

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
February 27, 2014

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Thursday, February 27, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the City Hall. Mayor Ronnie 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: Finance, Public Housing, Human Resources, Public Works, and Public Utilities.

Finance Director Colleen Conroy came before City Council and stated the City must maintain current operations and continue with software upgrades, maintenance support, and continue training as usual. The Finance Department budget has been reduced by 16.8% since 2009 due to cutbacks, changing some of payroll expenditures to other funds and some to do with software which has streamlined workflow.

Ms. Conroy also stated that we cannot address all of the capital projects at once and we are at a critical juncture in how much debt service we can take on. Many cities use a financial advisor and she would like to look into the possibility of contracting with one to help gauge the debt we have and what we can take on.

Ms. Conroy also stated that another project in conjunction with Public Utilities is investing in a payment Kiosk for utility bills. We will have meetings concerning this in the next few weeks.

In the concern of revenue in the General Fund, each year the requests by the various governmental fund departments well exceeds the projected revenue by at least a \$1 Million. The City Manager must then make cuts to general fund operations and make transfer funds from Enterprises Funds into General Fund to balance the budget.

There has not been a property tax increase in the City in 10 years but the general fund is funded by taxes. There is slight increases in sales tax revenue. The County in the current year estimated \$983,000,000 as assessed valuation of property. She further stated that .01 tax increase equals \$ 98,300. We may receive an additional \$32,000 in property taxes due to the new revaluation. We try to collect bad debt through the NC Debt Set Off Program.

In closing, Ms. Conroy stated that she is proud of the way departments watch their budget and do their best to stay within the guidelines, looking for grant opportunities as much as possible.

Ms. Conroy answered any questions that Council had.

Public Housing Director Cedric Baldwin came before Council and gave a brief overview of the number of staff members, conventional units and section 8 vouchers in the Albemarle Housing Department. He said that they continue to improve the Public Housing System (PHAS) score by addressing unit turnaround time for vacant units and improving lease-up rate for vacant units.

Mr. Baldwin stated there is continued improvement for the Section 8 voucher program for FYE June 30, by completing annual re-exam of existing participants, verifying family composition to ensure families have correct voucher occupancy standards for their need, continue to complete annual inspections in a timely manner, continue to monitor the effects of portability/transferring of vouchers, and develop strategies to lease more vouchers to eligible families.

Mr. Baldwin spoke of Public Housing operations and when applications are taken each month. He stated the applicants are screened for eligibility using criminal background checks which are required by HUD. He said the waiting list is around 240 eligible applicants. Section 8 housing choice vouchers applications are not currently taken and there is approximately 220 eligible applicants on the waiting list.

Mr. Baldwin reviewed with Council resident initiative activities.

Public Housing Needs and Priorities:

Immediate Needs – Phase III of HVAC renovation for Amhurst Gardens two story units.

Board of Commissioners Training

Staff Training
Purchasing a 4WD maintenance vehicle
New Housing software

Short Term Needs:

Renovations to the Family Life Center
Development of Section 3 Programs
Continued Modernization of Public Housing Units
Development of 2015-19 Five-Year Agency Plan

Mr. Baldwin stated that HUD awarded the Department of Public Housing \$285,155 for fiscal year 2013 to be used toward modernization of units, management improvements, equipment, and fees. This would include replacing HVAC units in the one story apartments in Amhurst Gardens, the purchase of a new maintenance vehicle, and development of the annual Agency Plan Update.

Mr. Baldwin answered any questions that Council had.

Human Resources Director Robert Whitley came before City Council and covered components of consideration for his department pertaining to Medical Insurance, Pay & Classification Study Updates, and Miscellaneous.

First, Mr. Whitley stated that he is not sure how much the Affordable Care Act will impact the City at this time. On insurance choice, we are waiting to determine the % increase affiliated with BCBS before considering going out for bids. We are continuing to look at self-funding options but there would be more risk for the City.

Next, Mr. Whitley stated that the City is having a pay and classification study which is a 5 month process and the questionnaires and employee interviews are complete. The draft is expected in mid-March and will be presented to Council April 7. We are looking at several plans to implement the results determined.

Mr. Whitley spoke briefly on performance evaluations. The current plan will be shown to the Management team and how this works and we can choose to use it or choose something else.

Mr. Whitley is planning more supervisor/employee training courses in the future. He completed his presentation speaking of his driver license monitoring with his access to DMV and his checking a couple of times a month on records.

Mr. Whitley answered any questions that Council had.

Public Works Director Nina Underwood came before City Council and stated that she will cover the following divisions within her department: Maintenance Shop, Warehouse, Streets and Landfill.

Ms. Underwood spoke of the June 13, 2013 microburst storm response and completion of NCDENR documentation by her department and the preparation of a RFQ for the selection of a design firm for a downtown streetscape plan. Administrative goals are workforce development, hiring of Assistant Public Works Director and Streets Superintendent, and the Downtown Streetscape Plan implementation.

Under Maintenance Shop, Ms. Underwood spoke of the responsibilities, accomplishments, and goals including construction of new maintenance facility and evaluation of new maintenance software.

Under Warehouse Services, Ms. Underwood spoke of the responsibilities, accomplishments, and goals including the purchase of a forklift.

Under Streets Services, Ms. Underwood spoke of the responsibilities, accomplishments, and goals including additional funding through the general fund for street resurfacing, continuing education for employees, on-site equipment training activities, and continued sidewalk refurbishment.

Under Landfill Services, Ms. Underwood spoke of the responsibilities, accomplishments, and goals including construction of a leachate force main from the leachate collection lagoon to the City's municipal system, a NCDENR 20 year loan for an assumed estimate annual capital outlay of \$100,000, and the sale of timber from newly acquired property.

Ms. Underwood answered any questions that Council had.

Public Utilities Director Michael Leonas and Assistant Public Utilities Director Judy Redwine came before City Council and first spoke of the departmental achievements in customer service/administration, water and sewer systems, Plants Division, and Electric. Mr. Leonas continued to speak about budget requests in the Water/Sewer Systems, Plants Division, and Electric

Critical projects to consider for FY 2013-2014 in the Customer Service/Administration Division was next and the costs of each as follows:

Adding an additional function to Harris/Northstar 6.4 version	\$	3,500
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Critical projects to consider for FY 2013-2014 in the Water and Sewer Systems Division was next and the costs of each as follows:

1) Replacement of Unit # 404 Dump Truck	\$	90,000
2) Replacement of a new camera system on Unit #412		90,000
3) Replacement of Unit #414		26,000
4) Purchase 350 AMR Water Meters		60,000
5) Mill Street Water line upgrade		25,000
6) Boring Rig Replacement		30,000
7) Portable Diesel Generator		40,000
8) Sewer Collections Manhole Repairs		60,000
9) Trench boxes replacement		19,200

Critical projects to consider for FY 2013-2014 in the Plants Division was next and the costs of each as follows:

1) Renovation of 52 WTP facility	\$	6.5 M
2) Electrical Improvement at the WWTP		506,000
3) Land Application Field at TTWTP		7,000
4) Deep Water Intake at TTWTP		2.97M
5) High Service Pump Actuator at TTWTP		10,000
6) Mud Valves Replacement at sediment basins at TTWTP		10,000
7) Finished Tank Leak Repaired at TTWTP		65,000
8) Sludge Removal Study for Water Plants	Engineering	32,000

Critical projects to consider for FY 2013-2014 in the Electric Division was next and the costs of each as follows:

1) Complete 4kv to 24 kv circuits conversion	\$	595,650
2) Upgrade the conductor behind Albemarle Crossing Mall		177,400
3) Old Charlotte Road Tie Line		79,200

4) Replace existing street lights with new LED street lights	100,000
5) Wooden Pole Inspection and Data Collection	75,000
6) Contract Labor – Lee Electrical	428,750
Asplundh Tree Expert (Three man crew)	180,000
Two man bucket crew (year)	274,000
7) An enclosed “work zone” trailer, signs, stands and cones	9,000
8) Mini Excavator Attachments	15,600
9) Replace Unit # 312 – 1987 Chev Bucket Truck	215,000
10) Replace Unit # 323 – 1999 Chev Pick up Truck	240,000

Mr. Leonas, Ms. Redwine and the City Manager answered any questions that Council had.

Mayor Michael stated that since the strategic planning session on February 19, Council has not had time to review the findings sent back to us from Ms. Ferguson with the Novak Group. We are proposing having another meeting so Council can go over the strategic plan and give the City Manager feedback.

It was a consensus by City Council to meet on Thursday, March 12 at City Hall at 6pm.

Mayor Michael stated that in the hopes of having MCNC run broadband into Stanly County, we are still waiting on FCC monies.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.