

Alma, Michigan
May 9, 2017

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

Absent: None.

Work session of Alma City Commission began at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Moore reported that at the last City Commission meeting, a citizen made a comment about the dock at the boat launch. This last winter our public works crews had time to catch up on some backlogged projects around the city. One of the projects was pulling the dock out of the water. The frame was sandblasted, painted, and new decking was added. This repair work made the dock look like new.

He spent two days with his colleagues from Mt. Pleasant and Clare as well as Tony Minghine from the Michigan Municipal League. They spoke to the Alma and Clare Rotary Clubs, a Mt. Pleasant community forum and the Morning Sun editorial board. Our message was that the Michigan municipal financing system is broken. Revenues go down during bad times but do not go up during good times. Revenues are not tracking with the economy. Cities have very limited means of increasing revenue. On average in other states, general fund revenues increased by 50% between 2002 and 2012. In Michigan, the revenues dropped an average of 10% over the same time period. Home rule in Michigan is different than home rule in other states. In Michigan, we can only do what is permitted by specific state law. In other states, cities can raise revenue as long as the state doesn't have a law prohibiting it. They have many more revenue options and the other states are contributing more to the cities. We need to focus on true growth which is defined as growth in population. Michigan's population has been flat for decades. If Michigan had had just average population growth since 1980, our state would have 14 million. That would make a big difference in the economy, the tax base, and the jobs available.

Our downtown has experienced three fires in the past seven years. We need to be more aggressive with a fire inspection program. We have tried to get various employees certified and able to inspect the property. We have not had much success. Mr. Moore is ready to consider other models of service such as finding a firm that specializes in fire inspections. He also believes that we should have business license requirement. License fees are not the objective. Rather, the City should know about change of use groups if the business changes hands or they expand their business offerings. The City needs to encourage property owners to make updates to their property particularly with their electrical systems.

At the last City Commission meeting, we were asked about the suggestions made by Lieutenant Overla. Mr. Moore and the Staff have been reviewing and working on many of the suggestions. Charging for fire services has been discussed by the staff and the City Commission a number of times. Commissioner Harrington spoke that she is not supportive of this. She feels that people will not be able to afford such a fee and it may lead to them trying to handle a fire on their own. Which could lead to great tragedy. It was suggested that we look at contracting out our services with other entities. I have spoken with the City of Saint Louis. They have similar budget challenges that we do. They are interested in looking at sharing services. Any successful contracts will not be quick. It will take some time. He is open to looking at a number of the budget line items. There will not be great savings in the line items but it is always worth reviewing. On the suggestion to examine the fleet size, the plan has been to have the new Director review after they have an opportunity to learn about our operation. We have retired the K9 unit as suggested. Lieutenant Overla made three recommendations related to fire department compensation. During the budget review session, he was given direction by the City Commission to review and restructure the fire compensation package.

The first draft of the master plan update has been received. He and Aeric Ripley are working through the document. For the most part, the document looks great. We will be asking the Planning Commission to help make the first pass of the document. Once the Planning Commission has had a chance, we will be asking the City Commission to also review the document.

At the last planning commission meeting, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to change the zoning on some college owned property on Cedar from R1A to R2. We were not able to get the paperwork to the City Attorney in time to get the ordinance for this agenda packet. We are hoping the ordinance arrives before the meeting so it can be introduced at this meeting. The College is planning to build a parking lot this summer which means they have a tight deadline to meet the opening of Fall classes.

**Alma, Michigan
May 9, 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 requested that two items be added to tonight's agenda. Consider adding an additional Comment Section for Commissioners at the beginning of this meeting and under New Business consider a resolution to approve the Mayor to form a subcommittee of three Commissioners to investigate the recent series of events and the General operations of the City.

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve these additions to the May 9, 2017 Agenda.

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

No: None.

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

Mayor Mapes wanted to thank everyone for coming and address the events that has brought us to these current circumstances. He wants the Public to know that the Commissioners have heard their concerns and understands that the processes have failed. The Commission will restore order and make the processes right again. Economic factors is what lead to the two patrol officers layoffs. There is no inference to job performance or of them being disciplined. Budget cuts and staff reduction has been occurring for the last decade. The City Commission is a governing board not an managing board. Community safety is not at risk. We still have a staff of highly trained officers. There is sufficient staff to have two officers on each shift, the school officer will remain primarily in the schools and the police department will continue to work with the State Police Magnet force with investigations. Mistakes have been made. Communication has been inadequate. He is confident that this board will take proper corrective action. Mayor Mapes wishes to stop and reevaluate the Public Safety Director hiring process and to establish a subcommittee of Commissioners to take on the task of questioning the City Manager, Department Heads and Police staff and Fire staff. A report of the subcommittee will be brought back to the Commission and made public.

Commissioner Ayers relayed that the staffing of the Police department is at the 2004 level before the grants were received to hire additional officers now those grants have ended.

Commissioner Piccolo stated that we will need citizens help to proceed and restore the Community as whole again.

Commissioner Mott expressed his concerns for what has been written on social media. He has never been labeled despicable in his life. He was not made aware of the layoffs and would not have been in favor of the layoffs. He believes that we can work through this.

City Attorney Costanzo wanted to thank everyone for coming to this meeting and when it comes time for Public comment, please follow the procedure of the Agenda and speak only once. This is not a question and answer period, the Commission can make comments at the end. He spoke that layoffs effects a lot of people not just the employee. There is no political persuasion involved in the decision process. Citizens expect a certain level of service but we need funds to keep this level. We need to contact our State Representatives and Senators to help cities financially provide this level of service. This is the way democracy works.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2017 Budget Review meeting and the April 25, 2017 regular meeting.

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

No: None.

A public hearing was held at 6:14 p.m. to review the proposed FY 2018 Annual City Budget and related property tax millage rates. City Manager Moore provided a brief overview of the proposed budget which was presented to the City Commission on April 11, 2017. Mr. Moore presented a chart that showed that Michigan is the last state in the union when it comes to a share of State Revenue funds. The Proposed FY 2018 Budget was developed with the assumption of total revenue sources at \$11,361,276 with the following City property millage rates being proposed: General Fund millage of 14.406; a Transportation millage of .9604; a Voted Street millage of 2.50; Voted Library millage of 1.5; Library millage of .5 and a DDA millage within the district of 1.9716. Homestead millage will be \$46.0928 per \$1,000 assessed value and Non-Homestead millage will be \$64.0928 per \$1,000 assessed value.

Wastewater rates will increase 7%; water rates will have a slight decrease and solid waste rates will increase by a \$1.05 per month. Expenditure assumptions are \$10,513,862. Major projects include: well field expansion; processing the SAW Grant for assessment management, reconstruction of Ely and Euclid Streets; reconstruction of Lincoln Avenue, reduction of police staff and to pull out of the cable consortium.

City Manager Moore further explained the general fund trends of lost revenue to the City. The Operational budget FY2017, deducted over \$300,000.00 from fund balance. City Manager Moore stated that taking funds from the General Fund budget year after year will leave the fund balance at zero by the year 2023. Revenue options are few. We cannot keep making cuts to balance the budget. All Departments have been downsized to cut expenses. Another option would be an Income tax, which would not be popular. The other option would be to have a special assessment or voted millage for services but this can only hold of costs for a few years.

The reduction in the police staff will bring the department back to the levels of 2004 before we received grants to employ more officers. Those grants have run out and we can no longer keep those additional officers employed.

In the future we can only hope that revenue trends do not change for the worse and that the General Fund revenues stay the same rosy scenario. We need to prepare for the future with less revenues.

Mayor Mapes explained a basis of property tax break down with the City only receiving \$400.00 of every \$1,000.00 collected The remaining \$600.00 goes to the State, County and the Schools. We are in a downward spiral. We need to lobby our State Representatives and Senators to help fund Cities.

City Manager Moore also explained that Michigan is a home rule State but in Michigan, home rule only applies if the state statute allows the city to work within that statute.

Commissioner Ayers and Mott concurred that the State is taking the City's revenues away.

Commissioner Allman wanted the Governor to know that the money's being put away for a rainy day Fund that it is raining in Alma all the time.

Mayor Mapes states he is an advocate for a balanced budget using the General Fund to balance the budget speeds up our downward climb. He is not in favor of using the General Fund for operations.

Commissioner Allman added that last budget using General funds was decide with it being a one-time shot.

Mayor Mapes opened the floor for Public comments on the FY2018 Budget.

Laurie Wilson, 7996 N Alger Rd. feels that cuts need to be made elsewhere. Safety is most important to her and the community. The policemen and fire fighters are the best in the County.

Tim Cruttenden, 1015 Iowa understands there are budgetary issues but this year's budget was already allocated so where did the funds go. That there was the need to cut police officers in the middle of a pay period. That was not good, it leaves a very bad taste.

Jim Gunter, 206 Fleming Dr. wanted to address his concerns over charging for fire services. If you have to hire a company to collect the fee they will be going after the individual not the insurance companies. He feels that it is wrong to charge someone when their property is lost to a fire. He is against it.

Ron Vibbert, 912 W Center relayed that there is a structural issue in government. He does not think it is understood by the legislature. We need to educate our Representatives and Senators on the financial problems cities are experiencing. We need to also educate the Alma Citizens.

Mark Smoker, 925 Glencoe asked that the budget states that 3 police officers will be reduced from staff, now that two officers have been laid off will another soon follow. He understand the budget issues but feels that you cannot compare year 2004 to year 2017. Society is requiring more and more demands on police officers.

Michelle Pitts, 626 Slater have all departments been really looked at in ways to save money so that employees do not have to be laid off. Is outsourcing work that could be done by qualified employees costing the City. Why are we hiring outside engineers when we have an engineering staff?

Mr. Moore explained that the City doesn't have a licensed engineer on staff. Many projects require plans to be sealed by a licensed engineer.

Mayor Mapes stated that the City has tried to preserve Public Safety for years and we have looked at all departments for ways to save money.

Casey Mueller, 536 Wright asked about the 2018 project to reconstruct Lincoln Avenue is it necessary to use an outside engineer when we have staff that could do this work. Why are we outsourcing engineering projects.

Mr. Moore stated that Lincoln Avenue project is using Federal funds and a licensed MDOT qualified engineer has to be used.

Mark Smoker, 925 Glencoe wanted to also ask about in the 2017 budget it was recommended to replace a police officer position with a code enforcement position so now are we actually losing an additional officer.

Mr. Moore replied that we did not lose a police officer for the code enforcement position.

There being no further questions or comments, Mayor Mapes entertained a motion to close the public hearing.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to close the public hearing at 6:37 p.m.

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

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Mott to set a public hearing for Tuesday, June 13, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. to consider a special assessment roll for unpaid charges for noxious weed cutting, sidewalk replacement and utility billing charges for 2016.

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

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Ayers to set a public hearing for May 23, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. to consider a resolution to establish a Commercial Redevelopment District for the parcels at 117 & 119 W Superior Street.

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

No: None.

Abstain: Mapes.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Allman to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda for payment: \$8,471.00 to The Library Corporation for the annual hardware and software service contract; \$3,400.00 to PC Trans for the DART annual dispatch software rental; \$201,824.25 to Chase for the principal and interest payment on the Library Bond Debt and \$1,583.69 to Gratiot County Treasurer for payment on tax bill#2951-344-256-00.

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

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Ayers to approve the request for payment in the amount of \$2,294.00 to National Hose Testing Specialties, Inc. for fire hose, ground ladder and aerial testing for the Fire Department.

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

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Allman to adopt the resolution to provide the City of Alma's termination notification of membership to the Mid-Michigan Cable Consortium effective January 1, 2018.

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

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Allman to approve the Introduction of Ordinance #790 to amend the Zoning Map of the City of Alma as it appears in Section 32-32 of the Ordinances of the City of Alma to rezone lots 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 of Block 4, Lancashire Addition.

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

Motion by Commissioner Ayers as supported by Commissioner Mott to receive the following reports and place them on file: Alma Police Department April 2017 report; Building Permit report for March and April 2017; Code Enforcement April report and Planning Commission meeting minutes of 5/1/17.

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

Motion by Commissioner Piccolo as supported by Commissioner Ayers to approve the appointment of Phillip J. Moore to the Gratiot Community Airport Authority Board for a term expiring June 1, 2021.

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

Public Services Director, Ron Turner presented reports with regards to the establishment of Special Assessment Districts #2 and #3 for 2017 for the construction of sanitary sewer leads on Ely Street and Euclid Avenue. All costs are split 50/50 between the City and the property owners. Ely Street and Euclid Avenue will be reconstructed this summer and as part of the CIP project, the sanitary sewer leads will be replaced. Total estimated cost for the Ely Street project is \$8,750.00 with \$4,375.00 assessed to the property owners and \$4,375.00 assessed to the City of Alma. Total estimated cost for the Euclid Avenue project is \$26,250.00 with \$13,125.00 assessed to the property owners and \$13,250.00 assessed to the City of Alma. If it is found that there is new sewer line already installed, the property owner would be exempt from the special assessment. On Euclid, sewer videoing showed multiple sewer leads to properties. It will be investigated which are active lines and only the active lines will be replaced.

Motion by Commissioner Mott as supported by Commissioner Harrington to receive the reports on the construction of Sanitary Sewer Leads on Ely Street and Euclid Avenue.

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

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Ayers to approve a resolution to set a public hearing for May 23, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of establishing a Special Assessment District #2 for 2017 for Sanitary Sewer Leads on Ely Street.

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

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve a resolution to set a public hearing for May 23, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of establishing a Special Assessment District #3 for 2017 for Sanitary Sewer Leads on Euclid Avenue.

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

Motion by Commissioner Harrington as supported by Commissioner Allman to adopt a resolution to enlist the Mayor to form a subcommittee of Commissioners to investigate the recent series of events and general operations of the City. The subcommittee will contain three members: Mayor Mapes, Commissioner Piccolo and Commissioner Mott. The subcommittee will report back to the Commission on their findings.

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

No: None.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Piccolo to approve Warrant No. 17-21 and to authorize the City Treasurer to issue checks in payment of all claims.

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

No: None.

All the Commissioners wished to express their comments after the Public comments are made.

Mayor Mapes opened the floor for public comment.

Barb Gager, 211 Fleming, a former employee of the City for 25 ½ years, now retired for 15 months. She wanted to voice her concerns on the recent events in the hiring of a new Public Safety Director. She understands that the Michigan Municipal League prepared the criteria for the recruitment process with the City Mangers approval. This criteria consisted of a list of minimum requirements. Ideal candidates would check off all the boxes on the list. She wanted to address the placement of Interim Director Mark Williams. He has worked for the City for over 19 years. He has worked through the ranks and been trained to be eligible for this position. He fell short of the list of requirements by being short 1 ½ years of supervisory experience. He did not check all the boxes. Williams was denied an interview so why did he qualify to be placed as Interim Director? She herself rose through the ranks to become City Clerk with the full support and training from the City. The City's investment in her proved to be a good decision. The City has done this for many other employees without them checking all the boxes. The City's promotion from within is a win win situation for the City and the employee. Lt. Overla did check all the boxes but was denied an interview for the position. It poses to wonder if her speaking out at the last Commission meeting resulted in this denial. Ms. Gager voiced her that she came here on her own volition and that the City Manager and Commission has made a shameful mistake in not considering either of these two employees for the Public Safety Director position. She added that she was thankful for these Officers service and thanked the Commission for their time.

Casey Mueller, 526 Wright states that the he knows that the Commissioners will bear this responsibility well. He wanted the citizens of Alma to know that this is the first time in thirteen years that he has worked the road patrol for the City alone. He had no backup. He wanted the Commissioners to know the facts. There was one car out in the City yesterday. There are more facts out there, the truth needs to be found.

Mark Smoker, 925 Glencoe, Our police department is not over staff for the population of the City. A City this size for having one officer on patrol is dangerous. Why wasn't there more investigation made into the possible budget cuts proposed by the Police department before officers were laid off. He presented many questions that he would like investigated and answered by the Commission. He thanked the Commission for all that they do and hoped that they will come up with a plan to do the right thing.

Tiffany, Carley and Aubrey Goffnett, 1337 Euclid addressed the Commission. Aubrey and Karley wanted the Commission to the know how important Officer Kim Powell is to their schools. She is always available and teaches them to do the right thing. Tiffany expressed her concerns with having Officer Kim split her time with the schools and road patrol. She can't be on the road and protecting children at the same time.

Les Rosan, 889 Mill stated that not having two police officers covering a domestic violence call is against State regulations. Alarm policies for banks requires two officers at the scene. If an officer has to wait for backup from the County or St. Louis the response time will be slowed down. Putting an officer in this kind of situation is dangerous. Something will happen. This is wrong.

Kathy Kaiser, 1350 Charles feels that Officer Kim is essential. Recently she helped with an autistic child who did not want to attend school because he did not feel safe. Officer Kim spoke to him and reassured the child. Officer Kim may leave us so that she can be of better use to another community. Cutting police officers cannot go on, they will leave us to find other positions.

Yvette Clark, 613 N River has a question on what she had read in the newspaper about Lt. Kendra Overla not getting an interview. She would like, as most people here an answer to this question. Mayor Mapes replied that the subcommittee will answer that question.

She did not know that Mark Williams had applied for the position. She will vouch for either one of them. She would like to see one of them appointed to the position.

Clara Pitts, 1005 Fairview stated that previously the Police Chief was hired from within. Was it a mistake to do this in the past. You have two people employed by the City who know the City. It is also wrong to have only one officer on duty. Buying cars and collars for the canine dog is not the most responsible way to be spending tax payers money. She also wanted to ask what Bank the CDRS are with at the present time? Mayor Mapes reported that some are with Isabella Bank. Ms. Pitts feels that tax dollars should stay in Alma with the Alma banks that pay taxes. She doesn't think the City is spending our money wisely. We need our police officers not someone from outside the City to be the Director.

Lacey Speagle, 411 Washington believes that comparing the Police officers level in 2004 to the level in 2017 is not the same it is a big difference. A lot has changed in thirteen years. The last thing we need to do is take away officers. There is a large drug problem in the County we need to address. Alma College reported 3 sexual base offenses in 2013 and then in 2015 that number was up to 11 sexual offenses. One officer responding to all the daily calls cannot be done. We need to know what costs were looked at. We need to focus on the here and now.

Tiffany Boatman, 186 Westview wanted to express her concerns about the process of internal succession, Mr. Moore has always been a promoter of this policy. Is it not less costly to hire within? Why did we spend \$12,500 dollars on a panel to hire outside the City when we had good people within the department? It makes no sense. As a professional women this feels sexist in not giving Kendra a chance at the position. She is sure that Kendra feels the same. When it comes to money will we be paying the existing officers overtime to compensate the time lost by the layoffs. It does not make sense to pay overtime to long time officers at a rate that would be higher than the pay the two new officers would have made. She appreciates that Mayor Mapes has formed the subcommittee to investigate this situation. She is concerned that it is only a committee of Commissioners. Whose fault is it that there is not enough funds to keep the officers employed until the end of the fiscal year? The fact that the City Charter allows all decisions to go through one person, maybe that should be looked at also. Will the committee look at the dismissals. Mayor Mapes concurred that will be one of the items they will address.

Yvette Clark, 613 N River asked what is the percentage of CDs that are in Isabella bank. Paul Borle, City Finance Director stated that it was about 40% and that the City tries to diversify the City's funds so that the funds can be insured through FDIC.

Tim Ostrander, 3950 N Begole Rd. stated that he was confused that there is a need for a committee to look at the process and how it broke down. Since one person made the decision to layoff officers, why can't we get an answer to our questions.

City Attorney Costanzo said that it is the City Manager's job is to work for the City Commission with the City's best interest at heart. The committee will be working to find out how the process broke down and how better to change it.

Justin Bailey, 306 Elwell He hopes and prays that the Commissioners will take a look at these very concerned citizens here tonight. A lot of people have questions and want answers. He wanted to take this opportunity to ask the Commission to take council and try to figure out what it is we need to do. We need to protect our citizens and our officers. He wanted to thank the police officers for the work they do. Police educate our children. Please don't take lightly these citizens and what we are asking . It is important.

Brian Anderson, 903 Mill has just recently moved back to Alma and works for the schools. He has gotten to know Officer Powell. Safety of our children is the utmost. We need her in the schools. Families are affected by the removal of the School Officer. One of the laid off officers grew up in this community and wanted to work and live here. He questions the treatment of the officers in the layoff process. We need to treat the youth of our community better. We need to keep the youth in our community. We need to come together to make this happen.

Brian King, 300 W Essex, St. Louis wanted to thank Mayor Mapes for clarifying that the layoffs were not a personnel issue. At the last meeting it was stated that the layoffs occurred because of personal issues. Are we getting straight answers now? He has a third grader at Hillcrest school who interacts with Officer Powell. Officer Powell has a positive impact on her. Thank you Officer Powell. Who is talking to other Communities on how they are making it through these hard times. Mayor Mapes stated that much cooperation is going on between the Cities. They all know it is beneficial to work together.

City Attorney Costanzo made a remark that cooperation between Cities may also mean more layoffs.

Mr. King asked why the public works department was using expensive residential lawn tractors for mowing, when commercial tractors would be cheaper.

City staff pointed out that the lawn tractors are leased every year on a trade in program.

Commissioner Harrington then addressed the Public. She is very supportive of our police department. We have these meetings twice a month and usually there is no one here. She did not hear one person tonight give any ideas on how to come up with more money to fund our departments. Are you willing to pay income taxes or special millages? This is a City wide problem and we have already cut every department. There is no more places to cut. She needs suggestions and she is not getting them. If you don't think we are handling things properly, you elected us. Go to the polls and elect someone else to serve on this board. She loves this City and is doing her very best along with her fellow Commissioners to run the City. She is insulted that people think they are not doing their job.

Mr. King had one more thought that this is not 2004. The police are not facing the same activities now in 2017.

Commissioner Ayers stated that the Police department is the very last department to experience cuts. We need more money to run the City.

Mr. King asked about asking Alma College for help in keeping an officer on staff and what about Masonic Home do they help out the City at all.

Mayor Mapes stated that he was a past member of the Masonic board and frequently they would give the City monetary contributions.

Michelle Pitts, 636 Slater asked if Alma college could be asked to make a contribution to the City to help with the budget. Commissioner Piccolo stated he will talk to the Alma College President about this request.

Valerie Helinski, 117 E End stated that she understands as most in the crowd that we are facing tough budgetary issues. As any business might face tough times. She has lost her faith and trust with the Commission and Mr. Moore in how the layoffs took place. She appreciates the committee being formed but is not sure she will trust the system again. What was the urgency in letting these officers go. This is the question on everyone's mind and why is it not being addresses?

Tim Lambrecht, County Commissioner representing two thirds of Alma. He understands that the City is experiencing tough times. What are our priorities. We have a real alcohol and drug problem in the County. Is the code Enforcement officer taking pictures of trash cans really worth losing a police officer. The County is always interested in collaboration. The new County Administrator is very anxious to work on collaborative efforts. This is very disappointing, the way these issues have unfolded. It will take serious work to get over this. This is not good, not good.

Tim Cruttenden, 1015 Iowa stated that the damage has been done by these actions to the City's reputation as a fair employer. Future applicants will know of these actions and will be hesitant about applying. The City looks less attractive. He is glad that the hiring process will be reevaluated. He expects that Kendra and Mark will be seriously considered. He is concerned that there were no answers, that we had to form our own conclusions. It seems that this was an act of retaliation. This cannot happen again.

Christina Ostrander, 3950N Begole Rd. wants to know what is the time frame for these answers. Will the committee come up with set dates to hear the reports of the committee?

Mayor Mapes hopes it will be done quickly but doesn't want to make the same mistakes rushing into completion. He wants to get the facts.

Commissioner Piccolo stated that a progress report could be given at the next City Commission meeting.

Ms. Ostrander asked who holds Mr. Moore accountable for his actions?

City Attorney Costanzo and Mayor Mapes relayed that by City Charter the City Manager supervises the City. His work is reviewed during performance reviews. This subcommittee is being formed as per of the City Charter to investigate the operations and procedures.

Carrie Bailey, 306 Elwell asked if the police officers would be reinstated. Commissioner Mott stated it will be discussed. She pointed out that the leader of the department should come from of the police ranks.

Eric Huff, 570 Charles wants to express his thanks to the Commission and the City Manager because most times it is a thankless job. You are in a tough position to do the best for our City. He hopes that we will seriously reconsider the cuts. The schools need a liaison officer. Officer Powell is in the school not only when there is trouble but also as a counsel to the children. He hopes that placing the liaison officer back into the schools is priority number one. He would like to see the other officers reinstated . He taught Officer Gifford and knows he was a great officer. He is a bit confused on the manner that the officers were laid off. Everyone understands budget cuts but the way these cuts were made hurts. He knows that the Commissioners want what is best for the City and he will try to help.

Commissioner Ayers thanked all who attended and for their comments. He really appreciated your respectfulness.

Commissioner Piccolo thanked all for their comments.

Commissioner Mott knows that he is a big guy. He has always tried to be transparent. He was shocked that two officers had been laid off and he was not made aware that Mark Williams wasn't allowed an interview.

He did know that Kendra Overla was not going to be interviewed. We were blind-sided.

Commissioner Allman also thanked all for coming. We will come up with the answers. He also was impressed with everyone's respectfulness. Mayor Mapes getting this subcommittee together is a good thing.

City Attorney Costanzo thanked all for coming and hopes that they keep showing up for the meetings. Everyone spoke from their hearts. Let's get through this together. He is proud to be a citizen of Alma.

Mayor Mapes wanted to echo the other Commissioners comments. Trust that he is taking this very seriously. He loves Alma and is disappointed in how the last two weeks have evolved.

Motion by Commissioner Allman as supported by Commissioner Ayers to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m.

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

No: None.

Gregory S. Mapes, Mayor

Sheila Letourneau, City Clerk