

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
March 11, 2010

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Thursday, March 11, 2010, at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Conference Room. Mayor Elbert L. "Whit" Whitley presided and the following Councilmembers were present, to wit: Troy E. Alexander, Martha Sue Hall, Judy Holcomb, Jeanette M. Napier, Jack F. Neel, Dexter Townsend and T. Ed Underwood. Absent, none.

The City Council held a Budget Work Session with the following Departments: Parks and Recreation, Engineering Services, Public Works, Human Resources and Fire.

Parks and Recreation Director Toby Thorpe reviewed cost saving measures already implemented in the current fiscal year. He noted that with these measures and others the Department will be able to meet the 5% budget reduction request.

Mr. Thorpe reviewed several ideas for the Department for the upcoming fiscal year which include combining City-wide and EE Waddell Community Center activities, improving aesthetics, low cost fitness programs, reduce park fertilization, reducing the frequency of bush-hogging, advertisement opportunities on ballfield fences, and new fees and charges for use of the Waddell Center.

More severe cost-cutting measures discussed include closing one or both pools for the summer and closing East Cannon Park and West Albemarle School Park.

Mayor Whitley left the meeting at this time. Mayor Pro-Tem Alexander assumed the gavel.

Director of Engineering Services Jon Mendenhall discussed Engineering Services activities for the upcoming fiscal year. He noted that the

Department has provided a great deal of assistance to other Departments in the form of project management. Ongoing projects include the construction of the Don Montgomery Park Stormwater facility, Greenway Phase II oversight, City Hall project clerk, and Morrow Chase project assistance. He noted that he concurs with the recommendation of the Planning and Community Development Department that a unified development ordinance is needed and would be great assistance to the development community.

He concluded his presentation by noting that the Department will continue to look for ways to cut costs and conserve resources

Public Works Director Mike Lambert presented the Department's initiatives for 2010/2011. He began with distributing an organizational chart of the Department and noted all the different activities Public Works is involved in. He also reminded Council that Public Works is involved in three separate City funds: General Fund, Powel Bill Fund and Solid Waste Fund.

The primary budgetary focus of the Department will be cost control. He noted he currently has three frozen positions and will not be requesting any vehicle replacements in the upcoming year. They have also implemented central purchasing for Departmental items.

Councilmember Hall said she would like the City as a whole to look into centralized purchasing for common items.

Mr. Lambert noted the Department will continue with street resurfacing and sidewalk replacement, downtown maintenance activities, fleet maintenance for the more than 400 vehicles and pieces of equipment, fuel and central warehousing and the recycling activities at the City Landfill. He noted that at some point he would like for Public Works to develop a State certified composting operation at the Landfill. He noted that the CPI for the solid waste collection contract funded from the Public Works budget is projected to increase 2.6%, or \$30,000 in the upcoming year.

Director of Human Resources Robert Whitley indicated that it is anticipated that health insurance premium costs will increase approximately 10% in the upcoming fiscal year. More specific information on this will be known later.

Councilmember Hall left the meeting at this time.

The Department does intend to replace one computer. In terms of costs savings in the current and upcoming fiscal year, he has indicated the City is no longer participating in the wellness program through Stanly Regional Medical Center.

Fire Chief Shawn Oke reviewed with the Mayor and Council the Fire Department budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. He said the Department will be seeking grants for the acquisition of a 95-foot aerial truck and the replacement of radios and pagers. The aerial truck would allow the Department to reach the third floor of buildings. An additional proposed grant is for a building exhaust removal system.

Future identified capital needs include the replacement of the Fire Chief's vehicle, replacement of Fire Station #2 and replacement of Engine #2.

Chief Oke identified potential sources of additional revenues. He suggested charging fees for Fire Prevention activities as Albemarle is one of the few municipalities our size that does not charge such fees. Also, the City could be more aggressive with fines, but these are required to go to the School system.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.