

## Town Council Work Session, June 28, 2022

The June 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, June 28th, at 5:00 PM.

Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett 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  
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

#### Absent:

Mayor Michael Mattox

#### 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 - *Absent*  
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Assistant Town Clerk

### 1. Agenda Adoption

Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett asked Town Council if they had any questions or concerns in regard to the June 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
Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
Mr. Timothy George	Yes
Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

### 2. Recognitions and Presentations

None to present 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.

- Mr. John Porter, with Clean Footprint, Florida, came before Council to inform them that he continued to follow protocol and, in conversation with the Town Attorney, John Eller, had informed the Town Manager, Gary Shanaberger, of his intentions, which was to hopefully have a lengthier discussion with Town Council regarding Clean Footprint's proposed solar project. He referenced the town's logo, "Treasured Past, Innovative Future", and stated that he believed the proposed solar project could be part of the town's innovative future. Mr. Porter stated that Clean Footprint hoped to become part of the Altavista community and he looked forward to the discussions he hoped to have with the town in the coming weeks/months.

Vice Mayor Bennett thanked Mr. Porter for his time and the information he delivered.

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### 4. Items Referred from Previous Meetings

There were none to discuss at this meeting.

### 5. New Business

#### 5.A Altavista Post Office

Mr. Ben Campbell, U.S.P.S. Officer-In-Charge of the Altavista Post Office, residential address: 1541 Roark Mill Road, Hurt, Va., came before Town Council requesting their consideration to turn the two-way alley behind the Altavista Post Office into a one-way street; preferably in the direction from Washington Street to 7th. He said the alley was used by both mail carriers and citizens and he believed allowing two-way traffic in the alley was a safety concern.

Mr. Campbell stated that he had witnessed vehicles using excessive speed when entering the alley and if his request was approved, he also suggested having a stop sign on the other side of Washington Street, before entering the post office alley, to slow down traffic.

Town Attorney John Eller asked which direction received the most traffic.

Mr. Campbell stated the traffic entering the aforementioned alley was about the same amount from both Washington Street and 7th Street.

Councilman Emerson suggested also adding a speedbump to the top side of the alley, closest to Washington Street, to help deter speeding down the alley.

Councilman Mitchell suggested that Chief Merricks evaluate the matter and offer input to Council regarding Mr. Campbell's safety concerns.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated, if there was a consensus of Council, he would like for Town Staff to investigate the matter further and offer Council recommendations for consideration of how to address and remedy this matter, to which Council concurred.

#### 5.B FY2022 Budget Amendments/Departmental Transfers

Finance Director, Tobie Shelton, explained the need for budget amendments and transfers, stating items that arise during a fiscal year that had been previously approved by Town Council, required amendments to the budget and each included the reason and when Council directed staff on the action. She said some of the items may be receipt of unbudgeted revenue, which required an amendment to the budget as well.

Mrs. Shelton stated Town Staff was seeking a consensus of Town Council to place this item on the July 12th consent agenda.

Councilman Wayne Mitchell made a motion, seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson, to approve Staff's request and place this item as presented on the July 12th, 2022, Regular Council Meeting Consent Agenda for official approval.

Motion carried:

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

#### 5.C Special Event Permit Request – Chamber of Commerce

Chamber of Commerce Director Brent Ashwell came before Town Council to request a Special Event Permit to hold a Back-to-School Carnival at English Park.

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Mr. Ashwell gave Council a brief description of the Chamber's plans and permit request for the carnival, which pending approval, was scheduled for Friday, August 19th from 4-10pm, and Saturday, August 20th, from 3-10pm. He said the carnival would start setting up on Tuesday, August 16th and take down and leave on Sunday, August 21st.

Mr. Ashwell stated carnival workers would stay in campers to the side of the carnival. He informed Council that he contacted the Altavista Police Department and Public Works to ensure there were no issues with the carnival or event plan, and there were no concerns. He said Public Works was supplying barricades to block off the carnival from park traffic.

Councilman Mitchell asked if the town was able to accommodate the water and electrical hookups needed for the campers of the carnival workers.

Public Services Director Tom Fore confirmed the town was able to do so, stating it was the same scenario as when Uncle Billy's Day vendors/workers needed the service.

Councilman Tracy Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Tim George, to approve the Chamber of Commerce's Special Event Permit to hold a Back-to-School Carnival at English Park on Friday, August 19th and Saturday, August 20th.

Motion carried:

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

### 5.D Special Event Permit Request – Three Into One Community Project

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins presented Council with the details of this Special Event Permit, submitted by Terry Austin with Three Into One, which had hosted this community event for several years. He stated Mr. Austin's request was to hold the event at the Booker Building in English Park on Saturday, September 24th, 2022, from 1-5pm.

Mr. Perkins stated the event was open to the public and would feature music, face painting, games, petting zoo, and a motorcycle & car cruise-in. He said there was no admission charge to the event and no alcohol was being served, as it was intended to be a family-friendly community event.

Mr. Perkins informed Council this permit also had a request for a \$300 town donation, however, Mr. Austin stated the request stood on its own if the funding was not approved.

Councilman Higginbotham asked if Town Staff had reviewed the permit application request and if there were any concerns that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Perkins stated staff reviewed the permit application and there were no concerns.

Councilman Jay Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Mitchell, to accept staff's recommendation and approve Three-Into-One's Special Event Permit to hold a community event at the Booker Building on Saturday, September 24th, from 1-5pm, but not to approve/include the \$300 donation request.

Motion carried:

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

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### 5.E Town of Altavista – Rt. 29 Hwy. Guide Signs

#### Background:

Town Council directed Town Staff to research and report information related to securing signage for the Specific Service Signs (large blue signs) along State Route 29.

Assistant Town Manager, Matt Perkins stated, at their May Work Session, Council indicated that the Specific Service Signs on Rt 29, both north and southbound, needed to have information that guided motorists to Town of Altavista attractions, such as Avoca, English Park (and Splash Pad), and Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch.

Mr. Perkins reminded Council that VDOT used a third-party contractor, Directional Signage Co., to manage their sign program; accordingly, he contacted the company and acquired costs associated with advertising on the signs, which he provided to Council.

Mr. Perkins informed stated that the splash pad was not eligible for its own sign, as it was a part of English Park, which would be on the directional signage if Council move forward. He said all desired items would be advertised on the directional sign closest to the attraction. He stated that Altavista's Visitors Center signage needed more work and that he would bring that design and cost information to Council at a later date.

Mr. Perkins informed Town Council that the Economic Development budget would cover both the annual fee (\$800 per sign/per location, and the one-time printing and shipping expenses (approximately \$3,200) under "Contractual Services: Advertising".

Councilman Mitchell asked if the town was responsible for covering the cost of the directional sign being changed to add the Avoca Museum.

Mr. Perkins stated the aforementioned \$800 annual fee included the Avoca Museum.

Councilman Emerson stated, since the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries assisted the town with the Dalton's Landing project, he suggested staff investigate whether they would also assist with adding directional signage for the attraction. He stated he had seen "brown" signage at local lakes and similar water attractions.

Mr. Perkins informed Council that the aforementioned brown signage represented "tourism" and was only used for attractions endorsed by the Department of Virginia Tourism. He stated that he would investigate Councilman Emerson's suggestion further.

Vice Mayor Bennett referenced the town's lodging tax and stated, if the town increased its lodging tax, the extra revenue was required to go towards "tourism" and advertising the town and/or town attractions. He asked if the directional signage would qualify for the tourism revenue.

Mr. Perkins answered he was unsure, but that he would check into the matter. There were no additional questions or comments from Council regarding this item.

### 5.F English Park – Beverage Vending Machine Discussion

#### Background:

At the direction of Town Council during their May 10th meeting, Town Staff published an Invitation to Bid for beverage vending services at English Park. In coordination with the Town Attorney, Staff developed a full bid package that included the sample contract.

Assistant Town Manager, Matt Perkins, informed Town Council that Staff released an Invitation to Bid for English Park Beverage Vending Services on May 23rd, 2022; advertised on Town of Altavista website and in the Altavista Journal on May 25, 2022, and Town Staff also direct solicited five (5) venders. He stated bids were due June 10th, however, no bids were received.

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Mr. Perkins informed Council that Onsite Vending, a small local vending company, was the only vender “interested” in working with the town on such a small-scale project.. He said some minor adjustments to the original bid specifications would need to be negotiated to benefit both the town and the vender.

Mr. Perkins stated, at that time, Town Staff was recommending moving forward and entering into a contractual agreement with Onsite Vending.

Councilman Mitchell shared his concern that the other vendors were not contacted and offered the same “revised” specifications to consider as Onsite Vending.

Mr. Perkins stated that all of the larger vendors were not interested in the small project, and the other small vender, Tee’s Vending, was not interested in going through a contractual agreement process to gain the business.

Councilman Jay Higginbotham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson, to accept staff’s recommendation and approve placing this item on Council’s July 12th Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for official approval.

Motion carried:

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

### 6. Unfinished Business

Town Manager Gary Shanaberger asked the Town Attorney, John Eller, to update Town Council on the progress of the town’s new Dearing Ford Road property for the boundary-line adjustment process.

Mr. Eller informed Town Council that the boundary-line adjustment for the town’s newest Dearing Ford Road property was complete; and with the judge’s signature on Friday, June 24th, the adjustment would become official on July 1st, 2022.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked if the covenants on the property had been removed/resolved.

Mr. Eller stated that the proper paperwork had been sent to the adjacent property owners and he was awaiting their responses.

### 7. Updates and Informational Items

#### 7.A English Park Trail System – Wayfinding Signs

Background:

The Town of Altavista is adding wayfinding signs to the English Park trail system, this includes Eagle Trail, the Cemetery Connector Trail, and the newly added Jenks Trail.

Altavista Public Works Manager, Jeff Arthur, informed Town Council that the GIS mapping for the wayfinding signs was complete. He stated that staff would be meeting with Mrs. Cottle, Cottle Sign Company, to review the draft signs and if approved, Mrs. Cottle would move forward with printing the wayfinding signs.

Councilman George suggested also adding a sign at the three pedestrian bridges that cross over creeks on the Cemetery Connector Trail. He stated the boy scouts that constructed the bridges worked hard on the project and desired to be recognized for their efforts.

All Town Council members concurred with Councilman George’s suggestion.

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### 7.B Town of Altavista (TOA) – Community Events Calendar

#### Background:

Town Council recently requested staff to investigate the possibility of creating a Community Events Calendar for the town's website; to provide a platform for advertising local events.

Assistant Town Manager, Matt Perkins, shared with Council the draft policy and submission form for the Town of Altavista's new Community Events Calendar Program that he and Mrs. Hailey, Assistant Town Clerk, had been working on. He stated that staff reached out to local organizations and town partners (Avoca, The Altavista Chamber of Commerce, Altavista On Track, the Altavista Area YMCA, and the Staunton River Memorial Library) for their input on whether they might be interested in the program; he said it was well received with good responses from all parties.

Mr. Perkins asked Town Council if they had any questions or comments pertaining to the draft document, to which there were none.

### 7.C Town of Altavista – Economic Development Incentive Policy

#### Background:

Town Council approved the Economic Development Incentive Program at its regular meeting of June 8, 2021; with grant funding appropriated by Town Council in both FY2022 and FY2023 budgets.

Assistant Town Manager, Matt Perkins, informed Council that staff had received two grant applications to the program, however, in order to review and approve the applications, a Grant Application Committee needed to be formed.

Mr. Perkins stated that three Town Staff members were selected to this committee, namely Matt Perkins, Assistant Town Manager, Tobie Shelton, Finance Director, and Sharon Williams, Community Development Director. He stated every effort would be made to communicate grant award recipients to the town's economic development partners, as well as notify applicants of other known incentives.

Mr. Perkins stated, by town policy, Town Council would serve to hear appeals, should an application be denied.

Councilman George asked if this was separate from Altavista On Track's (AOT) program.

Mr. Perkins stated AOT's program, the Altavista Downtown District Business Investment Grant Program, was similar, but separate from the town's incentive program.

Councilman Mitchell asked why this program had a different review committee than the Altavista Advantage Loan Program.

Mr. Perkins stated, when established, the policy for this program did not require a member of the Planning Commission or Economic Development Authority to be a committee member; it was in the policy as "if so desired".

Ms. Sharon Williams, Altavista's Community Development Director, reminded Council that the Advantage Program offered higher loan amounts and the incentive program only offered loans up to \$7,500, therefore could be handled administratively.

There were no additional questions or comments from Town Council or staff for this item.

## 8. Matters from Council

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

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- Councilman Emerson asked if the issue that recently caused the need to shut down the splash pad in English Park had been resolved.

Public Services Director Tom Fore answered the issue had been resolved and the splash pad was open. He stated the town would always look out for the best interest of its citizens and in this case, the need to close the splash pad until the issue was evaluated and resolved. Mr. Fore assured Town Council that staff followed the CDC guidelines (the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention) for this matter.

- Vice Mayor Bennett asked Mr. Fore if there was any way to determine how many people utilize the splash pad in English Park.

Mr. Fore stated the only way was to have a staff member taking count of the splash pad patrons. He said that staff members had seen many license plates from other counties and other states at the splash pad, so he believed the amenity had been successful in promoting the town.

- Councilman Tim George asked staff to look into VDOT's "landscaping program" available for localities to utilize to help beautify their towns and/or entry into town.

Town Manager Gary Shanaberger shared his previous experience with the program. He stated, although the initial investment came from sponsors, the town would be responsible for managing the landscaped area(s).

- Mr. George also shared his concerns regarding blighted properties in Altavista and suggested the town amend ordinances to address the issue.
  - Mr. Emerson suggested developing property maintenance codes
  - Mr. Higginbotham suggested using previous (old) way of addressing the issue, by "declaring a nuisance".
  - Consensus of Council to place this item on the July Work Session for further discussion.

### 9. 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)(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 Councilman Jay Higginbotham 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

Town Council went into Closed Session at 6:38 p.m.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 7:12 p.m.

### FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilman Jay Higginbotham, seconded by Councilman Wayne Mitchell, 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

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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 identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by Town Council.

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

Town Manager Gary Shanaberger informed staff of Town Council's official vote/actions after returning from this closed session.

- Town Council approved a resolution to appropriate funds for the purpose of purchasing from the Campbell County Utilities and Service Authority (CCUSA) the water and sewer utilities located on the property owned by the Town of Altavista known as the Dearing Ford Business & Manufacturing Center. The motion was made by Councilman Jay Higginbotham, seconded by Councilman Tim George, and voted 6-0 to approve.
- Town Council approved a resolution to appropriate funds for the purpose of purchasing from Martel L. Tardy and Lula A. Tardy (sellers) being Tax Parcel #2536-61-4429, containing 22.6 acres. The motion was made by Councilman Jay Higginbotham, seconded by Councilman Tracy Emerson, and voted 6-0 to approve the resolution.

### 10. Adjournment

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

The June 28th, 2022, Council Work Session was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

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Reggie Bennett, Vice Mayor of Altavista

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Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager/Town Clerk