

COUNCIL WORK SESSION OCTOBER 27, 2015

The work session of the Council of the Town of Altavista was held in the Council Chambers of the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on October 27, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

Council members

present:

Mayor Michael Mattox
Mrs. Micki Brumfield
Mrs. Beverley Dalton
Mr. Charles Edwards
Mr. Tracy Emerson
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham

Also present:

Mr. J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Town Manager
Mr. Daniel Witt, Assistant Town Manager
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Finance Director
Mr. David Garrett, Public Works/Utilities Director
Mr. Steve Bond, Wastewater Treatment Plant
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney
Mrs. Mary Hall, Administration

1. Mayor Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.
2. A motion was made by Mr. Emerson, seconded by Mrs. Dalton, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried:

VOTE:

Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
Mrs. Micki Brumfield	Yes
Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
Mr. Charles Edwards	Yes
Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
Mr. Timothy George	Yes
Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes

3. Public Comments—Agenda Items Only

Mayor Mattox asked if anyone would like to speak on anything listed on the agenda.

Mrs. Ann Shelton on behalf of the Recreation Committee addressed Council and spoken in favor of the proposed boat launch. Mrs. Shelton presented Council with a petition signed by over 200 persons in favor of this proposal.

Mayor Mattox asked that these pages be included in the minute book.

4. Introductions and Special Presentations

- a. Staunton River Boat Ramp Concepts

Mr. Coggsdale advised at the July 14, 2015 Town Council meeting, staff was authorized to proceed with the preliminary engineering assessment related to the proposed boat ramp on the Staunton River. The firm of Gay & Neel was hired to assess the site and create a layout and cost estimate for the project.

Mr. Tim Guthrie, Gay & Neel presented to Council a power point presentation with two layout concepts and construction estimates based on their review. He referred to FEMA and advised they do not like any land fill in their flood plain. He pointed out the FEMA floodway and if fill is placed in the area, the base flood plain cannot be raised; obtaining permits with FEMA may take six months to a year. He advised on the first option he tried to minimize any fill. He presented the second option which shows the grades

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differently. He advised the two options are very similar; the only savings would come in the earthwork and shifting the retaining walls.

Mr. George questioned the gray areas on the layouts if they were to catch runoff water.

Mr. Guthrie responded those areas were to increase the turning radius for a vehicle pulling a trailer.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if this could be a place to park a pickup truck with a rack on it.

Mr. Guthrie advised the budget estimate covers earthwork, erosion control, pavement and miscellaneous; the cost is very close when comparing both options. Mr. Guthrie felt based on the criteria the town would be eligible for a \$75,000 grant with DGIF.

Mr. Higginbotham asked what the issues were when dealing with the river.

Mr. Guthrie advised in order to build the ramp out into the river, the area would have to be pumped out which would allow the stone base to be placed. Another option would be not to pump out but place the stone in the river and then place the ramp. Would have to know what is in the river and if it is solid enough to support the ramp. He noted at the minimum the permitting would be taken through JTA (made up of the core of engineers, DEQ, and DMRC). They will review the design and also make sure the species in the water are not disturbed.

Mr. George referred to the listed cost for grading and advised it is hoped that Campbell County would take care of the grading portion of the project.

Mr. Guthrie noted the estimate cost of the grading includes the retaining walls.

Mr. George asked if the project was just a canoe launch would that change things significantly.

Mr. Guthrie responded it would because the presented design is for vehicle and trailer access.

Mr. Emerson asked for an estimate to build a canoe launch.

Mr. Guthrie stated the presented estimated project can be cut to a fourth of the cost because it reduces the access issues and parking limitations.

Mr. Higginbotham asked how many motor boats access the river.

Mr. Emerson said he didn't think there was very many.

Mr. George stated in talking to the DGIF there is another tear of grants when there is motor boat access for emergency crews.

Mayor Mattox asked if there were grants readily available.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the canoe design would be similar to the presented design.

Mr. Guthrie responded the requirements for a canoe ramp is not as significant.

Mr. Emerson mentioned there is a plastic, fiberglass rail that the canoe can be slid on.

Mr. Witt presented Council with some available grant opportunities. He asked Council to understand going in all these grants are competitive and can't guarantee the town would be awarded any of them. He asked Council if this is something staff moves forward with.

Mrs. Brumfield asked if starting with the canoe launch was a possibility; apply for grants and later on put in the turnaround for the longer vehicles.

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Mr. Witt advised that was possible.

Mrs. Brumfield felt the ones that have expressed an interest are interested in the canoe launch.

Mr. Witt mentioned with the County being a partner in this; the use of their workforce and equipment could go away. If this does occur then there would be additional cost for doing the site.

Mayor Mattox asked if Council was in agreement to ask staff to move forward with the grant process and to approach the Board of Supervisors in regards to the excavation.

Mrs. Brumfield stated she was not aware this was for motor boats.

Mr. Witt stated it would be designed for jon boats with motor on back and canoes; this would allow for river rescue and river access for fire, EMS, and the Game Department.

Mr. Emerson noted if Fire or Rescue needs to access the river they will tow the boat over the bank if necessary. He advised he has floated Staunton River many times and very few times he has seen a motor boat on the river. He felt the canoe part made more sense; the larger scale is a waste of resources.

Mr. George asked if a canoe launch was built would the ramp still be installed at an angle.

Mr. Guthrie responded you would want it tucked back as much as possible. DGIF doesn't want the ramp to run perpendicular to the river.

Mr. Emerson referred to the launch at Long Island which has been used for 20 to 30 years and felt this project should be similar to that one.

Mayor Mattox asked if it was the consensus of Council to re-evaluate the project moving more towards a canoe launching point, ask staff to continue looking for/applying for grants when applicable and request Campbell County to help with the excavation.

Mrs. Dalton stated if proceeding with grants, Council needs to know what the town's obligation is.

Mr. Coggsdale asked Mr. Guthrie what it would take to correct to a canoe launch design or is it needed.

Mr. Guthrie advised it would be a scaled down version.

Mr. Emerson stated people want a place to put in their canoes and kayaks and didn't think gravel versus pavement matters.

Mr. George asked if this would make a difference when applying for grants.

Mr. Witt responded no.

Mr. George asked if the grading would be the same so we would know how to approach Campbell County.

Mr. Witt asked if there was an additional cost to redesign the layout concept.

Mr. Guthrie said he would see what could be done.

b. IALR's WWTP Emergency Overflow Pond Re-Characterization.

Mr. Coggsdale advised at the August 11, 2015 Town Council meeting, staff was authorized to proceed with the Institute of Advanced Learning and Research in regard to testing the sludge in the EOP in a manner consistent with the 2003 grid. Dr. Scott Lowman (IALR) was in charge of the re-characterization and issued a report regarding the project.

Dr. Lowman addressed Council with the results of his testing noting most of the testing area was below 100 mg/kg; the aim is below 50 mg/kg. He mentioned with the pot study he was looking for the hot spots and tested seven different spots around the pond that were really high in 2003; these came back considerably lower. He approached the testing with a conference call with the University of Iowa and the University of Maryland and others to make sure the experimental design was proper. Everything was done to recreate the 2003 report exactly; sampling was completed on September 16, 2015. Dr. Lowman stated on average there was a 90% reduction over the 12 year period; three samplings were higher in this study than in the 2003 study. Dr. Lowman stated the data looks as expected nothing strange and noted his speculation is it would take an additional 7 ½ years to get below 50 mg/kg. He felt this was good data for the town.

Mrs. Dalton asked if the requirement is that every spot has to test below 50 parts per one million or is that an average.

Dr. Lowman stated that was a great question but he didn't know the answer.

Mrs. Dalton stated we have moved considerably in that direction.

Mr. Bond stated DEQ's original stance was if any spot in the bowl was over they considered the whole bowl as being high.

Dr. Lowman recommended getting feedback from DEQ and the EPA.

Pot Study

Dr. Lowman advised the pond was tested in seven different locations; one hot spot was found near the peer at 152 parts per million. Dr. Lowman advised this sludge was mixed with difference combinations (10 pots of six combinations). The greatest reduction came with the mixture of switch grass, microbial consortia and sludge. Dr. Lowman stated he would like to test again at the beginning and end of the growing seasons.

Mayor Mattox asked Dr. Lowman to update Council on what he is looking to accomplish with the pot studies.

Dr. Lowman advised the pot studies have been shown to work in the lab; it doesn't translate to the field at all (too many factors in play and variation). The fact that it shows it is working the first growing season is great, the second growing season hopefully the reduction will continue to occur. The plan is to seek funding for a larger study in the pond.

Mr. George asked ultimately if this works, how it would be applied to the pond.

Dr. Lowman stated the pond would have to be dry as switch grass will not grow like rice.

Mr. George questioned building a berm across the middle of the pond basically a cap and seal and planting the switch grass on the dry side.

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Dr. Lowman responded that was correct. He stated when he began reviewing the data, in the 2003 Draper Aden report there was a berm drawn and a living cap. If the whole pond was being treated, this would be the way to do it by moving the contaminants to one side planting switch grass or whatever.

Mr. Higginbotham advised Dr. Schnoor is requesting a berm be built in the lagoon. Based on the fact that the EPA has funded the University of Iowa to research and Dr. Schnoor has asked for the berm; this berm would be to the north of Dr. Sowers' project. This berm will be 10 feet wide and 1,000 cubic yards. He asked Council to consider this berm so they could move forward with the University of Iowa giving Mr. Garrett time to build the berm.

Mr. George asked if something would be planted on the berm.

Mr. Higginbotham felt something would be planted on the berm with a foot of water being pumped off the other side to expose the island. They want to plant on the island and section off Plot 5 because that is where the hot spot is located. This would give two planting seasons next Spring to move forward with.

Mr. George asked what was being planted.

Mr. Higginbotham responded it would be willow, poplar and some other trees.

Mr. George questioned the desire to plant deep root hybrid poplars as mentioned in the packet; this poplar tree grows 70 feet tall and is a huge tree to be planted in the perfect petri dish. His concern is when this huge tree falls it takes a chunk of earth with it.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the trees that are on Plot 5 will be cut back; they will not let them grow into massive trees. He has asked Dr. Licht if there was concern with roots penetrating the liner and his reply was 'absolutely not'.

Mr. George questioned if Dr. Licht knows.

Mr. Higginbotham stated they have the funding from EPA to do this and this is what they are recommending.

Mayor Mattox advised he likes research and asked if they would be funding the entire cost of building the berm.

Mr. Higginbotham replied "no"; their research funding with EPA cut them 23% so they only have \$119,000 to spend each year for the next five years.

Mayor Mattox asked if there was an estimate to build such a berm and if this had been discussed with the DEQ.

Mr. Higginbotham responded no not with DEQ.

Mayor Mattox asked if it would interfere with the Class 1 liability.

Mr. Higginbotham responded no there would only be 1,000 yards in the pond.

Mr. Emerson asked when the meeting with VDEQ is scheduled for.

Mr. Coggsdale advised it is scheduled for November 30th.

Mr. Emerson asked if this meeting would tell the town they have done everything the EPA wants done at this point.

Mr. Higginbotham drew a chart showing EPA at the top with the University of Iowa being funded by the EPA. DEQ is the remediation program. He did not feel Council

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would hear back from the DEQ. The voluntary remediation program has nothing to do with the path of the University of Iowa and Council told the University of Iowa they would participate in their program.

Mayor Mattox asked Dr. Lowman if he were to carry out his process would he go after funding.

Dr. Lowman stated funding is difficult.

Mayor Mattox asked if he would be ready to do more.

Dr. Lowman stated he would need to see his second year results because they may stay the same.

Mr. George asked how long the trees had been in the pond and if they had remediated any PCBs.

Mr. Higginbotham advised test have been sent on Plot 5 and have not received results back.

Mrs. Dalton noted the re-characterization tells you the general direction. It does not tell the direct result of what has been done.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Garrett for a cost to construct the berm.

Mr. Garrett explained his approach to building the berm and estimates it would take 15 days to build it across the pond; with labor and equipment the approximate cost would be \$30,000.

Mayor Mattox asked if we knew the dirt that is going into the pond is clean.

Mr. Garrett advised the soil has not been tested that came from Hurt; some of the soil came from the project on Bedford Avenue.

Mayor Mattox noted if the PCBs are down 90% he did not want that messed up.

Mrs. Dalton asked if this was the best configuration of the berm.

Mr. Higginbotham stated he was excited that Council chose to retest the pond because it gives data that they didn't have before.

Mrs. Dalton felt the berm was in response to the request from the University of Iowa; we are trying to facilitate their research. If Council didn't have to do this much of a berm because of the University of Iowa's needs, this would be a good thing.

Mrs. Brumfield mentioned DEQ would not let the Town keep the hot spots.

Mayor Mattox asked Dr. Lowman how he would proceed.

Dr. Lowman suggested talking to EPA Region 3 because they are the ones in control of this pond. Let them know that University of Iowa has funding to do research in this pond; that would get everyone on the same page.

Mr. George asked who would be liable if the University of Iowa's experiment doesn't work.

Mrs. Dalton stated it would be the town's responsibility.

Mayor Mattox confirmed according to regulations, EPA has to be notified if experiments continue.

Mr. Coggsdale presented Council with information from Dr. Schnoor.

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Dr. Lowman mentioned he has read this information and felt it needed to be more specific.

Mr. Emerson asked Mr. Higginbotham if Council doesn't have to answer to DEQ why do this.

Mr. Higginbotham responded the EPA has funded the University of Iowa specifically for research in the pond.

Mr. Emerson asked why keep doing all this if the Town is not going to stay in the VRP and why do anything to the pond if waiting another five years the pond will take care of itself.

Mr. Emerson stated his point is if the pond is taking care of itself and the Town hasn't decided if it will stay in the program why build another berm.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the program has nothing to do with EPA.

Mrs. Brumfield stated it would not hurt to stay in the program.

Mayor Mattox said they may accept the path the Town is on with the 90% reduction.

Mr. Emerson asked if Council had to answer to the DEQ or not.

Mr. Coggsdale advised as long as we are in the VRP pursuing that yes, if we are not he assumed no.

Dr. Lowman stated the VRP would probably not let the Town sit and wait. The whole idea is to get people to remediate and get out of their program. It all falls under the EPA.

Mr. Bond stated it does look like we don't have to answer to the EPA on what is done with the pond except the liability status. It is in the permit to be reliable; DEQ has control over that. The town has to be careful where the berm is constructed and the proposed berm is getting really close to cutting into the liability.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the berm will be about 5 feet high and will be about 1,000 cubic yards.

Mayor Mattox referred back to the cost to construct the berm.

Mr. Garrett advised his estimate consists of labor and equipment and anticipates taking 15 days to construct using three town employees; \$30,000. He noted the equipment cost alone would be \$7,100.

Mayor Mattox asked what Council would learn that they didn't already know by building a berm. The ultimate goal is to remove PCBs from the pond. Is there value in spending \$30,000 to construct another berm? Will this increase the speed of degradation?

Mr. George stated Council has the responsibility to keep the pond safe and he is not a proponent of the trees. The University of Iowa has been given money for research but ultimately the town is responsible for the pond and possibly 10 years from now a tree will fall and breach the perfect petri dish. He did not see why the trees were being considered or gain anything different. Why would Council proceed when they don't know if the trees that are there are doing anything?

Mrs. Brumfield referred to the chart stating there were 18 out of 29 locations that are still above 50mg/kg. The EPA is not going to let Council pull back and do nothing.

Mayor Mattox noted DEQ has already said they want remediation quickly.

Mr. Higginbotham read the letter that was written to the University of Iowa:

March 12, 2014

Community Engagement Director
Iowa Superfund Research Program
University of Iowa
Iowa City, VA 52242

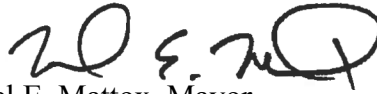
Dear Dr. Just:

The Town of Altavista welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Iowa Superfund Research Program to facilitate research at the PCB contaminated site on the grounds of our wastewater treatment facility. We are happy to offer site access and can accommodate modest needs for your research. We also are continuing the phytoremediation studies that we have pursued in the past in cooperation with Ecolotree, Inc. as part of our efforts.

It is our understanding that the majority of research costs related directly to work performed by the Iowa Superfund Research Program will be the responsibility of the University of Iowa. But, we acknowledge and are willing to contribute some staff time to facilitate the research endeavor.

We look forward to working together.

Warm regards,



Michael E. Mattox, Mayor
Town of Altavista

Mr. Higginbotham felt Council needs to support the people they said they would support and that on November 30, 2015 DEQ was not going to give Council an answer. He felt DEQ was totally separate from the EPA and the University of Iowa funding.

Mr. George asked if anyone was pushing to have the berm constructed.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the University of Iowa would like to get the berm in because they can't plant under water.

Mrs. Dalton stated this was difficult and obviously there isn't a consensus. Someone suggested the EPA be informed of the berm idea; she felt this was a good faith effort. She asked that the scientific community confirm that the berm as designed is the right one.

Dr. Lowman stated this berm is reasonable because Draper Aden proposed this berm in 2003. They called for this berm and a cap.

Mrs. Dalton suggested the berm idea be delayed two weeks and more information be gathered. There is no disagreement that Council wants the pond in regulation status.

Mr. Edwards stated some 15 years ago to cap this pond would be \$4 to \$4.5 million and now Council is talking \$30,000. At this time \$360,000 has been spent, 10% of what was originally estimated. Mr. Edwards stated he was not sure that it was critical

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to stay in the VRP but the point is EPA is driving this event. He stated he supported the idea of getting the EPA's approval to build the berm and felt the price for the berm was small enough pending this approval. Mr. Edwards was in agreement with postponing a decision for two weeks.

Mr. Higginbotham said Council realizes Dr. Schnoor sent a proposal to the EPA and the EPA approved funding for it; will EPA even comment on putting the berm in.

Mr. Emerson stated he was not for spending money on maybes until there is a straight course. There has to be some clear answers from the EPA.

Mayor Mattox stated he has nothing against research if a scientist wants to come here and asked if it is worth \$30,000 of the tax payers' dollars to plant trees in the pond when there is no evidence that the trees work. The berm may be a good thing but why should the town have to pay for it. If the berm is so important, \$30,000 is a lot of money to spend on a maybe. The DEQ meeting is on November 30 and Council is required by statute to send EPA a notice of any work in the pond. Whether or not anything can be done before the EPA response is unknown.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he didn't know if the EPA would respond, they just have to be notified.

Mayor Mattox stated in respect to Mr. Higginbotham's request 15 days could be 15 days in February just as easily as it could be 15 days in November.

Mr. Edwards suggested asking staff to notify EPA Region 3 that the town is considering building a berm as shown on the map.

Mr. Coggsdale asked Council to rewind to the original request of the University of Iowa; they wanted to get to the island with the other area being a control zone. They wanted the island because it was the hottest spot in the pond. This spot is sitting beside of Plot 5. There is already a pad close to the hottest spot.

Mr. Higginbotham noted the difference between February and November is the weather conditions.

Mr. Eller noted the study submitted by Dr. Lowman is a great report to present to the EPA and will take the urgency down a lot in what is done at the pond. Dr. Lowman will be presenting his findings. He felt telling them an additional experiment will be done on the hottest spots in the pond will be a sales pitch. He noted he may be able to sell that what has been done is enough because the urgency is down but to not do anything would not. He asked Council if they wanted to try and stay in or give it up and go on.

Mr. George noted the DEQ has never liked the berm and trees out there.

Mr. Eller stated it is now a lot less dangerous pond.

Mr. George mentioned it is discomfoting that Mr. Steve Rock, EPA, has been asked to stand down from the town.

Mrs. Dalton stated the discussion is over who will pay for the berm and can Council get approval for the berm She stated the University of Iowa coming in and experimenting at their cost is fine and to facilitate that is fine. The University of Iowa saying the berm will look like this and the fact that it will cost \$30,000; she felt conversation with Dr. Schnoor telling him the object and seeing what the minimum is that he would need was important. She did not feel Council was ready to vote on this but needs to continue to build the body of knowledge to help with the decision.

Mr. Edwards suggested discussing with the University of Iowa the possibility of extending Plot 5.

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Mr. Bond stated when the University of Iowa is contacted ask what their objective is because he spoke with a couple of the folks while in Danville and some of their objectives are not completely directed to the pond’s problems. They advocated continuing with the phytoremediation and with Ecolotree, Inc. This is not necessarily what this group’s main focus is.

It was the consensus of Council to gather more information before moving forward.

5. Items Contingent for the Regular Meeting

a. Economic Development Marketing (Tagline)

Moved to the November 10, 2015 meeting.

b. Declaration of Surplus (Fire Hydrants)

Mr. Coggsdale advised the Town was contacted by a representative of the Altavista Fire Company in regard to the scrap fire hydrants that were replaced as part of the Bedford Avenue water project. Mr. Garrett advises there are 8 intact hydrants that can be deemed surplus. The scrap value is \$10.00 per unit.

A motion was made by Mrs. Brumfield, seconded by Mr. George, to give the scrap hydrants (8) to the Altavista Fire Company.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Micki Brumfield	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Charles Edwards	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes

c. VDOT Route 43 “Gateway Project” Update

Mr. Witt advised the Route 43 “Gateway Project” had been funded and up until October 13, staff had the understanding that part of this project was going to be traffic signal replacement for the intersection of Main Street, Seventh Street and Bedford Avenue (Route 43). VDOT has advised the funding source is no longer available and the Town will have to pay for the project. VDOT has offered the town to apply for revenue funding to pay for the new traffic lights. The town would be paying for traffic signals that are the responsibility of VDOT at a cost of \$700,000; a 50/50 match. The town’s portion would be \$350,000 per intersection. The applications are due on October 30th. The grant was submitted under the premise that the Town is providing a safe corridor for kids and people walking to our Main Street District. The second option is to amend the original TAP grant which would allow for the project to move forward. VDOT has determined the existing cabinet/conduit boxes will not accommodate the pedestrian actuators contained in the project. VDOT has estimated the cost to be \$220,000. This is an 80/20 grant and is due October 30, 2015.

A motion was made by Mr. Edwards, seconded by Mrs. Dalton, to allow Mr. Witt to apply to amend the TAP grant in the amount of \$220,000 with the Town’s matching amount being \$44,000.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Micki Brumfield	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Charles Edwards	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes

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6. Items Scheduled for the Regular Meeting Agenda

7. Public Comments

Adjournment

Mayor Mattox adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, Clerk