

Town Council Work Session, April 26, 2022

The April 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, April 26, 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
Dr. Scott Lowman
Mayor Michael Mattox
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Member(s) Absent: Mr. Jay Higginbotham

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 asked Town Council if they had any questions or concerns in regard to the proposed March 2022 Council Work Session Agenda, 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. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

2. Recognitions and Presentations

None scheduled for this date.

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.

Betty Moorman, 900 16th Street, Altavista, came before Council with concerns about dogs in her neighborhood being let out of their house periodically throughout the day and stated the dogs had been defecating in her yard. She said there were other property owners in her neighborhood that had complained to her about the same issue.

Mayor Mattox and Council thanked Ms. Moorman for her time and attending the meeting.

4. Items Referred from Previous Meetings

There were none to discuss at this meeting.

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5. Discussion for Items New and Unfinished

5.1 Special Event Permit Request – Lori Watkins, State Farm Insurance

Community Development Director, Sharon D. Williams, informed Town Council that 2022 was the 100th year anniversary of State Farm Insurance.

Ms. Williams referenced a Special Event Permit application submitted by Lori Watkins, local State Farm Agent, requesting the use of English Park on Friday, June 3rd, to host an event to celebrate State Farm's 100th year anniversary. She stated Public Services and the Police Department had been made aware of the request and believed there wouldn't be any problem with allowing the event.

Ms. Williams stated the celebration would be a family-friendly event with free admission, and no alcohol was being served. She said Ms. Watkins intended to offer music, food trucks, and a bounce house, along with tables/stations set up to promote State Farm.

Ms. Williams stated that she and a representative for Lori Watkins, Ryan Patterson, were both available for questions from Council.

Mayor Mattox asked if Campbell County had been notified of Ms. Watkins' intent to use a bounce house at the proposed event.

Ms. Williams said that Ms. Watkins was informed that she would need to acquire a permit from Campbell County to have a bounce house at her event. Ms. Williams stated that staff would follow up with Ms. Watkins to make sure the permit was secured, and all other requirements had been met.

Councilman George asked if there was intent to close the park for the event.

Ms. Williams stated that the State Farm celebration was open to the public, therefore the park would remain open for people to enter and exit any portion of the park.

Mr. Patterson, representing Lori Watkins, addressed Council and said that Mrs. Watkins was requesting Council's consideration to approve a proclamation declaring June 7th as State Farm Day in Altavista; and read during a ribbon-cutting event at Ms. Watkins' State Farm store front. He said, although the ribbon-cutting would be held on Monday, May 30th, State Farm's official anniversary date was June 7th.

Mayor Mattox reminded Mr. Patterson that May 30th was Memorial Day and stated he would be out of town the day of the ribbon-cutting, but he would make sure a representative of Council would be present.

Councilman Wayne Mitchell made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett, to approve the proposed proclamation, declaring June 7th, 2022, as State Farm Day in the Town of Altavista.

Motion carried:

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

Ms. Williams stated there was a process with Altavista On Track (AOT) and the Chamber of Commerce and for ribbon-cutting events. She said that staff would collaborate with the Chamber and AOT to coordinate State Farm's ribbon-cutting on May 30th.

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5.2 English Park Boat Ramp Parking Lot – Striping Consideration

Community Development Director, Sharon D. Williams, referenced the English Park boat ramp parking lot and informed Council paving was recently completed of that area. She said the Recreation Committee recommended striping the parking lot with the maximum number of parking spaces as possible.

Ms. Williams referenced the photo in Council's agenda packet that gave a visual of the proposed striping layout recommended by the Recreation Committee. She said that staff believed the layout offered the most parking possible and also recommended the striping layout as presented. She asked Council for their input and consideration of approval.

Mayor Mattox asked Public Services Director, Tom Fore, and Public Works Manager, Jeff Arthur, for their input on the matter.

Both Mr. Fore and Mr. Arthur agreed the proposed layout was the best option.

There being no further comments on this matter, there was a consensus of Town Council to accept staff's recommendation and allow staff to move forward with the proposed striping layout as presented for the parking lot in English Park, adjacent to the boat ramp.

5.3 Altavista Police Department (APD) – Request to Declare Items as Surplus

Altavista Police Chief, Tommy Merricks, presented Council with a list of items the APD would like to declare as "surplus". Chief Merricks informed Council the APD was working towards being accredited and clearing out old, unusable items was part of that process. He also asked for Council's approval to allow him to use his own judgement regarding old uniforms moving forward, so the unused items did not accumulate. Chief Merricks asked Council if they had any questions.

Councilman Mitchell asked, if an item was placed on GOVDeals.com to sell, but was not sold, what happened to the unsold items.

Chief Merricks stated that most items usually sell within a reasonable timeframe, except for uniforms, which he destroyed if not sold.

Mr. Mitchell asked where the acquired funds from the sell of surplus items go to.

Chief Merricks stated the funds went to the town's General Fund. He said, at a later date, he may ask Council to consider allowing the APD to use a portion of those funds for the accreditation process.

Mr. Mitchell stated he thought the accreditation process had been completed years ago.

Mayor Mattox informed Council that the Police Chief prior to the previous one had an officer start the procedure to be accredited, but the process was never completed.

Chief Merricks assured Town Council that it was one of his goals for the APD to complete the accreditation process. He stated the accreditation would also be helpful lower insurance costs for APD officers.

There was a consensus of Town Council to allow the Altavista Police Department to declare the presented list of items as surplus; and authorized approval for the APD to move forward with selling or adequately disposing of the items. The consensus also included authorizing Chief Merricks to use his own discretion in the future regarding the disposal of old, unusable officer uniforms.

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6. Updates and Informational Items

6.1 Grass Mowing Contract – Renewal Update

Background:

The Town of Altavista uses an outside contractor to maintain mowing services for six town-owned locations. This contract is reviewed annually.

Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur referenced Altavista's FY2022 mowing contract with Tad Myers and stated it had been reviewed and would be renewed for FY2023. He informed Council that there was a 30% increase in Mr. Myers' price quote, due to the recent increases in fuel costs, however, the contract still remained within the amount budgeted for this item. Mr. Arthur said that Mr. Myers indicated, if fuel prices decreased, he would adjust his price to reflect the change.

Town Attorney John Eller recommended requiring a "base rate" for fuel costs in the town's mowing contracts, for use when calculating changes (increases or decreases) in fuel costs.

There was a consensus of Town Council to follow the direction of the Town Attorney and asked Mr. Arthur to revise the mowing contract to include a fuel cost base rate.

6.2 English Park Trail System – Wayfinding Signs, Progress Update

Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur informed Council that the designs had been finalized for the wayfinding signs. He stated that Hurt & Proffitt indicated they were finishing the last steps in mapping the trail system and the final map would be complete soon for staff's review and approval. He said, after the mapping was complete and the main signs installed, the last step for this project would be to incorporate mile markers along the trail system.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Arthur for the work he does for the Town of Altavista.

7. Matters from Council

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

- Vice Mayor Bennett referenced the wooden pedestrian bridge located at Shreve Park and asked staff if they had an update on the replacement project for that bridge.

Public Services Director Tom Fore answered and stated his staff was waiting on the assistance from Councilman Higginbotham, which previously offered his assistance and guidance on this project.

With no additional question or comments from Town Council, Mayor Mattox asked if Town Staff had any additional items for Council to hear or consider that was not on the agenda.

- Sharon Williams, Altavista's Community Development Director, referenced the new Spark Innovation Center and informed Council that the renovations on the facility were nearly complete. She asked Council to consider touring the center on Tuesday, May 10th, before their Council meeting started at 6pm.

Town Council unanimously shared their favor in touring the Spark Innovation Center and agreed on the May 10th date at 5:30pm.

- Altavista Police Chief Tommy Merricks informed Council that recently, Town Staff had collectively been in contact with several Moseley Heights residents, mostly within the Eudora Lane area. He stated that staff was scheduled to do a walk-through of the area the following Tuesday at 3pm, with some of Moseley Heights' community leaders to look at a few issues that the community had concerns about.

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Chief Merricks also informed Council that he invited the Moseley Heights residents to join him and a couple of staff members at the First Church of Jesus, in Moseley Heights, at 7pm on the same Tuesday (May 3rd) to discuss any concerns they may have. He invited Town Council members to attend if they were available.

- Councilman George stated he was recently approached by someone wanting to place a water/soda vending machine in English Park next to the splash pad. He reminded Council that one side of the bathroom building had electrical outlets on the exterior so that would be the most feasible place to have them, if approved.

Mr. George said that he contacted Lynchburg City to inquire what their policy was for having vending machines at their parks and he was told the large parks have concession stands and the small ones have vending contracts that were reviewed annually.

Mr. George shared his favor with having vending for beverages at English Park and asked for Council's input.

Mayor Mattox stated that Gatorade was a Coke-A-Cola product and would put a vending machine where the town wanted it and the town would receive a portion of the revenue from the machine(s).

Councilman Emerson said he remembered when both Shreve Park and English Park had vending machines located outside the bathroom facilities and shared his favor with allowing beverage vending machines again.

There were no additional comments on this matter at this time.

- Vice Mayor Bennett informed everyone of a "trash pickup day" being held in Moseley Heights on Saturday, April 30th, starting at 8:30am., and starting at the YMCA.
- Councilman Lowman referenced the "big blue attraction sign" on Hwy. 29 when entering Altavista. He asked if staff had an update on whether the town could utilize the sign to advertise the splash pad.

Town Manager Gary Shanaberger stated that the Assistant Town Manager, Matt Perkins, was currently working on the project.

Mr. Perkins informed Council that when he contacted VDOT, he was directed to a third-party that overseen the signage. He stated he would contact the group and continue gathering information regarding what was allowed to be on the highway signs.

- Mayor Mattox asked for Council's input on whether the town should advertise an RFP for having a food court inside the Booker Building, located in English Park, Altavista.

Councilman Mitchell reminded Council of the first time an RFP was advertised for the item, and no one responded.

Councilman George suggested Council considered allowing the town to build a concession stand at English Park and bid the service out on an annual contract.

Vice Mayor Bennett reminded Council, when the citizen survey was conducted a couple of years prior, the most favorable option was to use the Booker Building as an event center.

Mayor Mattox asked if the initial RFP was for a specific use or in general.

Altavista's Community Development Director, Sharon D. Williams, stated the aforementioned RFP was advertised after a feasibility study was conducted on uses for the Booker Building. She said the RFP focused on the five top favorable responses from the feasibility study.

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Mayor Mattox asked if any of the five uses included having a food court at the facility.

Ms. Williams answered it did not. She also referenced a previous conversation among Council whether to allow food trucks to periodically service English Park, however the conversation was not conclusive, and Council made no definitive decision on the matter

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

- Town Manager Gary Shanaberger referenced Councilman George's mention of having vending machines in English Park. He asked for clarification on whether Council was in favor of allowing the service, or if staff was merely to investigate the options for Council's consideration.

Mayor Mattox shared his concerns with the town allowing food trucks or vending machines in English Park, he stated he believed the service from outsiders would decrease revenue for local business owners.

Councilman Emerson shared his favor with allowing the Town Manager to investigate the options available for the town to offer "beverage" vending machines, such as water and/or Gatorade, at both English and Shreve Parks; and the potential cost/revenue for each option.

8. Closed Session

There was no closed session conducted at this meeting.

9. Adjournment

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

The April 26, 2022, Council Work Session was adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk