

COUNCIL WORK SESSION JULY 25, 2017

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 July 25, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Council members  
present:

Mayor Michael Mattox  
Mrs. Micki Brumfield  
Mrs. Beverley Dalton  
Mr. Tracy Emerson  
Mr. Timothy George  
Mrs. Tanya Overbey

Council members  
absent:

Mr. Jay Higginbotham

Also present:

Mr. J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Town Manager  
Mr. Daniel Witt, Assistant Town Manager  
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Finance Director  
Mr. Dennis Jarvis, Economic Dev. Director  
Chief Mike Milnor, APD  
Mr. David Garrett, Director of Public Works  
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney  
Mrs. Mary Hall, Administration

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

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mr. Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Micki Brumfield	Yes
	Mrs. Beverly Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mrs. Tanya Overbey	Yes

3. Public Comments—Agenda Items Only

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

Mrs. Carol Day, 1403 Bedford Avenue, addressed Council and suggested Council consider making the tennis courts at the Bedford Avenue Park a parking lot for the park.

Mayor Mattox asked if anyone else would like to speak.

No one came forward.

4. Introductions and Special Presentations

5. Items for Discussion

- a. Bedford Avenue Park Discussion (Tennis Courts)

Mr. Coggsdale advised staff is seeking guidance from Town Council concerning the tennis courts at the Bedford Avenue Park. The Recreation Committee has discussed this and would like to see the tennis courts and the chain link fence removed and the area turned into an open space that would include a sidewalk connecting the handicap parking on Woodland Alley to the other areas of the park. He noted due to the poor condition of the courts and the need of costly repairs, staff believes this is a reasonable request. Recreation Committee members believe there are a sufficient

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number of tennis courts at the YMCA and High School. Mr. Coggsdale noted Mr. Garrett has provided the following information in regards to this request:

*Demolition of the tennis courts would consist of removing the chain link fence, removal of the post, removal of the old black top by excavating, haul off and dispose of old blacktop, haul in dirt to fill and level area, seeding the area and cover with straw. After the demo work is complete, we would then consider installing a sidewalk that would start at the playground area on Bedford Ave. side and connect to the handicap parking area that is on Woodland Avenue off Myrtle Lane.*

*The budget cost for this project by a contractor are listed below:*

- 1. Demo Tennis Courts - \$26,000.00*
- 2. Install new sidewalk - \$ 8,300.00*

*Estimated Total - \$34,000.00*

*If the Town Forces were to be assigned this project;*

- 1. Demo Tennis Courts - \$17,000.00*
- 2. Install new sidewalk - \$ 8,000.00*

*Estimated Total - \$25,000.00*

Mr. Coggsdale advised he has reached out to Ms. Mary Pascal, Campbell County Recreation, in regards to a demolition they completed and found the County paid out \$122,000 to completely replace four tennis courts in two different locations.

Mrs. Overbey advised she visited the park on this date and found variations in the surfaces and feared someone could fall. She felt doing nothing was not an option. She asked if the park was ADA compliant. She did not feel that it was. Mrs. Overbey noted Mr. Higginbotham has been in contact with her to advise residents have been in touch with him regarding the park. Their argument is if you are not a member of the YMCA, the tennis courts are not available and the ones at the High School are not available during the day.

Mrs. Brumfield advised she has checked with some folks who took three tennis courts in Ivy Hills and made six pickle ball courts. She stated some of her friends are interested in volunteering to repair the courts for pickle ball. Mrs. Brumfield stated she is not suggesting make the courts pickle ball and noted one court is for pickle ball but because of the cracks, it cannot be used. She stated if the tennis courts were repaired, this would give the pickle ball players somewhere to go to. Mrs. Brumfield stated you have to be a member of the YMCA to use the courts. She noted if someone is on the court and a Y member wants to play, then this person gives up their court to that individual. Mrs. Brumfield advised the School Board is in the process of passing something that would forbid the use of the tennis courts during the day. She noted the two courts at the Bedford Avenue Park are the only two that can be played at any time. She asked for time to check with the developer of the Ivy Hill Courts as to the cost. She wanted to see if this is something the town could do versus tearing them down. She stated she talked to 10 people on Myrtle Lane and one person said there was not a lot of people that played tennis at those courts. The others that she spoke to did not feel the courts should be torn up with grass and trees put there. The residents didn't want more space there for people to hang out. It also gives the Police Chief another area to police. She noted they have had to call the police to respond up at the park to remind people that the park closes at dusk.

Mr. George questioned who told that residents could not play on the school courts.

Mrs. Brumfield advised this information came from a School Board member.

Mr. George stated he was not sure about the school courts but one point that was made during the discussion of reworking the courts was the idea that they are open to the public. He noted two or three years ago, the Parks and Recreation Committee started looking at the courts and they were approached about pickle

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ball. The idea was to refurbish the court and make it usable; he noted this was done. Mr. George stated he hasn't noticed anyone using the court. He stated after all the work that was done to the court, it is in bad shape again. The Parks and Recreation Committee feels if the courts can't be maintained then they don't want them. The Committee felt it would be best to remove the courts and make it a green space. Mr. George noted there are five parks in town and three of which are meant to be neighborhood parks. He stated he is not opposed to redoing the tennis courts but none of the other parks have them and asked if Council wants to start putting them up elsewhere. He suggested asking whoever is in charge of the courts at the high school what the availability is. Mr. George stated he didn't see a lot of people playing tennis around here except at the YMCA.

Mrs. Dalton stated her first thought was this was the only set of courts town wide and noted she likes the idea of dual purpose. She felt there was not a consensus among Council at this point as to what to do with this project. The fact that the town doesn't have public tennis courts would lead her to believe this was the better place for them. She noted the handicap accessibility is a problem because of the geography of the lot; there are other parks in town that are handicap accessible. Mrs. Dalton stated she wasn't sure how the park could be amended to make it completely accessible.

Mr. Emerson stated he didn't have a strong opinion on this matter but appreciated the Recreation Committee's input. He felt this matter should be looked at further. He asked Mr. Garrett if a parking lot was put on the courts if it has a weight-bearing surface.

Mr. Garrett responded that he was not sure what was under the court surface.

Mayor Mattox related that he had played basketball there many times growing up. He asked if the town is at a liability as the park is and if it is closed to public use.

Mr. Coggsdale advised the park is not closed at this time.

Mayor Mattox wanted to know if there is a true liability where the town can be found negligent. He wants to make sure no one potentially gets hurt there. He stated he was hesitant on the parking because this would put parking beside a residential area. He asked the Chief of Police if there had been calls to this area.

Chief Milnor responded that he was unsure and would need to check.

Mayor Mattox felt the Police Department did a great job because most people were gone by dusk. He did not feel this area was necessarily a hang out. He noted he liked the idea of a parking lot but did not feel the entire area was needed for this.

Mrs. Day stated the parking lot would keep the kids from parking on the grass.

Mayor Mattox asked if the area was ADA compliant.

Mr. Witt did not feel it was.

Mrs. Brumfield suggested a sidewalk be placed between the water tower and the fence.

Mr. George stated it would be nice if the sidewalk were attached to the steps because during rain events, mud runs down the steps.

Mayor Mattox stated Council wants to spend the taxpayers' dollars for the greatest good and asked for \$60,000, but are there that many people using the courts or is there another purpose for it?

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Mr. George did not feel folks would be opposed to the tennis courts, but in his opinion, he wanted them to look good.

Mr. Coggsdale referred to a previous meeting in which Council decided neighborhood parks would be parks that you walk to, non-vehicular; and also decided to provide handicap parking. He noted the Leonard Coleman Park is truly a neighborhood park because no parking areas are available.

Mayor Mattox stated he would like to know if the School Board will be closing public access to the school tennis courts. Also is the town ADA compliant; if not, what will it take to become ADA compliant.

Mr. Emerson referred to the area beside the water tank and felt this was an ideal place for the Water Park.

Mr. George suggested if the courts are repaired, that there be one tennis court and one pickle ball court.

Mrs. Brumfield noted she has played the court before and the condition of the surface is bad.

Mr. George asked for a price to repair both courts.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would contact Superintendent Robert Johnson, Campbell County Schools, in regards to the School tennis courts. He noted he and Mr. Garrett would look at the park to determine the safety issue.

Mr. Eller suggested signage that states "Rough surface, use at your own risk".

Mr. Garrett also suggested hot asphalt being poured into the cracks to remedy some of the unevenness.

Mayor Mattox asked the Chief if he would like to add anything.

Chief Milnor stated he was not aware of it being a huge problem.

Mr. George asked Chief Milnor to have an officer patrol this area on a regular basis.

Mr. Coggsdale advised he and the Chief are working on the parking situation and noted the present parking arrangement was decided on at a previous Council meeting.

Mrs. Overbey noted she has received a request for picnic table to be placed at this park.

### b. Budget Amendments

Mr. Coggsdale presented Council with budget amendments that will be needed for actions taken during FY2017. The budget amendments are either associated with Council action, grant awards or items that are being covered through funds from different line items.

It was the consensus of Council to place this item on the August 11, 2017 Council meeting consent agenda.

### c. Dead End Street/Turnarounds Discussion

Mr. Coggsdale advised at the July 11<sup>th</sup> Regular Town Council meeting the subject of dead end streets without turn arounds was brought up. He presented Staff with a package, which included a listing of dead-end streets and some alternatives that might be available. Mr. Coggsdale noted many of the dead-end streets are

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straight in and straight out. He mentioned he has received a complaint on Doss Street. Mr. Coggsdale stated some of the streets have a “Dead-end” sign on the street and suggested additional signage as a possibility.

Mrs. Dalton stated the thoughts of the town placing a cul de sac at each dead end street would be costly and felt staff should take it on as it becomes problematic. She felt signage would help with the problem.

Mrs. Brumfield mentioned she grew up on a street with a cul de sac and there were constant issues with people hanging out there and littering.

Mayor Mattox stated he would be interested in seeing if something could be done with Doss Street.

Mr. George agreed with handling each street as complaints arise.

### d. Park/Trails Master Planning Update/Discussion

Mr. Coggsdale advised previously Council indicated to staff that they would like to proceed with the process to procure professional assistance for master planning for English Park, Shreve Park and a Town-wide Trails system. He presented the draft Request for Proposals (RFP) that staff has developed.

Mr. George questioned what is being done at Shreve Park.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Shreve Park was included because there have been discussion of this being a possible Splash Park location.

It was the consensus of Council to move forward with procuring professional assistance for the master planning for English Park, Shreve Park and a Town wide Trails system.

After discussing, it was the consensus of Council that the committee will consist of Mr. George, staff and one other (who would be picked by Mr. George and staff).

Mr. Emerson asked if the County portion of the park has been transferred to the town.

Mr. Eller advised he is still waiting for the railroad to transfer the lease.

### e. VDH Grant Application

Mr. Coggsdale presented staff with a draft VDH Grant application noting the Department of Utilities is seeking grant funds to assist with providing emergency power engineering and planning for Reynolds Springs, McMinnis Springs, Bedford Pump Station and the Staunton River Pump Station. The FY2017 Budget included \$65,000 for installation of manual switches for this purpose. He noted these funds could be used to match grant funds and assist in implementation.

It was the consensus of Council for the Department of Utilities to submit the VDH Grant application.

### f. Buildings and Other

Mr. Coggsdale advised some Council members have expressed concerns about certain structures within the Town and if there are existing codes that staff could use to remedy these. He stated staff wants to make sure of the tools available to use at their discretion; he noted there are several code sections in place (Sections 21-1 and 21-2, Sections 34-31 & 32 and Sections 62-81 & 82). Mr. Coggsdale stated the ordinance does not only include animals, but structures as well as accumulated trash. For Sections 21-1 & 2 staff would identify 4-5 structures that fit the criteria contained in the code, prepare a report to present to Council, and request Council direct staff to give notice to the owners for removal, repair or to secure the structure. Only buildings ‘which might endanger the public health or safety of the residents of town’ would be included. He stated staff wants a process that works for Council.

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Mayor Mattox stated there is already an ordinance in place that has been used and asked why a listing of four or five properties could not be compiled and staff move forward as before.

Mr. Coggsdale noted in the past there was an advocate on Council who took charge; he and Mr. Witt moved forward with the process.

Mrs. Dalton asked if there was a way to pre-inform Council of which properties have been identified.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Witt to update Council on how the previous process worked.

Mr. Witt advised he and Mr. Ronald Coleman (former Councilman) went out and identified several structures that were public nuisances. Council set aside \$10,000 for the remedy of these nuisances. He noted each case was positive as the property owners were receptive and willing to work with the Town. The ones that received the monies paid the town back at no interest over a three-year period. He found that many of the properties identified have "absent" landlords. Mr. Witt stated he didn't want to present something to Council and they be surprised by it. Mr. Witt stated he would present Council with properties he has identified and noted he will gladly contact the property owners before sending out his nuisance letters.

Mayor Mattox felt it was a good idea to give the property owners options before sending out the nuisance letters.

Mr. George added the Planning Commission and the Council makes rules and from his perspective, he says enforce it. Staff does not need his permission to enforce the code. He stated if someone has a problem with it, they can address Council with it and Council can make a decision at that time.

Mrs. Dalton suggested if Council is made aware of these nuisance properties then when approached outside of Town staff, Council can address the situation appropriately. She felt a heads up would be nice but didn't know what forum would be used.

Mr. Eller advised in the process the property owner is giving notice and asked to come to a Council meeting to explain why the property is not kept up. During the meeting, Council decides whether or not to declare the property a public nuisance, then staff moves forward to abate the situation. He noted Code Sections 21 and 22 gives this authority.

Mayor Mattox stated Council should be blind to the selection process. If staff has identified a piece of property that is a nuisance, that is when Council should be notified.

Mr. Witt stated he would like to identify three properties and present them to Council.

Mr. Emerson stated he agreed with Mayor Mattox and Mr. George, and did not need to be notified about any of them, bring them to Council and put them through the process and if they haven't done what they are supposed to do he is for doing whatever comes next.

Mayor Mattox asked if Council is opposed to an Adhoc Committee.

Mr. Coggsdale asked if there is some consideration of confidential nature behind this.

Mayor Mattox stated Council does not want to embarrass anyone.

Mrs. Overbey pointed out the notification process is outlined in the code; she stated there is a code and told staff to enforce it.

Council was in agreement to follow the codes.

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Mr. George referred to the old Lane Company building stating this was a public nuisance.

Mr. Witt advised he is working with Campbell County building inspections on this property.

g. Project Updates

Mr. Coggsdale advised the Charlotte Avenue project is out to bid. He advised of a group wanting to refurbish Veteran markers at Green Hill Cemetery.

After discussing, Council determined the group needs to work directly with the plot owner and submit written approval to the town.

6. Public Comments

Mayor Mattox asked if anyone would like to comment on anything not listed on the agenda.

Mayor Mattox asked if anyone else would like to speak. No one came forward.

Mr. Emerson stated the Police Department has been staying off of the 29 bypass saying the State Police works the highway. He stated he has received calls that people have seen the officers sitting in the median cut through on the bypass. He did not feel there was anything that restricts the Town Officers from getting on Route 29 and writing tickets. He noted there are a lot of drugs coming into town and there is a chance of stopping them on the bypass. He asked Council to consider allowing the Chief to discuss this with the Commonwealth Attorney to see what the boundaries are and allowing the officers to do some enforcement on the bypass. There are DMV grants and DUI enforcement money. Mr. Emerson felt drugs were coming from the City of Danville and this may be an opportunity to keep some of the drugs from coming into the town.

Chief Milnor stated the boundary is 300 yards and then there is the mutual aid. He has had conversations with Campbell County Sheriff Steve Hutcherson and he is in agreement with allowing the town officers to work this area. Chief Milnor noted many of the DUIs are coming from Applebee's and the Wal-Mart Shopping Center area, going on the bypass and never coming into town.

It was the consensus of Council to allow the Chief of Police to discuss this with the Commonwealth Attorney to see what the boundaries are and allowing the officers to do some enforcement on the bypass.

7. Adjournment

Mayor Mattox adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

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Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

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J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk