City of Albion

City Council Meeting

July 17, 2017

1. Call To Order

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

1. Moment of Silence To Be Observed
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

PRESENT: Maurice Barnes (1), Lenn Reid (2), Sonya Brown (3), Marcola Lawler (4) Jeanette Spicer (5) and Andrew French (6) and Mayor Brown.

Staff Present: Cullen Harkness, City Attorney; Stacey Levin, Assistant City Manager; Jill Domingo, City Clerk; Scott Kipp, Chief Public Safety and John Tracy, Director Planning, Building & Code Enforcement.

1. Mayor & Council Member’s Comments

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

VI. Public Hearing-Michigan Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for Peabody Block Project

A. Request Approval Resolution # 2017-32, Michigan Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for Peabody Block Project (RCV)

Mayor Brown opened the Public Hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Public comments were received from Amy Deprez, EDC Director who gave a brief overview of the project as follows:

* Project is located at 400 S. Superior Street.
* The first floor is 3,000 square foot commercial business space
* The second and third floor will have two 2 bed/ 2 bath apartments
* Complete rehabilitation of the entire building
* An elevator will be added
* Commercial area will be white-box so it is ready for any type of business
* Grant needs local support for approval
* DDA Tax Sharing Agreement-this will be finalized once the project is complete and a value is assessed. This was important to owners and investors as they wanted the project to be a benefit to the community
* The tax sharing agreement will be a 6-8 year process. The first few years a higher percentage with go to owners. Breakdown will be as follows:
* Year 1 & 2 80% owners -20% DDA
* Year 3 & 4 60% owners - 40% DDA
* Year 5 & 6 40% owners- 60% DDA
* Year 7 & 8 20% owners- 80% DDA

Additional comments were received from Council Member Brown and Mayor Brown.

Mayor Brown closed the Public Hearing at 7:11 p.m.

French moved, Spicer supported, CARRIED, To Approve Resolution # 2017-32, Michigan Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for Peabody Block Project as presented. (7-0, rcv)

VII. Presentations

1. Albion Housing Commission Update

Ann Kemp, Executive Director Albion Housing Commission gave the following update:

* Albion Housing Commission has 220 total units. There are currently 98% occupied with only eight (8) vacancies.
* As of March 15th, 2017 all units went smoke-free. Because the Commission was pro-active in setting this policy, they did need to make an amendment from 15 feet away from a building to 25 feet away from a building per HUD’s actual smoke-free ruling.
* The Albion Housing Commission has received their capital funding which will allow all parking lots to be clean, re-surfaced and striped. Windows and doors will be replaced at Northview Homes at a cost of $238,123.00. The paperwork will go to HUD on August 2nd, 2017 for approval and once approved will go out for bids sometime in October, 2017.
* The capital funding for 2016 were used for new roofs on Grandview Heights units in October 2016, architect fees for the roof project and new carpet in the administrative office.

Comments were received from Council Members Brown and Reid and Mayor Brown.

VIII. Public Comments (Persons addressing the City Council shall limit their comments to **agenda items only** and to no more than three (3) minutes. Proper decorum is required.)

Comments were received from Bill Dobbins, 15901 E. Michigan Avenue who thanked the Council for their continued support of the Peabody Project and City Manager Mitchell and Amy Deprez, EDC Director for all of their hard work with the grant process.

1. Consent Calendar (VV)
2. Approval Regular Session Minutes – July 5, 2017

French moved, Brown supported, CARRIED, to approve the Consent as presented. (7-0, vv)

1. Items for Individual Discussion

A. Discussion-Update on the Status of the Rural Health Network Grant

City Manager Mitchell stated this was requested by Mayor Brown. Email from Elizabeth Carey at Starr Commonwealth indicate: SAMHSA– the federal department under which the Rural Healthcare Grant opportunity was offered, has not issued any awards for this grant as of yet. We have been pressuring the Department and our legislators to find out more information. Announcements should have been made in May with a June 1st deadline, but alas, no announcements. Starr’s lobbyists have shared that many of the key appointments that need to be made to run the federal departments have not been made and thus awards of grants are not being processed. Starr remains hopeful that someday soon we will receive notice of acceptance or at least formal news about the grant status. But we truly have heard nothing.

Comments were received from Council Member French who stated the Governor has approved the State’s budget which included a line item of $850,000 to bring health care to Albion.

B. Approval of Council Member Selections for the EDC Advisory Board (RCV)

 Mayor Brown recommends Council Member Spicer for the EDC Advisory Board.

Comments were received from Council Members Barnes and Spicer; Amy Deprez, EDC Director; City Attorney Harkness; City Manager Mitchell and Mayor Brown.

Point of order was called several times by Mayor Brown and Council Members Spicer and Brown.

Council Member Brown called the question.

French moved, Spicer supported, CARRIED, to Call the Question. (6-1, rcv) (Barnes dissenting).

French moved, Reid supported, CARRIED, to Approve Council Member Spicer to the EDC Advisory Board as presented. (6-1, rcv) (Barnes dissenting).

C. Discussion-Water Tower Replacement

City Manager Mitchell stated the City is in the process on putting together a USDA grant application towards the repair/replacement of the Water Tower and upgrades in the water system. Additional 500,000 gallons of capacity is needed. Direction is needed from the City Council on the direction in which to proceed. City engineering firm has provided pros/cons for each scenario:

• Repair existing and add 500,000 gallon tank $2,522,000

• Replace with a 1 million gallon tank $2,810,000

• Repair existing and add a 1 million gallon tank $3,332,000

Questions/Comments from the Council were as follows:

* Repairing the existing tank and adding a 1 million gallon tank would allow the City the capacity to plan for future expansion
* A high priority is making the community aware of impending costs for the water tower
* How much is the City’s match for the grant?
* A water rate increase is required to obtain the USDA grant as current rates are not at median level.
* Would like to see an excel spreadsheet with anticipated costs that can be shared with community members
* City Manager Mitchell is currently working with Mickey Bittner, City Engineer on educational pieces for the water tower
* Where will the funding for the grant match come from?
* The water fund balance will cover repairing the existing tank and also some of the grant match.

The consensus of the Council is to move forward with the grant process to repair existing tank and add a 1 million gallon tank at a cost of $3,332,000.

D. Discussion/Approval Funding for Ash Street Parking Lot (RCV)

City Manager Mitchell stated the City of Albion applied for an USDA – Rural Development grant for the Ash Street Parking Lot. This project is for the reconstruction of the existing parking lot and alleyway located at 110 W. Ash Street.

The work will consist of removing the existing asphalt surface, grading, sand subbase,

aggregate base, leach basins, storm sewer piping, new hot mix asphalt surface,

abandonment of existing driveway onto W. Ash Street, sidewalk repairs and

replacement at drive entrances, driveway replacement to alley between parking lot

and commercial buildings, curb and gutter, and landscaping consisting of bushes, trees, plantings, and other vegetation. The project includes drainage improvements

to reduce surface water near the rear entrances of the downtown buildings. The grant

request was for $118,000 (Engineering: $18,880 and Site Improvements: $99,120).

Resolution #2017-05 authorized the grant application with a $18,900 local match from

the City Maintenance and Sewer Funds. The USDA has responded that the grant for

$59,050 for the W. Ash Street Parking Lot improvements.

USDA needs a response by July 21st on our decision to either:

- Accept the grant and city is responsible for the balance of $58,950

- Reject the grant

- Adjust to project – must meet the initial match of $18,900 --- so a total project of

$77,950. This would remove approximately $15,000 from the project for curb and gutter. This is not recommended by the City Engineer.

City Manager Mitchell has discussed this with the DDA Board and they do not have funding available for this project. Additional options for the increased costs are cost sharing and fund raising.

Questions/Comments from the Council were as follows:

* Many additional needs in the community with a higher priority
* Installing parking meters may help to recoup cost of parking lot repairs
* Would the fund balance be drastically reduced if we did this project
* Conservative use of fund balance as we may have unforeseen issues
* Fund balance should be used for these types of projects
* A commitment of support was made to the owners of the Brewery
* What is the estimated timeframe of the opening of the Brewery
* The Brewery is planning to open in January, 2018
* No anticipation of the grant being approved for only 50% versus the 90% that was applied for

Comments were received from Council Members French, Spicer, Brown, Lawler, Reid and Barnes, Mayor Brown and Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Director Tracy.

French moved, Barnes supported, CARRIED, to Call the Question. (7-0, rcv)

French moved, Barnes supported, CARRIED, to Approve Funding for Ash Street Parking Lot with the Additional Funding Taken from Fund Balance. (6-1, rcv) (Mayor Brown dissenting).

XI. City Manager Report

City Manager Mitchell gave the following City Manager Report:

**Annual Employee Picnic**- this annual event is being scheduled for Friday, August 18th and is to be held at the Victory Park Picnic Shelter.

**MDOT UPDATE**

Week of July 17, 2017

* **M-99 (Superior St) Closed from Ash Street to Michigan Ave**
* **Cass Street to Remain CLOSED**
* **Erie Street to Remain Open**
* Pedestrians to Cross at Erie Street
* Maintain Access to Business’ with Pedestrian Barricades
* Complete Storm Sewer Cass Street to River
* Grade and Install Curb and Gutter Ash Street to Erie Street
* Install Concrete Valley Gutter and Bridge Deck Approach
* Gravel Base Course Installation and Grading
* Grade for Sidewalk

Week of July 24, 2017

* **M-99 (Superior St) Closed from Ash Street to Michigan Ave**
* **Cass Street to Remain CLOSED**
* **Erie Street to Remain Open**
* Pedestrians to Cross at Erie Street
* Maintain Access to Business’ with Pedestrian Barricades
* Gravel Base Course Installation
* Grade for Sidewalk
* Concrete Base Course Installation

**Community Forum with Public Safety – “Driving While Black – Policing While White”** – Tuesday, July 18th at 6pm at Bethel Baptist Church, 523 Washington St.

**Calhoun County Land Bank Authority**

Land Bank & County Treasurer issued the partial notice to commence demolition for Dalrymple today. They will have to complete the water system cut and cap before they can issue the full notice.  Homrich requested and received the permit from SAFEBuilt this morning, and demo moved forward today as planned.



**Calhoun County Health Dept.**

* A new Health Officer has been hired – Eric Pessell. Eric has been employed by Kent County since 2013 as the Environmental Health Director, and has also previously served as the Environmental Health Director for both Barry-Eaton and Jackson Counties.  He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Olivet College, with a major in Biology and a minor in Environmental Science.  In addition, he has experience with a wide variety of public health programs and extensive experience with both state and national accreditation.

**Resilient Communities – Cronin Project**

* Held a community picnic on Saturday at Holland Park.

**Festival of the Forks –** Scheduled for Sept. 14 – 17. Plans include using Reiger Park.

**Planning Commission** – the July 18th meeting has been cancelled.

**Labor Negotiations** – will be commencing shortly

**Community Clean up** – Saturday, July 22nd – Clean ups, electronics, tires

LOCATIONS FOR DISPOSAL

1. Ketchum Field – corner of North Street and N. Clark Street.

2. Harris Field – corner of W. Cass Street and Gale Street.

XII. Future Agenda Items

* Council Member Barnes requested EDC plan for the parking lot on Austin and Albion Street be added to the next agenda.
* Council Member Spicer asked for an update on the Rieger Park swimming hole to be added to the next agenda.
* Council Member Brown asked about the City Manager’s evaluation.
* Mayor Brown stated the evaluation form needed to be updated as part of the contract. The consensus of the Council is to hold a study session on Monday, July 24, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. to review the evaluation process and revisions/updates to the evaluation form. He also asked Council Members to return completed City Attorney evaluation forms at the study session.

XIII. Motion to Excuse Absent Council Member (s) (VV)

 No action was necessary as all members were present.

XIV. Public Comments (Persons addressing the City Council shall limit their comments to no more than three (3) minutes. Proper decorum is required.)

Comments were received from Elrarene Showers, 805 ValHalla Dr, Alfredia Dysart-Drake, 1016 S. Superior Street and Mayor Brown.

XIV. Adjournment

Brown moved, Spicer supported, CARRIED, to adjourn council session. (7-0 vv)

Mayor Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

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Date Jill Domingo City Clerk