

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL
March 17, 2010

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Wednesday, March 17, at 6:30 p.m. at the Rosebriar Restaurant. Mayor Elbert L. "Whit" Whitley presided and the following Councilmembers were present to wit: Troy E. Alexander, Martha Sue Hall, Judy Holcomb, Jeanette Napier, Jack F. Neel, and T. Ed Underwood. Absent, Dexter G. Townsend.

The City Council held a dinner meeting with the members of the Planning and Zoning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mayor Whitley welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained the recent actions of the City Council regarding alternates on the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment. The Mayor stated that the City Council had moved Chuck Horne from first alternate to fill the unexpired term on the Planning Board vacated by Elworth Plyler. He stated that second alternate Perry Moser would remain as a Planning Board alternate until his term expired or until he was appointed to a position on the Planning Board. After this, there will no longer be alternates appointed to the Planning Board.

He stated that City Council had instituted term limits, and that after current terms expire, members would be eligible to be reappointed for one additional term. After that, they will have to be off of a board for one year to be eligible for reappointment to that board. He stated that alternates would remain on the Board of Adjustment due to the requirement for a six votes to approve a variance.

Keith Wolf made a presentation on the issue of electronic gaming operations. He noted that this was a recent issue that had occurred across the state, and that this included internet cafes and video gaming machines, all of which are used for gambling. He summarized the key points of an ordinance recently adopted by the City of Kannapolis to address this issue, and provided a summary of some other towns and the taxes they collect on these businesses. Councilmember Hall noted that due to a Superior Court decision in the Triad area, district attorneys are not able to prosecute cases involving these machines at the present time. Chief Ronnie Michael noted that the NC Sheriff's Association is advocating new legislation to address this problem, but he does not know if it will be considered in the short session. Several members of City Council voiced support for implementing a fee for each machine as has been implemented in other communities. Mayor Whitley asked that the Planning Board look at this issue and make a recommendation to City Council regarding any ordinance that should be adopted.

Bob Sasser noted that a request will be coming to the Planning Board from the Pawn Shop on East Main Street that would like to have more than two electronic video games. He stated that the owner may request a text change to allow more than the maximum of two that are currently permitted.

Mayor Whitley discussed the severe budget constraints that Albemarle and other local governments are facing, and noted that the City will be making numerous budget cuts in the upcoming fiscal year. He noted that City employees will not be receiving any salary increases, and that all departments have been asked to reduce their budgets in the upcoming year. He noted that as a result it may be necessary to curtail the number or meal arrangements that have been customary for the joint meetings of the City Council, Planning Board, and Board of Adjustment.

Mayor Whitley advised the City Council that he had spoken with ADDC Executive Director Vicki Coggins earlier in the day regarding the City Council decision on Monday evening to pursue a community development block grant to defray part of the expenses of the former All Star Mills building demolition. He stated that representatives of the Department of Commerce had told Vicki that this would delay the demolition for possibly up to four to six months. Due to the threatened legal action by the railroad and the unsafe condition of the building, the Mayor recommended that the City not pursue the grant, but instead proceed with the immediate demolition of the building as planned. It was the consensus of City Council to proceed as recommended by Mayor Whitley.

Upon motion of Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Holcomb and unanimously carried, City Manager Raymond Allen was appointed Acting City Clerk for this meeting.

Planning and Community Development Director Bob Sasser presented an agreement to dedicate right of way and install a turnaround on Pecan Avenue by Aaron Deese and others. The City would accept the improvements after they are made by the private property owner. Upon a motion of Councilmember Holcomb, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the Mayor was authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of the City.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.