

REGULAR MEETING CITY COUNCIL
December 2, 2013

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in a regular session on Monday, December 5, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Elbert L. "Whit" Whitley, Jr. 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.

Mayor Whitley stated that this is the City's organizational meeting following the November 5 municipal elections.

Senator Gene McLaurin stated before Council that he is thankful to be able to speak at this organizational meeting before the new Council and the Councilmembers exiting tonight. He stated that Albemarle is a great City with a great reputation and is a good steward of taxpayer's money.

Senator McLaurin stated to call him when and if anyone needs him as their senator. He gave best wishes to everyone.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Underwood, seconded by Councilmember Holcomb and unanimously carried, the minutes of the November 18 regular session minutes were approved as submitted.

Mayor Whitley stated that it had been an honor and a rewarding experience to serve with the Councilmembers as Mayor and he had thoroughly enjoyed this.

He stated to Benton Dry, Martha Hughes, and Chris Whitley as new Councilmembers that he wishes them the very best.

He stated to Judy Holcomb, Jack Neel, and Ed Underwood as outgoing Councilmembers, thanks for their dedication.

In closing, Mayor Whitley thanked all of the City employees with no exception, they are certainly appreciated.

He thanked City Manager Raymond Allen and Human Resource Director Robert Whitley for bringing in such good people to work for the City.

He spoke to the newly elected Mayor, Ronnie Michael and new Council, that we are truly in good hands.

Councilmember Holcomb thanked everyone for all their support and gave a special thanks to the Albemarle Police Department for an excellent job.

Councilmember Townsend stated that he had been very fortunate to serve with Judy Holcomb, Jack Neel, Ed Underwood, and Mayor Whitley who are legends in their own right. Also, he said that combined service among Mayor and Council, we have over 150 years of service. He said that he will be forever grateful to all of them.

Councilmember Hall thanked Judy Holcomb, Jack Neel, and Ed Underwood and Mayor Whitley for their service.

Councilmember Neel thanked Mayor Whitley for bringing him to Albemarle from Roxboro, NC in 1963. He wished all the exiting members well wishes and welcomed the new members and Mayor Michael.

Councilmember Underwood stated that he had enjoyed working with Mayor Whitley and Councilmembers and he welcomed the new members coming in tonight.

Councilmember Alexander thanked Judy Holcomb, Jack Neel, Ed Underwood and Mayor Whitley for their service and that he had enjoyed working with all of them. He stated that when he came on board in 1987, Jack Neel was the only Councilmember with City experience and they all depended on him.

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

The Honorable Kevin Bridges, Superior Court Judge, came forth to deliver the oath of office to Mayor Ronnie Michael and City Councilmembers Benton Dry, Martha E. Hughes, and Chris Whitley.

(Oaths and Signatures)

The meeting reconvened with the newly sworn Mayor and City Council. Mayor Ronnie Michael presided, and the following Councilmembers were present to-wit: Troy E. Alexander, Benton H. Dry II, Martha Sue Hall, Martha E. Hughes, Dexter Townsend, and Christopher Whitley. Absent, none.

The Reverend John Futterer gave the invocation.

Mayor Michael thanked his family and stated that deciding to run for Mayor was a tough decision but he is happy that he made that decision. He stated we are losing around 90 years of experience when Mayor Whitley and Councilmembers Holcomb, Neel, and Underwood leaving their seats tonight. Ms. Holcomb has 23 years, Mr. Neel has 26 years, Mr. Underwood has 18 years, and the Mayor since 1965 has 20 years.

Elbert L. Whitley, Jr. - Councilmember 1965-1969
Mayor 1969-1977 and 2005-2013

Mayor Michael also thanked his friends.

Mayor Michael stated that Mayor Whitley's leadership will be missed and thanked him for his support in the Mayor's race.

Mayor Michael thanked staff and the citizens of Albemarle.

The Mayor stated that the City is moving forward by creating an Economic Development Task Force and now advertising for an Economic Director to work with the County on economic development.

He stated that he wants everyone's voice heard and citizens will soon be able to visit the City website for new Councilmember contact information.

Councilmember Hughes thanked her family for supporting her the last several months. She further stated that she has big shoes to fill in replacing Judy Holcomb.

Councilmember Whitley stated that he is honored and humbled to be here and he also has big shoes to fill in replacing Jack Neel. He said he is looking forward to working with the Council.

Councilmember Dry stated that Albemarle is a great City and we are all fortunate to live here. He thanked Judy Holcomb, Jack Neel, and Ed Underwood for their service.

Councilmember Dry stated that Councilmembers Alexander, Hall, and Townsend will aid the new Councilmembers.

Mayor Michael recessed the meeting until 6:40 pm to allow the new members to converse with their family and friends that were in attendance.

Mayor Michael brought the meeting back in session and stated that Council had a copy of the municipal calendar in their agenda packets and asked if anyone had any questions.

Councilmember Townsend moved to dispense with the written ballot as the method to select the Mayor Pro-Tem. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. Upon a vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

Councilmember Hall moved to re-appoint Troy Alexander as Mayor Pro-Tem. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Townsend. Upon a vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the City Council re-appointed Raymond I. Allen City Manager.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the City Council re-appointed David A. Beaver City Attorney.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall seconded by Councilmember Dry and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to leave the appointment of the Finance Director – Colleen Conroy, Tax Collector – Lindsay Carter - City

Clerk – Paulette Bowers to the discretion of the City Manager. The City Manager indicated that it was his intention to make the following appointments:

Finance Director – Colleen Conroy
City Clerk – E. Paulette Bowers
Tax Collector – Lindsay Carter
Deputy City Clerk – Michael J. Ferris

The Mayor and City Council considered setting a public hearing to rezone a 10.5 Acre Property from GHBD/ General Highway Business District to R-8A Multi-Family Residential. On November 26, 2013, the Planning Board voted unanimously in favor of recommending approval of a request of Venture Properties to rezone a 10.5 acre property (Tax Record 19682) on NC 740 Hwy and Hilco Street from GHBD/General Highway Business District to R-8A/Multi-Family Residential.

The map change is in compliance with the Land Use Plan and this should be included in a motion if the Council approves this application following a public hearing.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Townsend and unanimously carried, the City Council approved setting public hearing to consider rezoning a 10.5 Acre Property from GHBD/ General Highway Business District to R-8A Multi-Family Residential for Monday, January 6, 2014 and the map change is in compliance with the Land Use Plan.

The Mayor and City Council discussed a proposal to change the City Council meeting time to 7:00 p.m. Councilmember Hall requested that this item be placed on the agenda for City Council's consideration. If Council wants to change the regular meeting time, an ordinance will have to be drafted, which can be readied for your consideration on December 16 and can be effective with the January 6 meeting of City Council.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Dry and unanimously carried, the City Council approved an ordinance to be drafted changing the City Council meeting time to 7:00 p.m. as of January 6, 2014.

The Mayor and City Council considered settlement agreements with 2012/2013 Electronic Gaming Business License Holder. Council received a memo from Assistant City Manager Michael Ferris. An additional one of the internet gambling businesses has agreed to the proposed settlement, and has signed the agreement. We are still waiting to hear from some of the others.

The City Manager answered any questions that Council had.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the City Council approved the agreement with Corner Pockets in the amount of \$4,166.67.

The City Council considered the appointment of a delegate and alternate to the Centralina Council of Governments. Centralina COG requests each year that jurisdictions confirm their current delegate and alternate or appoint replacements. The City's current delegate and alternate are Councilmember Hall and Councilmember Townsend, respectively.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Whitley and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to reappoint Councilmember Martha Sue Hall as the City's delegate and Councilmember Townsend as 1st alternate.

The City Council considered the appointment to the Stanly County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Currently Councilmember Neel serves in this capacity.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to appoint Councilmember Martha E. Hughes as the City's delegate to the Stanly County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

The Mayor and City Council considered an appointment of the Rocky River Rural Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee Delegate and Alternate. Currently Councilmember Hall serves as the delegate and Councilmember Michael as the alternate. The TAC meets every other month on the third Thursday at 6:00 pm in rotating locations. It is made up of elected officials from the member jurisdictions. RRRPO is made up of Anson, Stanly, and the western part of Union County, and most of the municipalities in these counties. It is headquartered in Albemarle at Stanly Commons. The TAC makes decisions on transportation improvement priorities and local transportation plans and makes recommendations to NCDOT.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Dry and unanimously carried, the City Council voted for Councilmember Hall to remain the City's delegate through January 2014 and to bring this item back before the Council after District 3's seat has been appointed.

The Mayor and City Council considered an appointment of the Rocky River Rural Planning Organization Technical Coordinating Committee Delegate and Alternate. Currently City Manager Raymond Allen serves as the delegate and Assistant City Manager Michael Ferris as the alternate.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Whitley and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to reappoint City Manager Raymond Allen serves as the delegate and Assistant City Manager Michael Ferris as the alternate.

The Mayor and City Council considered appointment of a Commissioner and Alternates to North Carolina Municipal Power Agency One. Currently City Manager Raymond Allen serves as the commissioner and Councilmember Neel as the first alternate. The second alternate position is currently vacant.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Whitley and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to reappoint City Manager Raymond Allen as the commissioner and appoint Jack Neel as the first alternate and Councilmember Hall as second alternate.

The Mayor and City Council considered an ex officio appointment to the Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation Board of Directors. This position is currently held by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Dry and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to reappoint Mayor Pro Tem Alexander as the Ex Officio to the Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation Board of Directors.

The Mayor and City Council considered training for elected officials on the new interface for City network users. The City Manager noted that training is needed to provide overview of new virtual network environment. This is a change being made City-wide and will change the way information is accessed. This is something that needs to be completed prior to the December 16 meeting since the Council laptops will no longer be needed and new terminals will be installed at the dais prior to the meeting on the 16.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Alexander and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to meet on Monday, December 9 at City Hall at 7pm on the new interface for City network users.

The Mayor and City Council considered attendance at the Centralina Council of Governments Annual Meeting which will take place on Wednesday, December 11 beginning at 5:15 pm at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Concord.

Councilmember Hall stated that this is a delegate orientation meeting. She invited all of the Councilmembers since this will be her last meeting.

Mayor Michael asked that any Councilmembers interested in attending, to please let the City Manager or Councilmember Hall know.

The Mayor and City Council considered a date and time for Mayor and City Council's official photograph.

Mayor Michael stated that we can delay this decision until after the District 3 Councilmember has been appointed.

The Mayor and City Council discussed a proposal for redevelopment of former Central School property.

Mr. Rex Todd with the Landmark Group came before City Council to discuss the Central School property and handed out to Council a short summary that he reviewed with them.

Mr. Todd stated that he was glad that Mayor Michael and some of the old and new Councilmembers visited with him the renovated sites by the Landmark Group at Cramerton and Gastonia recently.

Mr. Todd stated that if the City decides to furnish the up front \$25,000 which is non-refundable for the Central School property, he will propose this to the Stanly County Board of Education at their board meeting on Tuesday, December 3 and that Landmark will reimburse the City for the \$25,000 and pay the Stanly County Board of Education the remaining \$125,000 for the property. If our venture is not successful, the City will pay for the remainder of the property and own it outright. We are looking to March 2015 as the grand opening of this property.

Mr. Todd answered any questions that Council had.

Council decided to delay the answer of this until after speaking with City Attorney David Beaver later in the evening in closed session.

The Mayor and City Council was informed of the procedures for filling a vacancy on City Council. Council received a memo from Michael Ferris regarding the procedures and the City Manager drafted a news release regarding this vacancy which was sent out last week. The news release and an application that can be printed off and completed are on the City's homepage. Michael Ferris also posted an article about this on the City's Facebook page this week.

The City Manager stated that the application deadline is Tuesday, December 10, 2013.

The Mayor and City Council were reminded about the Albemarle Downtown Christmas on Saturday, December 7 from 10:30 am to 5 pm.

The Mayor and City Council were reminded about the ADDC Tour of Homes on Sunday, December 8 from 2 pm until 6 pm.

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The Mayor and City Council were reminded of the Stanly County Christmas Parade in downtown Albemarle on December 9, 2011. The Christmas Parade will begin at 5:30 pm, and will follow its traditional route down First Street to South Street, and then up Second Street where it will end at the YMCA Cannon Park.

The Mayor and all Councilmembers affirmed riding in the Christmas Parade. Fire Chief Oke will take care of setting this up for the Council

Councilmember Hall welcomed each new Councilmember to the board and encouraged everyone to attend the Centralina Council of Governments meeting next week.

Councilmember Whitley stated that he is happy and honored to serve on the Council.

Councilmember Dry thanked Police Chief Halliburton, the Police Department, Stanly County Sherriff's Office, and the SBI on capturing the person responsible for the shooting and death of B & G Coins owner.

Councilmember Alexander stated that he is looking forward to the Mayor and Council all working together.

Councilmember Townsend welcomed aboard all the new Councilmembers. He also wished the Albemarle Bulldogs Football Team good luck this Friday playing in Murphy, NC in the playoffs.

Councilmember Hughes stated that she is honored and also excited about serving the citizens of Albemarle.

Councilmember Dry congratulated Coach Jackson and the North Stanly Comets Football Team this year.

Councilmember Hall thanked the school board members for being at the meeting this evening.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Whitley, 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 and 5 to consult with the City Attorney and to discuss real estate.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Townsend 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 and 5 to consult with the City Attorney and to discuss real estate.

Mayor Michael stated that he would ask Ms. Hall to make a motion.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Hughes and unanimously carried, the Mayor and City Council approved an offer to purchase the Central School property in the amount of \$150,000 in cash, owned by the Stanly County Board of Education, closing within 30 days. Mayor Michael will attend the Stanly County Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, December 3 along with Mr. Rex Todd with the Landmark Group to make this offer.

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