

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
January 28, 2013

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Monday, January 28, 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, Judy Holcomb, Martha Sue Hall, G.R. Michael, Jack F. Neel, Dexter Townsend and T. Ed Underwood. Absent, none.

The Mayor and the City Council held a meeting with the members of the Economic Development Task Force to review the final proposal.

Mayor Whitley called the meeting to order. He turned the meeting over to ED Task Force Chairman Russ Sharples.

Mr. Sharples thanked the City for the opportunity to participate on the Task Force and all those who have served. He felt this was a great endeavor for the future of our community.

Consultant Crystal Morphis with Creative presented the final report and recommendations. She also thanked those who have participated in the process. She noted the activities have provided an update to the 2004 plan by undertaking a community survey and a SWOT analysis. She noted the community survey had a much higher participation rate than what she is accustomed to seeing and she was very pleased with this level of community involvement.

Ms. Morphis reviewed the top priorities as developed by the ED Task Force. The highest priority was to undertake a branding and marketing exercise for Albemarle. She said the City needs to define how it wants to be perceived by establishing its official image. A second priority is to fund the Stanly County Economic Development Commission. She suggested providing direct funding on a proportionate basis in order to become a partner in economic development. Another goal is to fund a new economic development position with the City. A final top recommendation is to support a new position with the Stanly County Economic Development Commission to provide existing business support.

Councilmember Holcomb said the City has tried numerous times recently to partner with the County EDC but has been turned down. Ms. Morphis indicated that the City should try again, noting this new community endeavor and the recommendations that have been put forth. She also noted that making the offer of becoming a funding partner could help.

Councilmember Townsend asked why a professional marketing firm was needed in the branding and marketing study when there are a lot of very interested and talented local people that can help develop a brand for the City. Ms. Morphis said local people will be used in the development of a brand; however the professional firm will lead the process and put it all together and complete the final product.

Councilmember Hall said the City has struggled getting young people involved in various processes. Ms. Morphis said there are some different approaches the City could take in the future aimed specifically at getting younger people involved.

Councilmember Neel said the community needs to find new, cooperative ways to approach economic development.

Councilmember Townsend suggested meeting with the County to discuss the process and proposal and how to move forward for the benefit of the entire community. He suggested having an outside facilitator assist with this meeting. Councilmember Hall said the Task Force members should also be invited.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Holcomb, seconded by Councilmember Underwood and unanimously carried, the City Council voted to accept the proposal and to discuss it further at their February 9 Budget Meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Townsend and unanimously carried, the City Council authorized the City Manager, Mayor and ED Task Force Chairman to meet with the County Manager and Chairman of the Board of Commissioners as soon as possible to present them with a copy of the findings and to discuss a joint meeting to move forward on the recommendations.

The Mayor and the City Council thanked the members of the Task Force for their work.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.