

**Present:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**Absent:** Stahl.

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

City Manager Schooley presented the February 22, 2019 Newsletter for discussion:

Informational

- Tour of Water and Wastewater Plants

Thanks so much to all of you for attending the tour last week. It was very meaningful to the water and wastewater plants to have you visit. I hope you have a better understanding of how much goes into making these plants operate. Nice to see our employees are making efforts to become better at what they do on a daily basis.

- GAWA: City of St. Louis Finance Responsibility

At the February 15<sup>th</sup> Gratiot Area Water Authority meeting the board signed a resolution assigning the duties of accounting and finance to the City of St. Louis. I have attached the Amendment to the Water Service Agreement that will be brought before you at the first March meeting.

- Airport Authority

The Gratiot Community Airport Authority met on Thursday February 21<sup>st</sup>. The major agenda item was the request from both Pine River and Arcada Township to be released from the authority. The agreement that established the authority allows for an entity to be released from the agreement upon a resolution of their own board and a 2/3 vote of the authority board. Current members of the authority board are Alma, St. Louis, Ithaca, Gratiot County, Pine River Township, and Arcada Township. After a lengthy discussion, the agenda item was tabled, and a committee was formed by the board to look into some possible funding alternatives for the airport. I will chair the committee that consists of Ithaca City Manager Chris Yonker, St. Louis City Manager Kurt Giles, Gratiot County Commissioner Tim Lambrecht and Greater Gratiot Development Director Jim Wheeler. The next full authority board meeting was set for March 21<sup>st</sup>.

- Joint Session of Alma School Board and Alma City Commission

Just a reminder that we have set a joint meeting of both the Alma Public Schools Board of Education and the Alma City Commission for March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm at Alma High School to discuss the development of the old Alma Middle School site on Downie Street.

- Leadership Conference

The City, Alma College, Greater Gratiot Development, Alma Public Schools, Mid-Michigan Medical Center, and Masonic Pathways have been working on the development of a Community Leadership Day hosted by Alma College where invited community leaders in our community get together to begin a conversation on the future of Alma. We are shooting for a date in early June to hold the conference. That should be finalized in the next week or so. I meet with the leaders of these organizations monthly to discuss city issues and the community in general. I am impressed with their enthusiasm and commitment to making Alma an even better place to live. As stated in the 2019 Goal Setting session, community visioning is a priority for the upcoming year. My hope is that this leadership day will be the springboard to an enthusiastic beginning of that process. More information to come in the upcoming weeks.

- An additional item is being added to the Newsletter. Aeris has been speaking to an interested party that would like to lease the open space in the State Street Plaza. The rent would be \$1200 per month with the lessee

paying all utilities. Once the party has agreed to the terms, we will bring the lease agreement to the Commission to approve.

- FY2018 Audit: Ali Barnes, Yeo and Yeo

The FY2018 independent Auditor's Report and Matters for Management's Consideration will be presented by Ali Barnes of Yeo and Yeo CPAs and Business Consultants during the commission work session prior to the meeting this Tuesday at 5:30 pm.

Ms. Barnes presented an Unmodified Financial Statement Opinion on the General, Wastewater, Water and Internal Service funds. All are positive and healthy. There are weaknesses in having to perform audit adjustments, prior period adjustments and in written procedures. There were difficulties encountered in performing the audit, which resulted in the audit process taking longer than it should. Adjustments to material misstatements needed to be corrected. The BS&A software conversion was scheduled at the same time as the audit, which took Finance personnel time away from the audit concerns. A number of items have been listed for Management Consideration. There is a systemic problem with the Finance department in correcting Material Weaknesses of Audit adjustments, prior period adjustments and written procedures.

Manager Schooley stated that we need to move forward, these problems have existed for a while. The prior years are done. We have to get better with our jobs. It is important to use the Audit as a tool to correct our weaknesses.

Commissioner Mott asked where do we get help? Manager Schooley suggested we bring in someone to look at the Finance department and personnel.

Commissioner Pitts stated that moving forward things have to be corrected. We need reports to make the Commission accountable.

Mayor Mapes agreed.

The February 26, 2019, City Commission work session concluded at 6:14 p.m.

**Alma, Michigan  
February 26, 2019**

Mayor Mapes called a regular meeting of the Alma City Commission to order at 6:15 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building.

**Present:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**Absent:** Stahl.

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 Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Allman to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2019 regular meeting.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Motion by Vice-Mayor Harrington as supported by Commissioner Mott to set a public hearing for Tuesday, March 26 at 6:00 p.m. to review and consider submission of a Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Grant application for the replacement and rehab of park restrooms located in Wright, Riverside, and Pine River/Conservation Park.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve a resolution adopting five year software support and maintenance agreement with Frontier Communications of America, Inc. for a total cost of \$25,154.66.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to receive the Code Enforcement January 2019 Report.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Allman to add the Finance Committee report to the Agenda.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Vice-Mayor Harrington gave the Finance Committee report that at the last City Commission meeting the Commission appointed a Sub-Committee to review the policies and processes of the Finance Department. Matt, Nick, Greg and I have met twice to review the current financial operations in light of the recent audit. We will continue working to address the audit findings with the goal of strengthening our internal systems to then move toward a more robust analytical projection framework.

Motion by Commissioner Mott as supported by Commissioner Allman as to receive the Finance Committee report.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to appoint Heather Therrien to the Alma Planning Commission to fulfill the unexpired term of Ryan Pellerito ending May 1, 2021.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Received a presentation from Aeric Ripley, Assistant City Manager/DDA Director on the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Grant application for the replacement and rehab of park restrooms located in Wright, Riverside, and Pine River/Conservation Park.

Mr. Ripley with the support of the Parks and Recreation Committee to again apply for this trust grant for the Park Restrooms. This application will be the same as last year's application for the three Park restrooms. At the last Parks and Rec meeting it was discussed how to increase the point total awarded to an application.

Priority #1 is the Wright Park Bathroom. The Committee recommends replacement of the whole structure with a new facility, to provide 4 universal designed, single occupancy restrooms. The plan is to model after the new restroom on Charles Avenue. The estimated cost would be \$200,000. An additional project is to update the electrical to the pavilions and do needed sewer work. Priority #2 is the rehab of Pine River/Conservation Park bathroom. This structure also houses a wastewater lift station. Wastewater Funds will be used to do repairs on the

roof and brick in the amount of \$40,500. Another \$50,000 est. will be used to rehab the bathroom into 5 universal designed single occupancy restrooms. Priority #3 is to rehab Riverside Park bathroom into 2 universal designed single occupancy restrooms and to paint the roof and exterior at a cost of \$45,000.

Last year we were very close in the point score in obtaining the grant, in this application we hope to score additional points in

- Renovation – 20 more points (document when the building were built)
- Use Environmentally friendly features – 20 more points (add \$6000 to the overall budget for plantings, and lighting)
- Provide a marketing plan for the Universal Designed Restrooms – 20 more points.
- Increase the City's match from 35% to 40% - 10 more points.

We have been encouraged to reapply for the grant.

The goal is to be in the top 30 Communities applying for the grant.

The total cost for the three bathroom facilities will be \$301,000 adding the engineering cost of an additional \$45,150 will bring the total to \$346,150. Requesting 60% from MDNR in the amount of \$207,690. The remaining 40% will need to come from the General fund grants, etc. in the amount of \$138,460. A Public Hearing is scheduled for March 26, 2019 and the application is due April 1, 2019.

Mr. Ripley also noted that the cost for outfitting the parks with portable restrooms would cost the City, for the useful life of a restroom structure 40 years, \$102,000. per park. The Spring of 2020 is the estimated time line for completion of this rehab and reconstruction of Park bathrooms.

Commissioner Mott asked if applying only for Wright Park would make a difference? Aeric responded that it would not. Commissioner Mott asked if there was a way to spruce up Wright Park in the interim of getting the grant. It was agreed that this could be attempted.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Allman to approve Warrant No. 19-16 and to authorize the City Treasurer to issue checks in payment of all claims.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

Mayor Mapes asked for Commissioner comments.

Vice-Mayor Harrington stated that after this meeting she will be attending the Alma High School Band concert.

Commissioner Allman congratulated the AHS band on obtaining new uniforms. He also enjoyed the Water and Wastewater plant tours. They were very enlightening.

Commissioner Pitts wanted to congratulate the Alma High School athletes that made it to the State Finals. She will be working on creating a "Panther Day" for all Alma Students to acknowledge them.

City Attorney Costanzo congratulated the Alma Wrestlers for being Regional champs.

Mayor Mapes announced that the Play is still on at the Strand Theatre and he congratulated the school students and Ms. Therrien on her appointment to the Planning Commission. Several people applied for the appointment.

Mayor Mapes opened the floor for Public Comments.

Laurie Wilson, 517 Michigan, St Louis wanted to than the St Louis Firefighters for showing their appreciation to a Firefighter who retired after 42 years of service.

Chuck Murphy, County Commissioner thanked the Commission for having the tours of the Water and Wastewater plants. He also informed the Commission that Seville Township is experiencing sewer problems. He was hoping that this Commission could look into the matter. Mayor Mapes answered that Seville Township would need to ask us officially to consider the situation.

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

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:50 p.m.

**Yes:** Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Piccolo & Pitts.

**No:** None.

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Gregory S. Mapes, Mayor

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Sheila Letourneau, City Clerk