

REGULAR MEETING CITY COUNCIL

October 21, 2013

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in a regular session on Monday, October 21, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall. Mayor Elbert L. "Whit" Whitley presided, and the following Councilmembers were present to-wit: Troy E. Alexander, Martha Sue Hall, Judy U. Holcomb, Ronnie Michael, Jack F. Neel, Dexter Townsend, and T. Ed Underwood. Absent, none.

Mayor Whitley called the meeting to order.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Holcomb, seconded by Councilmember Underwood and unanimously carried, the minutes of the October 7 regular session, October 7 closed session, and October 16 adjourned minutes were approved as submitted.

Mr. Durham Lewis, Lewis with Lewis Certified Public Accountants was scheduled to come before City Council to present the FY 2012-2013 Albemarle ABC System Audit but was not here tonight due to a family emergency.

The Mayor and City Council considered the request of Ted Smith, Director of Security, for Stanly Community College for changes in parking designations in the vicinity of West Albemarle School. Mr. Smith noted that Stanly Community College is requesting the designation of on-street handicapped parking spaces on Short Street and two spaces as passenger loading zones on West Main Street.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Neel, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the City Council approved the City Attorney drafting an ordinance for changes in parking designations in the vicinity of West Albemarle School, with the designation of on-street handicapped parking spaces on Short Street and two spaces as passenger loading zones on West Main Street.

Mayor Whitley noted that the monthly administrative reports were in the agenda package.

The Mayor and City Council considered a Resolution of Initiation for the Old Central School Redevelopment Project. It was noted that the City has learned that there is an opportunity to compete for tax credits through the North Carolina Housing Development Agency (NCHFA) by designating the Old Central School as a Redevelopment Project. The School Board has marketed the property; the City has subdivided it and now is the time to designate it for specific Redevelopment Project. This will open the door for additional planning and development work to be done to see the project through.

It was also noted that the City understands a group has made an offer to the Board of Education to purchase the school since the School Board has been so active in selling the property for redevelopment. If that offer is accepted by the Board of Education, we want the City to be ready to receive a redevelopment proposal for this important piece of our community's history as part of our downtown revitalization program.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Neel, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved the following resolution:

(Resolution 13-36. Old Central School Redevelopment Project.)

Upon a motion by Councilmember Holcomb, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the following Ordinance was duly adopted:

(Ordinance 13- 44. Gang Eradication Grant for 2nd year.)

The Mayor and City Council considered acceptance of a white goods grant that the City has been awarded in the amount of \$79,500 for its white goods recycling program at the Landfill for the purchase of a roll-off truck. It was noted that this truck will be used exclusively for recycling activities at the Landfill. The truck will have a winch on the back that will pull the 40-yard containers of source separated materials that have already been processed at the site.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Michael, seconded by Councilmember Underwood, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved the White Goods Grant in the amount of \$79,500 for its white goods recycling program at the Landfill for the purchase of a roll-off truck.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the following Ordinance was duly adopted:

(Ordinance 13- 45. Police radios and White Goods Grant.)

The Mayor and City Council considered approval of the purchase of a new Sewer Vac Truck for Public Utilities in the Water/Sewer Division. It is a Vactor Model 2112 Vacuum Jet Rodding Machine with a vaporooter root control attachment to handle the bigger problems and maintenance especially root issues that the other truck has not been able to do. Debt service to pay for this is included in the 2013-2014 Budget. If approved, Public Utilities request permission for Finance Director Colleen Conroy to seek financing for this purchase over 59 months time. The total purchase cost of the unit is \$384,660.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Neel, and unanimously carried, the Council approved the purchase of a new Sewer Vac Truck for Public Utilities Utilities and for Finance Director Colleen Conroy to seek financing for this purchase over 59 months time. The total purchase cost of the unit is \$384,660.

The Mayor and City Council considered declaring surplus a trencher in the Public Utilities Department, and two Ford Crown Victorias from the Police

Department. It is estimated to bring over \$5,000 in the Public Surplus Auction upcoming.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Alexander, and unanimously carried, the Council declared surplus a trencher in the Public Utilities Department and two Ford Crown Victorias from the Police Department and ordered sold.

The Mayor and City Council designated a voting delegate and alternate voting delegate to the NLC Congress of Cities. Councilmembers Hall and Townsend are planning to attend this meeting in November.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Holcomb, seconded by Councilmember Underwood, and unanimously carried, the Council designated Councilmember Hall as the voting delegate and Councilmember Townsend as the alternate voting delegate at the NLC Congress of Cities.

The Mayor and City Council considered appointment to a vacancy on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. It was noted that Steve Megson has resigned his position on the Albemarle Parks and Recreation Advisory Board because of increased work hours which will conflict with meeting times and days. He represented Central Elementary School on the Board. Per the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board ordinance, the principal at Central Elementary is to submit a nomination to fill this unexpired term. Principal Melissa Smith has submitted the name of Janice Abernathy, who lives at 525 East Street.

The Mayor and City Council considered an appointment to a vacancy on the Greenway Commission. Laura Wheeler has resigned from the Greenway Commission because her husband has accepted a job in another part of the state and they have had to move as a result of this.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Neel, seconded by Councilmember Underwood, and unanimously carried, the Council approved setting aside a decision on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and the Greenway Commission appointments until the November 18 regular City Council meeting.

The Mayor and City Council received an update on the sale of mulch and compost material at the landfill. The sale of mulch and composted material was approved by Council two meetings ago and Councilmember Hall requested an update on the matter at the last meeting. Landfill Division Superintendent Darren Preslar came before Council with a brief report and answered any questions that Council had.

The Mayor and City Council received a report on the joint issuance of an Economic Development Branding Initiative. It was noted that the citizen's Economic Development Task Force appointed by City Council a few months ago had as its number one recommendation the creation of a branding study to define the City's image and to help market our community. After learning that Stanly County had a similar interest the City Council asked that we work with the County on a joint RFP for this service. County Manager Andy Lucas took the lead on this effort. Council received the RFP with input from the City regarding specific City information and the City profile. This RFP was sent to several qualified firms on October 14, with proposals due by November 15.

The Mayor and City Council received a report on the status of initiatives regarding the Albemarle Prime Power Park. The City Manager noted that he and Stanly County EDC Director Paul Stratos met on October 1 with ElectriCities Economic Development Department Director Brenda Daniels, and Charity Barbee a recent addition to their economic development staff. As a result of this meeting, ElectriCities is going to develop a new marketing piece for the Prime Power Park, and has agreed to provide some funding for recertification of this site as a Certified Economic Development site.

Other funds would be provided by the City and County out of funds we have currently budgeted. With the recertification of this site, it will receive prominence in marketing from the NC Department of Commerce. Paul Stratos is pursuing firms able to perform this work and is getting cost estimates to do so. In addition, the County has conducted a study of how to increase sewer capacity for the site, and is planning to proceed with Phase I of this study in the near future, which will triple the current capacity of the County's line that serves the site. The

City's line that the County line is connected to can already handle this increased capacity.

The Mayor and City Council received a report on the status of State Disaster Declaration for the microburst storm this past June. The City Manager noted that David Vaughan with NC Division of Emergency Management, the grants manager handling this storm for the City, came to Albemarle on October 11 to finalize all of the cost documentation and the application for a state disaster declaration. The City is eligible to receive assistance under a state declaration for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and roads and bridges. The cost to the City for these items totaled \$982,359.95, and when we receive the state declaration we should receive reimbursement for 75% of this cost, or \$736,769.96.

The City Manager stated that this will be a tremendous help to the City, although since electric restoration costs are not eligible for any state reimbursement the costs for this (approximately \$1.3 million) came from the City's reserves. Mr. Vaughan complimented the City on its record keeping and documentation for this event, and as the coordinator for the disaster declaration and recovery effort the City Manager thanked all of the City's staff involved in this, particularly Judy Redwine and Nina Underwood and their respective staffs. Mr. Vaughan has sent the package requesting the declaration and assistance up the state chain of command, and we should receive notification in a few weeks.

The City Manager answered any questions that Council had.

The Mayor and City Council received a report on nominations for ElectriCities Board of Directors. There is only one nominee in each of the categories- weighted vote (Gastonia) and at large vote seat (Granite Falls).

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Holcomb and unanimously carried, the City Council approved the City Manager voting at his discretion on the two seats expiring.

Councilmember Holcomb thanked ElectriCities for the successful event held at the E E Waddell Center.

Councilmember Townsend thanked Director of Public Housing Cedric Baldwin for responding to his concerns involving the senior lunches being held at the Niven Center.

Councilmember Townsend inquired on the unpaved portion of Alfred Street and when it would be reopened. The City Manager stated that this is not a City street, just a path people have used with no City right of way. Councilmember Townsend stated that we need to get this path or road reopened. Councilmember Neel stated that we first need the right of way to reopen the path. The City Manager stated that there is no extra grant money left to do this and residents could donate the recording fees to create this right of way. Fire Chief Shawn Oke stated there are no issues that he is aware of but he will look into this and talk with the City Manager. Councilmember Neel stated that we need to research a right of way here.

Councilmember Hall thanked the Public Utilities Electric Division on a great job during Public Power Week.

She also thanked Public Housing Director Cedric Baldwin and his staff for the nice newsletter in color.

Ms. Hall stated that Finance Director Colleen Conroy is in the Uwharrie Players play, The Codgerella this coming weekend and the following weekend.

Councilmember Neel mentioned a vacant house owned by McCoy Realty with a broken outside fixture that was leaking. They received reimbursement for one month of the sewer bill and are asking forgiveness of the other months on the sewer bill. Since this is outside of City Council's adopted policy, City Council will have to approve this and should do the same for McCoy that is being done for Sonic. The City Manager stated that the sewer bill is \$25.06 with an \$8.07 minimum, totaling a \$17.89 difference which can be refunded.

Councilmember Neel moved that City Council approve a refund in the amount of \$17.89 to McCoy Realty for reimbursement of sewer bill due to water leak. Councilmember Hall seconded the motion. Voting for the motion were Councilmembers Alexander, Hall, Holcomb, Michael, Neel, and Underwood. Voting against the motion was Councilmember Townsend. The motion carried.

Councilmember Neel stated that there has been a pile of limbs in front of the 1st Methodist Church on 1st Street for the past month. The City Manager stated that Waste Management does not pick up for churches or institutions, only residential. This will be the responsibility of the church to remove those limbs.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Underwood and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council adjourned to a Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) 4 and 5 to discuss economic development and real estate.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Townsend and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council reconvened to open session. Mayor Whitley announced that a Closed Session was held pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) 4 and 5 to discuss economic development and real estate and stated there is something to report at this time.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Underwood, seconded by Councilmember Alexander and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.