

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
April 18, 2018

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Wednesday, April 18, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. at the Rosebriar Restaurant. Mayor Ronnie Michael presided and the following Councilmembers were present, to wit: Bill Aldridge, Chris Bramlett, Benton Dry, Martha Sue Hall, Martha E. Hughes, and Chris Whitley. Absent, Councilmember Dexter Townsend.

The City Council held a meeting with the members of the Planning and Zoning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment to discuss matters of common interest.

Mayor Michael brought the meeting to order.

Mayor Michael stated that the City Council and Planning Board and ZBA have a copy of Chapter 95: Commercial Code and a Commercial Maintenance Code summary sheet handed out by Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson. The Mayor asked that Council take this information and review and decide if they want to enforce a commercial code for appearance or structure or both.

The Mayor stated that PDS needs approval of money allocation for their department to move forward in having a person working one day a week on nuisance abatement after July 1, 2018. Mr. Robinson stated that COG Code Enforcement Officer James Luster if money is allocated, will be in the office at least one day a week working on residential/commercial code enforcement.

Mayor Michael opened the floor for discussion and asked if Council is prepared to adopt a commercial code ordinance for the downtown only or city wide. He asked that Council review and determine changes needed if any and/or suggestions and this will be discussed at our next meeting on May 7.

Mr. Robinson stated that he needs to know the direction Council would like to see Planning and Development Services going so he can plan this staff position accordingly. David Bowers will be retiring in June, 2018 and he will need to replace this position. He stated that Council may need to have a separate meeting to discuss the future direction for PDS.

Planning Board Vice-Chairman, Todd Furr stated that he notices a lot of residents having 4-5 parked cars in the front lawn. Is there a limit to how many licensed and operable cars can be parked in the front of the house?

Mr. Rahimzadeh stated that Chapter 80 is nuisance/abandoned/junked motor vehicles and the ordinance allows every residence to have 2 on premises as long as they are sufficiently covered and located in the rear yard.

Councilmember Hall asked about the issues at 110 Park Ridge Road. Mr. Robinson stated that this property is on the list and has been given to COG Code Enforcement Officer James Luster as a deteriorated not dilapidated property eligible for demolition. After July 1, Mr. Luster may be able to look at deteriorated as well as dilapidated properties.

Councilmember Hall asked about properties that do not have electricity or water/sewer turned on. The City Manager said that 807 North Ninth Street is generating a lot on neighborhood interest. He said there is nothing in North Carolina law that allows a City to force people out of a home. The only tool the City has at its disposal is minimum housing code, and not having utility service is a violation. He said that staff has initiated this process, but the property will become compliant if power is reconnected. He said that he has spoken with several neighbors and was actually on the phone with one right before the meeting. He said the City will continue to do what is within its power address this property.

Mr. Robinson asked that Council have the requester call Mr. Rahimzadeh.

Councilmember Bramlett stated that as a Councilmember, we receive all sorts of issues and complaints. He asked what is the best way to respond.

Mayor Michael stated that he should listen to them and bring any issue or complaint to the City Manager or Assistant City Manager. Get the answers from management and take this information back to the resident.

Mayor asked that City Council remain for further discussion on several items.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hughes, seconded by Councilmember Dry, and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council adjourned to a Closed Session Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (3) – Legal.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Bramlett, and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council reconvened to open session. Mayor Michael announced that a closed session was held Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (3) – Legal and there is nothing to report at this time.

Mayor Michael stated that he had spoken with Oscar Hinson earlier today and Mr. Hinson did not feel he received the consideration on his properties at the public hearing this past Monday evening that he thought he should have by Council. Mayor Michael told Mr. Hinson that he owns several more properties that will be on the dilapidated property list if not repaired and advised him to speak with Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson.

The Mayor stated that David Beaver had spoken with him and Benton Dry about the City increasing his monthly retainer amount. Mr. Beaver would like to speak with Council concerning this one evening in closed session.

The Mayor stated that Mr. Beaver needs to make a proposal to Council in writing.

Mayor Michael stated that he had sent out to each Councilmember information concerning the King property downtown for consideration. The responses he received back mostly chose option 3 which was for the city to provide labor and materials to resurface all these areas, and in turn the City would maintain and control them for a period of time around 10-15 years. The lots include the corner lot at King and First, and the parking area behind the Sweet Shop and the buildings that face 2nd Street.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hughes, seconded by Councilmember Dry, and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council approved proceeding with approaching the King Heirs about this and for the city to provide labor and materials to resurface all these areas, and in turn the City would maintain and control them for a period of time around 10-15 years.

The Mayor stated Electricities has been debating on a rate reduction for the upcoming fiscal year. They are selling more power on the open market and Duke Power is charging less to operate it. They have decided on a 7% cut to the wholesale rate. The City needs to look at what percentage rate decrease to pass onto the customers and keep overhead costs for the City as these are not reduced.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Bramlett, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council approved proceeding with developing a budget proposal with a 4% reduction for City electric. The vote was 5-0 and carried.

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