

Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, January 24, 2023

The January 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, January 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
Mr. Matthew Perkins, Asst. 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. Paul Hill, Asst. 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 asked Town Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to the January 2023 Work Session Agenda, of 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

▪ Citizen Craig Amo - Re: Request for a Billy Booker Memorial

Mr. Amo addressed Town Council and requested Council’s consideration to honor William Gus “Billy” Booker by naming the ballfield located at War Memorial Park after Mr. Booker; and placing a plaque on the stone arch entrance of the field. He shared with Council a brief history of Mr. Booker’s accomplishments and contributions to the Town of Altavista.

Councilman Emerson asked if the aforementioned stone arch would be disturbed.

Mr. Amo answered, it would not; he said only a plaque would be added to the structure.

There was a consensus of Town Council to place this item on the February 14th Consent Agenda.

▪ FY2024 Budget – Agency’s and Non-profit’s Annual Fund Requests

Background: During the town’s annual budget process, Town Council provides an opportunity for local agencies and nonprofits to deliver their annual budget request.

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Town Council can provide direction to Staff concerning these requests and their inclusion in the draft budget. If Council does not provide direction, Staff has typically included the requests in the draft budget, which will be delivered to Town Council this year (2023) at their February 14th Council Meeting.

Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Altavista's Director of Finance and Administration, informed Town Council of the scheduled order of presentation. Each organization gave Town Council a brief overview of their 2023 Annual Report, and were asked to present their FY2024 fund request, with an explanation of intention for the funds.

- Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce
Executive Director Beverly Watlington and Board President Kyle Goldsmith
FY2023: \$30,000 / FY2024 request, \$55,000
- Altavista Area YMCA
Chief Executive Officer, Maria McCracken
FY2023: \$100,000 / FY2024 request, \$100,000
- Altavista On Track
Executive Director, David Green
FY2023: \$55,176 / FY2024 request, \$55,176
- Altavista Senior Center
CCPLS/Citizen Engagement Senior Programming, Katie Lane
FY2023: \$1,000 / FY2024 request, \$1,000
- Avoca Museum and Historical Society
Executive Director, Caleb Lafoon, and Board Member Rusty Hicks
FY2023: \$82,140 / FY2024 request, \$123,230
- Small Business Development Center(SBDC), Lynchburg Region
Executive Director, Stephanie Keener
FY2023: \$6,000 / FY2024 request, \$6,000

Mayor Mattox encouraged Town Council to ask questions for items they did not know or understand pertaining to the individual presentations/fund requests.

- Councilman Mitchell referenced the Chamber of Commerce's increased fund request from the previous year, \$30,000, to \$55,000 for FY2024. He asked Mr. Goldsmith to bring Council back a document itemizing the Chamber's intent for the extra funds.
- Vice Mayor Bennett made reference to only one out of the six organizations present that evening submitted a FY2022 Audit Report. He asked that they all do so as soon as possible because it was the Town's responsibility to share with the citizens of Altavista where the Town's funds were being spent and why.

Mayor Mattox concurred with the Vice Mayor and added that the Town was held accountable for their monetary actions, and accordingly hold the organizations they contribute funds to with the same accountability.

- After the YMCA presentation by CEO Maria McCracken, members of Town Council shared their appreciation for the work they do for the community and the amenities they offer; and stated the YMCA was an asset to the Town of Altavista.

Mayor Mattox asked Ms. McCracken for an "itemization of use" for the YMCA's \$100,000 annual fund request.

Ms. McCracken informed Council that the YMCA had a new accounting system that enabled them to complete their annual reports sooner than in the past. She stated the Town's annual contribution to the YMCA went directly to their youth sports program, and said she would deliver the requested document to Council for their review.

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- During David Green's presentation for Altavista On Track (AOT), Councilman Mitchell referenced the recent Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and AOT, and asked Mr. Green for a copy of the document.

Mayor Mattox asked that the document be shared with all Town Council members.

Councilman Mitchell also asked what AOT's event schedule was for CY2023.

Mr. Green reminded Council that AOT was not only accountable to the Town of Altavista, but also to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, which included annual reports, audits, and event schedules. He said that 2022 was not as profitable as predicted or desired, and AOT would be restructuring their future event plans, with the exception of the Annual Gibley Jog.

Mayor Mattox stated the initial objective for AOT was to promote Altavista's Downtown District and to incentivize new businesses to locate there. He said, as a small business owner, he would be happy to offer input when needed.

Mr. Green stated that objective was still at top priority for AOT and said that he looked forward to working with the Town, and the State, to increasing the presence of Altavista's Downtown District.

- Town Council shared their appreciation for the Altavista Senior Center, and the opportunities it offered to Altavista's senior community.

Councilman Mitchell stated that he believed \$1,000 (the Senior Center's FY2024 fund request) was a small price to pay for such a great senior amenity.

- Avoca Board Member Rusty Hicks gave a brief overview of Avoca's history and how it became a town-owned property. Afterwards, Executive Director Caleb Laffoon presented Avoca's FY2024 fund request, increased from last year's \$82,140, to \$123,230. He stated that \$82,140 of the request remained for (2) employee salaries, which included himself.

Mr. Laffoon referenced the Avoca Reserve Fund, monies from the sale of a previous town-owned property and allocated by the Town for Avoca maintenance. He asked Council to consider relinquishing the fund to the Avoca Board.

Mr. Laffoon shared that the Avoca Board would like the Town to consider maintenance of the Avoca mansion like other town-owned public properties, by taking care of maintenance issues, whether it be a light switch or heat pump.

Mr. Laffoon also asked Council to consider allowing the Town's Public Works Department to help with Avoca's year-round ground maintenance, like mowing and leaf removal services. He asked for a separate \$35,760 in funds for landscaping, which he stated came from an average of three separate quotes.

Mr. Laffoon referenced the Avoca mansion's second floor plastering and stated, being 120 years old, the plaster was starting to crack and become a safety hazard. He informed Council of a \$3,000 grant that Avoca received to assist with replacing the plaster, and asked Council to consider a one-time donation of \$5,324, the remaining funds needed for completing the project.

Councilman Mitchell shared his favor with approving the "basic" maintenance request. He referenced the property being town-owned and therefore should be maintained at the same level as the library and train station.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked Tom Fore, Public Services Director, for his input regarding whether Public Works could mow the Avoca property or if outsourcing the work was more feasible.

Mr. Fore said he would evaluate the services needed and offer a recommendation.

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Mr. Bennett asked if Avoca received United Way funding.

Mr. Laffoon stated, previously, Avoca had not received funding from United Way, but informed Council that he was currently working on gaining their funding.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Laffoon and the Avoca Board Members present that evening, if they would welcome Mr. Fore reviewing their landscaping contract before Avoca entered into an agreement, to assure the received proposals were reasonable proposals; to which the Avoca Board Members agreed.

Councilman Higginbotham shared his favor with Avoca and the Town sharing the responsibilities of ground maintenance on the Avoca property: such as the Town taking care of basic mowing, mulching, and leaf removal, and Avoca beautifying the property with flowers, shrubs, etc.

Mr. Higginbotham referenced the Avoca Reserve Fund, and reminded Mr. Laffoon that the funds in that account were allocated for use only on Capital Improvement Projects at Avoca. He shared his favor in leaving the Avoca Reserve Fund the way it was currently being managed.

Mr. Higginbotham also suggested utilizing the Avoca Reserve Fund, not additional Town funding, for the aforementioned “plaster restoration project”, and stated that type of project was what the fund was established for.

Councilman George stated he thought the Town was already helping with ground maintenance at Avoca, so he was in favor of the Town sharing that responsibility.

Councilman Lowman asked for clarification of how the Avoca Reserve Fund was established and how it could be used.

Finance Director Tobie Shelton stated that the fund was established through the sale of the old Altavista EMS building, previously located adjacent to the Avoca property. She said the deed of that property strictly stated that the funds of the sale were to be allocated for CIP maintenance projects only.

With no further question regarding this matter, Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Laffoon and the Avoca Board for the work they do for the Altavista community.

- Lynchburg Regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
Executive Director Stephanie Keener presented Council with the SBDC’s 2022 annual report and a brief overview of their 2023 Plan. She reminded Council that any fund contributions from the Town of Altavista were matched with federal funds by the SBDC’s Small Business Administration Grant.

Ms. Keener stated in 2022, the SBDC served twenty-one Altavista businesses, with training and/or one-on-one counselling, which they offered free, or of minimal cost to the business.

Ms. Keener informed Town Council that the SBDC was partnering with Altavista’s Community & Business Engagement Coordinator, Jamie Gillespie, to offer business counseling opportunities at the Spark Innovation Center. She said the SBDC recently hired two new business advisors, one focused on finance and budgets, and one focused on marketing and branding; and both would be rotating time at the Spark Innovation Center.

Councilman Mitchell asked if the number of businesses assisted by the SBDC in 2022 (twenty-one) was an average number for Altavista.

Ms. Keener stated, other than the decrease in 2021, due to COVID, the numbers in the Lynchburg region, including Altavista, had been steadily increasing.

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Vice Mayor Bennett asked Ms. Keener to elaborate on the SBDC's intention to utilize the Spark Innovation Center to assist the town's small business community.

Ms. Keener stated the SBDC was working with Mrs. Gillespie to create specific days and timeframes that they could utilize office space and be available for business counseling. She stated, by having a consistent presence in town, would help keep the Spark Center at the forefront of helping new and existing businesses.

Mayor Mattox asked if the SBDC would be bringing back a previous program, "small business workshops".

Ms. Keener stated that the SBDC currently offered a ninety-minute online class for new businesses to learn the answers to basic questions; and for existing businesses to hear from their peers that may have similar questions or concerns.

Ms. Keener informed Council that the SBDC planned to offer a new class in 2023, focused on community support for small businesses. She stated the class would be held at the locality's location of choice; and information provided to small businesses regarding available support from their community, such as what grant programs were available and where to find office space.

Councilman Higginbotham asked how businesses could find out about the aforementioned classes and workshops.

Ms. Keener stated that all SBDC activities were located on their event calendar. She said local (Altavista) events/classes could be shared on social media and in newspapers, as well as "word-of-mouth" being a great informative tool.

Mayor Mattox and Town Council thanked Ms. Keener for her continued work in assisting the Town of Altavista's small business community.

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; of which there were none.

4. Unfinished Items (referred from a previous meeting)

4.1 English Park – Electrical Repairs

Background: English Park is used for multiple festivals and events. The Town has electrical fixtures throughout the park that allow vendors to utilize the electrical outlets. After the last AOT event in English Park, Staff brought to management's attention, there were faulty electrical supply lines in the park that needed to be repaired.

Public Services Director Tom Fore stated, Staff was asking for Council's consideration to move forward with repairing the faulty electrical system in English Park. He said after Staff reviewed the submitted quotes for the work, they recommended awarding the project to Childress Electrical, the lowest bid at \$26,300.

There was a unanimous consensus of Town Council to place this item on the Consent Agenda of their February 14th Council Meeting.

At this time, Mr. Fore also referenced a previous discussion regarding the Town adding more lights to the parking lots at English Park. He asked for Council's direction.

There was a consensus of Town Council for Staff to investigate the cost for using solar lights, similar to the ones at Dalton's Landing, but in the amount of lights needed for the English Park project; for their consideration of placing the item on a future CIP.

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5. New Items for Discussion

5.1 Blight Discussion – Informational Item

Community Development Director Sharon D. Williams introduced Director Jeffrey Brown, of the State Building Code Office. She informed Town Council that Mr. Brown had the opportunity earlier that evening to meet with the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager and take a tour of the Town of Altavista.

Mr. Brown informed Town Council that he had been with the State Code Office for five years, and was previously a local building code and property maintenance official for fifteen years. He said that he would be happy to answer any questions Council may have regarding the tools available to the Town to help tackle blight issues.

Mr. Brown stated that the Virginia State Code included a property maintenance code, which could be adopted by a locality entirely, or in portions of the code; and in addition, local ordinances were tools to help enforce the code, such as a derelict structure ordinance and an unsafe building ordinance, which the Town Code of Altavista already had both.

Mr. Brown stated, if a locality chose to adopt the State Maintenance Code, they also had to appoint a Code Official for enforcement of the code, which were required to have minimum qualifications and special training before being allowed to handle the task.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Brown, after touring the town, what were his recommendations.

Mr. Brown stated that, even though it could be a long process, it was wise to give a property owner the chance to comply with the Town Code and Ordinances by making initial contact (a phone call), and sending a certified letter with the Town's requests. He stated, if the matter was not resolved and ended up in court, it showed favor for the locality that they made every effort to reach an agreement with the property owner for compliance.

Councilman Mitchell asked for clarification on whether a locality had to have a Code Enforcement Officer to have the ability to tackle blight issues.

Mr. Brown answered, a Code Enforcement Officer was only required if a locality adopted the State Maintenance Code. He stated that a locality could address some blight issues with ordinances, such as Altavista's Derelict Structure Ordinance.

Mayor Mattox asked, since Altavista was part of Campbell County, could the town rely on the county to enforce a maintenance code if adopted by the town.

Mr. Brown stated that Virginia's State Building Code was adopted and mandatory for the entire state, however, the State Maintenance Code was optional for localities to adopt; and also optional whether they adopted the entire code or only portions. He said the State Maintenance Code was very unique, and would be hard for a county code official to enforce all of the variations possible through adopting the code by their multiple localities; however, it may be possible through an agreement between the county and a locality.

Vice Mayor Bennett said he understood it was Town Council's responsibility to decide whether to adopt the State Maintenance Code, and then, to authorize the Town Manager to hire a Code Official. He asked what the requirements were for being a Code Official.

Mr. Brown stated one requirement was to have at least three years of experience in the construction field, ideally as either a building inspector or maintenance inspector. He stated, if the minimum experience requirement was met, the person could start immediately, however, they only had twelve months to obtain their training and certification requirements. Mr. Brown informed Town Council that the DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development) offered Code Official training classes and testing throughout the year.

Councilman Higginbotham reminded everyone of the previous Town Loan Program that offered property owners, with derelict or unsafe structures, the opportunity to fix their properties with a no-interest loan from the Town.

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Mr. Higginbotham said, only if the property owner did not comply after multiple attempts by the Town, would they take the issue to court for approval to tear down the structure. He stated this was all accomplished with the existing Town Ordinances; and stated he did not believe the Town should endure the extra cost to hire a Code Enforcement Official.

Town Attorney John Eller asked Mr. Brown, in regard to Altavista's Derelict Structure Ordinance versus the State Maintenance Code's definition of an unsafe structure, if the town could use parts of the State Maintenance Code in their Derelict Structure Ordinance to make a stronger case for reasons to require compliance.

Mr. Brown state that he was not as familiar with the definitions of a derelict structure, but stated that he would send a copy of the State Maintenance Code to the Town Manager for distribution to the Town Attorney and Town Council, so they could reference the document against the Town's existing ordinances regarding the matter.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Brown for his time and the information he shared.

5.2 Departments of Public Services and Community Development Request - to Update Town Code: Chapter 62, Solid Waste

Background: Chapter 62 of Altavista's Town Code was last updated in 2004 when the Town switched to automated collection, which began in January 2005. Since that time, some of the Town's policies and practices have changed; however, Town Code was not updated. Staff also believed some services needed to be clarified, and fees increased to reflect actual costs.

Community Development Director Sharon D. Williams asked Town Council to consider the Departments of Community Development and Public Services recommendation to update Altavista's Solid Waste Ordinance. She presented Council with a brief overview of the proposed changes for their consideration – to be determined after a public hearing.

During her presentation, Ms. Williams stated, periodically when a landlord evicts a renter, the renter would leave behind items that the landlord had to dispose of, and the landlords usually left the items on the curb for Public Works to pick up. She informed Council, when this occurred, it sometimes required Public Works to make two-three trips to the land field.

Ms. Williams stated that, with the proposed ordinance and fee changes, Staff was also recommending a fee be charged to landlords that require multiple "bulk" pickups.

Ms. Williams asked Council to authorize Staff to advertise a public hearing for the requests

Town Council accepted Staff's recommendations and approved Staff to advertise for a Public Hearing regarding the proposed code changes and increased fees.

Ms. Williams also referenced Altavista's Central Business District and the fact that many of the buildings were built to the end of their property line, and without adequate room for a trash dumpster for their business. She stated, on some occasions the Town had allowed businesses to put their dumpster on town-owned property; however, currently there was no policy in Town Code referencing this manner.

Ms. Williams asked Town Council to consider adding a "hardship" policy pertaining to dumpster placement in the Town Code to address this issue.

Councilman Mitchell suggested having verbiage in the ordinance that required said dumpsters to be enclosed, at least from the road side, or sides, of the dumpster.

Councilman Higginbotham suggested creating a name that did not include the word "hardship". He said the word sounded misleading, and the intent might be misunderstood.

Ms. Williams asked Council to authorize Staff to advertise a public hearing for this item. There was a consensus of Town Council to authorize a public hearing on this matter.

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5.3 Public Works Surplus Request

Background: Periodically, Staff will request Council's authorization to surplus items that are no longer in good condition, or not in service; so the items can be disposed of or sold.

Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur presented Town Council with a request for consideration to declare the following items as surplus:

- 2001 Chevrolet 2500 HD Pickup Truck
- two 8ft Hinken Plows - which only fit the truck above

There was a unanimous consensus of Town Council to place this item on the Consent Agenda of their February 14th Council Meeting.

Mr. Arthur took this opportunity to update Council on the English Park Trail System's Wayfinding Signage Project. He said the large signs were in production, and the mile marker signs were soon to follow, they were just waiting for mapping to be confirmed for placement of the mile markers.

Councilman Higginbotham shared his appreciation for the vender doing their due diligence for the correct placement of the trail signs.

Councilman Emerson shared his concern with the project taking so long, and asked that Council be updated when the project was complete.

5.4 WWTP Request to Replace Sludge Impeller

Background: The sludge pumps are suction lift pumps that are used to return sludge from the bottom of the clarifiers back to aeration. These pumps require alternating runs and are used constantly, therefore they wear out over time and need to be replaced. Because the cost of these are over \$3000, they are put on the CIP every other year for replacement.

Director of Public Services, Tom Fore, stated, due to increasing equipment costs, there would be a deficit from the initial budgeting to replace one of the return-sludge impeller assemblies. He stated that Staff was requesting Council's approval to use leftover funds, if any, from FY2023 Wastewater CIP items, or from Operational funds from the Enterprise Fund, to cover the projected deficit.

Mr. Fore said, if no unexpended funds were available, Staff requested to appropriate funds (\$2,226.30) from Enterprise Reserves at the end of the 2023 fiscal year to cover the deficit.

There was a consensus of Town Council to approve Staff's request; which would be revisited at the end of fiscal year 2023 to determine the amount needed.

Councilman Higginbotham asked Mr. Fore to keep Council updated on this item.

5.5 Springs Rehabilitation Project – Engineering Proposals

Background: Town Council previously approved Staff to move forward with acquiring engineering services to design and provide contract administration over construction of this project. Staff received proposals, which were shared with Council for reference.

Public Services Director Tom Fore requested Council's consideration to hire Engineering Concepts Incorporated to complete the design and construction administration work for the Springs Rehabilitation Project, which had the lowest bid of \$378,595. He said, due to the high cost of outsourcing the inspection work, it would be done "in-house" by his Staff.

There was a consensus of Town Council to approve Staff's request, and place this item on the Consent Agenda of the February 14th Town Council Meeting.

5.6 Legislative Items – Informational Item

On this date, The Virginia General Assembly was currently in session and had begun discussion on PFAS in water sources.

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House *Bill 1721* required the Commissioner of Health to form a work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in the Commonwealth's drinking water; and develop recommendations to reduce the microplastics.

Senate *Bill 1013* required a waterworks owner to make notification to the public by a local newspaper and also individual mailed notification with other mandated requirements. Senate *Bill 849* would require localities, including the Town of Altavista, to get permission from property owners to install smart meter technology.

Mr. Fore informed Council that the water resource contamination issue that occurred earlier that year had been resolved. He said the cause had been identified and therefore, he did not anticipate a reoccurrence of the issue.

Mr. Fore referenced the Town's new AMI utility meters, that would soon be installed for all Altavista utility customers. He stated, if passed, the Town would be affected by Senate Bill 849; requiring the Town to obtain permission from homeowners before installation.

Public Services Director Tom Fore informed Council that he was following the General Assembly's progress on these items and would keep the Town up to date on the matter.

5.7 TOA Utilities – UV System Replacement

Assistant Public Services Director Paul Hill informed Town Council that the Town's UV Disinfection System was twenty-four years old and had outlived its useful lifespan, and become problematic and unreliable. He said the replacement parts were also becoming harder to acquire due to supply chain issues.

Mr. Hill stated, Staff was seeking approval to purchase the new UV system from Trojan, at a cost of \$349,840. He stated, while it was a little more expensive, it met the DEQ requirements in the Town Permit; and being new, would reduce maintenance costs.

Mr. Hill stated that Staff also recommended using Atrium Construction to install the new UV system, as they had the lowest bid, \$48,200, of the received quotes.

Mr. Hill reminded Council that Staff budgeted \$750,000 for this project. He stated, with the UV system costing \$349,840, an installation cost of \$48,200, and an additional \$20,000 contingency line (for potential concrete & electrical work), the total estimated cost for this project was \$418,040, a \$331,960 savings from the initial budget.

Councilman Higginbotham asked if Atrium's quote was "all inclusive", to which Mr. Hill answered that it was.

There was a consensus of Town Council to accept Staff's recommendation, and place this item on the February 14th Council Meeting Consent Agenda for approval.

5.8 Altavista Police Department: re: Automated Vehicle Recognition (AVR)

Background: Pro-AVR is a camera system that photographs the rear of vehicles and captures the vehicle information and makes it available in a searchable database.

APD Chief Tommy Merricks informed Council that Altumint, the town's vendor for their school-zone speed monitoring cameras, was offering an AVR "pilot program" to the Town of Altavista, at no charge to the town.

Chief Merricks informed Council that presently, VDOT did not allow LPR (License Plate Reader) systems on VDOT right of ways. He said, while Altumint and other companies were lobbying the General Assembly to change those regulations, he recommended, if approved, the pilot program be conducted on Clarion Rd, which was a Town right of way. He stated, should the Town desire a permanent system, the location or locations be discussed at that time.

Mayor Mattox asked Chief Merricks to explain why this may be useful to the APD.

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Chief Merricks stated that, no matter how many officers that a locality had, they cannot be everywhere. He said this technology was very useful in finding individuals that have committed crimes or have warrants against them.

Councilman Mitchell asked if this data was only seen by the locality it served.

Chief Merricks stated that the data retrieved from the AVR system was shared through the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

Councilman Higginbotham asked if the Town would be obligated to a contract by being in the AVR pilot program; to which Chief Merricks stated it would not.

Town Council approved placing this item on the February 14th Consent Agenda to authorize Chief Merricks to move forward with participating in the pilot program.

5.9 Altavista's Housing Development Program

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins stated, Staff was proposing the Town establish a Housing Development Reserve Fund, allocating \$250,000. He said, along with funds from the Town's ARS Program, both funds would be used to facilitate two new home builds on recently acquired town-owned properties.

Mr. Perkins stated, once the houses were sold, funds from those sales would be returned to the Housing Development Reserve Fund; and the initial funds/loan for the ARS Program would be repaid to the state. He said it was Staff's intent for the program to eventually become self-sustaining.

Councilman Mitchell asked if \$250,000 would be requested for the program every year.

Mr. Perkins stated the \$250,000 was a one-time request, and all net sales would be allocated back into the program's Reserve Fund for future housing development projects.

Mayor Mattox asked if the requested funds were available or would reserve funds be used.

Finance Director Tobie Shelton stated, if approved, \$250,000 would be reallocated from the Reserve Fund into the new Housing Development Fund.

Councilman Higginbotham asked who would be financing the homes for new homebuyers

Mr. Perkins stated financing would be the potential homebuyer's responsibility.

With no further questions, Town Council accepted Staff's recommendation and to place this item on the February 14th Consent Agenda for official approval.

5.10 FY2024-2028 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Discussion

This item was informational only.

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins presented the draft CIP for FY2024 and projections for FY2024-2028 for the Utilities Department (Water and Wastewater), for Town Council's review and consideration during the FY2024 budget process

Mr. Perkins informed Council that Parks & Recreation., Public Works, and Avoca's draft CIP would be presented at their next meeting.

6. Updates and Informational Items

- Town Manager Gary Shanaberger informed Town Council that the Town of Altavista did not receive the grant for the "Site-readiness Program" regarding the town's 83 acres on Clarion Road. He said that he had a phone conference scheduled for the following week to determine how the Town could make their application stronger for resubmission.

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- Community Development Director Sharon Williams informed Town Council that, as part of the pre-planning process for a DHCD grant application, Town Staff was hosting a Mosely Heights Community Meeting on Thursday, January 26th, at 6pm; to start collecting surveys, which was part of the requirements of the grant process.
- Ms. Williams also informed Council that the Town's Smart Scale application to install a round-about at the intersection of Lynch Mill Road and Clarion Road was not recommended for funding by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.
- Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins reminded Town Council of the Spark Innovation Center's Grand Opening on Friday, February 10th at noon.
- Mr. Perkins also informed Council that he had a phone conference scheduled for the next day with VDOT, regarding their Ready-Set-Go Program, pertaining to an application the Town submitted for a potential project to connect English Park to 3rd Street, with sidewalks and crosswalks on Pittsylvania Avenue. He said that he would keep Council updated on the progress of the application for this project.

7. Matters from Town Council

- Councilman Jay Higginbotham referenced the new Spark Innovation Center and suggested that some type of "safety barrier" be placed in front of the building.

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins stated that the matter was being addressed.

- Councilman Wayne Mitchell suggested the town consider adding a "Lazy River" float attraction to English Park.

There was a consensus of Council to consider the item further (at a later meeting); when Staff was able to acquire information about the idea.

8. Town Council Closed Session

The Altavista Town Council convened in closed session in accordance with the provisions set out in the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended,

Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3) 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.

Section 2.2-3711 (A)(8) Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter.

A Motion was made by Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett, seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson. Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Vice Mayor R. Bennett	Yes	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes		

Town Council went into Closed Session at 7:47 PM.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 8:46 PM.

FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

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

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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.

VOTE:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes	Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Vice Mayor R. Bennett	Yes	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes		

Notice was given to Staff that Town Council was in favor of allocating \$23,000 for additional testing at the Frazier Farm, by Hurt and Proffitt; contingent no grant money was available

Unanimous consensus to place the item on the February 14th Consent Agenda for official approval.

9. Adjournment

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

The January 24th, 2023, Town Council Work Session was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Michael Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk