

Alma, Michigan  
July 25, 2017

**Present:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**Absent:** None.

**Work Session began at 5:30 p.m.**

City Manager Moore informed the Commissioners:

On Thursday, July 20, 2017, Ron Turner announced to the staff that he is planning to retire on December 1, 2017. Mr. Turner has had the date set for a couple of years. For the last couple of years, he has been working on a transition plan with his staff so that they would be prepared when the actual date came. He has a good staff that will be able to handle the future after he retires.

Mr. Moore attached a link ([www.gratiot.org](http://www.gratiot.org)) to the draft master plan. The document is too large to include with the newsletter. All the communities in Gratiot County will begin reviewing this document for eventual approval. The approval process is long. The planning commission must notify all the surrounding communities, utilities, MDOT, MDNR, and others of the proposed master plan document. The comment period takes 60-days. Once the planning commission reviews all the comments, the planning commission will hold a public hearing to listen to any public comments before making a recommendation to the City Commission to approve the master plan. The City Commission can then either approve the master plan or send it back to the planning commission for revisions.

During the last meeting, a number of comments were made about the Farmers' Market and reasons for the relocation. Aeric Ripley has prepared a brief presentation about the Opera Block and the relocation of the Farmer's Market. He is planning to present it during the work session.

Aeric Ripley, Assistant City Manager/DDA Director presented a retrospective on the Opera Block and Farmers Market. He stated that this project all started with the fire that took place in the Opera Block on October 14, 2010. A developer purchased the Opera Block property days before it was to be demolished. His plan was to redevelop the property historically for college housing and commercial venues on the ground floor. City Commission, DDA and the Community as a whole were behind this plan. Do whatever it takes was the common theme. Staff reached out to MEDC for funding to assist with the redevelopment. Applications were submitted in September 2012. In June 2012, a public hearing was held to approve Special Use Permits to allow residential housing in the Opera Block. Parking was a large discussion point. Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Certificate and approval by the State Tax Commission was approved in 2013 for the project. The parking lots # 4, 8 and 1 were going to be needed for the new traffic associated with the project. The Farmers Market located in parking lot #4 would need to be moved. Many new locations were discussed. Frontier parking lot, South end of Library parking lot, Middle school property on Downie, and the Scotland Yard Park. On July 17, 2013, the Farmers Market opened at the new location at Scotland Yard Park. Complaints about the parking lot came from everyone. The Farmers were not happy about moving, but now they love the location. The Market on the east side of Alma makes sense. The west side of Alma has Alma College and the Central section will have the Opera Block when completed and now the east end has a draw with the market. In June 2014 a Community Revitalization Program grant award in the amount of \$1 million was awarded for rehab of the Opera Block. A CDBG grant award in the amount of \$419,958 (\$108,737 local share) to rehab Parking Lots # 4, 8 and 1, replace historically correct LED street and parking lot lights was awarded. No businesses were being asked to contribute to the local match. Multiple meetings were held to extend the funding in 2015 to keep the project progressing. In April 2016, the grant award funding was withdrawn from the MEDC with the option to reapply when the project got back on track. Today, the parties who have financial interests in the project are working on a solution to get the project completed. In September 2016, the City Commission was informed that the Herbert Leuth Endowment Fund had dollars available to improve something in the parks. Scotland and Wright parks were suggested as possibilities. The Alma Park and Recreation Board reviewed the possibilities and recommended paving the Scotland Yard Park parking lot

to the City Commission. The park is used for the Farmers Market twice a week from May through October and the adjacent business is also willing to contribute to build the parking lot. At the Budget Goal Setting Session and at the Budget Review meetings, paving Scotland Yard parking lot was discussed. On May 23, 2017, the FY 2018 Budget was approved and the paving project went out for bid. The bids were received on June 7, 2017. The bids came in higher than estimated. The adjacent business stepped up to pay an additional amount to cover their share of the extra costs. Hopefully, the Opera Block project will be resolved soon. At this point moving the Farmers Market back to Parking lot #4 would only result in moving again once the Opera Block project is completed. A statement at the last meeting was made that the attendance at the Farmers Market was declining. An explanation for this is the opening of the Meijer store in 2014 and the new addition of Farmers Markets in St. Louis and Ithaca.

On Wednesday, July 19, 2017, Aeric Ripley held an informational meeting for interested property owners in the downtown area. For the next round of apartment rehabilitation grants, we are looking at bundling several properties into one grant submission. As property owners are seeing the results of the previous grant projects, local interest in furthering the program has increased. One of the real benefits of undertaking the projects is to bring the existing buildings up to current code. Ten people attended the meeting. The next step is to walk through all the properties to prepare preliminary cost estimates of the projects. Once the cost estimate is known, property owners will decide if they are still interested.

We have concluded negotiations with the Police Sergeants unit. Mr. Moore will be asking the City Commission to go into executive session to be briefed about the proposed agreement prior to asking the City Commission to approve the agreement.

**Alma, Michigan**  
**July 25, 2017**

Mayor Mapes called a regular meeting of the Alma City Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building.

**Present:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**Absent:** None.

Mayor Mapes asked the City Commission and members of the audience to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2017 regular meeting.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Harrington to receive a thank you card to the City Commission for approving the Scotland Yard Parking lot Project from the Farm Market Vendors.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Allman to approve the requests for payment in the amount of \$1,980.00 to Delta College Public Safety and Training for the annual Police In-Service Training Consortium Membership and \$3,541.35 to Mid-Michigan Railroad for the annual Pipeline crossing fee for Court St., Bridge St. and the Pine River Sewer.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Allman approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$1,684.00 to Water Cannon Inc. for a pressure washer for cleaning, paint stripping and prep of the buildings and structures of the Wastewater Department.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Vice-Mayor Nyman to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$2,333.20 to National Fire Protection Association Headquarters for the certified fire inspector training of the City's DDA Director and Code Enforcement Officer and a one year membership in NFPA. Alma Downtown Development Authority will pay for the DDA Director to attend the training in the amount of one half of the costs.

Commissioner Harrington asked will the fire inspector be doing inspections all over Alma or just certain businesses. City Manager Moore answered that the fire inspector can inspect all properties in the City. Assistant City Manager, Aeric Ripley stated that the goal of fire inspections is to work with the property owners to bring their properties into compliance to not just make their property safe but their neighbor as well.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$1,539.00 to Kustom Signals, Inc. for a Raptor RP-1 dual k-band antenna for a police vehicle to allow for both front and rear radar detection.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Vice-Mayor Nyman to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$2,305.00 to MassTrans for the MassTrans Frontline Conference for the Alma Transportation staff August 11-13, 2017. Conference fees will be reimbursed 100% by Michigan Rural Transit Assistance Program.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Mott as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$2,603.68 to Boyne Mountain Resort for rooms for the MassTrans Frontline Conference for the Alma Transportation staff August 11-13, 2017. Conference fees will be reimbursed 100% by Michigan Rural Transit Assistance Program.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Ayers to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$10,490.00 to Mainstream Computers for the one year subscription license for the MS Office 365 for the City of Alma.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Ayers to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$11,000.00 to Etna Supply for a Sensus water Utility Meter reading gun and software and support services.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Vice-Mayor Nyman to approve the request for purchase in the amount of \$24,032.00 to The Library Corporation for server updates within the five year contract, OPAC updates for the first year of the five year contract and ILS support and software updates for the first year of the contract for the Alma Public Library.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Vice-Mayor Nyman to approve a resolution introducing Ordinance #792 to amend Chapter 60 of the Ordinances of the City of Alma through the addition of Section 60-188, to set forth the specific steps to be taken by the owner and/or insurance carrier relative to the restoration of property after demolition, regardless of the reason for the demolition.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Ayers to authorize the execution of a five year agreement with The Library Corporation for a five year contract for Library Solutions system hardware, software and technical support for the Alma Public Library.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Ayers to receive the following reports and place them on file: Alma Transportation June 2017 Report; Alma Police Report June 2017 and the July Board of Review minutes July 18, 2017.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Ayers to enter into executive closed session to discuss labor negotiations and to review personnel matters at the request of the employee.

City Clerk Letourneau took a roll call vote to enter into executive closed session at 6:19 p.m.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

Return to the regular session at 6:30 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve Warrant No. 18-01 and to authorize the City Treasurer to issue checks in payment of all claims.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.  
**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Mott as supported by Commissioner Ayers to approve a four year contract with the Police Officers Labor Council representing the Police Sergeants of the Alma Police Department effective July 31, 2017.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.  
**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Mott to accept the City Manager's resignation and execute a separation and release agreement effective by the end of the day July 26, 2017. This agreement follows the City Manager's contract which allows a six month severance pay; continuation of Health, Life and Dental insurance and vacation for the six month period. The City will not contest unemployment benefits if applied for by Mr. Moore.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.  
**No:** None.

Mayor Mapes wanted to thank Mr. Moore for his service to the City. It has been a pleasure to work with him over all these years. Mayor Mapes stated that Mr. Moore has got the City out of a number of tough spots. Everyone on the Commission as well as those in the audience wish him the best.

Motion by Commissioner Mott as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to nominate and approve Matthew Schooley to the position of Interim City Manager.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.  
**No:** None.

Commissioner Harrington thanked Mr. Moore for his service and his commitment to the City. She has enjoyed working with him.

Commissioner Mott thanked Mr. Moore, it has been a really hard time.

Commissioner Allman also added his thanks, you were a big help to him. Good luck to you and thanks to Matt for stepping in.

Commissioner Ayers wanted to wish Phil good luck in the future, it has been a pleasure to work with him and thanks to Matt for stepping up.

Vice-Mayor Nyman and Commissioner Piccolo thanked Mr. Moore for his hard work.

City Attorney Costanzo stated that the financial situation in this community has been rough for several years and it doesn't look like it will get better soon. A lot of credit should be given to Phil Moore for shepherding us through these financial tough times. There may have been disagreements with Mr. Moore but there should be no disagreement that because of Mr. Moore this City is so much better. A second thing to remember is that Mr. Moore, by the City Charter, could have made this separation a lot more difficult, time consuming and costly but because he puts the City first he has made this transition easier, which should be noted.

Mayor Mapes echoed the City Attorney's comments and is looking forward to working with Matt Schooley. He will be a great leader for the City. He noted that the City has a great staff at all levels of the city. The staff will do well for us in the future.

Mayor Mapes opened the floor for Public comment.

Laurie Wilson, 202 Mechanic addressed the Commission with her concerns about a safe community. She believes that the police officers drive around our community to keep us safe. They are the best people. They help people of all ages.

Mark Prout, 1006 Iowa wants to bring his concerns of the speeding of cars on Iowa Street. He has brought these concerns to the Commission before. There are three routes, Warwick, Lincoln and Iowa that bring west traffic into the City. All but Iowa are posted with speed limits signs. Iowa has the most concentration of homes. With the College, the rails to trails and many children in the area this excessive speed is dangerous. He feels that Iowa street needs to be posted, this matter needs to be addressed.

Matt Schooley, 516 Gratiot wanted all to know that these have been really tough times the last couple of months. Phil, I don't want you to leave this place without knowing that people can't make a judgement on your work for the City based on the last two months. We both hired in at the same time , I just want to tell you I appreciate everything you have done, you have given me a lot of opportunities and my pledge to you all is that I will be myself and try to get us through these times. Please do not take a man who has been here an awfully long time and base his whole body of work on the last couple of months. You, Phil have done a great job and thank you very much.

Barb Gager, 211 Fleming wanted to echo Matt Schooley's comments. She had worked closely with Phil. It has been hard the last couple of months on everyone. Phil did a good job and she wishes him good luck and thank you for your service.

Mayor Mapes wanted to express his appreciation to everyone on the Commission for their work. We can see that the process set out by the Charter does work. Although we don't always agree with each other, we were very civil and professional. He appreciated the effort everyone put forth.

Laurie Wilson, 202 Mechanic spoke again about the traffic light at Pine and Superior. Cars making left turns are not paying attention to pedestrians crossing. Someone will get hit at that intersection. Drivers need to pay better attention.

Being no further Commissioner or Public comment Mayor Mapes asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:53 p.m.

**Yes:** Allman, Ayers, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Nyman & Piccolo.

**No:** None.

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Gregory S. Mapes, Mayor

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Sheila Letourneau, City Clerk