

## Altavista Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, July 25, 2023

The July 2023 Work Session for Altavista's Town Council was held in Council Chambers of the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 7th Street, on Tuesday, July 25th, at 5:00 PM.

Mayor Mike Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.

### Town Council

Members present: Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett  
Mr. Timothy George  
Dr. Scott Lowman  
Mayor Michael Mattox  
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Absent: Mr. Jay Higginbotham  
Mr. Tracy Emerson

### Also Present:

Mr. Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager  
Mr. Matthew Perkins, Asst. Town Manager  
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Director of Finance and Administration  
Mr. Tommy Merricks, APD Chief of Police  
Mr. Tom Fore, Director of Public Services  
Mr. Jeff Arthur, Manager of Public Works  
Mr. John Eller, TOA Town Attorney  
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Assistant Town Clerk

### 1. Agenda Adoption

Mayor Mattox informed Council of an amendment to the agenda; and addition to section#5.New Business – Altavista On Track Request. He asked Town Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to the July 2023 Work Session Agenda, of which there were none.

Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Mitchell, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried, with a 5-0 vote from Town Council.

### 2. Recognitions and Presentations

#### ▪ Altavista On Track (AOT)

AOT Executive Director, David Greene, shared with Council the webpage recently created for AOT's 2023 Rivertown Fest, with the assistance of students participating in a Web Design Class, offered through the Spark Innovation Center's Summer STEM Camp Program. Mr. Green thanked Ryan Weeks, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, for teaching the class, Autumn Evans for her assistance at the Spark Center, and all of the students for their contributions to AOT's web page; Zander Bartley, Nyameye Adom, Jordan Claytor, Breyden Milam, and Brack Blackstock.

Mr. Weeks thanked the Town for the opportunity to teach Spark's Web Design Class, and stated that he would be happy to again. He said the students learned a lot and did a great job with the task given to them.

### 3. Citizen's Time

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any citizens present that would like to come before Town Council regarding a non-agenda item. There were none.

### 4. Unfinished Business

#### ▪ Pittsylvania Avenue Washout – Contractor Award

Altavista Director of Public Services, Tom Fore, referenced the washout occurring on the riverbank alongside the English Park boat ramp, below Pittsylvania Avenue. Mr. Fore stated, after consulting with VDOT, Staff was given the best course of action, and between the two bids submitted, Concrete Foundations, at \$90,000, was Staff's recommendation for the project. He asked for Council's consideration to place the item on the August 8th Consent Agenda.

Councilman Mitchell asked if VDOT gave the Town a written request to remediate this issue.

Mr. Fore answered they did not, and reminded Council that part of Pittsylvania Avenue was Altavista's responsibility to maintain, however VDOT did recommend the Town use a specific type of materials (rock/stone) to complete the work needed. He said the Town could choose to use other materials, but concurred with VDOT's recommendation.

Mr. Mitchell asked how long this issue had been happening, and was it getting worse.

## Altavista Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, July 25, 2023

Mr. Fore stated the washout started five years prior when a large tree fell, and the erosion had continued to get worse every year the issue was not remediated. He stated it was getting close to a raw waterline.

Councilman George stated that he thought the Town was only required to pave Pittsylvania Avenue, and shared his concerns with the Town having to do all the work for this project, without VDOT's assistance. He asked the Town's Attorney, John Eller, if the agreement between VDOT and the Town mentioned this type of situation.

Mr. Eller reiterated Mr. Fore's statement, that Main Street and Bedford Avenue were the only roads in Altavista that's VDOT was responsible for, and the remaining roads were the responsibility of the Town.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they were ready to make a choice whether to place this request on the August 8th Consent Agenda, or on the meeting's agenda as an item for discussion.

Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett asked Town Attorney John Eller to review the agreement between the Town of Altavista and VDOT, and confirm what, if any, VDOT's responsibility was in this matter.

Councilman Mitchell asked, if a storm washed away the bridge on Pittsylvania Avenue, would it be the Town's responsibility to fix the road that joined the bridge.

Mr. Fore stated that the Town did its due diligence by being part of Campbell County's Hazard Mitigation Plan, and in a case as Councilman Mitchell's scenario, the Town would be reimbursed by FEMA.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked, if the bank erosion continued, and disturbed the aforementioned raw waterline, how much of the Town's water supply would be affected.

Mr. Fore answered, "all of it", but stated that the Town had contingency plans in place for such an incident

Councilman George shared his concerns with the Town having to manage the washout issue.

Mr. Fore reminded Council that the Town's Highway Fund (VDOT funding) would be utilized to cover the cost to remediate the Pittsylvania Avenue washout.

Councilman Mitchell referenced the large tree that fell and started the erosion issue at the said site, and asked if there were additional trees in that area that could be removed, so the Town could be proactive in deterring such erosion issues.

Mr. Fore stated, yes, there were other large trees along Lynch Creek that could be removed to help prevent such an incident. He also suggested the Town plant River Willows, which would assist in holding the riverbank together, deterring erosion.

There was consensus of Town Council to accept Staff's recommendation to award Concrete Foundation Inc. this project, and to place this item on the August 8th Consent Agenda for official approval.

### 5. New Items for Discussion

- Altavista On Track (AOT) – Special Event Permit Request

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins informed Town Council that AOT was changing the name of their annual fall festival, from BBQ, Bourbon, & Beer Festival, to Rivertown Festival. He stated that AOT submitted a Special Event Permit Application requesting permission to also relocate the event from English Park to Broad Street, and included a request for Broad St. to be closed during event hours.

Mr. Perkins stated that the SEP application was pending approval from Town Administration, until the details and logistics could be finalized with the Altavista Police Dept. and Public Works concerning road closures and street barriers for the event.

Councilman Mitchell thanked AOT for continuing the annual festival, and said he was looking forward to attending.

AOT Director David Greene thanked Town Council for their continued support of Altavista On Track. He informed Council that this year's festival would include food, music, a car show, and much more.

There was a consensus of Town Council to allow AOT to relocate their annual fall festival from English Park to Broad Street. The allowance included the following road closures: Broad Street, from Main Street to Washington Street, Seventh Street from Campbell Avenue to just past Broad Street (Hailey's/Post Office alley), and Washington Street.

## Altavista Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, July 25, 2023

- Administrative Office – Surplus Request

Altavista's Director of Finance and Administration, Tobie Shelton, presented this item to Town Council. Mrs. Shelton showed of the items that the Administration Department was requesting to be deemed surplus property; and to authorize Staff to sell (on GOV Deals) or dispose of the items.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had questions regarding the request, of which there were none.

After reviewing the list and photos of the items requested for surplus, there was a consensus of Town Council to place this item on the August 8th Consent Agenda for official approval.

- FY2023 Carryover Request

Director Tobie Shelton stated that Staff was requesting to carryover unexpended funds, totaling \$315,650, for projects budgeted in FY2023, but were not completed during that fiscal year. She said, this action would transfer the unexpended funds from the FY2023 Budget to reserves, and earmarked for the stated use; once the expenditures were made, Staff would present a budget amendment for Council's approval.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had questions regarding the request, of which there were none.

Councilman George referenced the carryover request for Parks & Recreation, painting two gazebos and installing three shade sails. He asked which location(s) were the shade sails being placed.

Public Work Manager Jeff Arthur answered that the budget only allowed for one (1) shade sail at that time, and it was being placed at the Leanord Coleman Memorial Park located on 15th Street.

Mr. George asked if the shade sail could be placed at the Pat DeBernard River Overlook, instead of at the Leonard Coleman Memorial Park.

Mr. Arthur stated that the sail was purchased specifically for the playground equipment at the Coleman Memorial Park, and would not attach correctly to the overlook.

With no further questions from Council, Town Council was in consensus to authorize Staff to place this item on the August 8th Consent Agenda for official approval.

### 6. Staff Updates

- Background: The Town of Altavista was selected by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to sample for Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5. Public Water Systems (PWS) began nationwide sampling for 29 per and poly fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and lithium in drinking water on January 1, 2023. These contaminants are listed on the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5). Sampling will continue through December 31, 2025.

Public Services Director Tom Fore referenced the chemical testing for PFAS being conducted by the EPA at Altavista's Water Treatment Plant, due to known chemicals from a facility cleaning in West Virginia being discharged into the Roanoke River. He informed Council that the first and second round of testing showed little-to-no trace of the chemicals in the Staunton River, adjacent to Altavista. Mr. Fore said the chemicals were currently unregulated, but he believed the federal government would regulate them soon.

- APD Chief Tommy Merricks reminded everyone that the APD's event for the 2023 National Night Out was scheduled for Tuesday, August 1st, from 5-9pm, and located once again at English Park, behind the Booker Building. He invited everyone to attend the community event, with free food and entertainment.
- Chief Merricks also informed Council of a recent incident on the river at English Park when a near-drowning occurred. He recommended the Town erect additional safety signs along English Park's riverbank where patrons frequently swim.

With a Consensus of Council, Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur said he would place additional signs.

- Public Services Director Tom Fore referenced the multiple times that Public Works worked overtime to service the Town's utility infrastructure. He thanked Public Works for their hard work and dedication to the Town. He informed Town Council of an Appreciation Luncheon he was giving the Public Works Department on Friday, September 15th, and welcomed them to join.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Fore if the Town's Public Services was still understaffed.

Mr. Fore informed Council of the following TOA Employee vacancies: (2) Facility Maintenance, (1) Public Works, Buildings & Grounds, (1) Public Works, Utilities, and (3) Full Time Water Plant Operators.

## **Altavista Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, July 25, 2023**

Mr. Fore also informed Town Council that the Water Plant was still short of a Class II Operator, and that he and the Town Manager were working on a variance with the VHD to manage the issue.

Mr. Fore said he believed the Town needed to consider paying operators a higher salary than the current rate, to stay competitive in the job market, and with surrounding localities.

Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett suggested placing the Town's lighted billboard sign on Pittsylvania Avenue to advertise that the Town was hiring for the aforementioned positions.

### **7. Matters from Town Council**

- Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett thanked the citizens that attended this work session. He also thanked the students that attended the Spark Innovation Center Website Camp, and encouraged them to continue working hard in pursuing their education and desired careers.
- Councilman Tim George referenced the Green Hill Connector Trail, and the three bridges constructed by a Boy Scout Troop as an Eagle Scout project. He reminded Staff that a recognition plaque needed to be placed at each bridge. He also referenced the kiosk entering Eagle Trail and asked Staff to check on the plaque for the Boy Scouts that did work in that area.

Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur stated that the company that created the new wayfinding signs for English Park's trail system was also working on the kiosk plaque.

Mr. George referenced the three large pipes laying at the bottom of that trail, connected to English Park, and asked Staff to investigate whether they were going to be used or need to be moved.

### **8. Town Council Closed Session**

There was no closed session scheduled or conducted during this work session.

### **9. Adjournment**

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any additional comments or concerns from Town Council or Staff, of which there were none.

The July 25th, 2023, Town Council Work Session was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

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Michael Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

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Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk