City of Albion

City Council Meeting

October 19, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor 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), Cheryl Krause (5) and Andrew French (6) and Mayor Joseph Domingo.

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 Works; John Tracy, Director, Building, Planning and Code Enforcement and Scott Kipp, Chief of Public Safety.

V. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER’S COMMENTS

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

VI. PRESENTATIONS

A. Substance Abuse Awareness Month-Mayor’s Youth Council

Akaiia Ridley, Mayor of the Mayor’s Youth Council spoke briefly on Substance Abuse Awareness Month and Red Ribbon week which was found in 1985 and is the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in the country.

She presented a service award to Mayor Domingo for his work with the youth in the Albion community.

Mayor Domingo read aloud the proclamation for Red Ribbon Week and presented to Akaiia Ridley, Mayor of the Mayor’s Youth Council.

Harry Bonner, Director of the Substance Abuse Council thanked the Mayor and Council for their leadership roles in working with The Mayor’s Youth Council, Junior Optimist Club and students from Albion Community Schools to become young civic leaders for our community. He asked that Albion College, The City of Albion and the community come together and help work through the difficulties currently facing Albion Community Schools.

B. Albion College International Students

Mayor Domingo read aloud and presented the Resolution of Honorary

Citizenship to the Albion College International Students.

Deb Peterson, Albion College thanked the Mayor and the Council for inviting our International students to make Albion their home while they are here.

C. Local Officers Compensation Committee

Scott Brown, Local Officers Compensation Committee gave a brief overview of the changes for the Mayor and Council Members pay structure. He stated the committee would like to phase out payments received for additional meetings attended. The committee suggested the following payment scale:

**Mayor:**

* Base Pay $3,300 annually ($275/mo)
* $40.00 per meeting (max 6 meetings per month)

**Council:**

* Base $2,400 annually ($200/mo)
* $40.00 per meeting (max 2 meetings per month)

Comments were received from Council Member Barnes.

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-October 5, 2015

Krause moved, French supported, CARRIED, to Approve the Consent Calendar as presented. (7-0, vv)

IX. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION

A. Request Approval 2016 City Council Dates (RCV)

Brown moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, to Approve 2016 City Council Dates as presented. (7-0, rcv)

B. Request Approval of Recommendations of the Local Officers Compensation Committee for City Council Pay (RCV)

As outlined by the Charter, unless rejected by a two-thirds vote of City Council, the recommendations will go into effect 30 days following filing with the City Clerk.

Comments were received from Scott Brown, LOCC Board Member, Council Member French and Mayor Domingo.

No Council action was taken.

C. Request Approval to Discharge Mortgage for 922 Maple St. (RCV)

Comments were received from Council Member French, City Manager Mitchell and Mayor Domingo.

Brown moved, Krause supported, CARRIED, Approval to Discharge Mortgage for 922 Maple St. as presented. (7-0, rcv)

D. Request Approval 1st Reading Ordinance # 2015-07, Operating Golf Carts on City Streets (RCV)

Comments were received from Council Members French and Krause; City Manager Mitchell; Mayor Domingo and Chief Kipp.

The consensus of the Council was to make the following changes:

* (h) should read: A person operating a golf cart shall not pass between lines of traffic **nor shall pass any vehicles on the left hand side of the street.**
* (i) should read: A golf cart shall not be operated on a **public** sidewalk constructed for the use of pedestrians unless used in the course of their employment, or for other purposes approved by the Department of Public Safety,
* (k) should read: A golf cart shall not be operated on city streets during the time period **from** one-half (1/2) hour after sunrise.

French moved, Brown supported, CARRIED, to Approve 1st Reading Ordinance # 2015-07, Operating Golf Carts on City Streets with the above amendments. (7-0, rcv)

E. Discussion-New Evaluation Process and Forms

Council Member Brown stated he was pleased with the new evaluation process and forms. He asked the following questions:

When will the process be implemented and do we have a process in place

for employees that are getting close to retirement?

Council Member Barnes asked if staff helped in the development process.

City Manager Mitchell stated the new evaluation process is in place and each employee starts the process with a self-evaluation. There are currently two versions of the evaluation forms-one for the management staff and the other for hourly employees. She had the leadership team review the forms and provide feedback.

F. Discussion-Downtown Businesses Retaining Insurance on Buildings

City Attorney Harkness stated that buildings that have had previous severe structural damage were previously addressed through code enforcement and law suits. Neither of these options have worked well. He suggests that rental property can be addressed through a Rental Certification Program. A Rental Certification Program is a detailed set of ordinances that can include a requirement for insurance. Our authority to require insurance on buildings must be based on state statute. Residents that own the buildings would not be covered under the Rental Certification Plan and therefore would have no requirements to carry insurance on the buildings.

The potential liability for the City would pertain to knowledge of structural damage to a building and not taking any type of action.

City Manager Mitchell stated an informal group is working with the EDC, Land Bank and Chamber of Commerce to address the following issues:

* Assessing actual owners of the property
* Evaluation of the buildings
* Initiating some financing mechanisms

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

G. Discussion-Policy for Employees to Express Concern without Fear of Retribution or being Penalized

Council Member Decker stated she would like to form a study group of individuals from the community along with City employees that would allow employees to have an open dialogue and provide feedback without fear of retribution or being penalized in their job. It has been stated that some employees who are not in the union feel they are not represented and don’t have a voice.

City Manager Mitchell stated she has an open-door policy and that at any time employees are able to discuss issues they may be having. She also stated there is a chain of command to be followed and that employees should first take concerns to their direct supervisors. When speaking with employees, the City Manager always asks whether or not the employee has spoken with the supervisor first before bringing it to her.

She would like Council to give her the opportunity to address any issues or breakdown in communications with employees before creating a committee.

She also stated she has never directed any manager or employee that they are not free to speak with Council Members however, elected officials should be mindful not to interfere with the administrative functions of the City or the professional duties of City Staff. Requests for staff assistance should be directed to the City Manager who will assign such requests to the appropriate staff person to complete in a timely and professional manner.

City Attorney Harkness stated he would suggest if an employee speaks to a Council Member that the Council Member contact the City Manager and make her aware of the employees concerns. The employee would then need to speak with the City Manager pertaining to those concerns. The Council Member can then follow up with the City Manager or employee to make certain the issue has been resolved.

Mayor Domingo stated employees are welcome to speak with Council Members however, all discussions and decisions will be made by the City Manager.

Comments were received from Council Members Barnes, French and Brown.

H. Discussion-Taxi Ordinance

Council Member Brown asked the following question-

If a business is established in another community, would they still need a license to operate in the City of Albion?

City Attorney Harkness stated that our current ordinance would require a business to also have a taxi license for the City of Albion.

The consensus of the Council is to have City Manager Mitchell and City Attorney Harkness move forward with a more comprehensive taxi ordinance. They would also like to have a reciprocal agreement added with The City of Marshall and also with Homer. They also asked to consider adding Uber to the ordinance.

City Manager Mitchell mentioned the Albion-Marshall Connector is available to the community.

Comments were also received from Council Member French.

I. City Manager Report

City Manager Mitchell reported the following:

* Reminder of the Show Your Best Event
* NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet will be Saturday, October 24, 2015
* Albion Public Safety’s Chili Cook-Off will be Friday, October 23, 2015
* The Entreneu group donated $25.00 to the Junior Optimist Club

Marie Macone, French Intern, spoke about the Show Your Best Event. She stated she has over 50 vendors for the event. There will be Silver Sneakers, kids & adult swimming, an awards ceremony and free giveaways throughout the day. The event is free and she encourages everyone to Come-Show Your Best.

J. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items were requested.

K. Motion to Excuse Absent Council Member (s)

No action needed 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 Mike Bearman, 11016 29 Mile Rd.; Jay Loomis, 408 W. Ash St. and Council Member French.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Krause moved, French supported, CARRIED, to ADJOURN Regular Session. (7-0, vv).

Mayor Domingo adjourned the Regular Session at 8:45 p.m.

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Date Jill Domingo City Clerk