City of Albion

City Council Meeting

August 17, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

City Clerk Domingo opened the regular session at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

Krause moved, Reid supported, CARRIED, to amend the agenda to select a temporary Mayor Pro Tem for the August 17, 2015 council meeting. (5-0, rcv)

Barnes moved, Brown supported, CARRIED, to Nominate Council Member Krause as the Mayor Pro Tem for the August 17, 2015 council meeting. (5-0, vv)

Council Member Krause chaired the meeting at 7:05 as the temporary Mayor Pro Tem.

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE TO BE OBSERVED

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STAFF PRESENT:

Sheryl Mitchell, City Manager; Jill Domingo, City Clerk; Cullen Harkness, City Attorney; Jim Lenardson, Director of Public Services and Scott Kipp, Chief of Public Safety.

V. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER’S COMMENTS

Comments were received from Council Members Barnes.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

A. Tree Committee & Ismon House Updates-Mike Herman

Mike Herman updated the council on the Albion Tree Committee highlighting the following:

* Funding was received through the Albion Lions Club from our Sister City in Noisy-le-Roi, France to plant trees to help replace those lost in the straight line wind damage a couple years ago. David Green, Director of the Whitehouse Nature Center at Albion College handled the selection and planting of trees for this project.
* The Albion River Committee has worked with Semco on the planting of trees west of Eaton Street along the river where Semco did their clean-up work. The Albion River Committee received funding from Semco to use for replacement of trees in the future in this area.
* The Albion Tree Committee has used some of its funding to purchase trees for the nursery and for planting along streets and parks in the city.
* David Green and some college interns working at the Nature Center this summer planted 12 trees throughout the city and planted another 12 smaller trees in the Tree Nursery.
* Mike Herman along with a couple city employees transplanted 15 trees from the Tree Nursery along the streets and in the parks in the city. They currently have 93 trees in the Tree Nursery at various stages of development.
* There are approximately 20 trees in the Tree Nursery that are big enough to transplant. The Albion Tree Committee will be advertising trees for sale this fall at a cost of $30 and the Committee with help from the City will plant them for the property owner. They would prefer trees purchased from the Tree Committee be planted in the front yard of homes.
* The Tree Committee has about $2,000 in its account so they will not do a fall funding campaign. They do expect to do a spring fund campaign in conjunction with the Arbor Day activities.

Mike Herman, Ismon House President updated the council highlighting the following:

* The Ismon House continues to be an active rental facility serving the needs of the Albion Community.
* The current fund balance is $42,000 and they were able to generate enough revenue to cover the normal operating expenses.
* City Manager Mitchell will serve on the Ismon House Board and was appointed at the August 12, 2015 meeting.
* The annual meeting of the Ismon House Board will be held Tuesday, September 22, 2015 at 5 pm at the Ismon House and the public is welcome to attend. They will be electing officers to serve for the next two years as well as filling a couple of openings on the Board. Anyone interested in helping to preserve and promote the Ismon House is welcome to apply to be a member of the Board.
* The primary efforts this year are focused on the rehabilitation of the 2nd & 3rd floors. The Ismon House received a Michigan Heritage Restoration grant from the State Historic Preservation Office which allowed them to complete the restoration of the Ismon House. The construction plans and specifications are almost finalized and will go out for bids September 10, 2015 and will be due on October 2, 2015. They expect to award the contract by the end of October and have the project completed by June, 2016.
* The will continue fund raising efforts for tables, chairs and other furnishings needed for the 2nd and 3rd floor.
* The renovation of the 3rd floor will allow them to handle larger events and expect the rental activity to increase as a result.
* They encourage community members to remember the Ismon House when scheduling family reunions, baby showers, business meetings, etc.
* The goal of the Ismon Board is to make the Ismon House available for rental at reasonable rates so that all the community can make use of the facility.
* They will plan a grand opening next summer to allow the public to see the final results of the restoration project.

Comments were received from Council Member Krause.

B. Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco-Nidia Wolf

Nidia Wolf, Director-Albion Health Care Alliance stated there has been a move in Calhoun County about raising the minimum age of legal access to tobacco. This would also include e-cigarettes. This would also help merchants having the alcohol and tobacco age both being 21. 95% of adult smokers begin smoking before the age 21. Tobacco use costs Michigan $4.59 billion in annual health care expenditures. If the minimum age were raised to 21, the estimated cost savings for youth aged 15-20 years old on the date of the policy change would include $323 million in medical savings, $14 million in Medicaid savings and $575 million in productivity savings. There would be 249,000 fewer premature deaths, 45,000 fewer from lung cancer and 4.2 million fewer years of life lost for those born between 2000 and 2019. The state of Hawaii is the first state to pass raising the minimum age to 21 years of age for tobacco products.

Comments were received from Council Members Decker, Brown, Krause and Barnes and Mike Herman, 910 Locust Lane.

C. EDC Update-Peggy Sindt

 Peggy Sindt, EDC Director gave the following EDC updates:

* The Downtown Albion Hotel project has been approved by the state for $1 million dollars for the project and this was the last piece of their financials so they are now able to move forward with the project. They are currently working on drawings for the hotel.
* Peggy stated a lot of interest is being created in the business community for home grown businesses in the downtown area. These can range from retail type businesses to restaurants. She stated competition is a good thing and the more a community has to offer, the more people will want to come and share in what they have to offer.
* She stated Albion College will be adding a show center to the equestrian center which will help create more downtown traffic.
* The DDA has awarded eleven (11) façade grants to downtown businesses.
* THE EDC is working with USDA World Development which offers incentives to help businesses start up.
* The EDC is always looking for sources to help with funds for the community and are working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.
* The Food Hub at 112 E. Erie St has begun construction. They are anticipating a completion date of early December of this year.
* The new foundry project for Brembo is coming along really well and they are have expressed interest in helping with community projects.
* Council Member Brown asked about long term goals to which Mrs. Sindt stated there are several things up in the air such as personal property taxes and budget constraints that may affect long term goals for the EDC.
* Council Member Brown asked about possible transportation to which Mrs. Sindt responded her and City Manager Mitchell have had an initial conversation with Senator Peters office pertaining to a regional transportation authority.
* Council Member Krause asked if the hotel would be breaking ground before winter and Mrs. Sindt responded she was unsure but there may be some sort of celebration this fall.
* The Dialysis center is still set to open the first of next year. Council Member Brown asked if there was a way to expand on amenities we offer in the City to those who would be using the Dialysis Center. Mrs. Sindt stated that Oaklawn will providing that information along with something from The Albion Chamber of Commerce.
* City Manager Mitchell stated Peggy has been extremely supportive and

 helpful in the Redevelopment Ready Project.

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-August 3, 2015

Barnes moved, Decker supported, CARRIED, to Approve the Consent Calendar as presented. (5-0, vv)

IX. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION

 A. Discussion-Austin Avenue Abatements

Council Member Barnes thanked John Tracy, Director, Building, Planning and Code Enforcement and Cornerstone Inspection for the outstanding job on the Austin Avenue buildings. He feels progress has been made and was pleased with City Manager Mitchell’s executive summary.

Comments were received from City Manager Mitchell.

B. Request Approval Resolution # 2015-25, Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products (RCV)

Comments were received from Nidia Wolf and City Manager Mitchell.

Decker moved, Brown supported, CARRIED, to **TABLE** Approval of Resolution # 2015-25, Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products until the full council is present. (5-0, rcv)

C. City Manager Report

City Manager Mitchell reported the following:

* The DDA approved 50% matching grants for 11 downtown area businesses for Façade Improvements. Improvements are eligible for reimbursements of up to $1,000 each. The DDA is beginning the process of updating the DDA and TIF plans which haven’t been updated since 2002.
* The Youth Basketball Tournament held on Saturday, August 8th in partnership with the Build Albion Fellows was a tremendous success and well attended. There is a lot of interest in providing regular tournaments throughout the summer in 2016
* The Music in the Park on Friday evenings at Holland Park are very popular drawing larger crowds each week. The music DJ is Larry Williams and the program continues through September 11th.
* Registration has begun for the youth football, cheerleading and adult flag football. United Way provided a donation of $5,625.00 to support the summer youth programs.
* The next community bike rides are August 15th and 29th, September 12th and 26th. All rides begin at City Hall at 9 am and end at the Albion Farmer’s Market.
* The last day to pay summer taxes without penalty was August 10th so the finance department was very busy. Staff is taking advantage of the training available through BS&A to strengthen and expand their skills. Working with the City Manager and Departments on projected 2015 amendments and preparing for the 2016 Budget.
* The reorganization created 6 General Foreman positions. The following individuals will be filling these leadership roles: Joe Pace, Scott Claucherty, Jay Loomis, Kevin Munro, Clarence Nelson and Larry Maynard.
* ADPS will be making a presentation at the Forks Senior Center on Friday, August 21 from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm on Marijuana legislation. PSO Wygant has been temporarily assigned as a Detective in the Detective Bureau.
* The Citizens Advisory Committee has been meeting and conducting surveys of the parks. The next meeting is August 18th at noon in the Mayor’s office. Surveys are being prepared to gather usage data and priorities for future planning for youth and residents. Objective is to complete by December 2015.
* Albion NAACP/Albion Public Schools- Back to School Celebration is being co-sponsored by the Albion Community Foundation. The event is Saturday, August 22nd from 10:00 am to 12noon at Albion Community Schools. Both the ADPS and Recreation Department will be participating.
* Churches of Albion are hosting a Back to School Fun Day Celebration on Saturday, August 29th from 11am – 4pm at Holland Park. Both ADPS and the Recreation Department will be participating.
* Krazy for the Kazoo-The City of Albion will be partnering in the Kalamazoo River Clean up taking place on October 3rd. We are joining with other participating organizations in the river cleanups and other conservation projects at different locations around the Kalamazoo River Watershed.
* Kanoe the Kazoo – August 22-Canoe and Kayak float trips on Saturdays.

August 22-Allegan to Douglas

September 12-Albion to Marshall

September 26-Ottawa Marsh

October 24-Ottawa Marsh to New Richmond

D. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items were requested.

E. Motion to Excuse Absent Council Member (s)

Brown moved, Barnes supported, CARRIED, to Excuse Council Member French (6) and Mayor Domingo. (5-0, vv)

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 Mike Herman, 910 Locust Lane and Council Members Barnes, Krause and Brown.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

(5-0, vv)

Council Member Krause adjourned Regular Session at 7:55 p.m.

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Date Jill Domingo City Clerk