

**REGULAR MEETING CITY COUNCIL**

April 19, 2021

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in a regular session on Monday, April 19, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Ronnie Michael presided, and the following members were present, to-wit: Mayor Pro Tempore Martha Sue Hall and Councilmembers Bill Aldridge, Martha E. Hughes, Chris Whitley, Benton Dry, Dexter Townsend, and Shirley D. Lowder.

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Mayor Michael called the meeting to order.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Townsend, unanimously carried, the minutes of the April 5, 2021 regular meeting as submitted were approved.

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Ordinance 21-16 – To Rezone a Vacant Lot on Anderson Road from NBD to R-15

A public hearing was conducted to consider a request for a Map Amendment (ZMA21-04) to rezone Tax Parcel 20008 from NBD/Neighborhood Business District to R-15/Conservation Residential District.

Senior Planner Ellie Sheild presented the ordinance and summary of the zoning change to Council. This request is to subdivide a vacant parcel into lots for 3, single-family homes. On April 1st, 2021 Planning and Zoning Board held a public hearing for ZMA21-04 and unanimously recommended City Council approve ZMA21-04 with the adopted consistency statement.

The Mayor called for the public hearing to be opened and asked if anyone would like to speak on the topic. No one came forward to speak.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Hall, unanimously carried, the public hearing was closed.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Dry, unanimously carried, the following request for Zoning Map Amendment 21-04 and Ordinance 21-16 associated with this zoning map amendment were approved with the following Statement of Zoning Consistency with Adopted Land Use Plan:

The Albemarle City Council finds the action to amend tax record 20008 from NBD/Neighborhood Business District to R-15 /Conservation Residential District to be consistent with the adopted

2028 Land Use Plan. Council finds the urban residential district zoning on this parcel to reasonable and in the public interest.

[Ordinance 21-16 – To Rezone a Vacant Lot on Anderson Road from NBD to R-15]

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**ANNOUNCED DELEGATIONS**

Ms. Linda Francis – To Discuss Her Concerns about a Property on the Corner of 10<sup>th</sup> Street Pee Dee Avenue

Ms. Francis came in front of Council to discuss 919 Pee Dee Avenue as a nuisance property. She first noted that 10 neighbors were here tonight in support of the neighborhood’s request to address their concerns about this property. She wanted to let Council know that they are all concerned about this property and are looking to hear what Council and staff can do about it.

Mr. Mike Snyder came forward to address Council. He stated that he lived next to the property in question and noted that there is a large oak tree on the property next door which is leaning towards his property and in danger of falling on his roof.

Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson presented his department’s recent assessment of the property. He acknowledged that there have been issues with this property for a long time. So far they have noted the following:

- There are potential nuisance violations for trash and junk on the porch, vehicles etc. If abatement is necessary, the City may be able to justify taking down some of the shrubs, bamboo, and tall weeds since the trash is mixed in with them.
- The items on the porch can be hauled off. Planning needs to look into the vehicles on the property and see if they can be removed if they are not covered or screened. The grass will also need to be mowed.
- If there are any zoning related issues that Planning can abate through the nuisance process the City needs to issue Notice(s) of Violation and allow the fees to accrue.

However, Mr. Robinson noted that in his inspection of the property in the last 2 weeks, he saw no evidence of the property not meeting state requirements for minimum housing code. He also checked the records on the property and found that the utilities are still on and taxes are paid to date. He noted that the owner has been in touch with Planning and that his department would like to keep an open dialogue with the owner on the future of the property. Planning also would be open to the neighbors helping out with the property.

Mr. Robinson took questions from Council. Mayor Pro Tem Hall noted that driving by today she saw 1 vehicle parked on the property – is there more? There is another vehicle in a shed in the yard. Are the vehicles untagged? Planning would have to look into that. They have already cited the

vehicles as a notice of violation. What do utilities records show? There is low usage on electricity and water/sewer, showing that there is no one living there full time.

The Mayor asked if the owner is the same as the one who owned the property 10-15 years ago. Yes it is the same owner. Mr. Robinson concluded his remarks by stating that until that property falls below minimum housing code there is not much the City can do with the property.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall requested that Mr. Robinson describe what minimum housing code is for the neighbors present at the meeting. The property would have to have a hole in the roof, or holes through the walls, the foundation crumbling, or cracks in the windows as examples of not meeting minimum housing code.

Councilmember Aldridge asked Mr. Robinson if through the City's Code of Ordinances the case could be pushed along. Mr. Robinson replied that the biggest violation right now is overgrown vegetation, but that is a sticky area to enforce.

Councilmember Townsend asked if the owner still lived locally. Mr. Robinson answered that the owner moved to Charlotte but that the son lives locally.

Councilmember Dry asked if Planning could pursue a court action to gain access to the house. Mr. Robinson replied that Planning would need to have a reason to gain access under an administrative warrant, and that per an outside inspection of the house there is no evidence they can bring to court to gain access inside the house.

Councilmember Whitley asked about the tree that was mentioned by Mr. Snyder at the beginning of the discussion. Mr. Robinson noted that Public Utilities has been working on that issue. Mr. Snyder told Council that he has been in touch with Public Utilities Director Judy Redwine and Public Works Director Ross Holshouser about the tree. They believe the tree is dying and could fall on power lines.

The Mayor asked Ms. Redwine to come up and provide Council with a summary of the tree issue. Ms. Redwine stated that the tree, per her crew's assessment, is a safety hazard and needs to come down, but that Public Utilities needs the owner's permission to take it down. Two certified letters were sent to the owner in the recent past. City Manager Michael Ferris added that he requested for Public Utilities to send notification to the owner about the tree much like the City did on another case last year. A Councilmember asked when the letters were sent. Ms. Redwine replied that the first letter was sent in July or August of last year.

Per a question posed by Councilmember Hughes, Ms. Redwine stated that if that tree came down it could take out a main power line serving a larger area of the City if the tree fell on it.

What recourse does the City have to intervene? Per City Attorney Britt Burch the property can be cited for violations of the Code of Ordinances, if there is an imminent threat to public safety such as a damage to the utility lines if the tree fell.

Councilmember Townsend asked fellow Councilmembers how to proceed and cautioned that the City might be starting a precedent of getting involved with other property issues in the future if they agree to deal with the tree as a City issue rather than one to be addressed by the property owner.

Councilmember Dry called a motion to authorize the City Attorney to move forward with the property owner to gain consent to taking the tree down on 919 Pee Dee Avenue. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall.

The Mayor asked if there was further discussion on the motion. A Councilmember asked if there was a lien on the property, or if the owner would be charged for the City to take the tree down. The City Attorney replied that she was not sure if there was a lien on the property for the other code violations, but that as a practice the City does not charge the owner for tree removal.

A Councilmember asked if there was ample notice to the owner of the status of the tree and the City's recommendation to cut it down. Ms. Redwine answered yes.

Councilmember Lowder noted that there are larger issues at hand with the property than the tree, and the Mayor replied that Council needed to take one step at a time to address the multiple issues on the property.

Ms. Priscilla Alford of 910 Pee Dee Avenue asked to make remarks to Council. She stated that the tree's current condition made her believe that it likely could fall on her roof or the neighbor's next door. She also has seen large tree limbs falling off into the street. She can't afford to repair her roof if the tree does fall on it.

The Mayor called for Council vote on Councilmember Dry's motion. The motion passed with 6 votes for the motion and 1 against. Councilmember Townsend voted against the motion.

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

### LCWWTP Process Rehabilitation Project Engineering Services Agreement

Mr. Adam Kiker with LKC Engineering came in front of Council to provide a brief overview of the project and the terms of the loan the City was just awarded. This project will be a major rehabilitation to the aeration process from floating aerators to fine bubble diffusion at LCWWTP. Also, this will include comprehensive electrical upgrades described in the 2013 report prepared by Southeastern Consulting Engineers. LKC first discussed this with the City Council on June 1, 2020 and then later at the City Council meeting on September 8, 2020 where Council voted to apply for Division of Water Infrastructure funding during the September 2020 cycle. The application was submitted on 9 September 30, 2020, and the City has received a Letter of Intent to Fund. The funding award is from Clean Water State Revolving Fund program in the form of a \$16,453,200 loan with a 20-year term at 0.10% interest. \$500,000 of the loan funds will not have to be repaid, as Albemarle received a \$500,000

grant and the rest of the funds in near-zero % interest loan. The Letter of Intent to Fund provides a requested timeline for the funding process.

The next step is to begin the engineering report process by approving the Engineering Services Agreement. Per questions from Mayor Pro Tem Hall about the financing of the loan as compared to savings the City would accrue, Mr. Kiker stated that the estimated savings to the City over the next series of years would be \$180,000 annually in electricity, and \$40,000 in maintenance costs.

Mr. Kiker noted to Council that as a courtesy, he wanted to inform them that since the cost estimates used to submit the proposal for funding were completed midway through last year, market costs for these services have since increased and so LKC Engineering would have to re-price the project and bring in front of Council again.

The Mayor commented that City Manager Michael Ferris did submit this project per the federal funding solicitation last week. However Council should at least allow the engineering report part of the project to move forward if they were so inclined while awaiting word on the federal grant.

Councilmember Whitley asked if the loan that was just awarded to the City would cover the Special order By Consent (SOC). Mr. Kiker replied that the loan would cover this project, but to address the SOC, both this and the Phase 3 inflow and infiltration project which is in the consent agenda tonight would have to be completed.

Councilmember Townsend asked if this project under discussion is covered in this fiscal year's budget or next year's. Public Utilities Director Judy Redwine replied that her department has the project funded.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Hughes, unanimously carried, Council approved the Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Engineering Services Agreement for the rehabilitation and process conversion project as described above.

#### Departmental Monthly Reports

The Mayor and Council received monthly departmental reports for March 2021 prior to the meeting. The Mayor asked if any Council members had any questions or comments.

Councilmember Aldridge asked if the main gate to Fire Station 1 was fixed. Police Chief David Dulin replied that the gate was fixed.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall requested that all departments add the date(s) that their staff did things so that it was easier to discern what was done when.

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#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The Mayor asked if Council wanted to move any items on the consent agenda.

Consider a Resolution of Support for the Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant

Funding

The City has submitted an application to Richard Hudson's Office through a Congressional earmark program opportunity. We are seeking \$5,000,000 to support our effort for a process conversion at the Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. This is the conversion to a fine bubble diffusion system. The funding opportunity was announced and closed between our prior meeting and this meeting. The City Manager was advised that we are permitted to submit a Resolution of Support from the Mayor and Council even after the application deadline has passed.

[Resolution 21-07 - To Support a Federal Earmark Application for the Rehabilitation and Process Conversion at the Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant]

Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Phase 3 Engineering Services Agreement

Staff is seeking City Council approval for the Engineering Agreement with LKC Engineering for I&I Phase 3 project. City Council approved this Phase 3 project on November 2, 2020 which features the Western Albemarle outfall plus portions of the Eastern Albemarle 24" outfall. The fees present in the Agreement are similar to, or less than, the fees presented in the Engineering Report that will soon be approved by the funding agency. LKC Engineering is requesting City Council consideration and approval of the Agreement for services from design, bid preparation, and construction management and oversight, as we have on similar projects with LKC.

Consider Reappointment of Terry Morgan to 3-Year term on ABC Board

Due to an expiring term, City Council needs to make an appointment to the ABC Board. Mr. Terry Morgan's term is the one under consideration. The ABC Board is pleased with Mr. Morgan's service and would like to see him reappointed.

Consider Road Closures for 2021 Beach Blast 5K

The 17th annual Beach Blast 5K will take place on Saturday, May 8, 2021 from 6:00 am - 10:00 am. The following road closures are requested:

1. Depot St. from Main St to South St. and from Main St. to North St.
2. Second St. from Main St to South St.

Consider Road Closures and Alcohol Sales for Still Runs Car Show

The Still Runs Car Show will take place on Saturday, May 8th from 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm. This is a City sponsored event. The following road closures are being requested:

- \* Main St. from Depot St to Third St.

\* First St. from North St. to South St.

\* Second St. from North St. to South St.

City staff also are requesting approval for alcohol sales during the event.

Consider Rescheduling First Meeting in September to Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> Due to the Conflict with the Labor Day Holiday

As the Labor Day holiday falls on the first meeting date of September 6th and City offices will be closed, Council should consider moving the date of the meeting to Tuesday, September 7th at 6:30 pm.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Lowder, unanimously carried, Council approved the following:

- Resolution 21-07 supporting a federal earmark application for the Rehabilitation and Process Conversion at the Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant;
- Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Phase 3 Engineering Services Agreement;
- Reappointment of Mr. Terry Morgan to another term on the Alcohol Beverage Control Board;
- Road closures for the 2021 Beach Blast 5K;
- Road closures and alcohol sales for the Still Runs Car Show; and
- Rescheduling the first Council meeting in September to Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in Council Chambers.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Consider Appointment to Boards/Commissions

This item was held over from the April 5th meeting. Staff has received applications from Mr. Roddrick Howell and Mr. Tim Johnson for a primary seat on the Historical Resources Commission to replace a member whose term expired in July 2020. Council received both men's applications prior to the meeting.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Hughes, unanimously carried, Council appointed Mr. Tim Johnson to a term on the Historical Resources Commission.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

Consider Request to Rename Rebel Road to Salvation Way

Councilmember Aldridge received a request from the Elders of Cross Community Church to rename Rebel Road to Salvation Way. If City Council would like to proceed with the request, the City Attorney can draft an Ordinance for consideration at an upcoming meeting.

The City Manager noted that there is only 1 other owner of which he is aware on that street who would need to be notified of the street name change proposal.

The Mayor asked Councilmember Aldridge, who received the initial request, to contact the affected parties to notify them of the potential name change.

No further discussion occurred on the topic.

#### Duke Substation Easement Request

This is a request on behalf of Duke Energy for temporary construction easement located at 608 US 52 North (Tax Record 27894) for construction of a floodwall. They are also seeking permission to place a construction trailer on the City property on Salisbury Avenue during the project. Planning and Development Services Department is requesting Council authorize the City Attorney to draft an easement in relation to this project.

Upon questions from multiple Council members expressing concern over the request and the potential impact it could have on City property, Senior Planner Ellie Sheild came in front of Council and presented a more detailed description of Duke Energy's request, the affected area using the map provided to Council prior to the meeting, and addressed Council's concerns.

There were multiple questions about the erection of the floodwall and the possible resultant flooding impact on Montgomery Park and City property there. Ms. Sheild noted that Duke Energy retained engineers who conducted a thorough study of the area and the proposed floodwall and secured a no-rise certificate based on corrected modeling. The company also has been permitted for the project. In the end the water flow will be redirected as a result of the installation of the floodwall but it is not clear whether flooding onto City property will definitely occur.

Ms. Sheild also explained to Council that the easement is the less cumbersome way for the City to respond to the request by Duke Energy.

Per questions by the Mayor Ms. Sheild noted that as part of the project the piping in the current drainage ditch will be removed and that there are 3 access points in the project area where Duke will cross over onto City property.

Councilmember Dry asked if water will flow inside the ditch or outside around the proposed wall. Ms. Sheild would have to request the modeling from the Duke engineers to respond on the technical aspects of the project.

Councilmember Whitley asked if Duke secured all approvals for permitting. Ms. Sheild replied that Duke has received go ahead from the state and now is obtaining County and City approval. The only outstanding item left in the project is obtaining the easement.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall asked how temporary the easement would be. Ms. Sheild replied that Duke is estimating a 6-month timeline on the project, and so working from the start date of the permitting and easement approvals, Duke would need access likely through fall 2021.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Whitley, unanimously carried, Council authorized the City Attorney to draw up a temporary easement between



Duke Energy and the City of Albemarle to access City property at 608 US 52 North for construction of a floodwall and placement of a construction trailer.

### Consider Changes to Issuance and Approval of Alcohol Permits on Public Property

A Councilmember has raised the question of allowing alcohol to be served at City events at recent meetings, but Council did not pursue any changes. It is staff's understanding that City Council would like to consider changes. In review of alcohol at City events on property owned by the City, the City Attorney found that the City's Code of Ordinances allows only for nonprofits to serve alcohol on public property, and that the approval of alcohol permits at public venues resides with City Council only, with no designee identified.

The first matter associated with this item is a request to make a change to ordinance 65.17 CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY. Specifically, staff is requesting the removal of the language that states: "Special event alcohol permits may only be issued to a non-profit corporation duly incorporated in the state and having received its status as a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Service." The rationale is that our special events are growing in attendance and frequency and the expectation of many attendees is that alcohol will be available for sale. To meet this expectation, the City needs more flexibility in being able to use vendors that can provide alcohol sales. Most vendors providing this service are for-profit businesses. This gives us more resources in terms of potential alcohol sales vendors, it supports our local economy by allowing businesses – particularly those in our downtown – to provide alcohol sales at our City Lake Park food truck events, and it responds to a demand from special event attendees.

The second matter associated with this item is a request to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager as the designee to approve special event alcohol permits as detailed in ordinance 65.17 CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY. The resolution also authorizes the Assistant City Manager to approve special event alcohol permits during the absence of the City Manager. The ordinance allows for a designee. Authorizing a designee allows the City greater flexibility to respond to the dynamic nature of event planning. The vendor will be required to complete the special events application and the designee will use the same criteria that City Council uses for authorizing special event alcohol permits.

Council discussed the aspects of the request and posed questions to the City Manager.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall commented that the ordinance only proposes to strike "nonprofits" from the specified section of the Code of Ordinances, and inquired whether this meant that businesses then could sell and possess alcoholic beverages on City property. The Mayor noted that this was the understanding and that the language was "sales, possession and consumption" of alcoholic beverages that was proposed to be permitted on City property for special events.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall and Councilmember Hughes both had a question about the intent of the word "possession" in the ordinance revision. Could individuals come onto City property and bring alcoholic beverages in? The City Attorney replied that the process for permission to sell, possess, and consume alcohol for events on City property will not change. Any outfit wishing to bring alcohol on City

property will still need to complete and obtain approval for an ABC permit and would also need to have appropriate licenses for this. It is to address large scale allowance of alcoholic beverages rather than individual allowances.

Multiple Council members had questions of allowable areas to possess and consume alcohol while at events on City property – would alcohol sales, possession and consumption occur in restricted areas? The City Manager replied that since a special event permit would still need to be submitted to the City for approval, which requires specification of the location/area to be used for the event, allowance of alcohol for that event if approved would be for the specified location/area requested for the event as listed on the permit.

Councilmember Lowder expressed her opposition to alcohol sales, possession, and consumption at events on City property, stating that these events are family oriented and would not be appropriate, and there is the potential for drinking and driving while impaired.

[Ordinance 21-17 – Amending Code of Ordinances Governing Alcohol Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages on Public Property]

[Resolution 21-06 – Designee for Authorizing the Possession, Consumption, Sale, or Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages on Public Property]

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, Council approved Ordinance 21-17 and Resolution 21-06 by a vote of 6 Councilmembers for the motion, and 1 Councilmember against the motion. Councilmember Lowder voted against the motion.

#### Adopt A Street Program

This item is up for discussion due to residents' complaints about these signs being placed in the City street right of way. There has been significant discussion lately on getting the community active and involved in this and other litter clean-up programs.

The Mayor noted that the issue with a neighborhood's request to remove a recently placed adopt-a-street sign is that the signage is being placed without communicating to the neighborhood first. Mayor Pro Tem Hall added that due to the recent initiative for trash pick up, she followed the process to erect an adopt-a-street sign in the neighborhood in question and did not know that the sign would create this response. She has been picking up trash in that area for the past series of weeks.

The Mayor noted that it might be worthwhile to clarify the adopt-a-street signage process and placement, which could include how signs would be put up. Or, the person who is requesting to adopt a street could be asked to poll neighbors about the sign, as an example of a solution.

A few Councilmembers expressed understanding of the neighborhood in question's perception of the signage issue, stating they probably would not want a sign going in front of their own yard.

Councilmember Hughes asked if the City really needed the adopt-a-street signs as part of the community trash clean up initiative. She noted that it doesn't seem fair to leave the sign placement up to City staff to determine where to place it.

The City Manager replied that he sees both sides of the issue, but whatever action Council wants to take, staff will implement.

A question was asked of whether the streets in question are City streets or DOT-maintained streets, and whether signs should be placed on major thoroughfares versus minor ones. Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson replied that the City has a list of streets and their classification (i.e., major thoroughfare, minor thoroughfare, etc.). If Council wanted signs placed on major thoroughfares, it would be difficult to get DOT to do this work.

Public Works Director Ross Holshouser came into the discussion via phone. He confirmed that like Planning they have a list of streets by classifications. The City Manager noted that even if the City decided to only put up signs on larger roads like Moss Springs or Pee Dee Avenue, they still would be running into the same problem as these are residential in nature.

Councilmember Townsend asked Mr. Holshouser how many signs have been placed recently for the adopt-a-street program. Mr. Holshouser replied that there have been about 6 signs placed. However Mr. Holshouser stated that he would not want the signage issue to deter residents from picking up trash.

Councilmember Aldridge asked if other municipalities were handling trash pick up efforts this way. Mr. Holshouser replied that many municipalities are implementing their trash pick up programs with adopt-a-street signage as part of their programs.

Councilmember Townsend noted that regardless of how the program is structured, you will never make everyone happy, and so continuing the program as is could be an option.

The City Manager stated that staff will be more cognizant in the future of where adopt-a-street signs are being placed.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Whitley, unanimously carried, Council approved maintaining the trash pick up and adopt-a-street program as is, and for the City to consider sign placement on a case-by-case basis in the future.

#### Information – American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds

Mayor Pro Tem Hall requested this item be placed on the agenda. The Mayor and Council received a high level overview of the American Rescue Plan prior to the meeting. Treasury guidance is needed before any decisions can be made; therefore, it is too early to state how the City will spend the funds received.

As was the case with COVID relief funding, the City Manager will review City needs against program eligibility and also seek input from Departments concerning the use of the fund. A recommendation from the City Manager regarding the use of funds will be made to the Mayor and Council when eligible uses are clearly defined by the Treasury.

#### Information – Employee Appreciation Cookout

The Employee Appreciation Cookout will be held on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm at City Lake Park. The format will be changed from a cookout to a food truck event due to COVID.

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#### **COMMENTS**

The Mayor began by providing an update about the Charters of Freedom project. The forms have been set and the precasts have been placed on top, so the next step is laying the brickwork.

#### Mayor Pro Tem Hall:

- Yesterday was Linemen Appreciation Day and so she wanted to let all the City of Albemarle linemen know that she appreciates them.
- She noted that there have been a series of break-ins reported in the last 48 hours – are they new? Police Chief David Dulin replied that they were new.
- She noted that the Farmer’s Market is now open but is not familiar with the directors and wanted to request information about them via an email.
- She gave an “attaboy” to Parks and Recreation, ElectriCities, and Councilmember Dry for hosting the April Food Truck Friday event. She thought 600-700 people came out that night.
- She reminded the public that the City’s upcoming Food Truck Friday is May 7<sup>th</sup> with Windstream sponsoring, and the next day the City is partnering with Tiffany’s for the Cruise In.
- She announced that tomorrow, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 10 am Habitat for Humanity ReStore will be holding their reopening event and reminded folks to come on out to it.
- She noted in one of the last SNAP editions, two area figures, Jeff Michael and Gene McLaurin have been appointed to positions on the state level. She would like City staff to draft congratulatory letters for Council to send them.

#### Councilmember Whitley:

- He noted that there are bills being considered in the General Assembly about zoning and family housing and wondered what the City’s position is on it. The Mayor replied that it is not certain which way the legislation is going, and wanted to know if Council had an opinion on it. Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson stated that there have been several responses out around the state to this legislation, and that he can go to the APA to find information and resources to bring to Council should they wish to weigh in. Some

Councilmembers discussed the common understanding of the legislation as one where all control would be taken away from municipal governments on zoning of family residences, and would add duplexes and triplexes as family dwellings local governments would have to consider.

- He asked what the timeline is for implementing the new electric charging stations installation. The City Manager replied that he would find out.
- He announced that the next Keep Stanly Beautiful clean up is scheduled for this coming Saturday in Rock Creek Park starting at 8:30 am and going for a few hours.

#### Councilmember Townsend:

- Re: the new R-6 zoning category, Grandview development, and approval of Morgan Ridge subdivision – he was wondering if this level of development was an all-time high for building permits for the City. Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson replied that since he’s been here definitely, and looking back 5-10 years ago, this is more than then.
- He has noticed in the past 2 weeks that there are “Jesus Saves” signs being placed towards the top of the City’s power line poles. He noted that it is very dangerous for someone to climb up there and wanted to know if anyone else noticed them too. City Manager Michael J. Ferris noted that Public Utilities will remove them using the bucket truck but that they will do it all at once in a sweep. Currently staff is estimating there have been 8-9 signs placed.

#### Mayor Michael:

- He asked the City Manager about the new donation boxes popping up. Mr. Ferris replied that per the Code of Ordinances these boxes are not allowed unless they are on a site related to the business or nonprofit operating there. They have been removing them when they have determined that each box has been placed on a site in violation of the City’s Code of Ordinances.

#### Councilmember Aldridge:

- Re: the donation box issue – he asked if fines are being assessed as well as box removal. Planning and Development Services Director Kevin Robinson replied that fines can be levied and that the fine is \$100.
- Re: lights at Morehead Park – he noticed the other night that it looked dark over there and requested that they be checked.
- He had a constituent reach out to him about trash around City Lake Park – can the City install cameras out there? The Mayor replied that placing cameras would be expensive but could be done.

#### Councilmember Hughes:

- She sent a kudos out to Parks and Recreation for a well-organized Food Truck Friday event earlier in the month.
- She noted that she and the Mayor picked up trash recently as part of the City-wide trash pick up initiative.

- She talked about the recycling event the County held this past Saturday – it was a very well-organized event with cars parked in long lines. The Mayor added that some City staff were there too helping out.

Councilmember Lowder:

- Re: City trash pick up events – she asked if volunteers were being given grabbers for trash pick up. Councilmember Whitley replied that Keep Stanly Beautiful had grabbers, vests, and some gloves for volunteers but folks can buy one to use for themselves as they are cheap.

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**CLOSED SESSION**

Upon a motion by Councilmember Lowder, seconded by Councilmember Whitley, unanimously carried, Council approved moving into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) Economic Development.

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**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

Upon motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Lowder, unanimously carried, City Council reconvened to open session.

The Mayor stated that a closed session was held pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) Economic Development. There was nothing to report.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Whitley, unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned to the next regular City Council meeting on Monday, May 3, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers.