

Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, October 25th, 2022

The 2022 October Work Session for Altavista’s Town Council was held in Council Chambers of the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 7th Street, on Tuesday, October 25th, 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
Mayor Michael Mattox
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Absent: Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham
Dr. Scott Lowman

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. Paul Hill, Assistant Public Services Director
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 October 2022 Council Work Session Agenda, to which there were none.

Councilman Tracy Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Mitchell, 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

2. Recognitions and Presentations

Mayor Mattox referenced “National First Responders Day” being the upcoming Friday, October 28th. He thanked the Police Officers, Fire Fighters, and EMTs that service the Town of Altavista and its surrounding community. He asked Altavista Police Chief, Tommy Merricks, if he would like to say a few words on the matter.

Chief Merricks thanked Mayor Mattox for the recognition of the town’s service providers. He said that he enjoyed serving in Altavista, and its great 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. There were no citizen comments.

4. Items for Discussion

4.1 Public Works – Surplus Request

With the absence of Public Works Director, Jeff Arthur, the town’s Public Services Assistant Director, Paul Hill, presented this item/request to Town Council. Mr. Hill shared a photo of the two vehicles that were on the list for authorization to surplus.

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Mr. Hill informed Council that both vehicles had been replaced with new vehicles, previously approved in FY2023's Capital Improvement Plan.

- 2002 Dodge Van, replaced with a 2022 Chevy Colorado Pickup Truck
- 2008 Ford Explorer, replaced with a 2022 Dodge Service Truck

There was a unanimous consensus of Town Council to place the request on the November 8th Regular Council Meeting Consent Agenda for official approval.

4.2 Lynch Creek Clearing and Restoration

Public Services Director Tom Fore presented this item to Town Council. Mr. Fore reminded Council that this project was pertaining to the creekbank area between English Auto and Elber's Grocery Store. He stated that the lowest bid received, from NatureChem, was \$4,925 over the \$50,000 approved CIP budget, however, this department had funding available to cover the overage.

Mr. Fore asked Council for their consideration to approve the bid from NatureChem.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any questions in regard to this project.

Councilman Mitchell asked, once this project was completed, was there preventative maintenance that the town could perform to keep the area from becoming an issue again.

Mr. Fore stated that NatureChem included in their proposal to return the following year to re-treat the area to prevent regrowth; and the town would utilize the same chemical to treat the area in the future, when needed, before growth occurred.

Mr. Mitchell asked if there were other areas in town that needed the same treatment.

Mr. Fore informed Council that staff would continue the clearing and maintenance work along Lynch Creek, through to English Park and the Wastewater Plant.

There was a unanimous consensus of Town Council to place this item on the November 8th Regular Council Meeting Consent Agenda to officially approve staff to award NatureChem with the Lynch Creek Clearing and Restoration CIP Project.

Councilman Mitchell thanked Mr. Fore for doing his due diligence in finding the additional funding needed to cover the cost of the overage on this project.

Mayor Mattox also thanked Mr. Fore and the Public Services Departments for the work they do for the Town of Altavista.

4.3 Zoning Ordinance: Text Amendment Request - Solar

Per a request by the Town Manager, Gary Shanaberger, and approved by a consensus of Town Council, this item was moved to the November 2022 Work Session.

5. Updates and Informational Items

- Public Services Director Tom Fore shared with Town Council information regarding a recent article in the Lynchburg News & Advance regarding GenX Forever Chemicals. Mr. Fore stated that "hot spots" of these chemicals were found in both the Salem and Roanoke reservoirs. He said, while levels of the chemical were not invasive below ten parts per trillion, above that level could cause future issues.

Mr. Fore informed Council that the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) was continuing to test and monitor levels of the chemical across the Commonwealth of Virginia. He stated, while it was not being mandated, he was in favor of testing the town's intake of the Staunton River when the river was high (from large amounts of rainfall), to investigate if the GenX chemicals were traveling in the sediment from the upriver reservoirs.

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Mr. Fore stated that he was currently gathering costs for the aforementioned testing, and if his department could not cover the cost, he would seek VDH funding for the said testing.

Councilman Mitchell asked, if the town was successful in testing its Staunton River resource and found no evidence of the chemical, would continued testing be needed.

Mr. Fore stated, if he was confident that the GenX chemical was not traveling downstream in large amounts and effecting the town's intake, no further testing would be necessary.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Fore for his efforts and due diligence with this matter.

- Altavista Police Chief, Tommy Merricks, updated Town Council regarding the speed monitoring cameras located at both the Altavista Elementary School, located on Lynch Mill Road, and the Altavista Combined School, located on Bedford Avenue.

Chief Merricks informed Council that the additional flashing/warning signs were erected on the side streets that approach the school zones; and he collaborated with the Campbell County School Maintenance Department to make sure the new lights were synced with the main warning lights and camera system for both school zones.

Chief Merricks stated that the new flashing/warning signs were also equipped with monitoring cameras, to ensure that the lights were in working order at all times, which had been some of the previous complaints.

Chief Merricks informed Council that the speed monitoring system would be back in service on Monday, November 14th; with a 10-day warning period, starting October 31, that the cameras would be re-implemented. He stated that he had already contacted the elementary school principal, and would also be contacting the high school principal to inform them and their staff of the upcoming warning period and implement timeframe.

Mayor Mattox shared a recent incident, when Chief Merricks was visiting his establishment and, while doing so, a transfer truck went by, obviously speeding. He stated that Chief Merricks stopped their conversation in mid-sentence and left to pursue the speeding truck.

Mayor Mattox stated that, if a child had been crossing the road, or a car pulling out of his or the school's parking lot, the truck was going so fast that it would not have been able to stop in time to prevent an accident.

Mayor Mattox thanked Chief Merricks and his department for the exceptional work they do every day, no matter where they are, or what they are doing, to serve and protect the citizens of Altavista, which included its children.

Chief Merricks remembered the incident and stated, after receiving his ticket, the truck driver said that he would inform his employer and coworkers of the reduced speed limit in that area due to it being a school zone.

Councilman Emerson referenced the 700+ speeding tickets issued when the speed monitoring camera system was initially implemented for Altavista's school zones. He said, with all of the attention that the speed monitoring system had produced, that he hoped it would deter people from speeding through the school zones; and the awareness would help keep the students, children of Altavista, safe from speeding vehicles.

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- At this time, Town Manager Gary Shanaberger updated Town Council on the following items:

- Vista Theatre Revitalization Project

Mr. Shanaberger informed Council that he and Town Staff had recently met with Robert Lee, project consultant, and that Mr. Lee was tentatively scheduled to be at the November Work Session to present Council with his report.

Mr. Shanaberger stated, at the aforementioned meeting, there was a consensus between Staff and Mr. Lee that a use for the Vista facility needed to be made before moving forward with the feasibility study. He stated that Staff believed gathering “community input” for ideas of potential uses of the facility would be useful in helping the town make that decision, and if Council desired, could be done with ballots at Town Hall and through the town’s social media platforms.

There was a unanimous consensus of Town Council for staff to do so.

- Dearing Ford Industrial and Manufacturing Site

Mr. Shanaberger informed Town Council that Meagan Lucas and Jamie Gillespie, with Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, recently met with the DHCD review team regarding the newly acquired 83 acres, located at Altavista’s Industrial and Manufacturing Park on Clarion Road, and informed Staff that the review went well.

Mr. Shanaberger stated the next step in the grant process was a site visit, which the town would find out the date of within the next two weeks. He said Public Works was continuing its cleaning/clearing efforts of the area in preparation of a site visit.

Mr. Shanaberger stated that DHCD would determine grant decisions by December 1st (potential of \$240,000 site development funds).

- Mr. Shanaberger concluded his updates by stating that he believed the second Managers Training went well and informed Council that the next training session was scheduled for Thursday, December 1st.

6. Matters from Town Council

There were no other questions or comments from Town Council.

7. 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)(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) 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

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

VOTE:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes

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Town Council went into Closed Session at 5:37 PM.
Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 5:43 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.

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
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes

8. Adjournment

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

The October 25th, 2022, Town Council Work Session was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Michael Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk