

Present: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitt & Stahl.

Absent: Piccolo.

Work Session began at 5:30 p.m.

City Manager Schooley presented the September 20, 2019 Newsletter for discussion.

Agenda Items

Resolutions - DNR Grant Application

Adopt a resolution of support for the revised Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Grant application of March 26, 2019 for the replacement of park restrooms located in Wright, Riverside, and Pine River/Conservation Parks.

The Michigan DNR has provided the preliminary scores for the Alma Park Restroom Rebuild & Rehab - Accessibility Project application submitted to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The communities are given the opportunity to have MDNR review their points and provide additional information to improve those scores. The Alma Parks Committee reviewed the information and compared it to last year's application on Monday, September 16, 2019.

I am pleased to report that the additions that were made to this year's application through discussions with the Alma Parks Committee and the City Commission improved our scores from 290 in 2018, to 360 in 2019. Taking our score of 360 and comparing it with 2018 project scores we would be in the top 34 projects, which included 4 State Development Projects. Last year the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund awarded funds to the top 34 projects. The total development grant recommendation amount was \$7,393,400, with \$6,853,400 going to 30 Local Development projects, and \$540,000 going to 4 State Development projects.

Comparing our score this year with the scores of projects funded last year, the project would have been funded. There is no guarantee 360 would get this project funded this year. As we discussed at the March 26th City Commission meeting, there are only a few areas in the application the City of Alma can increase the score, based on the criteria. One of the ways we increased the score this year was increasing the amount of local match to the project. The commission approved increasing the match from 34% to 40%, and changes were made to the narrative dealing with accessibility, how the public would be informed of the accessibility of the new restrooms.

The Park Committee's review brought out only two areas where the score could be increased. One is under Collaboration; which requires an agreement with another entity to share in the upkeep of the project area. There is a possible 15 points available for "An informal maintenance agreement exists at the site which relates to or benefits the proposed project."

The Park Committee discussed reaching out to the Keep Alma Beautiful Committee to create an informal maintenance agreement for what KAB is already doing in the parks. Staff put a call in to our MDNR Grant administrator to see if this arrangement would count as an informal maintenance agreement. A letter from the KAB stating they would be providing assistance in and around the park areas where the restrooms are located would count for some points.

A second option brought to our attention by our MDNR Representative would be to provide a little more detail on the environmentally friendly elements to the project. For example, the landscaping near the restrooms are of native plants, LED lighting, where is it located, the addition of motion sensors, and the hand dryers will be hi-

efficiency dryers. There is a possible 20 points here.

A third option to increase our position is the most costly financially. There is 10 points available if the City Commission would decide to increase the local match from the 40% to the 50%. The increase would take the current match from \$138,400 to \$173,000, a \$34,600 increase to our local share. The Park Committee discussed this option and felt it would greatly improve the chances of securing the funding.

Staff is confident with our score, based on last years funded projects, but we should increase our score if we can. Staff is recommending we work with the Keep Alma Beautiful Committee to draft a letter specific to supporting the cleanup and maintenance around the project areas and expand upon the environmental narrative. If our application were to receive the points from one or both, staff is very confident in receiving the funding. The increase in the local match is a City Commission decision and is the only option where the points are guaranteed, but these points come at a substantial increase to our budget. If the Commission decides to increase the local match a resolution has been prepared as required by the MDNR.

Information

Recognition for Doug Brooks

We continue to recognize the positive efforts of our employees that step up to the challenges of their job and best exemplify our Core Values of TRIPLE. Public Services Director David Ringle would like to recognize the efforts of Doug Brooks, crew leader in the Department of Public Works.

Attached is a Letter of Recognition for Doug for his efforts in turning our waste compost process into one of the best in the state. A recent visit by EGLE confirmed what a great job Doug is doing.

Doug will be presented with the letter and a City of Alma Challenge coin to recognize his efforts on behalf of the City of Alma and the residents.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION DOUG BROOKS

Over the past several years, it's been no secret that the Public Works Department has been running with an undersized workforce. Through aging infrastructure, increasing amounts of assets, adverse weather events, increases in both regulations and reporting and any combination thereof, all Public Works personnel throughout all Public Services divisions are being asked to do more with less. Some employees have stepped up to the challenge and have answered back with not only positive, but sometimes amazing results. Doug Brooks is one of those employees. Time and time again, Doug has risen to the occasion, and takes on these stressful challenges daily as the leader in the trenches, quite literally.

On the morning of September 11, 2019, the State of Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE) made a site visit to our yard waste compost site with little notice. Their site visit included walking the entire site, inspecting, analyzing, and measuring the piles, reviewing reporting, inquiring on current yard waste site practices and processes, material turnaround time, as well as making recommendations and requirements for future reporting and practices. When the visit concluded and a few recommendations were made, a statement was made to us by the gentleman from EGLE that we have a site that turns out some of the best compost in the region, and we also learned that one of our past users of the compost material is one of the pickiest choosers of compost in the state. It seemed the general consensus among the several of us there, that we're turning out a better product than what is required, and we took that as a major accomplishment. Much of that pride in accomplishment can be attributed to the efforts and "outside the box" thinking of Doug Brooks. With his planning and efforts, we are able to take yard waste material and within a year turn it around into desired compost.

The increases in users of the material and patrons of the site speak volumes for our practices and it helps exponentially with our required turnaround times for material. Each year, our piles seem to disappear faster, and

more and more residents are stopping by to load from our pile along Washington Avenue. Drive by and see for yourself. During the time, that morning, of EGLE's visit, there were three different residents loading from our pile. Doug has taken on many of the yard waste site activities himself, including monitoring and rotating the piles as well as staging the location of the piles and has done an outstanding job with his efforts as well as his crews, in addition to his daily tasks of leading Public Work's daily activities. Doug is a good crew leader and a 'go to person' over a diverse staff of employees with even more diversity in tasks and job requirements.

Good things are going on in our City that too many times go un-noticed. This situation needs to be recognized and Doug Brooks thanked for his service, commitment, and outside the box thinking. It is an honor and privilege today to award Mr. Brooks with this City of Alma Challenge coin. I hope you accept this as symbol of sincere gratitude and appreciation for your services to the City of Alma residents.

Finance Department Update

Finance Director/Treasurer, Kathy Phillips will take a piece of time during the work session to discuss some of the plans she has for reporting the processes in the department to you as commissioners and the public in general. She has been working on restructuring our internal fee process that has been troubling from a budget and audit stand point. I am attaching a document she created and handed out previously, A Glimpse into Finance; and The New Retirement Reality that was prepared for the finance committee earlier this month. Both of these documents will be helpful as we begin important finance discussions over the next couple months.

Ms. Phillips presented the Commissioners with the Treasury and Finance Report, Cash Summary by Bank, Check Register and Revenue and Expenditure Report for August 2019. Ms. Phillips concluded with an explanation of Internal Services Fees. These fees were for Accounting, Engineering, Garage Services, Public Works and Equipment Rental. The allocation of these fees have been frustrating and confusing. In analyzing the situation, there was no logical method to impose these fees on Departments. The decision was to eliminate the Internal Service Fees from the budget.

The September 24, 2019, City Commission work session concluded at 6:00 p.m.

**Alma, Michigan
September 24, 2019**

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, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

Absent: Piccolo.

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 Mott as supported by Vice-Mayor Harrington to approve the Amendment to the Agenda to recognize Children's Discovery Academy as a nonprofit organization.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Pitts to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2019 regular meeting, the September 10, 2019 Executive Closed Session and the September 13, 2019 Special Meeting.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Held a Public Hearing to consider a request from Avalon & Tahoe Manufacturing, Inc. for a PA 198 Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption Certificate.

Kasey Zehner, Greater Gratiot Development Authority, provided a brief report about the company's proposed expansion. They are the largest private employer in Alma as well as the County with 391 employees. Their most recent expansion was in 2017. This expansion started in May of 2019 which will increase the facility by 23,000 square feet. After construction the facility will total 260,000 square feet. This project is expected to be completed by the end of the year and will retain its current employees and add an additional 35 new employees. The exemption that is being presented will be in 1.2 million in real property value. If their request for a tax exemption is approved by the City Commission, the application will be sent to the State Tax Commission for final approval. Frank Nerychel and Jim Block of Avalon & Tahoe are here tonight.

Frank Nerychel, Avalon & Tahoe Manufacturing, Inc., addressed the Commission on the company expansion. Avalon has an excellent relationship with the City. This expansion is a continuation of the 2017 project. Avalon & Tahoe Manufacturing, Inc. is expanding its current facility with increased production and office space and a new dealer meeting room. The expansion will also include new equipment purchases totaling \$1.44 million (classified as EMPP and subject to ESA). They need more meeting room space for employees as well as dealers. He explained that an open house was held in July for dealers, and they had sales of 3000 boats. He believes the company is moving in the right direction. He asked if the Commission if they had any questions.

Mayor Mapes made a comment that Avalon has been a great partner and the facility looks great. It is amazing to see the number of boats being produced.

City Manager Schooley said he went to the dealer show and was impressed with the facility and the products.

Commissioner Pitts stated that family members from out of state were happy to tell all that these boats came from their home town, Alma.

Mr. Nerychel appreciates our consideration of this tax exemption request.

Les Rosan, 889 Mill Street asked about the bike lane adjacent to the property if the construction was causing deterioration of the road.

David Ringle, Public Services Director stated that was the natural deterioration of the road surface. He also added that it has been great working with Avalon on this project. Avalon will also be fixing the sidewalks on the property.

Being no more comments, Mayor Mapes asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Motion by Commissioner Mott, as supported by Commissioner Allman to close the public hearing at 6:15 p.m.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Commissioner Mott, as supported by Commissioner Pitts:

Whereas, pursuant to PA 198 of 1974, as amended, after a duly noticed public hearing held on July 24, 2012, this City Commission by resolution established an Industrial Development District; and

Whereas, Avalon & Tahoe Manufacturing, Inc. has filed an application for an Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate with respect to a new facility to be acquired and installed within the Industrial Development District; and

Whereas, before acting on said application, the City of Alma held a hearing on September 24, 2019 at the Alma Municipal Building, 525 E. Superior St. at 6:00 p.m., at which hearing the applicant, the Assessor and a representative of the affected taxing units were given written notice and were afforded an opportunity to be heard on said application; and

Whereas, construction of the facility and installation of new machinery and equipment had not begun earlier than six (6) months before August 16, 2019, the date of acceptance of the application for the Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate; and

Whereas, completion of the additions to the facility is calculated to and will, at the time of issuance of the certificate, have the reasonable likelihood to retain, create or prevent the loss of employment in the City of Alma, and

Whereas, the aggregate SEV of real and personal property exempt from ad valorem taxes within the City of Alma, after granting this certificate will not exceed 5% of an amount equal to the sum of the SEV of the unit, plus the SEV of real and personal property thus exempted.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the City of Alma City Commission that:

1. The City of Alma finds and determines that the granting of the Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate considered together with the aggregate amount of certificates previously granted and currently in force under PA 198 of 1974, shall not have the effect of substantially impeding the operation of the City of Alma, or impairing the financial soundness of a taxing unit which levies ad valorem property taxes in the City of Alma.
2. The application from Avalon & Tahoe Manufacturing, Inc. for an Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate, with respect to a New Facility on the following described parcel of real property situated within the Industrial Development District to wit:

That parcel of land described as all property located north of Michigan Avenue beginning at Bridge Avenue going west and south of the Pine River including all vacant properties now owned by Avalon & Tahoe Mfg., Inc.

be and the same is hereby approved.

3. The Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate, when issued, shall be and remain in force for a period of twelve years after completion.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Resolution Declared Adopted.

Motion by Commissioner Pitts, as supported by Vice-Mayor Harrington, to adopt a resolution authorizing Mayor Mapes to execute the PA 198 Tax Exemption Certificate Agreement on behalf of the City of Alma.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

The following preamble and resolution was offered by Commissioner Pitts as supported by Commissioner Allman:

Whereas, the City of Alma City Commission supports the submission of a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) application titled, "Alma Park Restrooms Rebuild/Rehab-Accessibility Project" to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for a development project encompassing the rebuilding of the Wright Park Restroom, rehabbing Pine River/Conservation Park and Riverside Park Restrooms, upon completion of the project, the aforementioned park restrooms will be of universal design, single occupancy, family friendly, vandal proof as possible; and,

Whereas, the proposed application is supported by the Community's 5-Year Approved Parks and Recreation Plan; and,

Whereas, the City of Alma is hereby making a financial commitment to the project in the amount of \$173,000 for engineering and construction, in cash and/or force account; and,

Now Therefore, Be It Resolved the City of Alma City Commission hereby authorizes submission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Application for \$346,000, and further resolves to make available its financial obligation amount of \$173,000 (50%) of a total \$346,00 project cost, during the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Pitts as supported by Vice-Mayor Harrington to adopt a resolution recognizing Children's Discovery Academy of Alma Michigan as a nonprofit organization operating in the community for the purpose of obtaining a Charitable Gaming License in order to hold a raffle on October 26, 2019.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Motion by Vice-Mayor Harrington as supported by Commissioner Pitts to approve the resolution ratifying the contract with UniFirst Uniform Company for uniform and shop rag rental services for the period 12/1/19-11/30/22 in the amount of \$16,568.76.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Motion by Vice-Mayor Harrington as supported by Commissioner Allman to receive the following reports and place them on file: Alma Police Department August 2019 Report; Solid Waste Services Guide, Alma Planning Commission meeting minutes of September 9, 2019 and the Park and Recreation September 16, 2019 meeting minutes.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitt & Stahl.

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Vice-Mayor Harrington to approve Warrant No. 20-06 and to authorize the City Treasurer to issue checks in payment of all claims.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Mayor Mapes asked for Commissioner comments.

Commissioner Mott expressed his thanks to Doug Brooks and the Public Works Department for the positive work being done at the Yardwaste site.

Commissioner Allman wanted to put in a plug for the Farmer's Market. It is a wonderful gathering event for the community. Everyone should go.

Commissioner Stahl Stated that she is enjoying the new website, it looks great.

Commissioner Pitts wanted to thank the volunteers and the Keep Alma Beautiful Committee for the great job done on the downtown Clean Up day. The Alma High School Homecoming is Friday.

City Attorney Costanzo congratulated the Public Works Department on the Yardwaste site and also thanked Avalon & Tahoe on their investment in Alma. They are special.

City Manager Schooley wanted to remind the Commissioners of the meeting of Community Leaders scheduled for October 9th at the Opera House for a conversation about how we can strengthen Alma's future.

He again wanted to acknowledge Doug Brooks on his efforts for the Community and the City at the Yardwaste site and to note that the Challenge Coin for his efforts was presented to him.

Commissioner Stahl added that on October 15th there will be a meeting to discuss Water Issues in St. Louis.

Mayor Mapes thanked Doug Brooks for his efforts. A lot of good things are happening in Alma. He is happy and hopeful that grant funding for the Park Bathrooms can be attained. He congratulated Kasey on her work with Avalon & Tahoe on their expansion.

Mayor Mapes opened the floor for Public Comments.

Laurie Wilson, St. Louis expressed her concern on the traffic issues on Wright Avenue. She feels that drivers travel to fast, people should slow down. Remember Safety first.

Les Rosan, 889 Mill wanted to publicly acknowledge Alma College on what they have done for the Opera House. He asked if a loader could be available to load the mulch at the Yardwaste site for citizens.

Bob Albrecht stated that a loader is available if the need is 5 yards or larger.

City Manager Schooley added that some of the Department Heads will be going to a conference in Ludington on Small Town Development on October 1st and 2nd. The next City Commission meeting will not have a work session due to the Opera House dedication that same day.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Pitts to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Yes: Allman, Harrington, Mapes, Mott, Pitts & Stahl.

No: None.

Gregory S. Mapes, Mayor

Sheila Letourneau, City Clerk