

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
February 26, 2014

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Wednesday, February 26, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room of the City Hall. Mayor Michael presided and the following Councilmembers were present, to wit: Troy E. Alexander, Bill Aldridge, Benton Dry, Martha Sue Hall, Martha E. Hughes, Dexter Townsend and Chris Whitley. Absent, none.

The Mayor and the City Council held a Fiscal Year 2013/2014 Planning and Budgeting Work Session in the Conference Room of the City Hall with the following Departments presenting: Planning and Community Development, Information Systems, Parks and Recreation, Fire, and Police.

Planning and Community Development Director Keith Wolf came before City Council and reviewed with Council some of the responsibilities of his department including the different boards under his department. Mr. Wolf stated his department workload has increased greatly since 2004 and he listed the following new responsibilities that have been added without additional staff:

1. Historic Resources Commission and the Minor Works Committee
2. Graffiti Removal
3. Contacting landlords about Minimum Housing Code Violations
4. Maintenance of the new City Hall
5. Activities with the Central School Project and Small Area Plan
6. Request for designations of Landmarks by the Historic Resources Commission.

He stated the number of nuisance violations in 2013 and how many letters were sent out when the problem was not solved within fifteen days and the number of second violations notices sent when the problem reoccurred during the year. Also weekly checks on illegal signs and courtesy visits to explain violations to first time offenders. Mr. Wolf stated that the maintenance personnel are also technically in his department and his budget includes maintenance and utility bills and some service contracts for City Hall and other buildings.

Mr. Wolf is requesting increased funding for an additional employee at the Planner II or Senior Planner level along with training and travel allowance for that position.

Mayor Michael asked for input from City Council concerning whether they should continue having quarterly dinner meetings with the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment. Mr. Wolf stated that he is fine with only meeting as needed. The City Manager stated maybe we could have a meeting at City Hall as needed with no meal involved.

Councilmember Hall agreed with Mr. Wolf and the City Manager in only having a meeting as needed at City Hall with no meal.

It was the consensus of Council for Mr. Wolf to speak with the Planning Board at their next meeting in March and for Mr. Wolf to report back to the City Manager.

Mr. Wolf answered any questions that Council had.

Information Systems Director Owen Squires came before Council to cover his budget information and priorities for 2014-15. He covered projects that are capital driven such as:

- Niven Center
- CKA waterline
- ElectriCities utility billing system
- Wells Fargo P-Card

- Critical cost of operations such as
- City-wide desktop to App Store
- Security related upgrades
- Migration of existing web systems
- Migration of existing phone/communications system

- Critical infrastructure-related projects such as
- Replacing two virtual-server hosts at approximately \$13,000 each
- Central data switch for the City at approximately \$19,000
- Working with Public Utilities (Systems Division) to prepare for a SCADA Environment
- Work with Public Utilities (Electric) to complete existing and planned fiber optic connections to City buildings.

Mr. Squires covered items that he should be looking at and items he wants to look at for 2014-15. He stated that his goal is to encourage all that Information Systems does to be an extension of the individual City departments.

Mr. Squires answered any questions that Council had.

Parks and Recreation Director Toby Thorpe came before City Council and reviewed his FY 2013-2014 budget items for facilities, funding, planning, policies, and programs including:

Facilities – Niven Center renovation project, Snyder Greenway Phase 3 and the TRACK trail at City Lake Park.

Funding – TRACK trail grant, partnering with Stanly County Health Department and the NC Cooperative Extension for Nourish NC, grant applications to PARTF for Morehead renovations and trail Expansion at Rock Creek Park.

Planning – Developed Master Plan for future development of Morehead Park, and received appraisal for abandoned NSRR corridor for future greenway.

Policy – adopted fee policy for non-public/non-Albemarle schools using AP&R facilities.

Programs – Maintained national certification for Tree USA and Playful City USA and expanded program offerings using the Niven Center

Mr. Thorpe stated his 2014-15 budget initiatives including And guiding principles for Parks, Programming, and how to pay for it.

Next, Mr. Thorpe covered his FY 2014-2015 immediate needs, short-term needs and immediate to long term needs pertaining to capital priorities, technology priorities and staff development priorities.

His immediate capital needs are the Morehead Renovation Project, Master Plan for Wiscassett Property, vehicle replacements and playground updates. His immediate technology priorities consist of credit card payment for

in-office registrations. His immediate staff development priorities are part time salaries.

These priorities have been through input from Albemarle Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Albemarle Parks and Recreation staff, Public feedback and review of existing planning documents.

Fire Chief Shawn Oke came before Council to present the 2014/2015 Fire Department budget recommendations. He first talked about grants in process for replacement of outdated vehicle extrication equipment and 800 MHz radio upgrades. Also a staffing grant that replaced three firefighter positions. The grant provides funding until November 2014 and to keep these positions until June 30 201, it will cost the City around \$65,000 for all three positions. He stated that the fire prevention fee generated \$4,065 in 2012/2013 and so far in the 2013/2014 budget has generated \$2,640 in revenue.

Chief Oke covered four major budget priorities for 2013/2014 as follows:

- 1) Hiring an Assistant Fire Chief
- 2) Replacement of Fire Station Two
- 3) New Staff Vehicle for Fire Chief
- 4) Reactivation of Call Force
- 5) Relocation of Ladder Company to Old Fire Station on North Third Street.

Future Recommended Improvements

- 1) Addition of full-time Fire Inspector
- 2) Addition of a Battalion Chief in charge of training
- 3) Acquisition of a rescue vehicle to carry the fire dept. rescue equipment.
- 4) Replacement of the fire dept.'s aerial ladder in the 2019/2020 budget estimated at a cost to exceed one million dollars.
- 5) Reduce the current Office of State Fire Marshal Fire Suppression Rating Schedule score from four to a two.
- 6) Begin the process to become an accredited fire department through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

Mr. Oke answered any questions that City Council had.

Chief of Police William Halliburton came before Council to discuss his department's priorities for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

Budget Priorities are:

1. Patrol Restructuring
2. Evidence
Custodian Records
3. Vehicles – 6 (each costing \$24,000 + tax, tag, title= \$150,000)
4. Unfreeze Detective – has been frozen for 5 years
Place in Narcotics Division
5. New Police Building

2014 Grant Total \$63,202 – Shanta Watkins position

State Share \$48,123

City Match \$ 15,080

If we do not receive this grant, he hopes to find a way to do this anyway because Shanta Watkins has done a great job and this position is vital to gang/violent crime strategy.

Governor Highway Safety – Office and Equipment

Last Year City Cost - \$48,046

Police Intelligence Officer Program – this will take 18 months to complete. It is a true career development program and it involves:

- Training
- Case Management
- Case Presentation
- Council Liaison
- Departmental Mentoring

The cost to the City for this program would be a 2.5% salary increase for each officer once they complete this program.

Chief Halliburton is proposing to change the patrol division from 4 separate squads into 2 district divisions and in the Special Operations Division, to add a second k-9. The restructuring will see the loss of two captain positions, but will include an additional two sergeant positions and 1 Major position with a cost of under \$10,000.

He stated that the schedule changes will allow for more officers being available during peak call times. Council received information of why to do

a departmental restructure, and also a graph and chart for Council to get a better understanding of why the changes are proposed.

Chief Halliburton stated that the City's 4 Police dispatchers normally work a 12 hour shift for 24/7 coverage. He stated he has monitored this between 9pm and 6 am along with monitoring personnel activity during this time and the activity level is very low and calls into the PD are low as well. He stated that the vast majority of services are typically needed between 8 am and 7 pm. Also, he stated that he looked into a situation created by FLSA in requiring 40 hour employees who work more than 40 hours in one week get compensated at time and a half. The Records/Dispatch personnel currently work 34.5 hours one week and 46 hours the next. They receive 6 hours overtime each pay period. This is costing our agency a large amount of overtime expense.

The Chief's proposal is that he restructure the department to have a records division whose duties do not change but the operational hours do and take three of his records personnel and have them rotate shifts that cover the hours of 6 am to 9 pm Monday through Friday and 9 am to 6 pm on Saturday and Sunday. This will result a drastic reduction in overtime. This will also allow him to take one records clerk position and create an evidence custodian within the department.

Chief Halliburton answered any questions that Council had.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Alexander, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned until Thursday, February 27 at 6:00 pm in the Executive Conference Room of City Hall for a City Council Budget Work Session.