

City of Albion
Study Session Minutes
April 26, 2018

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: Mayor Brown

STAFF PRESENT:

Scott Kipp, Interim City Manager; Lauren Elster, Assistant City Attorney; Jill Domingo, City Clerk; Tom Mead, Finance Director; Jim Lenardson, Director of Public Services and John Tracy, Director Planning, Building & Code Enforcement.

III. 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).

No public comments were received.

IV. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSION

A. Council Goal Setting Session

Interim City Manager Kipp requested the 2018 recreation millage as a discussion item and added to Council goals.

The consensus of the Council is to add the 2018 recreation millage to Council goals.

Interim City Manager Kipp stated the staff would like direction from the Council on whether they would like to renew the millage for the 1.5 mills or to increase the millage to 2 mills.

Recreation Millage:

Finance Director Mead gave a brief overview of the current recreation millage stating the millage will be up for renewal at the end of 2018. It has been discussed with the previous Manager and Recreation Director to increase the millage .5 mills to cover the \$25,000 cost for the use of Marshall Opportunity High School. In comparing the 2018 budget with a projected 2019 budget the .5 mills would more than cover the cost for the use of the school. The program expenses have been

significantly cut in the past and the additional funding from the .5 mills would help with programming costs. In 2018 the program costs were \$7500.00, with the additional millage funds this could be raised to \$25,000 in 2019. The recreation millage also allocates \$8700.00 to the Forks Senior Center and may be able to offer additional funding with the added millage. There will be a 1 mill decrease in taxes for 2019 as the debt millage was paid off in 2018. For a home with a market value of \$100,000, 1 mill would be \$50.00 and the additional .5 mill would be \$25.00

Questions/Comments from Council were as follows:

- Is the \$25,000 fee for the school a flat fee? How is the fee negotiated? Would any increases be expected?
- Concern of having Recreation Director negotiating fees as he is also a member of the Marshall School Board.
- Council needs to consider what mileages should be placed on the August ballot i.e. recreation, streets, sidewalks, water/sewer.
- Would like sample ballot language for renewal and additional millage

Infrastructure:

- A water/sewer rate study is being done that will come to Council for approval.
- The City is in the final stages of the SAW grant and recommendations will come before the Council in the near future.
- New water/sewer rates will help with grant funding for the new water tower and also to create sustainability.
- Updating the water & sewer infrastructure while doing street projects has worked well.
- The MEDC has asked the City to re-apply for the ICE grant that we did not receive the first time and also indicated a very good chance of receiving it this time. If the ICE grant is received, we would be able complete all of Irwin Avenue which would also include the water & sewer infrastructure. The cost would be approximately \$2.2 million and the grant is \$2 million. If the ICE grant is received, the grant we received for the \$375,000 that was earmarked for Irwin Avenue may be able to be used for another street.
- The USDA Rural grant will be ready to submit in the next few weeks. The new water tower is on hold until the grant is submitted.
- Painting will begin on the water tower in mid to late May.
- We received the Albion River Trail Expansion II grant.
- We currently have a 3-mill street millage which is a five (5) year millage and will expire in 2020. We receive approximately \$250,000 from this millage per year.
- The state had \$70 million they were allocating to municipalities for street repairs, however the City's portion of that was only \$68,000.
- We have an 80/20 split with MDOT for major street repairs.
- Would like to layer the street repairs into the GIS system
- Council would like a 3-5 major & local street repair plan in place

***Council Member Lawler left at 8:00 p.m.*

Sidewalks:

- The \$50.00 sidewalk assessment was complete in 2018
- The current ordinance requires residents to take care of repairs to sidewalks
- It may be a tough sell for another sidewalk millage
- May be able to change ordinance for sidewalks and work on a 50/50 or some sort of share plan with the residents and the City.
- A .5 mill for sidewalks would capture about \$43,000 and the \$50.00 assessment brought in \$150,000.
- Would like to see a sidewalk evaluation and identify owners whose sidewalks are in need of repair.
- Work in conjunction with the Neighborhood Planning Councils as communication will be a key factor in determining what needs to be done with sidewalk repairs.
- May be able to use the non-motorized funding from Act 51 funds.

***Council Member Barnes left at 8:12 p.m.*

Neighborhood Stabilization:

- Creates structures for Council and the Community
- Programming to bring community together for dialogue
- Get people talking to one another
- Neighborhood Planning Councils
- Communication via facebook and city newsletter
- Removal of blighted homes
- Habitat for Humanity is looking for a few small houses to rehabilitate
- Implement master calendar
- Vision should start with Neighborhood Planning Councils
- There are currently ten (10) houses to be demolished in the next few months.
May be an additional ten (10) to twenty (20) houses demolished this year

Comments were received from Council Members Barnes, Reid, Lawler, Spicer and French; Mayor Pro Tem Brown; Interim City Manager Kipp; Director of Public Services Lenardson; Finance Director Mead and Director of Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Tracy.

- V. 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 Interim City Manager Kipp and Finance Director Mead.

- VI. ADJOURNMENT

Spicer moved, French supported, CARRIED, to ADJOURN Study Session. (4-0, vv).

Mayor Pro Tem Brown adjourned the Study Session at 8:27 p.m.

Date

Jill Domingo
City Clerk