City of Albion

City Council Meeting

July 6, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Joseph Domingo opened the regular session at 7:00 p.m.

II. MOMENT OF SILENCE TO BE OBSERVED

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. ROLL CALL

Maurice Barnes (1), Lenn Reid (2), Garrett Brown (3), Rebecca Decker (4), Cheryl Krause (5), Andrew French (6) and Mayor Joseph Domingo.

STAFF PRESENT:

Sheryl Mitchell, City Manager; Jill Domingo, City Clerk; Cullen Harkness, City Attorney; Tom Mead, Finance Director; John Tracy, Building and Code Enforcement and Kurt Etter, Public Safety Sergeant.

V. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER’S COMMENTS

Comments were received from Council Members Barnes and Reid and Mayor Domingo.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

A. Albion District Library Update-Cindy Stanczak

Interim Director Cindy Stanczak gave an update on the Albion District Library highlighting the following items:

* June is summer reading month
* The Library offers several programs for children and teens
* The library has a budget deficit of approximately $18,000 due to the decline in property taxes and may have a proposed budget amendment
* Abraham and Gaffney will be presenting their annual audit to the library board on Thursday, July 9, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
* Library opened an investigation into Former Director Karen Kuhn’s embezzlement from the library and she has paid back all dollars owed and the court case has been closed.
* Encourages all residents to come to the library and get a library card
* Library millage will be up for renewal next year. The Board has not made a determination of whether they will be asking for an increase in the millage.
* The Library is currently offering a summer reading challenge for adults
* They have a little free library located at Vision of Life.

Comments were received from Council Members Krause and Barnes.

B. Forks Senior Center-Tom Hunsdorfer

Interim Director Tom Hunsdorfer gave an update on the Forks Senior Center with the following highlights:

* The Forks Senior Center has 386 members with 40 new members this year
* They offer several programs for seniors ages 60 – 100 including eight (8) exercise programs, a diabetes support group, a Medicare support group just to name a few
* They are currently housed in the Old County Building on Albion Street and have a ten (10) year lease
* The Forks Center is open 50 hours a week along with some evening and Saturday hours
* The mission statement of the Forks Senior Center exists to improve and maintain the physical, mental and social well-being of the area’s senior citizens
* The Forks Senior appreciates the support of the City of Albion through the Albion Recreation millage along with Calhoun County and The Department of Aging

Interim Director Hunsdorfer introduced the President of the Forks Senior Center-Carol Maynard.

Mrs. Maynard stated September 10, 2015 will be the 10th Anniversary of the Forks Senior Center. She introduced the new full time executive director-Gina Costa.

Comments were received from Mayor Domingo.

VII. CITIZENS COMMENTS

No comments were received.

VIII. CONSENT CALENDAR (VV)

 (Items on Consent Calendar are voted on as one unit)

 A. Approval Regular Session Minutes-June 15, 2015

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve Regular Session Minutes-June 15, 2015 as presented. (7-0, vv)

 B. Approval Special Council Session Minutes-June 29, 2015

 French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve Special Council Session Minutes-June 29, 2015 as presented. (7-0, vv)

IX. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION

 A. Request Approval Ordinance # 2015-03, An Ordinance to Amend Section (s)

 18-301 and 30-436 (RCV)

Comments were received from City Manager Mitchell who gave a brief overview of Ordinance #2015-03 pertaining to the finished sides of a fence facing the street.

French moved, Barnes supported, CARRIED, to Approve 1st Reading of Ordinance # 2015-03, An Ordinance to Amend Section (s) 18-301 and 30-436 as presented. (7-0, rcv)

B. Update Holland Park-Council Member Reid

Council Member Reid gave a brief update on Holland Park highlighting the following items:

* On June 15, 2015 the groundbreaking at Holland Park took place
* On June 17, 2015, the official build began with assistance from volunteers from Knox Presbyterian Church, volunteers from the community and city staff.
* On July 2, 2015 the park was officially opened with the kids from Albion Community School with the ribbon cutting ceremony being held on July 3, 2015.
* They are still working on the children’s garden and other than that the children’s section of the park is complete. They will begin work on the teen and senior center next
* The park has three little libraries and will be adding another two
* They will also be adding reading tables and tables for games
* The pavilion and parking lot still need to be completed and will be slated as future projects

Council Member Reid stated she was very appreciative of all of those who helped make this project a success. She also noted that $125,000 is needed to complete the project. Donations are still needed and can be made to the City of Albion/Holland Park.

C. Discussion- 606,608,610 Austin Avenue-Council Member Barnes

Council Member Barnes stated he would like to see something done with the above properties as the perception by potential businesses is not positive. He would like to have the owners move forward and renovate the property but would at the least ask that they are kept up to code. He stated he would like to look for grant funds that may help owners renovate these properties. He also stated he would like for properties in Precinct One (1) to be included in the target market analysis.

Council Member Krause stated that the properties are in extreme disrepair and although she is not a fan of demolishing properties she is concerned for public safety.

City Attorney Harkness echoed the issue of public safety and also the possibility of being a liability to the City.

Mayor Domingo asked if the recommendation from Cornerstone Inspections is to demolish the buildings.

City Manager Mitchell stated that although there would be challenges, she would be willing to work with the property owners who have a plan in place and show by demonstration that steps are being taken to revitalize the properties.

Building, Planning and Code Enforcement Director Tracy stated the buildings on Austin Avenue have been in disrepair for years and are now infested with raccoons. A letter has been sent out to each of the owners of the property to which they have until July 9, 2015 to contact the City to discuss the violations and options. He said he will be meeting with the City Manager after this date to discuss how council would like to proceed. He also stated that all three properties are up to date on property taxes.

Council Member Decker asked which property owner had contacted the City in reference to the letter that was sent and was informed that the property owner of 610 Austin Avenue has contacted the City and would like to find a way to save the property.

D. Boards and Commissions Appointments (RCV)

* James Arnett, Reappointment, Albion Housing Commission, Term to Expire 7-1-2020

Comments were received from the following Council Members:

 Council Member Barnes stated that he has applied for this position on the

Albion Housing Commission a few times and had previously been the Council Liaison for the Albion Housing Commission. He would like to see the Commission re-establish and create policies. He is asking the Council not to approve the reappointment of James Arnett as he would like to be appointed or have a new member appointed and placed on the Albion Housing Commission.

Council Member Krause asked if the Council Liaison position was ex-officio.

Mayor Domingo asked what our actual involvement is with the Albion Housing Commission.

Brown moved, Krause supported, **FAILED**, to Approve James Arnett, Reappointment, Albion Housing Commission, Term to Expire 7-1-2020 (2-5, rcv dissenting Krause, French, Barnes, Reid, and Decker)

Comments were received from Council Member Reid who asked for clarification on if the vote taken was to Reappointment James Arnett or appoint Council Member Barnes to the Albion Housing Commission. It was stated the vote was for James Arnett to be re-appointed to the Albion Housing Commission. Council Member Reid stated she misunderstood the vote and would like to change how she voted.

Mayor Domingo stated the vote had already taken place and changes were not able to be made. He said he would now look through the applications and bring another candidate to Council for approval.

* Lindsay Washburn, Initial Appointment, Planning Commission, Term to Expire 12-31-2016

Comments were received from Council Member French.

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve Lindsay Washburn, Initial Appointment, Planning Commission, Term to Expire 12-31-2016 (7-0, rcv)

* Lindsay Washburn, Initial Appointment, Board of Review (Alternate), Term to Expire 12-31-2018

Comments were received from City Manager Mitchell who stated a correction is necessary and the Term to Expire should be 12-31-2017.

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve Lindsay Washburn, Initial Appointment, Board of Review (Alternate), Term to Expire 12-31-2017

Mayor Domingo introduced Lindsay Washburn who stated she was happy to be appointed to the boards and looked forward to helping out in the community.

 E. Request Approval for Telnet Service Agreement for 36 Months for Local & Long

Distance Calling (RCV)

Comments were received from City Manager Mitchell.

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve Telnet Service Agreement for 36 Months for Local & Long Distance Calling as presented. (7-0, rcv)

F. Request Approval Ordinance # 2015-04, An Ordinance to Update the Non-

Discrimination Ordinance (RCV)

Comments were received from Council Members French, Barnes, Brown, Decker and Krause, City Manager Mitchell and Mayor Domingo.

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve 1st Reading Ordinance # 2015-04, An Ordinance to Update the Non-Discrimination Ordinance as presented. (7-0, rcv)

G. Request Approval Ordinance #2015-05, An Ordinance to Amend Municipal

 Civil Infractions Ordinance by Amending Section 1-269 (g) (3) (RCV)

Comments were received form City Manager Mitchell and City Attorney Harkness who stated the only changes to the ordinance were items g through i.

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve 1st Reading Ordinance # 2015-05, An Ordinance to Amend Municipal Civil Infractions Ordinance by Amending Section 1-269 (g) (3) as presented. (7-0, rcv)

H. Request Approval of Purchase of City Owned Property-Urban Renewal Replat

 #2 (RCV)

Comments were received from City Manager Mitchell who stated she had received a request from Theodore Washington, 112 S. Albion Street to purchase the parcel lot located adjacent/abutting his property. The lot is identified as Parcel 51-012-352-00, which is Urban Renewal Replat #2, Lot 69. The 2015 valuation by the Assessor is $3,058. It is the intention of Mr. Washington to purchase an additional lot in the near future and combine the parcels. Because the properties were previously owned by the Land Bank, they are not eligible to be combined until 2016.

Council Member Krause asked if Mr. Washington has been maintaining the lot Building, Planning and Code Enforcement Director Tracy stated that Mr. Washington had been maintaining the lot for several years. Mr. Washington stated he is currently renovating the property and the new lot will be his personal residence and not be sold.

Additional comments were received from Council Members Barnes, Brown and French and City Attorney Harkness.

French moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve Purchase of City Owned Property-Urban Renewal Replat #2, Lot 69 to Theodore Washington as presented. (7-0, rcv)

I. Report from the City Manager

City Manager Mitchell updated the council on the following items:

* The DDA is accepting applications for their Façade Grant programs. Businesses within the DDA district may request up to 50% reimbursement in expenses, up to a maximum of $1,000. The deadline for applications is July 31, 2015. The grants are available to the first 10 qualified submissions.
* The Erie Street Reconstruction has begun with a completion date of August 28, 2015.
* Officers are completing their yearly training and certification in PPCT (defensive tactics) and Taser qualifications. PSO Noppe has completed 3 of 5 classes towards becoming a certified Crime Prevention Specialist.
* July tax bills are going out. A temporary staff person is on board in the department, assisting with the payroll function.
* The first meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee will be Tuesday, July 7th at 1:00 p.m.
* Residential cleanup is Saturday, July 25, 2015 from 9 am to 3 pm at Ketchum Field and Harris Field.
* Crews are working on local street repairs. There was also a water main break in front of City Hall recently. Jim is working with USDA on identifying potential grants for water tower refurbishing. SAW grant activities are moving forward, including developing the Asset Management Plan for the Wastewater Facility, assessment of the sanitary collection system and the intense task of scanning in mounds of system blueprints that will be used in the GIS system. Staff has been working on identifying trees for removal and trimming, some have already been removed. Several members in the department were involved in supporting the completion of the first phase of the Holland Park project. Willice Fruge successfully completed his State of Michigan Class D Examination.
* Council Member French asked when the sidewalks will be done.
* Council Member Krause asked if there was a list of community members or churches that would be willing to assist seniors with the residential clean up.
* Council Member Barnes volunteered to help seniors who need assistance with the residential clean up.

J. Future Agenda Items

* Council Member Brown would like a discussion/update from Cornerstone Inspection Service on the next agenda
* City Attorney Harkness requests an Executive Session for the City Attorney review added to a future agenda

K. Motion to Excuse Absent Council Member (s)

No action was necessary as all members were present.

X. CITIZEN’S COMMENTS (Persons addressing the City Council shall limit their

comments to agenda items and to no more than five (5) minutes. Proper decorum is required.)

Comments were received from Jim Behling, 12860 Maple St, spoke regarding the summer water/sewer credit program; Cindy Stanczak, 929 Luther Dr, thanked the street department for filling the potholes on Irwin Avenue; Janice Best, 710 S. Eaton St, appreciates the council approving and supporting the non-discrimination ordinance; Wesley Dick, 700 E. Michigan Avenue, also appreciates council supporting the non-discrimination ordinance; David Gilbert, Calhoun County Prosecutor and Mayor Domingo.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Brown moved, French supported, CARRIED, to Adjourn the Regular Session

(7-0, vv)

Mayor Domingo adjourned Regular Session at 8:40 p.m.

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Date Jill Domingo City Clerk