

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
March 8, 2012

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Thursday, March 8, 2012, at 5:15 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 2012/2013 Planning and Budgeting Work Session in the Conference Room of the City Hall with the following Departments presenting: Finance, Planning and Community Development, Public Utilities, and Police.

Councilmember Michael moved that the City leave the downtown tree lights on until after the Criterium Race in April this year and continue with turning off the tree lights at each time change each year. Councilmember Holcomb seconded the motion. Voting for the motion were Councilmembers Alexander, Holcomb, Michael, Neel, and Underwood. Voting against the motion was Councilmember Townsend.

Finance Director Colleen Conroy discussed Finance Department accomplishments and goals. She noted that sales tax revenue is up a slight amount and also that the Stanly County Tax Assessor is now assessing property for 2013 and very preliminary indications are that values are not really going up or down, just remaining flat. She also thanked City Council for the increase in pay that will take place later this month.

Ms. Conroy stated that the finance department has implemented Remit Plus which reads and scans utility bills and checks and those checks are now sent electronically to the bank. Also, implemented Creative Payment Solutions which takes the information people send from their bank in their bill pay section and picks up the information electronically rather than sending it to the City in the form of a check, then processing it, and taking it to the bank.

Ms. Conroy stated that finance is in the process of implementing GoDocs and Tyler forms which will generate forms without having to pay a

printing company to make the form. Also, finance is implementing Tyler Content Manager which will happen near fiscal year end and on into the first part of the next fiscal year. She stated that we will have files at our fingertips and security will be in place so only people who should see will see information and will eliminate keeping so much paper.

Ms. Conroy stated that the cost of supplies continue to rise and the high cost of gasoline affects everything from manufacturing through delivery, so our costs will be higher in the supply area as well. The travel and training cost will remain and we need to replace some copiers/printers, etc as well this upcoming year.

Ms. Conroy answered any questions that Council had.

Councilmember Hall came in to the meeting at this time.

Mr. Keith wolf, Director of Planning and Community Development discussed his Departmental operations with the Mayor and City Council. He began by providing an overview of the various boards and commissions the Department works with and their functions.

Mr. Wolf stated that his department provides staff support for the following boards and commissions:

1. Planning Board
2. Zoning Board of Adjustment
3. Albemarle Historic Resources Commission and the Minor Works Committee
4. Albemarle Community Appearance Commission – Community Clean Up

He stated that his departmental staff to respond to all new requests promptly, follow up on issues that have not been resolved in the past, and keep at least one person in the office during business hours.

He stated that all three planning staff members are stretched to the limit and under serious stress. He stated that he needs to hire an experienced planner as soon as possible who can take over some ongoing responsibilities within the department.

He gave the stats on 162 nuisance violations issued for 2011, 136 of the violations were for high grass/weeds. The remaining violations included those with construction debris, trash/junk in yard, and upholstered furniture on front porch, tires and waste. The 14 sign violations that occurred, all violations were resolved. Six zoning violations were issued in 2011, all were resolved.

Also, duties within his department include accepting complaints regarding discrimination in housing and conduct investigations. We did not receive any during 2011.

The City contracts with Centralina Council of Governments for minimum housing code enforcement.

Mr. Wolf answered any questions that Council had.

Director of Public Utilities Ellen Huntley began her presentation with a review of departmental achievements.

Ms. Huntley covered briefly the special order by consent projects which includes:

1. Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant which is on track.
2. Highway 52 Water Treatment Plant

Next, Ms. Huntley talked briefly about the Concord-Kannapolis-Albemarle Waterline project.

Ms. Huntley covered briefly the critical projects which includes:

1. Highway 52 Water Treatment Plant – main water supply in the City limits when the City begins selling water to Concord-Kannapolis in 2014.
2. Old Whitney Pump Station - Rehabilitation of the hwy 52 plant, pipe gallery, clear well, elevated tank, flow meters, security cameras, and SCADA system.

Tuckertown Water Treatment Plant –

1. Replace raw water intake structure, pumps, and add stand-by generation
2. Evaluate and repair the existing filters
3. Replace fluoride and chlorine scales

Electric Division

1. Delivery #3 on Central Avenue
2. Replace/Convert five 4kv circuits
3. Asplundh crew for cutting side growth.

Departmental Equipment Requests:

Water and Sewer Systems Division – replace 1984 sewer jet truck with a lease purchase of \$360,000 and replace a 1997 departmental truck using departmental funds of \$30,000.

Electric Division:

Replace 2004 Service Truck using departmental funds of \$60,000, replace 2001 bucket truck with lease/purchase in the amount of \$175,000, and purchase a small track hoe with departmental funds or lease purchase of \$80,000.

Utility Rate Recommendations FY 2012-2013

Water and Sewer – no rate increase for users up to 300 cubic feet (2200 gallons).

5% minimum increase in all categories above 300 cubic feet.

Electric – with the wholesale rate increase, we recommend that the maximum amount possible be passed on to the customer and take effect on July 1, 2012 instead of October 1.

In closing, Ms. Huntley mentioned several potential cost saving projects:

1. The City to consider consulting with forester to look at a management plan for any existing timber and to plant trees in the areas where it is feasible at Tuckertown WTP and Long Creek WWTP.
2. In consultation with solar company, are looking at coordinating a project with Union Electric that would provide all the power at Tuckertown and possibly to additional customers on that end of the county. Areas of solar panels would be located before trees are planted.
3. Increase current rate of \$15.00 per load to \$50.00 per load charge to septic companies to pump and haul to the waste treatment plant to recover the cost for treating such highly concentrated waste.
4. With biosolids study grant from the NC Rural Center the most economical way of disposing of our sludge will be determined and these costs will go down significantly.

Ms. Huntley answered any questions that Council had.

Chief Executive Officer of the Police Department William Halliburton provided an overview of the Department's needs starting with the new logos for the police vehicles.

Chief Halliburton reviewed the 2012 budget plan which included:

1. To unfreeze an investigator position, and a patrol position of under \$60,000 not including benefits.
2. To purchase one patrol car and 3 police vehicles in the amount of \$112,395.00.
3. For the gang/technology awards, a match from the City in the amount of \$32,114.00.

Chief Halliburton covered line item budget priorities such as uniforms with a \$5,000 increase, Travel with a \$3,000 increase, Training with a \$4,000 increase, Overtime Wages with a \$10,000 increase and Special Investigations with a \$3,500 increase and Small Equipment with a cut back of \$12,000. He stated that other line items will be in line with last years figures with smaller variations.

Chief Halliburton reviewed with Council all of the departmental promotions and noted that with these promotions to such critical positions comes the necessity to train these personnel in their new roles.

Also, Chief Halliburton reviewed departmental restructuring including:

1. Detective Division will now have a Narcotics Sergeant and a Gang Investigator, the training captain now has Traffic Officers, SRO's and Reserve Officers assigned to his office.
2. Request for the removal of a SRO Sergeant (rank only) to be replaced with a Narcotics Sergeant
3. Request removal of the Elementary SRO so the Patrol Division does not lose an officer for replacement.
4. Future restructuring will include a new Captain position that will have responsibility for accreditation/grants/crime analysis.

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