

# Altavista Town Council Work Session, Tuesday, June 27, 2023

The June 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, June 27th, 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  
Absent: Mr. Jay Higginbotham

Also Present: Mr. Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager  
Mr. Matthew Perkins, Asst. Town Manager  
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Director of Finance and Administration  
Mr. Tommy Merricks, APD Chief of Police  
Ms. Sharon D. Williams, Community Development Director  
Mr. Tom Fore, Director of Public Services  
Mr. Jeff Arthur, Manager of Public Works  
Mr. John Eller, TOA 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 June 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. The motion carried.

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

### 2. Recognitions and Presentations

There were no presentations given on this date.

### 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 Business

There were no unfinished business items to discuss at this time.

### 5. New Items for Discussion

TOA Urban Archery Program:

Altavista’s Assistant Town Manager, Matt Perkins, asked for the Town Council’s input and direction on whether to add the Town’s newly acquired property, formerly known as the Frazier Farm, to its Urban Archery Program. Mr. Perkins informed Council the previous owner had allowed hunting on the property.

Mr. Perkins also informed Council that the property was not currently posted for no trespassing.

Councilman Tim George asked, if allowed, would hunting be in wooded areas only.

Mr. Perkins stated, under the Town’s current policy, archers could hunt the entire property, but if added to Altavista’s program, the Town could restrict activity to certain areas. He explained that the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries established rules for the archery program that all localities had to follow, but localities could add additional regulations as they deemed necessary for their program area.

Councilman Tracy Emerson referenced the Altavista Combined School’s Cross-county Track Team, and reminded everyone that the team was previously allowed to use the Frazier Farm for track meets during the fall months. He shared his concerns with allowing hunting on the property, which occurred during the same time period as the school’s track meets.

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Mayor Mattox reminded Council that the aforementioned property was purchased by the Town for housing development. He suggested not allowing archery hunting on the property, due to its potential of being developed soon.

Town Council was in consensus not to add the (former) Frazier property to its Urban Archery Program. Council also asked Staff to post “No Trespassing” signs on the property as soon as possible.

### 6. Staff Updates

- Director of Public Services Tom Fore asked for Council’s consideration to approve Staff’s recommendation of Dewberry Engineers, Inc. to conduct the preliminary engineering report required for the Town’s \$30,000 USDA Grant. Dewberry was one of six firms reviewed by Staff.

There was a Consensus of Town Council in favor of accepting Staff’s recommendation, and to place this item on the July 11th Consent Agenda for official approval.

- Mr. Fore also informed Council that the WTP recently lost a Class II Operator, and the Town needed to consider paying operators a higher salary, in line with surrounding localities, in order to keep them as TOA employees.
- Responding to questions from Council pertaining to semi-trucks parking on the side of 5th Street, which can damage the Town’s waterline underneath that area: Mr. Fore and Mr. Arthur both confirmed that traffic cones and “No Truck Parking” signs were being placed in that area.
- Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur informed Town Council that the English Park Trail System’s Wayfinding Signage Project was complete.
- Police Chief Tommy Merricks reminded everyone that the APD’s Annual National Night Out was coming up: Tuesday, August 1st, from 5-9pm in English Park, with The Embers as music entertainment.
- Town Manager Gary Shanaberger Re: the Vista Theatre – invited Council members to visit other theatres/venues for visual inspiration and to gather ideas for Altavista’s theatre.
- Manager Shanaberger Re: Central Virginia Planning District Commission Board  
Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett agreed to replace Councilman Wayne Mitchell as the Town’s liaison.

### 7. Matters from Town Council

- Councilman Scott Lowman asked for an update on the Town’s vacant position of Business and Community Engagement Coordinator, which also managed the Spark Innovation Center.

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins confirmed that the job opportunity had been advertised in several media locations, however only one application had been received to date. He stated that interviews for this position were scheduled to start on July 10th.

- Councilman Tim George referenced the shade sails located at the lower end of Broad Street, and asked if they could be relocated to the River Overlook in English Park.

Public Works Manager Jeff Arthur stated the shade sails were part of the lower Broad Street’s streetscape project and were sized to that area.

Councilman Emerson shared his favor with there being “cover” on the overlook, and suggested the Town consider that option during future CIP discussions.

- Councilman Wayne Mitchell referenced the neighborhood park located on Myrtle Lane. He said he witnessed a vehicle park on the alley side of the parking lot and damage the neighbor’s shrubbery.

Mr. Mitchell shared his concern with the current parking design, and suggested the Town revisit how that parking lot was laid out, to help deter unlawful parking and private property damage. He stated that he believed the initial parking design showed large rocks/boulders on the alley side of the park’s entrance.

Chief Merricks stated that the aforementioned parking area would need proper signage on the alley side, in order for the APD to have the ability to enforce the Town’s parking rules.

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There was a consensus Council to allow Public Works to erect “No Parking” signs in the said alleyway.

Public Services Director Tom Fore said that Public Works could retrieve large rocks from English Park and place along the alley of the aforementioned park, to deter unlawful parking.

### 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. The motion carried.

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

Town Council went into Closed Session at 5:52 PM.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 6:06 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	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

Notice was given to Staff by Town Manager Gary Shanaberger, that Town Council did not make any official actions as a result of this closed session.

### 9. Adjournment

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

The June 27th, 2023, Town Council Work Session was adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

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Michael Mattox, Mayor of Altavista

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Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk