

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
February 25, 2013

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Monday, February 25, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference 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.

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: Fire, IS, Human Resources, Finance, and Public Housing.

The Mayor stated that there will be an open house on February 28 at the Stanly County Museum from 6:00-8:00 pm.

The City Manager stated that there will be a Stanly County COG meeting on Tuesday evening and he has the following Councilmembers attending: Alexander, Hall, Holcomb, Neel, and Mayor Whitley.

Councilmember Underwood and Councilmember Michael confirmed their attendance. The City Manager stated that the meeting has been moved up to 6:00 pm for a reception and he will meet everyone at 5:30 pm at City Hall to ride together.

The City Manager handed out information to Council and the Mayor concerning questions from the Saturday, February 9 City Council Budget Work Session of a City payroll update and post closure funds at the City Landfill.

Fire Chief Shawn Oke came before Council to present the 2013/2014 Fire Department budget recommendations. He first talked about grants in process for staff vehicles, apparatus, and pictometry imaging for building pre-plans. Also a staffing grant to replace three firefighter positions which are

currently frozen. He stated that the fire prevention fee generated \$6,745 in 2011/2012 and so far in the 2012/2013 budget has generated \$2,625 in revenue.

Mr. Oke covered four major budget priorities for 2013/2014 as follows:

- 1) Hiring an Assistant Fire Chief
- 2) New staff vehicle for Fire Chief
- 3) Reactivation of Call Force
- 4) Relocation of Ladder Company to Old Fire Station on North Third Street.

Future Recommended Improvements

- 1) Relocation or renovation of Fire Station Two
- 2) Addition of full-time Fire Inspector
- 3) Addition of a Battalion Chief in charge of training
- 4) Acquisition of a rescue vehicle to carry the fire dept. rescue equipment.
- 5) Replacement of the fire dept.'s aerial ladder in the 2019/2020 budget estimated at a cost to exceed one million dollars.
- 6) Reduce the current Office of State Fire Marshal Fire Suppression Rating Schedule score from four to a two.
- 7) Begin the process to become an accredited fire department through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

Mr. Oke answered any questions that City Council had.

The Mayor passed the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Alexander at this time.

IS Director Owen Squires came before City Council and stated that the Information Systems Department continues to service technology related operations for all City departments. He explained what IS is doing in each City department and how his department works with City staff to identify, build and maintain an effective telecommunications infrastructure. He outlined each department and what IS is presently doing in each department below:

- 1) Administration – New vehicle tags
High definition video recording
Social media platforms

- Infrastructure needs in general
- 2) Fire Department- To setup an application and testing equipment for the new Fire Apparatus
Incident reporting
- 3) Engineering Dept - Major upgrade to the GIS mapping systems software.
Laptop setup to use for GIS training purposes
- 4) Police Dept - Detailed and documented Security procedures
Social media tools to assist police
Outside contractors to redesign their computer/network infrastructure
In car camera systems
- 5) Finance - Major software upgrades to aid long standing procedures and operations – Harris Northstar and Tyler/Munis accounting system
How financial information is being processed
- Human Resources - Dedicated document scanner and multi function Printer/copier/scanner
- Parks & Recreation - Planning stages of the Niven Center to integrate technology
Event recording for Senior Games
Social media tools
- Planning Dept - Tablets to use in the field for notes and pictures
- Public Housing - Thin client computers for all Housing locations
New platform for Emphasys
- Public Utilities - Infrastructure portion of a Systems Division
SCADA redesign and implementation
Major upgrade to Harris/Northstar CIS and Tyler/Munis environment
- Public Works - Hybrid systems
City Warehouse and City Landfill security
- Information Systems - Integration services, Infrastructure, personnel, training, and external sources, migration to a sustainable computing model

Mr. Squires 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, a Pay Plan study, and Going Green.

First, Mr. Whitley stated that the trend is somewhere around 8-11% increase on health insurance for the upcoming year. Our consultants are looking into options as a partially self funded program, an independent drug card service or a bid program for health insurance.

Secondly, Mr. Whitley stated that he is looking at doing a study on pay plan only but would like to consider a complete program which would include a position classification, pay plan and personnel policies. The cost will determine the extent of study the City does. We would like to perform the study in the 2013/2014 budget year and implement the study in the 2014/2015 budget year.

Also, Mr. Whitley stated that his department is going green and items such as forms and newsletters will now be electronic. The newsletter alone is costing \$300 per newsletter to print.

Mr. Whitley answered any questions that Council had.

Finance Director Colleen Conroy came before City Council and stated that her department has streamlined processes, implemented new software, analyzed improvements in using their software, and begun sending more and more electronically such as purchase orders, accounts payable and payroll.

Also, Finance added Tyler Content Manager, the purchasing card program with approximately 39 cardholders. At this point we are still keying by hand sales tax information as a receivable from the State due to problems in the system.

Ms. Conroy also stated that with doing more electronically and keeping the budget down, Finance has cut back staff also. It is a request to hire one part time person to share for various projects and/or filling in during absences, or just doing day to day jobs, relieving supervisors for other tasks. In consideration also is contracting with a collection agency to recoup some of the utility losses, but someone must prepare the information to send to the agency which would be time consuming also.

Ms. Conroy explained the diagram given to Council of the systems and software used by Finance and shared with other departments. She also proposed contracting with someone as a database administrator to make sure of interfaces running smoothly between software and departments and them being responsible for continued system improvements.

We are looking at accepting credit cards for more services than just utilities and contracting with a company to look into credit card fees paid and to help lower these costs. She also asked for continued SOG training/travel for her new staff members and continued training for long time staff members, supplies, equipment and maintenance needs.

Councilmember Townsend moved that all employees, including part time and temporary employees, be required to use direct deposit, with no more checks being issued for payroll as of this motion. Councilmember Neel seconded the motion. Voting for the motion were Councilmembers Alexander, Hall, Holcomb, Michael, Neel, and Townsend. Voting against the motion was Councilmember Underwood. The motion carried.

Ms. Conroy answered any questions that Council had.

Assistant City Manager and Interim Public Housing Director Michael Ferris 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.

Next, Mr. Ferris stated that he would like to update Council on the new public housing director search. He stated that the City Manager, the Human Resource Director, and he analyzed the applications and they were narrowed down to a certain number of candidates for participating in the assessment center. The candidates will participate in the assessment on Tuesday, February 26 and Wednesday, February 27. Upon questioning, Mr. Ferris stated that he hopes to have a director chosen by mid March.

Mr. Ferris continued to speak about priorities and issues for the Public Housing Department in providing clean, safe, and affordable housing for individuals and families in need as well as focus on family self-sufficiency activities involving more training and education to our staff in this area. Also, added into the Department's agency plan is a proposal to renovate the Family Life Center, making it more suitable as an educational and training setting.

Mr. Ferris stated that a replacement of an older vehicle in the Section 8 program, with funds coming from Section 8 and Conventional Housing funds. Also a maintenance vehicle replacement in Conventional Housing with capital fund program money, begin HVAC replacement at Amhurst and renovation to the Family Life Center.

Mr. Ferris answered any questions that Council had.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Underwood, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned until Wednesday, February 27 at 5:30 pm in the Executive Conference Room of City Hall for a City Council Budget Work Session.