

City of Albion
Council Special Session Minutes
March 7, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Atchison called the special meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. MOMENT OF SILENCE TO BE OBSERVED

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Vicky Clark (1); Lenn Reid (2); Sonya Brown (3); Marcola Lawler (4); Jeanette Spicer (5); Shane Williamson (6) and Mayor Atchison.

ABSENT: All members were present

STAFF PRESENT:

Darwin McClary, City Manager; Cullen Harkness, City Attorney; Scott Kipp, Chief Public Safety; Jill Domingo, City Clerk; John Tracy, Director Planning, Building & Code Enforcement; Mike Lohrke, Interim Superintendent Public Works; Mike Riddle, Interim Superintendent Public Services and Haley Snyder, Interim Assistant City Manager/Deputy Clerk/Treasurer.

V. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (Includes any proposed additions, deletions or other changes to the agenda)

Lawler moved, Smith supported, CARRIED, to Approve the Agenda as presented. (7-0, vv)

VI. PRESENTATIONS-None

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS-None

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

No public comments were received.

IX. CLOSED SESSION-None

X. CONSENT CALENDAR (VV) Items on the Consent Calendar are voted on as one unit) - None

XI. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION

A. City Manager Performance

Mayor Atchison stated he is not satisfied with code enforcement and Council is being told that lack of resources is the problem. What improvements will be implemented to address the code enforcement issues?

City Manager McClary stated he is working on preparing a plan for code enforcement and that this is a work in progress. The immediate concern seems to be the transfer of an internal employee from the code enforcement position to the Finance Department. The two departments discussed the transfer and the timing of the transfer and came to the determination of when the transfer should take place. Code Enforcement is a concern and the lack of resources will need to be addressed along with rental certification.

Council Member Reid asked whether the City has the money to hire additional staff for Code Enforcement.

City Manager McClary stated that part of his recommendation to the Council is for additional staffing for Code Enforcement.

Council Member Williamson stated he feels information is given to the Council without any follow-up; feels City Manager is unresponsive and untimely in communication; no directive given to City Hall staff; has lack of leadership; not at work and does not attend community meetings

City Manager McClary stated he is willing and encourages Council Members to set up weekly individual meetings with him to discuss any issues they may be having. Communication is important and there are challenges that will need to be addressed. He takes time off according to his contract. He understands perception and is willing to take calls from Council anytime. The Council must trust that things are being done behind the scenes. He asks Council Members to not wait until they are frustrated to talk to him. The City has outstanding employees and department heads and we all need to work as a team. He stated he has been asked by individual members of the Council things that may violate the charter but has never been asked by the Council as a whole.

Mayor Atchison stated he realizes that how the Manager does his job is his as long as his actions are lawful, he is however, unhappy with the quality and timeliness of his actions. He was upset that the 1st reading of the

rental certification was placed on the agenda when he felt the Council made it clear at the study session that they did not want to move forward with the ordinance as written.

City Manager McClary stated that because the rental certification was discussed at a study session, it was placed on the agenda for administration to get formal direction on how the Council wanted to move forward pertaining to rental certification.

Council Member Williamson asked City Manager McClary what his single biggest accomplishment has been in the past months?

City Manager McClary responded that his single biggest accomplishment in the past six months is dealing with staff/personnel issues and the budget. Council Member Williamson asked what his role was in assisting and putting together the budget? City Manager McClary stated because of when he started his position, a great deal of the budget was complete so his role was limited. He will present a list to Council of his accomplishments.

Council Member Clark stated there are some perceptions out in the community. Council wants direction from City Manager and City Manager wants direction from Council. Seems to be miscommunication between Council and Manager. She stated if City Manager McClary needs something from Council that he should ask.

Council Member Smith stated he understands the City Manager is bound by the goals set by the Council and maybe those goals need to be thrown out and new goals drafted. Do additional ordinances needs to be added to get Code Enforcement done. Council needs to support City Manager so he can do his job.

Council Member Reid stated she receives complaints from residents that want things done in their precinct.

City Manager McClary stated the City needs to create a sustainability program for sidewalks and streets. He stated he has spoken with Council Members and they have stated that they do not want to move forward with that. There are going to be tough and unpopular decisions that need to be made pertaining improvement of our streets.

Council Member Williamson asked if City Manager will consider a 360-performance evaluation and that direction is he providing as he is not seeing any leadership.

City Manager McClary stated he is willing and looks forward to a 360-performance review as it is part of his ICMA requirement at his one-year mark.

Council Member Spicer stated she has issues with dead trees in the City.

City Manager McClary stated the Department of Public Services have been working to remove many of the dead trees throughout the City.

Council Member Reid stated she feels we need a designated grant writer.

Mayor Atchison stated that of the primary functions of a city position needs to be writing grants. He feels that there is a lack of urgency to get things done.

City Manager McClary stated there have been many items brought up by individual Council Members and although he would like to help with each of these items, he must focus on the actual goals set by the Council. He is pulled in many different directions by Council and priority issues do come up.

Mayor Atchison stated City Manager McClary needs to make Council aware if priorities need to change.

Council Member Williamson stated he feels it all boils down to lack of responsiveness; lack of leadership and his performance is sub-standard.

Council Member Lawler asked the City Manager if he had the things, he needs to get things done and if he is overwhelmed, to make Council aware.

Council Member Spicer stated she is glad the Manager is aware of issues before the 6-month review.

Mayor Atchison stated he wants the City Manager to be successful and is only making him aware of Council dissatisfaction and frustration.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS-None

XIII. 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 John Face, 812 N. Eaton St; Betty Branche, 408 Washington St and Helene Younger, 216 W. Chestnut St.

XIV. CITY MANAGER REPORT-None

XV. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER'S COMMENTS

No comments were received.

XVI. EXCUSE ABSENT COUNCIL MEMBER (S)

No action was necessary as all members were present.

XVII. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Vicky Clark (1); Lenn Reid (2); Sonya Brown (3); Marcola Lawler (4); Jeanette Spicer (5); Shane Williamson (6) and Mayor Atchison.

ABSENT: All members were present.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

Clark moved, Williamson supported, CARRIED, to adjourn the special session.
(7-0, vv)

Mayor Atchison adjourned the Regular Session at 9:30 a.m.

Date

Jill Domingo
City Clerk