

REGULAR MEETING CITY COUNCIL

March 1, 2021

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in a regular session on Monday, March 1, 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, Shirley D. Lowder, Chris Whitley, and Benton Dry. Absent: Councilmember Dexter Townsend.

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Mayor Michael called the meeting to order.

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The Mayor gave the invocation.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Lowder, unanimously carried, the minutes from the February 9<sup>th</sup> special meeting, the February 15, 2021 regular and closed meetings, and the February 16<sup>th</sup> special meeting as submitted were approved.

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**ANNOUNCED DELEGATION**

Mr. Greg Speight, North Stanly High School – To Request Pole Installation

The Mayor announced that Mr. Speight would not be in attendance tonight.

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**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Update on 2020 Census

The City's Census liaison, Jay Voyles, provided an update on the status of the 2020 Census. He began by reporting the Albemarle response rates. The self response rate for Albemarle was 62.8% of households completing the Census survey before canvassers came out. The nonresponsive follow up rate came up to 99.9% of households responding with the help of some kind of reminder or assistance. Mr. Voyles then went through each Census tract that makes up Albemarle and reported whether each tract was a high response rate area or a low one.

In terms of the timeline of the release of Census data, Mr. Voyles reported that the Census Bureau plans to deliver Census counts to Congress by April 30<sup>th</sup>, and send the data pertinent to redistricting to the states by September 30<sup>th</sup>. These delays are due largely to the effects of the COVID19 pandemic. The NC Board of Elections is recommending to the General Assembly that all 2021 elections be postponed until 2022.

For the redistricting process, the census tracts which incorporate the boundaries of Albemarle will be reviewed to see if the population count in the tract is an increase or decrease from the last census number. If the change is more than 5% the City will have to redistrict, but if it is within the margin of the 5% the City may not have to redistrict.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall thanked Mr. Voyles and the Stanly County census workers with their re-think of census information distribution and canvassing plans due to the onset of COVID last spring.

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### **MUNICIPAL CALENDAR**

Mayor Michael and Councilmembers received the municipal calendar prior to the meeting. The Mayor asked if Council had any questions or comments about the calendar.

Councilmember Aldridge pointed out that there are two Council meeting dates in June, and suggested that Council consider the summer schedule of one meeting for the months of June, July, and August. The Mayor replied that Council would need to take action on changing the schedule and asked fellow Councilmembers if they would like staff to come back at the March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with a revised meeting schedule for the months of June, July, and August for Council review and approval.

Councilmember Lowder made a motion to change the summer meeting schedule, and the Mayor recommended that specific revised meeting dates be provided at the March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting for Council vote. Council agreed with the Mayor's recommendation.

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### **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

#### Set a Public Hearing to Consider a Performance Incentive Agreement for Project Rider

Council is being asked to establish a public hearing for March 15, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. to consider a performance incentive agreement for Project Rider.

#### Resolution 21-02 to Support Increased Funding for Road Needs

Based on recent Council discussion for advocating for Albemarle's need for more funding for road work at the state level, and per their request to place a resolution on this agenda to consider support for receipt of alternate or additional Powell Bill funding for road needs, this resolution was drafted for Council consideration and approval.

[Resolution 21-02 – Support for Alternate/Powell Bill Funding Request]

Ordinance 21-07 – To Eliminate Parking Restrictions on the South Side of Pee Dee Avenue between Fifth Street and East Main Street

As the City continues its work to increase parking opportunities, staff has identified the south side of Pee Dee Avenue between North 5th Street and the 5-Points intersection as an area for on-street parking. The street is wide enough to allow parking on one side; the south side is the preferred side as it has fewer curb cuts and therefore more spaces to be gained. Up to fourteen (14) additional on-street parking spaces can be created in this location. This is a very convenient and visible location close to Pfeiffer University.

Council received a map of the proposed on-street parking scheme prior to the meeting. If approved, the City will include this information on a public parking map we are developing to provide to Pfeiffer to share with faculty and students.

[Ordinance 21-07 - To Eliminate Parking Restrictions on the South Side of Pee Dee Avenue between Fifth Street and East Main Street]

Ordinance 21-08 – Landfill Budget Amendments and Project Closeouts

This ordinance is for a budget amendment to close 2 projects for Landfill. The ordinance:

- 1 - Transfers residual funds from Gravity Line to use part of it to increase the budget for Equipment Repair & Maintenance and the remainder we will send to the Leachate Project fund to close it.
- 2 – Closes out the Leachate Project. The Leachate Project is completed. Due to some of the issues related to the project and the contractor, not all of the expenses were eligible for grant reimbursement, so our eligible draw down was less than the original budget. Even with this, the project came in considerably under budget.

[Ordinance 21-08 - Landfill Budget Amendments and Project Closeouts]

Ordinance 21-09 – Revision to Approved Residential Ordinances

Staff found a couple minor items and one section that were unintentionally omitted during the drafting process of the residential ordinance amendments that were adopted in January. Council received a document itemizing revisions prior to the meeting.

[Ordinance 21-09 - Revision to Approved Residential Ordinances]

Consider Road Closure Request for a Special Event Permit

The Stanly County YMCA will be hosting their annual Stanly Kids Triathlon on Saturday, April 17, 2021 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm. The Stanly County YMCA is requesting for First Street to be closed from Troy Alexander Drive to CB Crook Drive. YMCA staff is simultaneously working through the NCDOT process for this closure.

Consider Road Closure for Tiffany's at the Boardroom Cruise-Ins

Tiffany's at the Boardroom will continue their cruise-ins on the 2nd Saturday of each month, from March through December 2021. City Council had approved the closure for several of these events and they have reached the end of the term for which the approval was provided, which is why this issue is before Council.

The request is to close W. Main St from 1st St. to 2nd St. for this event through December 2021.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Whitley, unanimously carried, Council approved the following:

- Setting a public hearing to consider a performance incentive agreement for Project Rider on March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm;
- Adopting Resolution 21-02 supporting City efforts to seek alternative funding sources or the doubling of the Powell Bill Funds provided to municipalities to assist with the funding of road construction and maintenance;
- Ordinance 21-07 to eliminate parking restrictions on the South Side of Pee Dee Avenue between Fifth Street and East Main Street;
- Ordinance 21-08 for a budget amendment to close 2 projects for Landfill;
- Ordinance 21-09 correcting a couple minor items and one section that were unintentionally omitted during the drafting process of the residential ordinance amendments that were adopted in January;
- Road closures for the Stanly County YMCA Stanly Kids Triathlon on April 21<sup>st</sup>; and
- Road closures for Tiffany's at the Boardroom cruise-ins on the 2nd Saturday of each month, from March through December 2021.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

### Pavement Maintenance FY 20-21

The annual street list for Pavement Maintenance has been processed, reviewed, and vetted with City Pavement Engineers and Public Works Department based on budget dollars for FY 20-21. The streets recommended are based on a computer generated list and provide for the most efficient use funds based on our needs. We do request a blended output of preservation and minor rehabilitation.

Council was provided lists of streets that will be improved by either "Preservation", aka Micro-surfacing, or "Minor Rehabilitation", aka 2" resurfacing prior to the meeting. Moving forward staff plans to receive quotes for this work and proceed with the work. The preservation list of streets are streets that are still in fairly good condition, but require a maintenance coat of micro-surfacing to keep them in good standing.

The minor rehab list of streets are streets that have shown cracks, pot holes and settlement in locations, but the subgrade is still in good enough shape to put 2" of new asphalt over a solid sub-grade. These are streets we plan to resurface ourselves. We have built up the experience in the Streets Division where we have the ability to be able to perform this work ourselves.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Hughes, unanimously carried, Council approved the FY 20-21 street preservation and minor rehab lists as submitted for pavement maintenance.

### Charters of Freedom

This is a public reminder that pavers are now available for purchase. Information regarding the pavers is also available on the City's Facebook page and website.

The Mayor announced that currently the project is on hold while the Charters of Freedom contractor engages the West Stanly High School bricklaying class to assist. He asked if Mayor Pro Tem Hall had any further updates. She announced that there would be an in person meeting of the committee on the morning of March 17<sup>th</sup> here in City Hall. She encourages the public to purchase memorial bricks, and invited the public to provide items for the time capsule.

Councilmember Dry asked whether the City would need to provide a donors plaque. Mayor Pro Tem Hall replied that the Charters of Freedom staff will do this. She added that the West Stanly High School bricklaying class assisting with the Charters of Freedom installation will also be listed on the plaque.

Councilmember Dry asked if there is a list of companies who are donating in-kind services or materials for the Charters of Freedom. The Mayor replied that there is a list and that can be made available to him.

The Mayor concluded the discussion by reporting that the pads have been poured, but due to recent weather issues and engaging the West Stanly High School class, there has been a hiatus on work, but the next steps would be completing the brickwork and pouring more footers.

### Update on Food Truck Fridays and Other Special Events

Mayor Pro Tem Hall requested this item to be discussed. Parks and Recreation Director Lisa Kiser came in front of Council to provide an update on upcoming City events as planned by the Special Events Committee.

Food Truck Fridays will begin this month and run through October on the first Friday of the month, with the first event scheduled for this Friday March 5<sup>th</sup>. There will be 6 food trucks for this Friday's event, and the movie "Good Dinosaur" will be shown.

Due to the Good Friday holiday on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the April Food Truck Friday has been moved to Friday April 9<sup>th</sup>. For that event, the City has booked Too Much Sylvia to play at the event.

For other upcoming downtown events, the City is partnering with Tiffany's at the Boardroom for their cruise-in nights. The City has booked Right Turn Clyde for the May 8<sup>th</sup> cruise-in, and also is soliciting arts and crafts and other activity vendors to participate.

The Mayor asked that staff market these events on social media to get the word out to boost attendance, as long as COVID restrictions continue to be loosened.

Ms. Kiser announced that she will bring forward potential dates for the 2021 Christmas Parade and other Christmas events at the March 15<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall requested that those watching or listening to the meeting consider donating to reduce the cost of booking the bands. Ms. Kiser added that all donations would be welcome, and she would be happy to take sponsorships for any of the City events. Sponsors would be advertised in flyers and on social media posts for City events.

Council thanked Ms. Kiser and all staff and the Special Events Committee for creating and executing City events – they are much appreciated especially after the restrictions caused by the COVID19 pandemic.

### Information – King Alleyway

There has not been any substantial progress since the Main Street retreat presentation on February 1st. The decorative poles have been ordered. Our electrical engineers, Southeastern Consulting Engineers, and the pole manufacturer's representative are working through the engineered drawings for each pole and as of February 21<sup>st</sup>, Southeastern approved drawings for three of the eight poles that will be placed in the alleyway. These poles will hold the decorative lights. Staff expects the poles to arrive mid to late spring. The poles are a significant driver for the timeline. If that timeline changes, staff will update Council.

The landscape architect, McAdams, provided a sketch design that was used to set the direction of the alleyway design. Staff has provided them with design elements for the alleyway and they are working towards developing the full design. The City expects to receive an iteration of the design sometime during the week of March 1<sup>st</sup>. At that time, the Downtown Vitality Project Team will provide feedback so that McAdams can continue to refine the design. We will also receive an updated project schedule for the design during the week of March 1<sup>st</sup>.

The alleyway project stretches from W. Main to King Ave.

Public Works Director Ross Holshouser took questions from Council. Will staff share the design with Council? Mr. Holshouser replied that when the design is ready it will be brought to Council.

Is it possible to lay the underground wires and pour the pads now for the poles? City Manager Michael J. Ferris noted that is something for the project team to address, but he is aware they are moving forward with all the can safely undertake without causing conflict with future work. Mr. Holshouser added that not much work is being done at this point because they are waiting for the designs to come back from the architectural firm.

Councilmember Aldridge noted that the sidewalk/pavement area behind the pawn shop is frequently used and could pose a hazard for pedestrian/vehicle collisions. He wondered if a sign or some marker could be put up there to caution pedestrians.

Councilmember Lowder asked what the price is for City utility poles. For a range of 30' to 50' pole, the price range is around \$141 per pole to \$517 per pole.

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**COMMENTS**

City Manager Michael J. Ferris:

- He is happy to announce that the City was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the state for 2 electric vehicle charging stations, one at City Hall and one in the Police Headquarters parking lot. Each station will have 2 ports.

Councilmember Aldridge:

- Per the SNAP article about the Albemarle Hotel renovation project, he believes it's a positive development for the City. Also he recently drove by the old Lowder Hardware Store renovation site and is seeing a lot of improvements on that property. These along with other properties are showing a building revitalization in downtown Albemarle.

Councilmember Whitley:

- Adding onto Councilmember Aldridge's comments, he stated that he has seen new stairs and decks being put in and dumpsters full off construction garbage at properties around the downtown, so not only are the big renovation projects taking off, there are a lot of home

improvement projects being done under the radar on side streets. That and the hotel activity represent downtown growth.

Councilmember Dry:

- We are sorry to hear that Councilmember Townsend was not able to be here with us tonight. We're thinking of you.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall:

- Re: recent discussion about the City/Keep Stanly Beautiful partnership to pick up litter, she wanted to let everyone know that Public Works Director Ross Holshouser and his family take this initiative to heart. She ran into Mr. Holshouser's daughter on Snuggs Park Road cleaning up litter along the roadside late last week. She thanked Mr. Holshouser for raising good kids.
- Re: the parking ordinance on the consent agenda tonight and Pfeiffer downtown campus – she understands Assistant City Manager Nyki will provide Pfeiffer with a map showing parking locations in downtown. She also commented that with the potential of the 14 parking spaces on the lot on Pee Dee Avenue that the City owns that will help the parking problem there. More incoming classes are coming to the downtown campus and every space can help.

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**CLOSED SESSION**

Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Dry, unanimously carried, Council approved moving into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential, N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) consultation with the City Attorney, and N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel.

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**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Whitley and unanimously carried, Council returned to open session. The Mayor stated that a closed session was held pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential, N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) consultation with the City Attorney, and N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Dry and unanimously carried, Council appointed Councilmember Hughes as acting clerk for the personnel portion of closed session.



The Mayor called a motion to approve a 2% raise for the City Attorney as a result of her annual performance review. Upon a motion by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember Lowder and unanimously carried, Council passed the motion.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned to Monday, March 15, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.