

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL  
April 22, 2013

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Monday, April 22, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the City Hall. Mayor Elbert L. Whitley presided and the following Councilmembers were present, to wit: Troy E. Alexander, Martha Sue Hall, Judy Holcomb, Ronnie Michael, Jack F. Neel, Dexter Townsend and T. Ed Underwood. Absent, none.

Also present were members of the Economic Development Task Force, City Manager Raymond I. Allen, Assistant City Manager Michael Ferris, City Clerk E. Paulette Bowers, ADDC Director Kathy Almond, and Planning and Community Development Director Keith Wolf.

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The Mayor and the City Council held a joint meeting with the Economic Development Task Force and Facilitator Crystal Morphis.

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Chairman of the Economic Development Task Force Russ Sharples welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for devoting time to attend the meeting this meeting.

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Mayor Whitley gave an update of the meeting that he had attended in February, along with the City Manager, EDTF Chairman Russ Sharples, and Vice-Chairman Tracie Sells at the County with County Manager Andy Lucas, Commissioner Chairman Gene McIntyre, Commissioner Tony Dennis and Stanly County EDC Director Paul Stratos. Mr. Sharples and Ms. Sells presented to the County what the City wants to do and stated the City would like to join forces of our Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) and the County EDC in supplying funds for economic development and expanding the City Planning Department related to economic development.

Commissioner McIntyre stated that he would get back with us after their February 22 budget session. The Mayor stated that we did not hear back from the County and he made contact with Commissioner McIntyre later and he said the County decided to not make a decision on this at this time. Mayor Whitley further stated that they evidently do not have any intention in joining forces with the City and the EDTF.

Mayor Whitley stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to further discuss and get the opinion of the EDTF on moving forward.

Mayor Whitley stated Ms. Crystal Morphis with Creative EDC is here to lead and direct our discussion tonight.

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Ms. Morphis stated that our purpose tonight is to:

- 1) Review economic development strategies
- 2) Discuss priorities going forward

We will also discuss actions that request funding and ones that do not request funding and the EDTF's role in all of this. She reviewed the overall strategies of the group with a PowerPoint presentation.

The Task Force developed key priorities and recommendations for City Council with the top four priority action steps listed below.

- 1) Engage a professional firm to lead the City through a branding exercise.
- 2) Provide City funding to Stanly County EDC to become a partner in economic development and seek a leadership role in the organization.
- 3) Expand the City's Planning and Community Development Department to include tasks directly related to economic development.
- 4) Advocate for a new staff position at the EDC targeted to support existing business.

She asked that discussion be opened and asked for any questions or comments that the City Council or EDTF members have. Upon questioning, Ms. Morphis stated that out of the 10 strategies and actions, #1 Branding and Marketing, #7 Business Park Development will require funding, along with providing funding to the County in becoming a partner, and adding a position in the Planning and Community Development department in the City related to economic development.

Upon questioning, the City Manager stated that at the staff level, he works with Stanly County EDC Director Paul Stratos on items as the Prime Power Park; grant programs that Electricities, etc. The City Manager also stated that the City does not have a relationship on a policy level but hopes this continues.

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Upon Councilmember Michael's discussion, the City Council and the EDTF discussed the development of an industrial park.

Ms. Morphis discussed the possibility of the County EDC assessing the sites/buildings and doing an inventory of what's available and their qualifications. We can outsource the assessment if we need to and it should be relatively inexpensive if the County does not do this. Also, Ms. Morphis stated that City Council may want to look outside of the City or County for a partnership with other municipalities.

Upon a statement made by EDTF member Cavin Holbrook, Councilmember Townsend stated that he would like to see the County and City leaders in an open situation and consider being on the County agenda to discuss this further with them.

Upon questioning, Ms. Morphis stated that in most areas there is a coalition with municipalities and the County. City Council may want to speak with other towns in the County and all those interested can go along to the County for the presentation by the EDTF.

Councilmember Hall stated that when she and David Morgan were County Commissioners, they talked with the municipalities. Councilmember Underwood also confirmed this when he was a County Commissioner. Ms. Hall further stated that she spoke with EDC Director Paul Stratos after the meeting took place and Mr. Stratos would like this to work out between the County and City for economic development. Ms. Hall said that she would like to see the EDTF go before the County Commissioners because they are looked at in good favor individually and collectively.

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Ms. Morphis stated that the EDTF needs to recommend a budget to be established for the 2013-14 year for economic development for the City.

Councilmember Michael asked that the EDTF go to the County Commissioners only and not include the City Council and make a presentation and recommendations to the County Commissioners.

Ms. Morphis stated that if the City decides for the EDTF to go before the County Commissioners, she will aid the EDTF members in creating a presentation to take before the Commissioners. She said that the priorities and key recommendation is creating a partnership with the County through City funding

and making overall goals for County/City being a funding partner in economic development for the County.

Ms. Morphis stated that the EDTF needs to get on the County Commissioner meeting agenda to present this plan and get a yes, no, maybe answer from them. The time involved at the most is 4-6 weeks and the only thing the City has to lose is a small amount of time.

EDTF member Conrad Carter stated that maybe we should ignore the County Commissioners and work directly with the Stanly County EDC Director Paul Stratos and just give the presentation to him.

It was noted that if the City hires an economic development person, this person needs to do tasks other than what Paul Stratos does for the County, not duplicate efforts.

EDTF Chairman Russ Sharples said that he is not willing to conclude or accept that the County is not willing to work with us yet. We are asking for another opportunity to talk with the County leaders of what their goals are at a regular County Commissioner public meeting.

Councilmember Neel stated that we need to get across to the Commissioners that the EDTF was established by the City of Albemarle but is not controlled by the City Council and not sent by the City Council.

EDTF member David Morgan stated that maybe we can get on the County Commissioner's May 6 agenda.

Ms. Morphis stated that the following points are to be covered when the EDTF members give their presentation before the County Commissioners:

- 1) To use Paul Stratos' experience and expertise.
- 2) EDTF members separate from the City Council
- 3) EDTF's work and recommendations
- 4) Point out to Mr. Stratos that we advocate for a new position at the EDC targeted to support existing businesses. (Back to # 3 of key priorities and recommendations.)
- 5) Provide funds to Stanly County EDC. (Back to # 2 of key priorities and recommendations.)
- 6) Maybe not include branding for the City but for all the County

Councilmember Neel asked that the EDTF while at the County meeting let the County know that the EDTF is in the driver seat and is here to support Council and will support or help in County EDC's decisions.

EDTF member Jim Lisk stated that we may want to choose a meeting other than the May 6 meeting because the Alcoa discussion will be a part of that meeting.

Ms. Morphis stated that EDTF Chairman Russ Sharples can ask to get on the May 20 County Commissioner regular meeting and email the documentation for the EDTF presentation so they have before the meeting.

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EDTF Chairman Russ Sharples stated that City Council has got to allow the EDTF to work with the County and if it does not work at first, to allow us to continue working toward our goals. This will not work overnight.

Ms. Morphis asked for a consensus from the EDTF and a consensus from City Council to move forward with these plans. It was the consensus of the EDTF and City Council to move forward. Ms. Morphis stated that we will follow up on the meeting with the County on May 20.

Ms. Morphis stated upon discussion that we need to request a dollar amount for Economic Development in the City 2013-14 budget per capita as a place holder. We should factor 3, 4, 5, or 6 times the population figure. It was determined that the County is factoring 6 times its capita and the City should allocate the same percentage of around \$100,000 for the next budget year for economic development.

It was determined to request to the County that the City become a partner and provide economic development funding.

Ms. Morphis stated that after the presentation at the County meeting, the EDTF should meet to discuss the results and the next steps. EDTF Chairman Russ Sharples will call this meeting. Ms. Morphis stated she will work with Mr. Sharples on the presentation and the budget amount for Budget 2013-14.

Upon questioning by Russ Sharples, Ms. Morphis stated that as many EDTF members as possible should go to the County Commissioner meeting on May 20, as well as other municipalities in the County.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Alexander and unanimously carried, the City Council approved support by way of words, attitudes, and actions moving forward with the EDTF and its strategy and plans working with the County Commissioners.

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Mayor Whitley stated to the EDTF, we sincerely appreciate your time and efforts and the City Council will support you 100%.

Councilmember Hall invited everyone to the City employee picnic on Thursday, May 16 at City Lake Park from 11 am-1 pm. Also, she stated the next CCOG meeting is Tuesday, May 28 at Oakboro. The COG meetings are held every other month for the County and municipalities.

Ms. Morphis stated if the EDTF presents to the County on Monday, May 20, they may also want to consider presenting to the CCOG on May 28 at Oakboro. She thanked everyone for their participation and the EDTF will reconvene after the presentation to the County on May 20.

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