

Town Council Regular Meeting October 12, 2021

The Altavista Town Council continued the September 28th Work Session on Tuesday, October 12th at 5 p.m. at English Park; to review the riverbank erosion issue and the Jenks River Trail placement options for further discussion and consideration at their October regular meeting.

After returning from English Park, Mayor Mattox adjourned the continued work session at 6 p.m.

Town Council held their regular scheduled meeting in Council Chambers of the Town Hall/J.R. Burgess Municipal Building at 510 Seventh Street on October 12, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

1. At six o'clock p.m., Mayor Mike Mattox called the regular meeting to order and presided.

Council Members

Present: Vice Mayor Reginald Bennett
Mr. Tracy Emerson
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham
Dr. Scott Lowman
Mayor Michael Mattox
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Town Staff present:

Mr. Clarence Monday, Interim Town Manager
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Treasurer/Finance Director
Mr. Thomas Merricks, Altavista Chief of Police
Mr. Jeff Arthur, Public Works B&G Supervisor
Mr. Tom Fore, Public Utilities Part-time Administrator
Ms. Sharon D. Williams, Community Development Director
Mr. George Sandridge, Main Street Coordinator
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Administration

Mr. Tom Fore, Altavista Utilities Director, gave the invocation for this evening.

After the invocation, Mayor Mike Mattox led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Agenda Adoption

Mayor Mattox informed Town Council of an amendment to the October 12th Agenda.

- #8A. New Business:
Altavista Police Department - Designation of Police for Trespassing Violations.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to the proposed October 12, 2021, Town Council Meeting Agenda, to which there were none.

Councilman Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lowman, to approve the October 12th Town Council Meeting Agenda as amended.

Motion carried

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

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3. Recognitions and Presentations

A. Personnel Changes

The town's personnel changes since September 1st, 2021 consisted of:

Milestone Recognitions:

Michael Abbott	Police Department - 5 years	9/08/2021
Terry Lambert	Public Works - 25 years	9/16/2021

New Hire Listing:

Phyllis Brown	Transit PT Bus Driver	9/20/2021
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Departure Listing:

Amanda Owens	Assistant Town Manager	9/03/2021
Mike Hudson	Avoca Museum Director	9/03/2021
Glenn Campbell	Wastewater Department	9/27/2021

B. Resolution of Service – Johelen Martin, BZA

Mayor Mike Mattox read aloud the resolution in recognition of Johelen Martin.

WHEREAS, the Town Council and the Altavista Board of Zoning Appeals encourages participation and thoughtful approaches to the impacts of development within the Town and on the environment; and

WHEREAS, Johelen Martin was appointed to serve on the Altavista Board of Zoning Appeals in September 1996, and elected not to seek reappointment when her term expired on August 31, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Martin provided valuable leadership, insights, and planning contributions to the Town's planning program during her tenure; and

WHEREAS, Johelen Martin's time of service has been marked by exemplary dedication of the best interests of the community through her active participation on the Board of Zoning Appeals; and

WHEREAS, Johelen Martin has performed her duties with the highest respect for our citizens, her fellow members, and ethical standards of the Town.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Mayor Michael Mattox and the Altavista Town Council, Chairman Wilson Dickerson and the Board of Zoning Appeals, Town staff and citizens all proclaim their appreciation and gratitude to Johelen Martin for her outstanding service on the Altavista Board of Zoning Appeals.

Adopted this 12th day of October 2021.

As Mayor Mattox presented the resolution to Ms. Martin and thanked her for her service, Town Council, Town Staff, and attending guests gave Ms. Martin a standing ovation.

Councilman Jay Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Mitchell, to approve the resolution for Ms. Martin.

Motion carried

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

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Ms. Martin thanked Town Council for the resolution honoring her service to the town through her time on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Ms. Martin stated it had been an honor to serve her community on the BZA since 1963, and a privilege to be asked to do so. She stated it had also been a pleasure to work and serve with BZA Chairman Wilson Dickerson.

Ms. Martin thanked Town Council and the Town of Altavista for the opportunity.

4. Citizen's Time (Non-Agenda Items Only)

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any citizen(s) present wishing to address Council with a comment, concern, or item regarding a subject that was not listed on the October 12th, 2021, Council Meeting Agenda.

Ms. Corrine Morris, 908 8th Street, Altavista, came before Council with concerns regarding the speed limit at the intersection of Main Street and Lynch Road.

Ms. Morris stated she believed the 45mph speed limit coming to the intersection from North Main Street was too fast and suggested the town contact VDOT to consider lowering the speed limit to 35mph, which was the case after the stoplight/intersection.

Mayor Mattox asked Clarence Monday, Interim Town Manager, for his input on the matter.

Mr. Monday stated the town had a couple of options:

1. To request the APD to enhance their presence in that area in order to increase enforcement of the speed limits and/or handle any violations that may occur.
2. Request that VDOT conduct a speed limit traffic study in the fore-mentioned location.

Councilman Higginbotham suggested the Altavista Police Department (APD) place their speed-reading sign at this location, to remind drivers of the speed limit.

Chief Tommy Merricks stated the APD's speed limit radar sign was currently only reliable part of the time. He stated he would consult with the town's maintenance shop to determine if it could be fixed and used, if not, he would request to use the Town of Hurt's radar sign.

Chief Merricks stated, meanwhile, his department would increase patrol in that area to hopefully deter speeding violations. He stated he would also gather relevant information regarding any previous accidents that had happened at that intersection to help Council determine whether a traffic study was necessary or not.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked what the price of a new speed radar sign would cost, to which Chief Merricks stated between \$15,000-\$20,000.

Mr. Bennett asked if there was a grant available that would help pay for a new radar sign.

Chief Merricks informed Council the Byrne Justice Grant was available for such an item, however, it would require a monetary match from the town.

There was a consensus of Town Council to allow Chief Merricks to collaborate with the Town Manager and move forward with submitting an application for the Byrne Justice Grant; and if awarded, to be used towards the purchase of a new speed radar sign for the Altavista Police Department.

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5. Town/Community Partner Updates

A. Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber)

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Grace Mattox shared with Council a few updates and upcoming events the Chamber was working on.

- Ms. Mattox referenced the Chamber's newest summer event, Movie Night in the Park. She stated movie night was a family-friendly event and had been a big success so far.

Ms. Mattox stated the next Movie Night in the Park (Shreve Park/Trade Lot) would be held on Saturday, October 16th and show the Halloween themed movie Hocus Pocus.

- Ms. Mattox informed Town Council that the Chamber would be working with WSET on October 21st and 22nd to spotlight/advertise ten (10) Altavista businesses on the TV show "Living in the Heart of Virginia", that will air the first week of November.
- Ms. Mattox stated the Chamber would also be hosting a "Business Jive After Five" event that would take place at Creative Edge on Thursday, October 28th. She stated event attendance would be "invitation only" to local businesses and Town Council would also receive an invitation. Ms. Mattox stated Creative Edge offered a lot of creative marketing services and would have examples on display at the event.
- Ms. Mattox referenced the Chamber's Annual Business Expo and stated this year's expo would be held on Thursday, November 4th, and once again located at the Altavista Area YMCA. She said 4-5 p.m. was for local business interaction only, and 5-6 p.m. the event would be open to the public.
- Ms. Mattox informed Council the Chamber would be hosting the "Shop Altavista" event again this year on November 27th. She stated the passport program allowed shoppers to collect stamps from local shops and by doing so, be entered for a chance to win a gift basket with items from local businesses.
- Ms. Mattox concluded her updates by referencing the town's annual Christmas parade. She stated the Chamber would be going back to a "traditional" parade this year. She said the Chamber was currently taking applications for participants.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any questions for Ms. Mattox.

Councilman Mitchell referenced Ms. Mattox's mention of the town being spotlighted on Living in the Heart of Virginia. He asked how often the town was asked to participate.

Ms. Mattox reminded Council of the town being asked the previous year and eight businesses were spotlighted. She stated this year there were ten businesses participating, including the Avoca Museum.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated, with there being so many town activities, was there a community calendar that informed citizens of the events.

Ms. Mattox stated the town calendar was given to citizens by January 1st of each year, which shared dates for town events. She stated, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber was unable to host some of their regular events, but she was currently working on the Chamber's 2022 schedule and would share the information with the town once the schedule was complete and approved by the Chamber's Board.

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Altavista's Finance Director, Tobie Shelton, stated the 2022 town calendar was currently being prepared and asked that the Chamber's schedule be shared as soon as possible.

Councilman Emerson asked if the Chamber of Commerce was planning to hold its annual banquet dinner.

Ms. Mattox stated the item would be discussed at the next board meeting, but the current plan was to have the banquet.

Mayor Mattox and Town Council thanked Ms. Mattox for the Chamber updates and the good work the Chamber of Commerce continues to do for the community.

B. Altavista On Track (AOT)

Altavista's Main Street Coordinator and AOT's Executive Director, George Sandridge, gave Town Council a brief update on Altavista On Track's current and upcoming events.

Mayor Mattox took this time to thank Mr. Sandridge and everyone that worked on offering the town its first BBQ, Bourbon, and Beer Festival. He stated "it was a job well done" and he heard nothing but good things from patrons of the event.

- Mr. Sandridge stated he had a great team helping him and the BBQ Festival would not have been possible without assistance from Sharon Williams, Community Development Director, the AOT Board, Altavista's Public Works Department, the Altavista Police Department, and several others.

Mr. Sandridge shared with Council a short video showcasing the food and activities offered during the festival. He stated there were patrons attending from as far away as Minnesota.

Mr. Sandridge stated he believed the festival had been a great community event, and in the eyes of the AOT Board, it was also a great economic development tool as well, because a lot of people were able to see Altavista that otherwise may not have.

Mr. Sandridge informed Town Council that AOT intended to utilize the revenue generated from the festival to continue its revitalization efforts of Altavista's downtown district,

- Mr. Sandridge stated AOT was currently planning its annual Giblet Jog event at English Park for Thursday, November 25th. He encouraged everyone to attend.
- Mr. Sandridge referenced the Christmas ornament that AOT offered last year showcasing Altavista's library. He stated the Vista Theater would be pictured on this year's ornament and would be available for sale within the next two weeks.
- Mr. Sandridge referenced the previous mention of the town calendar and informed Council that Town Staff was currently working on a "calendar policy" and would be presenting the item to Town Council soon.

Mr. Sandridge said he was happy to answer any questions Town Council may have.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to the AOT updates.

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Councilman George asked if the BBQ Festival had been profitable for AOT.

Mr. Sandridge informed Town Council that the festival generated a net profit in the amount of \$11,000 for Altavista On Track, which they intended to use towards grant programs.

Councilman Emerson said he attended the festival most of that day and felt that AOT did a great job with the event. He stated there were a couple of people that told him it was the nicest event they had attended in Altavista.

Mr. Emerson stated, as with all first-time events, the festival was a learning curve for AOT and they may do some things differently next year, but overall, the event was spectacular.

Mayor Mattox thanked APD Chief Merricks and his department, and Jeff Arthur and the Public Works Department for their assistance and participation in the event.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Sandridge for the AOT updates and thanked AOT for the work they do for the Town of Altavista and its community.

6. Consent Agenda

- A. Town Council Meeting Minutes
 - o September 14th, 2021
- B. Acceptance of Monthly Financial Reports
 - o September 2021 Revenue and Expenditures
- C. Approval of a portable toilet for Dalton's Landing
- D. Approval of FY2021 Carry Over Request
- E. Approval of the FY2023 Budget/CIP Calendar
- F. Approval of the new Town Council Rules of Procedure and Code of Ethics

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to the October 12th, 2021 Consent Agenda, to which there were none.

Councilman Emerson made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Bennett, to approve the October 12th Council Meeting Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

7. Public Hearings

There were no public hearings scheduled for this date.

8. New Business

- A. Altavista Police Department (APD) – Regarding Trespassing Violations

APD Chief Merricks shared with Town Council his concerns in regard to APD officers having to sit with mental health patients at the hospital until an opening could be located for the patient at an appropriate state facility.

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Chief Merricks informed Council his officers had been taking turns sitting with a patient since the previous Saturday night, with no set date for transfer as of that afternoon.

Chief Merricks reminded Town Council that the Altavista Police Department was currently short staffed and stated it was an added strain on his department to cover these matters on a long-term basis.

Chief Merricks asked for Council's consideration to allow him to work with Town Attorney John Eller to join the Campbell County Sherriff's Office and the Bedford Sherriff's Office in filing a Writ of Mandamus towards the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health Services regarding this matter.

Chief Merricks stated the fore-mentioned department had been closing some mental health hospitals while the open ones were staying at full capacity and the need was still in high demand. He stated this was a major problem with all local police departments and if not addressed, the issue would only get worse.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any questions for Chief Merricks.

Councilman Higginbotham asked if the hospitals being closed was COVID related.

Chief Merricks stated he was unsure of the reason.

Councilman Emerson concurred with Chief Merricks that the problem was throughout the state. He stated his employer, the Campbell County Sherriff's Office, would have as many as four to five mental health patients to transfer during one weekend. He stated the patient would remain in police custody until a hospital "takes position" of the patient.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated he knew of an officer that had to travel four hours to transport a patient to the appropriated mental hospital.

Mr. Emerson said a police department was required by law to transport a patient to any hospital in the state that they were directed to do so. He stated the problem was so excessive that the Attorney General was now looking into the matter.

Councilman Mitchell asked how long police officers have had to adhere to this mandate of sitting with mental patients until admitted into a hospital.

Chief Merricks stated the requirement had been a law for as long as he could remember, however, there had been a rise in mental health patients and, with not enough hospitals open to receive the patients, the need for police officers to sit with the patients had also increased, which was causing a strain on police departments.

Councilman Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Emerson, to authorize Chief Merricks to work with Altavista's Town Attorney, John Eller, and join Campbell County with a Writ of Mandamus towards the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health Services in this matter.

Motion carried

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

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Mayor Mattox shared his concerns for what the APD has to deal with in this matter and thanked Chief Merricks and his department for doing the best they can.

9. Unfinished Business

A. Jenks River Trail in English Park – Placement Discussion

Background:

Once complete, the Jenks River Trail will offer an extension of Eagle Trail in English Park, which will be connected by the new pedestrian bridge and run parallel to the river.

Mayor Mattox stated, earlier that evening, Town Council toured the Jenks River Trail area and had an opportunity to visualize the trail area, foot bridge, terrain, vegetation, tree line, and potential connectivity to the existing trail system. He asked Council for their input.

Councilman George suggested the next to be acquiring price quotes for the work to be done

Councilman Higginbotham stated, with the cost of materials such as steel steadily rising, he suggested the town move forward with ordering the second pedestrian bridge, similar to the first, to cross the creek that was known to be needed for this project. He volunteered to work with Jeff Arthur, Public Works, to prepare specs for the bridge to be priced/quoted.

Mayor Mattox asked if he would like to make his suggestion a motion, to which Mr. Higginbotham stated it would.

Councilman Mitchell suggested the town use the same manufacturer of the first bridge to purchase the second bridge to ensure similarity.

Councilman George asked where the funds for the second bridge would come from.

Mr. Higginbotham suggested using the remaining Jenks funds to purchase the bridge.

Mr. George reminded Council there were still several dead trees that needed to be removed in order to continue the Jenks River Trail.

Mr. Mitchell referenced the town's initial quote for removing dead Ash trees in the park. He stated any additional trees needing to be removed would have to be added to the quote.

Mr. George suggested getting quotes for all phases of the Jenks River Trail project.

Mayor Mattox stated, with material costs continuing to increase, he concurred with Mr. Higginbotham that the town should move forward with purchasing the second bridge needed for this project.

Councilman Higginbotham stated his motion again, seconded by Vice Mayor Bennett, to approve authorizing Town Staff to move forward with purchasing a second bridge, similar to the first, for the Jenks River Trail.

Motion carried.

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

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Mayor Mattox continued the Jenks River Trail discussion by asking Town Council for their input on removing additional trees from the area of this project.

Jeff Arthur, Public Works B&G Supervisor, informed Town Council that Mason Tree Service would be in Altavista in two weeks to complete the initial work scheduled.

Mayor Mattox suggested getting a quote from Mason Tree Service for the additional trees.

Councilman Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Mitchell, to authorize Jeff Arthur, Public Works, to gather three price quotes for Town Council's consideration for the removal of additional dead trees along the Jenks River Trail.

Motion carried.

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any additional questions or comments in regard to the Jenks River Trail project.

Councilman Mitchell referenced a previous quote given to Council by the former Public Works Director, David Garrett, to lay crush & run gravel on the field portion of the Jenks Trail. He suggested gathering current prices for the potential work of using crush & run.

Councilman Lowman asked if Council would consider allowing Public Works to continue clearing the Jenks Trail area as much as possible, as time allowed.

There was a consensus of Town Council to do so.

Councilman Higginbotham suggested dividing the area along the river and the field area for the Jenks River Trail project into two separate phases. He also suggested allowing staff to gather price quotes for surface material options, such as gravel and crushed concrete.

Utilities Director Tom Fore asked, for quoting purposes, how wide Council wanted the trail

Councilman Emerson asked how wide the pedestrian bridge would be, to which Mr. Higginbotham answered five feet wide.

There was a consensus of Council for the trail along the river to be six feet wide, and the field portion of the trail be ten feet wide, to simulate the existing trails.

Councilman George asked Jeff Arthur, Public Works, if the town would have millings after the boat ramp parking lot was paved.

Mr. Arthur stated there would not because the parking lot was being paved over the existing surface, however, there would be millings available from the town's spring paving project.

Councilman Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Emerson, to authorize Utilities Director Tom Fore to advertise an RFQ request pertaining to surface materials for the Jenks River Trail, with the specs as directed by Council.

Motion carried.

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes

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Mr. Timothy George	Yes
Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

B. Moseley Heights Community Project Team – Request for Funding

Background:

Representatives of the Moseley Heights Community Project Team spoke before the regular meeting of Town Council on September 14, 2021, to discuss holding a 5K run/walk on October 30, 2021 at Shreve Park to benefit the family of William Barnwell. At the September work session, Council agreed that funding would be provided if the organization had obtained its 501(c)3 status.

Per Tobie Shelton, Altavista's Finance Director, as of the writing of this report, the Moseley Heights organization had not completed the 501©3 requirement; therefore, staff recommend the funding request not be approved at this time.

Councilman Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Mitchell, to accept Staff's recommendation and deny the Moseley Heights Community Project Team's funding/donation request.

Motion carried.

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

C. English Park – Riverbank Erosion Issue

Background:

During 2020 the English Park was closed for one week due to floodwaters overrunning the river basin. This also included closing the boat ramp, overpass, and all roads into the park. There was erosion on the riverbank in English Park, adjacent to the Staunton River, caused by elevated water levels, high water flows and currents, and flooding associated with storms. Stabilization and re-establishment of the riverbank is needed to ease the erosion and further flooding into the park and surrounding areas. At the request of Town Council, staff asked Andy Klepac, P.E., Hurt & Proffitt, to conduct an assessment of the English Park riverbank area. He has recommended several courses of action that the town can take to address the issue.

Mayor Mattox stated, earlier that evening, Town Council had an opportunity to visit English Park and review the erosion damage. He asked Council to share their input.

Councilman Mitchell referenced the \$100,000 (\$50,000 for each initial two areas) allocated in the current budget for remediation of the erosion issue. He suggested the town move forward with the project.

Councilman Higginbotham reminded Council there were now four areas of erosion for concern on the English Park riverbank.

Councilman Emerson suggested utilizing the \$100,000 budgeted funds to place filter fabric and riff raff rock on all four erosion areas.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if Town Staff was available to do the work, or did the town need to bid the project to outside contractors.

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Utilities Director Tom Fore stated the Public Works Department was currently shorthanded and would be unable to take on the project at this time.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked Mr. Fore his professional opinion on the riverbank erosion issue

Mr. Fore stated the riverbank needed to be stabilized as soon as possible. He suggested clearing up the area, laying filter fabric, and then installing riff raff rock, with large rock placed at the bottom of the bank and smaller rock coming to the top of the riverbank.

Councilman Higginbotham made a motion to move forward with Mr. Fore's recommendation, seconded by Councilman Emerson.

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any additional Council comments or concerns for discussion pertaining to this item.

Councilman George asked who the town would obtain quotes from.

Mr. Fore stated there were 10-12 companies to consider, however, it would depend on who was available to take on the project in a timely manner, as Council desired.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if the motion was to address the two initial areas of concern, or to also include the two additional areas recently discovered.

Councilman Higginbotham suggested the requested bids include an alternate cost for erosion sites three and four for Council's consideration.

There was a consensus of Town Council to do so.

Councilman Higginbotham re-made his motion, seconded by Councilman Emerson, to authorize Tom Fore, Utilities Director, to develop specs for the scope of work and move forward with advertising this project for bids; consistent with Mr. Fore's recommendation to use fabric cloth, small (core) stone on bottom, with larger (armor) rock on top; the initial motion was amended to divide the scope of work into Phase I: the two areas most affected by erosion, and Phase II: the third and fourth areas that erosion had washed out.

Motion carried.

Vote:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

10. Reports and Communication

- A. September 2021 Departmental Reports
- B. Council Monthly Calendars – October and November
- C. Informational Items

The Manager's Report, Departmental Reports, and Council Calendars were delivered to Town Council on an earlier date, with their October Regular Council Meeting Agenda Pre-Packet.

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Finance Director Tobie Shelton stated Town Staff would be happy to answer any questions Council may have in regard to the monthly reports.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to the monthly reports, to which there were none.

Mayor Mattox stated he was happy to have Mr. Fore back at work.

11. Matters from Council

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any additional concerns or items for discussion.

- Councilman Mitchell referenced the COVID pandemic, as well as Town Staff currently being short staffed. He thanked Staff for the work they do for the Town of Altavista, not only for special events, but also for the day-to-day operations of the town.
- Councilman Mitchell asked for an update on the town's funds from the American Relief Plan Act (ARPA).

Tobie Shelton, Finance Director, informed Town Council that the town had received its 2021 ARPA funds and would receive the second amount in spring of 2022.

Councilman George asked if the town used the entire amount of funds for 2021.

Mrs. Shelton answered the town did not. She stated she and the Interim Town Manager, Clarence Monday, had discussed potential projects the 2021 ARPA funds could be used for and would be presenting the items to Council at one of their November meetings.

Mrs. Shelton stated the total amount of ARPA funds allocated to the Town of Altavista was \$3.2 million, however, there was certain criteria used to qualify a project and localities had to be able to justify each use of the money. She stated she continues to work with McGuire Woods Consultants' ARPA representative how to, and how not to use the funds.

Mrs. Shelton referenced a category of use for the ARPA funds. "General Service". She stated in order to utilize that category, the town had to show a reduction in revenue, which it did not. She stated the town could consider utilizing ARPA funds for the Vista Theater Revitalization Project to fix the front façade of the building, because the appearance of the building effected the other downtown businesses.

Mayor Mattox stated, although the town's revenue had been constant, its expenditures had increased. He asked if the town could use that argument to utilize the ARPA's General Services category.

Mrs. Shelton stated the ARPA worksheet for qualifying items was very specific and only asked for "audited" revenues, not expenditures, and the town was unable to use the General Service category due to not showing a revenue reduction.

Mrs. Shelton informed Town Council there was an ARPA category that specifically allowed funding for water, wastewater, and storm drain infrastructure, as well as Broadband.

Mrs. Shelton stated Town Council could email her or Mr. Monday with any items they wished to be considered for ARPA funding and they would investigate the possibility.

- Vice Mayor Bennett suggested Town Council consider having a separate meeting to specifically discuss and decide on potential projects for using the remaining ARPA funds.

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- Vice Mayor Bennett also stated he appreciated when staff was honest in letting Council know when they were unable to take on additional tasks or projects and shared his appreciation for Town Staff's continued hard work while currently being short staffed.
- Mayor Mattox asked if ARPA funds could be used towards existing debts the town had borrowed for utility projects.

Mrs. Shelton stated the town could not use ARPA funds for existing debts, however, if Council approved, the town could utilize ARPA towards utility projects that had not yet been funded, keeping the town from having to borrow funds for those projects.

Councilman Higginbotham asked if ARPA funds could be used towards the Lynch Creek project, to which Tom Fore, Utilities Administrator, reminded Council that project had already been funded through borrowing and could not be considered for ARPA.

Mr. Fore stated, however, if the project's costs ran over the initial budget, the town could use ARPA funds to cover the additional costs.

Mr. Fore referenced the Water and Wastewater Plant's Generator Project previously approved by Council. He reminded Council that the town still needed approximately \$139,000 to cover the cost of this project, which could be covered by ARPA instead of another borrowing.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Fore if there were any other utility projects that needed to be done the town could utilize the AEPA funds for.

Mr. Fore suggested the town consider installing "automatic read" water meters to all utility customers. He stated this would enable the Utilities Department and its customers to read consumption instantaneously, which would be helpful in detecting leaks sooner.

Town Attorney John Eller informed Town Council that the Town of Hurt had the fore-mentioned water meters and he believed the meters worked really well.

Mr. Fore referenced the Frazier Road drainage issue and stated it was a "stormwater/infrastructure" project, which could also be considered for ARPA funding.

Mayor Mattox referenced the town's desire to have Broadband services across the town. He stated utilizing ARPA funds would help the town implement the service throughout the entire community, which was at the top of the amenity list by existing and new citizens.

- Councilman Higginbotham referenced the Vista Theater Revitalization Project. He suggested Hurt & Proffitt, the project's engineers, consult with an HVAC contractor concerning the new roof design. He stated, when replaced, the new roof would need to be prepared for the new HVAC system.
- Councilman George referenced Halloween and Trick-or-Treating. He asked if Altavista's Police Department would be directing traffic on Bedford Avenue again this year, to which APD Chief Merricks confirmed they would.

Mr. George asked if businesses would be participating in handing out candy this year.

Town Treasurer/Finance Director Tobie Shelton stated there had been a lot of interest to by downtown businesses and she believed they would be doing so from 2-5 p.m. on Friday, October 29th.

- Councilman Lowman referenced the town's desire to implement Broadband services in the entire Altavista community.

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Dr. Lowman informed Council that Sharon Williams, Altavista's Community Development Director, had been in contact with Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Broadband liaison, which agreed to conduct a study for the town, at no charge, with Altavista's options pertaining to Broadband.

- Dr. Lowman thanked Altavista On Track and Town Staff for the BBQ, Bourbon, and Beer Festival held earlier in October. He stated there had been a consensus among Council that entertainment was an important amenity and also advertisement source for localities and events like the recent BBQ festival could help put Altavista "on the map".

Dr. Lowman referenced Avoca's part-time events coordinator. He suggested the town consider changing the position to fulltime, working for both the town and Avoca on events.

Mayor Mattox asked that the item be placed on the November Work Session Agenda for further discussion and consideration.

Interim Town Manager Clarence Monday stated he would do so.

- Councilman Emerson informed Council that Campbell County was using their ARPA funds for Broadband, and he believed that included the Town of Brookneal. He suggested allowing staff to investigate whether or not Altavista would also be included.

There was a consensus of Town Council to do so.

12. Closed Session

There was not a Closed Session held on this date.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Mattox asked if there was anything else to bring before Town Council or any additional comments or concerns from Council, to which there were none.

Mayor Mattox adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Michael Mattox, Mayor

Clarence Monday, Interim Clerk
Interim Town Manager