

Altavista Town Council Work Session Minutes from November 28, 2023

The November 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, November 28th, at 5:00 PM.

Mayor Mike Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.

Council Members present: Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham
Dr. Scott Lowman
Mayor Michael Mattox
Mr. Wayne Mitchell
Absent: Mr. Tracy Emerson

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

1. Agenda Adoption

With no amendments needed, Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had questions, comments, or concerns pertaining to the Work Session Agenda, of which there were none.

Councilman Wayne Mitchell made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett, to approve the agenda as presented; the motion carried with a 6-0 vote from Town Council.

2. Recognitions and Presentations

Background: Annually, the Town is required to engage a public accounting firm, which must be licensed Certified Public Accountants, to conduct an independent audit of the Town's basic financial statements, in accordance with Governmental Auditing Standards.

David Foley, with Robertson, Farmer, Cox Associates, presented Town Council with Altavista's FY2023 Audit Report. He gave Council a brief overview of the report, and stated that the Town of Altavista was issued an "unmodified opinion" on the Town's financial statements, which he stated was the cleanest opinion an auditor can give.

Staff requested that acceptance of the FY2023 Annual Report be put on the December 13th Town Council Meeting Consent Agenda. Council had a unanimous consensus to do so.

3. Citizen's Time

There were no citizen comments on this date.

4. Unfinished Business

▪ Green Hill Connector Trail – Improvements

Upon a request by Town Council at a previous meeting, Assistant Public Services Director Paul Hill presented Council with two surface options, stone and asphalt, for their consideration, pertaining to surface-treating the lower end of the Green Hill Connector Trail (the 1,000 foot run from Eagle Trail to the first creek bridge on the Connector Trail).

Mr. Hill informed Council that Staff made numerous phone calls requesting quotes for the project, but only one contractor (Crews Construction) responded with estimates. He stated that Staff was recommending stone over asphalt, to keep the trail's natural esthetics.

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Councilman Higginbotham asked what the trail's surface was currently.

Mr. Hill answered that the Green Hill Connector Trail's lower area was surface treated with a sturdy base of asphalt millings.

Councilman Mitchell stated, between the two choices, he favored stone over asphalt. He suggested this item be moved to FY2025 budget discussions for further consideration.

Mr. Higginbotham shared his favor in keeping the Green Hill Connector Trail as natural as possible by leaving it the way it was and not adding additional surface treatment. He stated that he would rather see the Town spend money to continue developing the Jenks River Trail, which was currently under construction and not completed.

Councilman George referenced two corrugated pipes that were laying in the aforementioned area of the trail and asked where those pipes were to be installed.

Mr. Hill stated that he was unaware of needing the additional pipes placed; and Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur informed Council that the said pipes were extra, in case needed

There was consensus of Town Council to discuss this matter further during the upcoming FY2025 Budget/CIP process.

5. New Items for Discussion

- Altavista Town Council CY2024 Meeting Schedule

Finance and Administration Director Tobie Shelton presented Town Council with a draft of their meeting schedule for 2024, which mirrored their 2023 schedule. Mrs. Shelton asked Council if they wished to make any changes to their meeting schedule.

There was unanimous consensus of Town Council to place this item on the December 12th Consent Agenda – to approve their 2024 Meeting Schedule as presented; with regular meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, at 6pm, and work sessions on the 4th Tuesday of each month, at 5pm, with the exception of December having no work session.

- Avoca Maintenance Fund – CIP Adjustment

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins referenced the fund that was founded with the proceeds from the sale of town-owned property and allocated specifically for Avoca maintenance. He stated, if all items on the current CIP (FY2024), and future projected CIP remained the same, the fund would show a deficit.

Mr. Perkins informed Council that, in collaboration with Avoca's Executive Director Caleb Lafoon, they reduced the funds needed for two of Avoca's FY2024 CIP items, which, if approved, would leave the Avoca Maintenance Fund with a positive balance of \$14,786.33. He asked Council for approval of the proposed changes.

There was consensus of Council to place this item on the December 12th Consent Agenda.

Councilman Mitchell reminded Town Council that the Avoca Museum and grounds were town-owned property, and once this fund was depleted, Avoca's maintenance costs would subsequently return to being part of the Town's annual operating budget. He suggested the Town develop a clear understanding with Avoca of which maintenance items were Avoca's responsibility and which were the Town's; to which Council concurred.

6. Updates from Town Staff

Town Manager Gary Shanaberger referenced the funds previously allocated by Town Council for the Vista Theatre Restoration Project. Mr. Shanaberger stated, with the Town's recent purchase of the adjoining Leggett building, the two were combined into one project, and now known as the Vista/Leggett Project.

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Mr. Shanaberger asked Council to consider allowing Staff to utilize the initial funds for the Vista/Leggett Project moving forward, in order to cover expenses from both.

Town Council believed this was applicable and showed unanimous consensus to authorize the Town Manager's request, and to place this item on the December 12th Consent Agenda.

Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett stated that the Town should consider increasing the initial fund amount in consideration of the potential need for grant funding matches.

Councilman Mitchell suggested the matter be added to the FY2025 Budget/CIP discussion process; to which Council concurred.

7. Matters from Town Council

There were no additional items for discussion from Town Council on this date.

- Each member of Town Council thanked Town Staff and Management, including the Police Department, for the work they do for the Town of Altavista.
- Councilman Lowman, as Altavista On Track President, also thanked the Town (Public Works) for their help with the recent Christmas Tree Lighting Event at the Library.

8. Town Council Closed Session

Town Council's Closed Session occurred from 5:52-6:15pm.

RE: *Section 2.2-3711 (A)(29)*: discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders and offers, and/or discussion of the terms or scope of such a contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

Notice was given to Staff by Town Manager Gary Shanaberger that no actions were taken by Town Council after the closed session.

9. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss Mayor Mattox adjourned this meeting at 6:16 p.m.

Michael Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk