

## Town Council Work Session, May 24, 2022

The May 2022 Work Session for Altavista’s Town Council was held in Council Chambers of the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on Tuesday, May 24th, at 5:00 PM.

Mayor Mike Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.

Town Council

Members present:

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

Also Present:

Mr. Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager  
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Treasurer/Finance Director  
Mr. Thomas Merricks, APD Chief of Police  
Ms. Sharon D. Williams, Community Development Director  
Mr. Tom Fore, Public Services Director  
Mr. Jeff Arthur, Public Works Manager  
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney  
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Assistant Town Clerk

### 1. Agenda Adoption

Mayor Mattox informed Council there was an addition item added to the Closed Session that evening. He asked Town Council if they had any questions or concerns in regard to the May 2022 Council Work Session Agenda as amended, to which there were none.

Councilman Tracy Emerson made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried:

VOTE:

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

### 2. Recognitions and Presentations

#### 2.1 Town of Altavista Water Treatment Plant – Award Received

Mayor Mattox read aloud the award that the town’s water plant recently received from the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water for achieving the optimization program goals. He stated the water plant received the 2021 Gold Performance Award for “Excellence in Clarification, Filtration, and Backwash”.

Mayor Mattox thanked Altavista’s Public Services Director Tom Fore and the Altavista Water Treatment Plant’s employees for their hard work and dedication to ensure the reliability of the town’s water system.

Mr. Fore also thanked his staff at the water plant for “staying on top of things” and making sure the plant and its services were operating correctly every day. He stated the Altavista Water Plant had received the Gold Standard Award for the past five years and attributed the success to the hard work of town staff.

Town Council all congratulated Mr. Fore and his team at the water plant.

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### 3. Citizen's Time

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

### 4. Items Referred from Previous Meetings

There were none to discuss at this meeting.

### 5. Discussion for Items New and Unfinished

#### 5.1 Delinquent Utility Account Write-offs

Background:

Annually Town Staff presents Town Council with a request to write-off delinquent utility accounts that are five years old, as well as accounts of deceased individuals.

Finance and Administration Director, Tobie Shelton, stated that staff was asking Council to consider adjusting financial records by writing off twelve (12) accounts over five years old totaling \$1,716.96, and four (4) accounts for deceased individuals totaling \$640.18, as staff's efforts to collect have been unsuccessful. The total write-off request was \$2,357.09.

Mrs. Shelton stated, if Council reached a consensus to authorize staff to write-off the delinquent accounts, the item would be placed on Council's June regular meeting consent agenda for official approval.

Councilman Jay Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson, to authorize Town Staff to write off \$2,357.09 in delinquent utility accounts that were five years old or from deceased individuals.

Motion carried:

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

Councilman Mitchell suggested Council consider authorizing staff to write off utility accounts from deceased individuals and not needing Council's approval.

There were no comments from Council on this matter at this time.

#### 5.2 Altavista Public Works Department – Surplus Item Request

Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur came before Council seeking Town Council's approval to declare a small list of items as surplus, as the items are non-reparable and no longer useful to the department.

- 2006 Peterbilt Refuse Truck
- 2004 GMC Schwartz Sweeper
- Sickle Bar
- 1999 Chevrolet Utility Body
- 2013 Scag Z-turn Mower

Mr. Arthur stated all items proposed for surplus had been replaced or in the process of being replaced.

Mayor Mattox asked if Council had any questions, to which there were none.

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Councilman Jay Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson, to approve staff's request to declare the presented items as surplus and place this item on the June 14 consent agenda for official approval.

Motion carried:

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

### 5.3 Vista Theater – Roof Project Update

Altavista's Community Development Director, Sharon D. Williams, stated that Bif Johnson, Hurt & Proffitt, and Jacob Caldwell, Dominion Seven Architects, were both present to provide Council with an update on the Vista Theater Roof Project.

Mr. Caldwell informed Council that Master Engineers, the structural engineers for the Vista Theater Roof Project, were nearing completion of their portion of the work pertaining to the roof, which would then allow the design team to move forward with drafting the necessary drawings and be ready for the bid process.

Mr. Caldwell stated the team anticipated taking bids in late July, early August and he believed the project would draw good interest and yield multiple bids.

Mr. Caldwell informed Council that this phase of the project did not qualify for "historic tax credits", however, the next phase (full building renovations) would qualify and assist the town financially with completing that phase of the project.

Mayor Mattox asked for a cost estimate of the roofing phase of the project.

Mr. Caldwell stated that he would not have that figure until Masters Engineers work was complete and the designs were drafted. He stated he would update Council at that time.

Councilman Higginbotham asked if a sloped membrane would be used to for the theater roof restoration.

Mr. Caldwell stated the existing roof structure was considered a "vault barrel" and insulation would be added to help offset energy costs and to meet current codes. He stated the new white membrane had a twenty-year weather tight warranty, including downspouts and gutters.

Councilman Lowman asked if the roof needed re-framing anywhere other than where the building/roof had fire damage.

Mr. Caldwell stated it would not be known until the entire roof structure was removed. He stated there was an allowance in the cost estimate for the cost of additional structural damage replacement, which would be returned to the town as a credit if not used.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Caldwell for his input on what might be the best use of the old Vista Theater building.

Mr. Caldwell said that he would make a couple of phone calls and bring some information regarding potential uses for the building back to Council at a later date.

Vice Mayor Bennett suggested holding a public meeting just for the purpose of gathering ideas from the community for potential uses of the old Vista Theater, to which the Mayor concurred.

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With no additional questions from Council regarding this item, Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Caldwell for his time and the updates on the Vista Theater Roof Project.

### 5.4 Altavista Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) - 2021 Annual Report

Altavista's Community Development Director, Sharon D. Williams, stated that the Code of Virginia required certain Boards to submit an annual report to their governing body. She said the Board of Zoning Appeals usually only holds one meeting per year, their organizational meeting.

Ms. Williams stated the Altavista BZA held their annual meeting in January 2021, and during the meeting elected Wilson Dickerson as Chair and Laney Thompson as Vice Chair. She asked if Council had any questions, to which there were none.

### 5.5 Altavista Board of Zoning Appeals Annual Report

Ms. Williams continued her presentation with the Altavista Planning Commission's 2021 Annual Report. She stated, at their February 7th meeting, the Planning Commission re-elected John Jordan as Chair and Marie Mitchell as Vice Chair.

Ms. Williams reminded Council there were numerous text amendments in 2021 regarding the Downtown Revitalization Overlay District (DRO), and staff believed there was still work to be done to achieve the esthetic goals of Council for that district.

Ms. Williams gave Council a brief overview of the 2021 annual report. She stated there were 79 Zoning Permits issued in 2021, and 37 of those permits were for new businesses or changes in ownership. Ms. Williams also informed Council that three (3) new single-family homes were built or under construction in 2021, 1302 3rd St., 1304 Woodland Avenue, and 1106 Bedford Avenue.

Ms. Williams referenced Council's authorization to amend Section 62-151 "Weed Control" of Town Code, allowing one (1) Notice of Violation to cover the entire growing season. She stated the change had been very effective towards this nuisance.

Ms. Williams continued and said, in 2021, staff received 73 confirmed code enforcement complaints and sixty-nine (69) of the complaints were abated.

Ms. Williams informed Council that, with the help of Campbell County's GIS Manager, Staff continued to work on the "public facing" GIS for the Town of Altavista's website and would be completed in 2020. She also informed Council, with the substantial completion date of June 1st for the Spark Innovation Center, the facility would also be complete and ready for operation in 2022.

Ms. Williams referenced the Acquire, Renovate, and Sell Program (ARS) the town was approved for by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). She stated, after suggested changes by the DHCD were made, the final approval would be within the next thirty days. She said the program would be based on the DHCD's knowledge and experience and was expected to start within the next few months.

With Altavista On Track still being part of the town's Community Development Department in 2021, Ms. Williams shared an overview of their annual report. She stated, with the success of AOT's first BBQ festival in 2021, they intended to host its 2nd Annual BBQ Festival on October 1st, 2022.

Ms. Williams informed Council that AOT awarded Downtown Business Investment Grants (DBIG) to four downtown businesses in 2021, as well as awarding three façade grants to downtown businesses, which provided downtown businesses an opportunity to update the exterior of their buildings through small renovation projects.

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Ms. Williams concluded her presentation by referencing the Altavista Planning Commission and informing Council that the Commission continued to work on the town's 2040 Comprehensive Plan update. She stated it was their intent to schedule a public hearing with Council in November 2022, and to attend a Council work session for discussion prior to the November public hearing.

Ms. Williams stated, as a directive of Town Council, the Planning Commission and staff continue to explore ways to improve the town's housing stock to meet the needs of current citizens, as well as bring other to Altavista.

Ms. Williams offered to answer any questions that Council may have regarding her report.

Councilman Mitchell shared his excitement for the town's recent award of the ARS Grant. He reminded staff of a local organization that trained individuals to work in the construction/housing field and stated there may be an opportunity for the town to partner with the group. Mr. Mitchell stated the program was an asset for the town and the community and he looked forward to seeing what the town could accomplish.

There being no additional comments or questions from Council, Mayor Mattox thanked Ms. Williams for her report.

### 6. Updates and Informational Items

- Altavista Police Department (APD) – Annual National Night Out Event

APD Chief Tommy Merricks informed Council of the department's intent to host a National Night Out event again in 2022, behind the Booker Building in English Park. He stated the event was always schedule for the first Tuesday night in August, from 5:30-9pm.

Chief Merricks said The Embers was the music entertainment, along with food and other activities. He said, as always, the event was free to the community. He asked Council for their authorization to host the event again in 2022.

There was a unanimous "yes" from Town Council to allow the Altavista Police Department to host the 2022 National Night Out in English Park on Tuesday, August 2nd.

- Mayor Mike Mattox referenced a recent incident that occurred on 7th Street that could have led to a fatality had it not been for the work of the APD Officers on call that evening. He thanked Chief Merricks and all members of the Altavista Police Department (APD) for the work they do every day for the Town of Altavista and its community.

Chief Merricks referenced the Campbell County Sheriff's Department and informed Council they also assisted on the aforementioned call and were a great help. He stated the two departments work together when possible to better service both communities.

- Town Manager Gary Shanaberger reminded Town Council of their upcoming strategic planning work session "retreat", scheduled for Tuesday, June 7th, from 12noon-5pm.

The Town Manager also thanked Town Staff for their continued hard work.

### 7. Matters from Council

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

- Vice Mayor Bennett referenced the Lynch Creek Sewer Replacement Project and stated he felt the contractor, Mendon Pipeline, was doing a great job.

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Public Services Director Tom Fore said that Mendon Pipeline did great work on the town's McMinnis Spring Project and the town was happy to have them back to work on the Lynch Creek Project as well.

- Councilman Emerson referenced Dalton's Landing, the town's new boat/canoe launch. He stated the maintenance contractor, Larry Dalton, recently told him that the site was being well used, with patrons of the river there every day and on the weekends, the parking lot was typically full. Mr. Emerson stated he believed Dalton's Landing had been well received by the community and shared his appreciation to the town for adding the site to the town's many outdoor activities.
- Mayor Mattox thanked Tobie Shelton, Altavista Finance and Administration Director, for her hard work. He stated he knew that she had been working a lot of overtime during the budget process and he told Mrs. Shelton to let Council know if there was ever anything they could do to help make her job easier.

### 8. Closed Session

I move that the Altavista Town Council convene in closed session in accordance with the provisions set out in the *Code of Virginia*, 1950, as amended,

*Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1) Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body.*

*Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3) regarding discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.*

The motion was made by Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett and seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson. Motion carried.

VOTE:	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes		

Town Council went into Closed Session at 5:38 PM.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 6:27 PM.

### FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Bennett, seconded by Councilman Emerson, to adopt the certification of a closed meeting.

### CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the Town Council has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the town council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Town Council hereby certifies, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Town Council.

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VOTE:	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes		

### 9. Adjournment

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

The May 24th, 2022, Council Work Session was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

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Michael E. Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

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Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk