

Council Work Session - November 27, 2018

The Altavista Town Council's November Work Session was held in the Council Chambers of the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on November 27, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.

1. Mayor Mike Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.

Council members

Present: Mayor Michael Mattox
Mr. Reginald Bennett
Mrs. Beverley Dalton
Mr. Tracy Emerson
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham
Mrs. Tanya Overbey

Also Present:

Mr. J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Town Manager
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Finance Director
Police Chief Thomas Merricks, APD
Mr. Tom Fore, Utilities Director
Mr. David Garrett, Public Works Director
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Administration

2. Agenda Amendments/Approval

Mayor Mattox asked to add another item for discussion to the night's agenda. He stated the item was for a utility bill adjustment requested by a town citizen.

Mr. Emerson, seconded by Mrs. Dalton, motioned to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mrs. Tanya Overbey	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mrs. Beverly Dalton	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Reginald Bennett	Yes

3. Public Comments—Agenda Items Only

No one came forward with comments on this date.

4. Introductions and Special Presentations

No introductions or presentations on this date.

5. FY2020 Budget – Public Input Opportunity

Mrs. Betty Gilliam, 1707 Dale Avenue, Altavista, addressed Council with a suggestion for the town of Altavista to develop a “planned community” for on seniors wanting to retire in a smaller home and also young couples that may not want to start out with a large home and the mortgage that goes with it. She stated the development should offer basic housing ranging in cost from \$115,000 to \$150,000 and also have a social building within the development for the citizens living there to get together with each other and also be able to invite their family and friends to come visit.

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Mrs. Gilliam referenced a senior development, Lake Walk, located closer to Lynchburg on Rt. 29 that is similar to what she is suggesting. She stated all of the 92 houses in that development are always occupied and sell quickly when a vacancy opens up. She continued stating the citizens of the community pay a maintenance fee to cover the cost of lawn care and trash pickup.

Mrs. Gilliam stated it was her opinion the Town of Altavista and its citizens would both benefit from a planned community of this type.

Mrs. Gilliam also suggested to Council the town invest in a community center for entertainment such as theater, special shows, exhibits, etc.

Mrs. Gilliam concluded her suggestions with a request to add park benches to the Riverfront Park trail. She stated she recently walked the path herself and enjoyed the experience, but her friend walks with the assistance of a cane so she cannot walk the entire path without stopping and stated it would be beneficial to have additional seating at the beginning and end of the path for people to rest if they needed to.

Mrs. Gilliam asked for a list of the businesses operating in the town of Altavista.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would have staff contact her with that information.

Mrs. Gilliam conveyed her appreciation to Council for its continued effort to make the town of Altavista a nice place to live for its citizens and also thanked Council for their time and consideration.

6. Items for Discussion

a. Citizen request for a utility bill adjustment

Ms. Lee Ann Head, 2216 Beech Avenue, Altavista, addressed Council with a request for a utility bill adjustment.

Ms. Head stated her water bill is normally around \$45, but her last bill was approximately \$1,000 because of a water leak in her irrigation system.

Ms. Head stated a member of town staff called her regarding a high meter reading at her property letting her know she had an issue. She stated she had the leak fixed that same day, September 24, 2018, by Central VA Irrigation.

Mrs. Head continued she requested the bill adjustment on October 16, but she became sick and went into the hospital for eight days and was unaware someone from the town office was trying to reach her regarding the adjustment request.

Mrs. Dalton asked what the town's utility policy stated regarding such issues.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the current policy does not apply to leaks in an irrigation system, so staff does not have the authority to consider such a request and therefore an adjustment request for this type of issue would have to go before Council for consideration.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Ms. Head's request had been denied by staff due to the issue being with her irrigation system which is not allowed in the current utility policy. He continued stating a member of staff tried to contact Ms. Head on three different occasions and a reminder letter of the outstanding balance was also sent to her home address, but no response was received so her water service was disconnected on Monday, November 6th.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated Ms. Head contacted the town office on November 7th and at that time was informed her water bill adjustment request was denied because of the issue being in her irrigation system which is not covered for adjustments, but she could go before Council to request an adjustment.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions for Ms. Head.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the water bill with the leak issue was in her name or her father's name, which shows as the owner of the property in town records.

Ms. Head answered the water bill is still in her father's name. She stated her father passed away and she is in the process of getting his bills put into her name.

Mrs. Dalton asked Ms. Head if she resides at the Beech Avenue property, to which Ms. Head answered yes she does.

Mrs. Dalton then asked, with Ms. Head living at the residence, why the leak went on so long as to arrive at a \$1000 water bill.

Ms. Head stated it took two hours to find the leak because it was so small in size. She also stated the location of the leak was in an area of the backyard that no one usually goes to, so she was unaware of it until she was contacted by the town.

Mrs. Dalton also asked what date the leak was found and fixed and also the date of the adjustment request, because the policy states a citizen has 14 days from the time a leak is found to request an adjustment in writing at the town office.

Ms. Head stated she was unaware of the 14 day rule. She stated the leak was fixed on September 24 and she filed her request at the town office on October 16.

Mrs. Shelton stated Ms. Head's utility bill was an "off-cycle" bill and was force billed on the twentieth of September.

Mr. George asked what an off-cycle bill was.

Mrs. Shelton answered it's when meters are read and high consumption is found, the account is flagged to be investigated. She continued the bill is put in a mail batch by itself giving staff time to investigate the high consumption reading and inform the citizen of the situation so the issue can be fixed in a timely manner.

Mr. George stated there was a similar situation on Lynch Road brought before Council to where they approved the adjustment request by the citizen.

Mr. Tom Fore, Utilities Director, stated the issue at Lynch Road was in the main supply line to the citizen's property which is covered under town policy. He continued the reason the current issue was before Council was because the issue is in the citizen's irrigation system, which is not covered under the town policy.

Mr. Coggsdale offered Council information regarding the citizen's previous water bills. He stated the property shows higher usage three out of the four quarters of the year, which would be when the irrigation is being used. He continued stating the last quarter showed a usage of 28,670, which is normal for the months the irrigation system is being used, and the current quarter's usage with the issue in question showed usage of 208,680, which is five times the normal usage.

Mayor Mattox asked what the normal policy would be if the request is approved.

Mrs. Shelton stated the historic average of a utility bill is taken into consideration along with the citizen's payment history. She stated the sewer part of the utility bill is adjusted one hundred percent above the historic average.

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She continued the water part of the bill is adjusted seventy-five percent of the historic average leaving the citizen responsible for the other twenty-five percent, which in Ms. Head's case would be \$374.72, with the adjustment of \$669.75.

Mrs. Dalton stated the difficulty Council has in making a decision regarding a request of this type is the town policy does not cover a leak issue when a citizen chooses to use an irrigation system on their property, but she assured Ms. Head that Council always takes every aspect of the request into consideration.

Mr. Fore stated with the amount of rain Altavista and surrounding areas have sustained recently, it would be easy for a small leak located in a homeowner's backyard to go undetected. He continued stating Ms. Head did have the leak fixed the same day she was informed of it and stated, if asked by Council, he would give his recommendation of an approval for the adjustment requested by Ms. Head based on the recent weather.

Mr. Bennett asked if any similar situation regarding a leak not in the main line had ever come before Council for an adjustment.

Mayor Mattox answered yes there had been other issues not covered by the current utility policy brought to Council for adjustment consideration and Council is required to look at each request individually for its determination.

Mr. Emerson stated he had taken into consideration the comments given by Mr. Fore regarding the recent weather conditions and he would be in favor of approving the adjustment request by Ms. Head.

Mrs. Dalton stated she would also be in favor of approving the request using the current policy guidelines and refunding Ms. Head the sum of \$669.75.

Mr. Higginbotham, seconded by Mr. Emerson, motioned to approve the utility bill adjustment requested by Ms. Lee Ann Head of 2216 Beech Avenue in Altavista by using the town's current utility policy guidelines.

Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mrs. Tanya Overbey	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mrs. Beverly Dalton	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Reginald Bennett	Yes

b. English Park Improvements Update – Southern Playgrounds

Mr. Scott DuBois, Southern Playground Crew Leader in charge of the English Park playground improvement design and construction, shared with Council a presentation including picture likenesses to offer them a visual concept of what the playground area could look like in its completion and also a budget analyses which would depend on Council's choices in the park's overall design, including whether a water recycle system would be used with the proposed water feature.

Mr. DuBois stated, at this point in the design process, he would like to have Council's input on the proposed design and budget options and also direction from Council on how to move forward.

Mr. DuBois stated there were three main components of the Park he would show Council and ask for their input and direction on: (1) the splash pad area's size and its components and the location of the pump station to operate the water feature, (2) the shaded area proposed for the center of the playground with shade structures and benches, and (3) the playground area and its play equipment.

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Mr. DuBois gave reference to each picture stating where the new playground equipment would be placed, landscaping choices that are possible, likenesses of the splash pad water features available, and a building location option that would house the splash pad water pump system and also a recycled water filtration system if Council chose the option.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the splash pad area and the perimeter surrounding the splash pad would all be concrete.

Mr. DuBois stated the entire splash pad area is concrete so water could fall back into the designed drain system and the perimeter of the splash pad would consist of both concrete and a turf area.

Mr. Higginbotham referenced a similar splash pad park in a nearby town that had issues with the surrounding perimeter staying wet and sometimes muddy. He stated it is not Council's intent to have the same issue and would like Southern Playground to implement a solution in Altavista's proposed plan.

Mr. DuBois assured Council there is already money appropriated in the current proposed budget to make sure all aspects of their concerns and requests are implemented in the design.

Mr. Higginbotham also asked Mr. Dubois why the splash pad area in the current proposed design is larger than the one in the original plan.

Mr. DuBois answered the size of the splash pad area was increased based on the community size and an estimated possibility of children to use the feature.

Mr. DuBois continued his presentation on the splash pad area of the playground stating the water equipment would come from a manufacturer in Canada, Vortex, and the design would include different sized water features in designated areas for toddlers, middle aged children, and teens. He stated the sectioned design would allow all age groups of children to enjoy the splash pad area at the same time and separating the age groups would encourage a safer play area.

Mr. DuBois also stated the splash pad design would be handicap accessible allowing all children and citizens the ability to enjoy the park's water feature.

Mr. DuBois informed Council there were large water feature options available where the space could be offered to a business for advertisement with a donation, which would create revenue for the town. He also stated all of the water features could be painted any color if a theme is desired.

Mr. George asked Mr. DuBois what an average donation would be for an advertisement on one of the water features, to which he answered the amount charged would be up to Council. He stated he could offer Council a break down of cost for each piece of water equipment for such use.

Mr. DuBois moved forward and presented Council with pictures of the playground area in the proposed design. He stated the playground area would also be divided into specific age appropriate zones with different sized play equipment in each area, showing pictures of slides and climbing equipment. He continued stating the swing area would offer toddler swings, regular swings, and also handicap accessible swings.

Mr. DuBois stated the dirt from digging out the splash pad area would be reused to create a hillside play area adjoining the playground. He stated the hillside would be a visual attraction with distinctive landscape and also an additional play area with the possible option of using slides on the hillside.

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Mrs. Dalton asked what type of ground cover would be used for the playground.

Mr. DuBois stated the ground cover in the proposed design would be a certified safe and handicap accessible playground mulch.

Mr. George asked if a shredded rubber mulch product could be used for safety.

Mr. DuBois stated the rubber products are comparable in safety to the natural wood mulch, but would be more costly to the town's playground design.

Mr. DuBois moved on to the third item in his presentation, a shaded area proposed for the center of the playground design, and offered Council information regarding the shade structure for the area.

Mr. DuBois stated the shade area was proposed for the center of the playground, located between the play equipment and the splash pad area, for parents and children to have a rest area no matter which area they were playing in and also for parents with multiple children to have a better view of all the play areas.

Mr. Emerson asked if the shade structure in the picture would be the same one used in the proposed design for Altavista, to which Mr. DuBois stated yes.

Mr. Higginbotham asked what the shade structure's cover would be made of.

Mr. DuBois stated the shade structure would be thirty-two feet in length, with a twelve foot projection of shade coverage. He also stated the shade cover was waterproof, and could withstand up to one hundred and ten mile an hour winds, but the cover would need to be taken down in the winter months to keep it from bending the structure from snow fall.

Mr. DuBois stated the design plan includes having benches underneath the shade structure, either with backs or without or both depending on Council's decision.

Mr. DuBois concluded his presentation with budget options for the proposed playground design. He stated the first option, \$957,000, would be for the entire project from the design to its completion with Southern Playground supplying the playground equipment and splash pad components. He continued stating the second option, \$888,000, would be Southern Playground designing and constructing the playground renovation, but the town using outside contracts to purchase the playground equipment and splash pad components, which could save the town a significant amount of money.

Mr. DuBois stated the last option, \$717,000, would be the same design plan, but without the recycled water filtration system if Council decided to use a "water-to-waste" option for water flow in the splash pad area.

Mr. George asked if the water filtration system would be added to the existing building housing restrooms.

Mr. DuBois answered the current proposal was to use the existing building for an addition because it already has the plumbing available to tap in to, but Council could choose to locate the filtration system anywhere near the splash pad area.

Mr. Bennett asked how much water would be used if the water-to-waste option was chosen.

Mr. DuBois stated for the size of the proposed splash pad area the water usage would be approximately 350 gallons per minute, but the water features would not run continuously, only when activated by a child/user. He continued the water components are usually in operation approximately 70% of the time the water area would be open, which normally is 10am until 8pm.

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Mr. Bennett asked what the most cost efficient option would be between the two in Altavista's proposed design.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the upfront cost difference is \$120,000.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. DuBois what his recommendation would be between the two options when considering Altavista's proposed design plan.

Mr. DuBois answered the decision would be up to Council, but offered his thoughts how he would look at the overall projected use by the community; the town's ability to have staff maintain the facility if the filtration system was chosen, and if not, the estimated cost possible in future water waste.

Mr. Higginbotham asked how many gallons per day would the splash pad use and waste if Council chose the waste-to-water option.

Mr. Tom Fore, Utilities Director, answered using the equation by Mr. DuBois of 350 gallons per minute and 70% time of usage per day, an estimated possible water loss would be 150,000-170,000 gallons per day in an 8hr day of operation.

Mr. Emerson asked what months a splash area would typically be in operation, to which Mr. DuBois answered Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Mr. Bennett asked would there be any water lost in using a filtration system.

Mr. DuBois stated there would be some water lost when children enter and exit the water area. He referenced a recently opened water facility in a nearby community with the same filtration system proposed in Altavista's plan that lost approximately 20,000 gallons last summer.

Mr. George asked how large the water holding tank was in the filtration system, to which Mr. DuBois answered the holding tank would be 3,000 gallons.

Mrs. Dalton stated she would be more in favor of spending an amount of money upfront to add the filtration system to recycle the water used than to try and estimate a cost for future water loss without the system. She continued the water estimated to be lost in a day's operation would be better used by town industry.

Mr. Higginbotham asked which water feature in the splash pad design would have the most water consumption, to which Mr. DuBois answered the big bucket.

Mr. Fore offered Council information regarding the water already being used by town's industry in peak summer months. He stated the water plant was rated for a daily capacity use of 3 million gallons of water per day and at peak demands in the summer was already 2.5 million gallons per day. He continued if an additional 170,000 gallons of water per day were added to the equation, it would increase the daily demand to approximately 2.7 million gallons.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if storm water could be used to run the splash pad area.

Mr. Fore answered storm water could not be used with the waste-to-water option because, by law, any water being used in a consumer environment has to be regulated, therefore water would come from the town's water plant.

Mr. George asked if there is a water temperature difference with each option.

Mr. DuBois stated water from the town would be colder than water from a filtration system because it is continuously circulating therefore warmer.

Mr. Higginbotham asked what the value of 170,000 gallons of water would be, which was the estimated number of gallons used per day using the water-to-waste option, to which Mr. Fore answered \$407.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated the \$407 would be the revenue potential for that amount.

Mr. Bennett asked what the cost would be for a three month supply of chemicals if Council chose the water recycling filtration system.

Mr. DuBois stated for a three month time period the town could use up to 200 gallons of chlorine and 50 gallons of muriatic acid, costing approximately \$2000.

Mr. Coggsdale stated when considering the filtration option, the chemical usage is one part of the cost equation. He continued the cost for staff maintaining the facility would also need to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Fore asked how many times a day would the filtration system need maintenance.

Mr. DuBois stated the proposed filtration system has a chemical control monitoring system continuously reading the water chemistry, and the town could choose to run the system through the internet and have the readings sent direct to the water plant for observation 24 hours a day. He stated the system is designed to give alerts when the water chemistry is off balance.

Mr. DuBois continued there was also the task of keeping an eye on and cleaning the filtration system's pumps and baskets from daily debris so the system continues to operate properly.

Mrs. Dalton stated with Mr. DuBois needing feedback from Council on how to move forward, she would like to have staff continue to investigate how the cost of both options would affect the town and the budget.

Mrs. Dalton shared her current favor being for the recycled water filtration system install so the water capacity needed to operate the splash pad area would stay off the water plant so the play facility would not be consuming the water that otherwise could be used for town usage and revenue. She stated she would be open to changing her view if given information favoring the waste-to-water plan.

Mrs. Dalton continued stating her observation of the current proposed splash pad design was the area looked to be too chaotic and not space conscience of its users.

Mr. Coggsdale shared he observed a similar water facility at nearby Occoneechee State Park and stated even though the design looked to have a lot going on, it would hold a numerous amount of children and would seem smaller if seen in use.

Mayor Mattox asked if Council had any other questions or concerns regarding the proposed playground renovation design.

Mrs. Overbey stated her current favor was for the filtration system install, but would also be open to more information regarding both options with or without.

Mrs. Overbey asked Mr. DuBois for a cost of each individual component in the splash pad area of the playground. She stated it would be helpful to Council for budget consideration options.

Mrs. Overbey stated she approved of the playgrounds proposed design and its equipment and was especially in favor of the artificial climbing trees. She also stated she liked the concept used in the design of different play areas for different age groups of children.

Mr. Emerson stated he liked the overall playground renovation design and especially liked the slides being placed on the hillside beside the playground area because it utilized an otherwise empty space into an additional play area. He also stated he looked forward to seeing the plan in its completion and would like to push for a completion date by June of 2019 in time for an unveiling at Altavista's annual Uncle Billy's Day Festival.

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Mr. Emerson stated he liked the multiple water components being offered for the splash pad area because concrete on a 95 degree summer day would need a water feature everywhere you could possibly place one.

Mrs. Dalton asked if there was another water featured playground with the same design within a 50 mile radius of Altavista, to which Mr. DuBois answered only Charlottesville at 90 miles away and Clarksville at approximately 60 miles away. Mrs. Dalton asked, with the size and configuration of the splash pad in the current design, how many children could possibly use the splash safely at the same time.

Mr. DuBois stated the number of children possible would depend on the types of water components used in the design. He stated some water features can only be used by one child, while others up to three or four children at any given time.

Mr. DuBois continued stating an approximate number could be estimated by using the equation of one child per twenty-five square foot and with the size of the splash pad in Altavista's proposed design being six thousand square feet, the number of children possible would be approximately two hundred and forty.

Mr. Higginbotham asked for more information regarding the splash pad feature's water consumption. He also stated his interest in knowing the cost for the splash pad's individual play components.

Mr. George stated he liked the entire playground renovation proposed design plan and he looked forward to seeing it in its completion.

Mr. George asked was a security camera system in the proposed plan, if not, he suggested the consideration to adding one for child and community safety. He asked Mr. DuBois if he could have a cost option for a security system for Council to consider at the next meeting he attends to which Mr. DuBois answered yes.

Mr. Bennett stated he agreed with Mr. George a security system would be an asset for the town to monitor the park's activity and help in keeping its citizens safe.

Mr. Bennett referenced a nearby town where the Mayor made a video showcasing the town's increased activity, not only in the parks, but also in the local businesses since the town upgraded their community parks. He continued stating it would be his hope of the same outcome for Altavista when the proposed plan is completed.

Mayor Mattox stated it was Council's intent, when considering options for the park's renovation, to have a wow factor in the park that the community would be proud of and would also attract more outside visitors to the town.

Mr. Coggsdale asked Council if they had a number other than the options Mr. DuBois offered in the proposed budget, they would be more comfortable with. He continued it would be easier for Mr. DuBois to have a set number to work with rather than Council deciding on individual components of the plan.

Mr. Coggsdale continued the maintenance and annual recurring cost were only to be considered for cost in future budgets and would depend on which upfront option they chose concerning the filtration system.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the budget options Mr. DuBois offered Council were for Southern Playground to design and construct the playground renovation.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the \$40,000 landscaping could be outsourced at a lower cost in order to help lower the overall budget.

Mr. DuBois stated the budget could be lowered if the town decided to complete some of the landscaping and/or building the filtration house themselves.

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Mayor Mattox shared his concerns with Council trying to pick and choose which part of the plan to keep or remove in order to lower the renovation cost. He stated his favor of Council agreeing to a set cost and letting the experts, Southern Playground, continue with the design and construction within the cost boundary.

Mr. George agreed it would be better to let Southern Playground design a plan within the town's budget since they have sixteen years of experience in doing so.

Mrs. Dalton asked staff to investigate if town would need to restructure the liability insurance covering the addition of the new components in the park renovation, to which Mr. Coggsdale stated they would.

Mrs. Dalton asked Mr. DuBois to offer Council suggestions where components could be removed or changed staying within the desired budget, but not take away from the overall wow factor of the new playground Council is looking for.

Mr. DuBois stated if Council could give him a desired budget to be considerate of, he would revise the design plan to the budget requested.

Mr. George asked if there would be any areas in the current proposed plan for different options to be available in lowering the budget.

Mr. DuBois stated there were areas in the plan possible for the town to assist or complete, such as the landscape grading and constructing the building for the filtration system to be housed. He continued the more the town could contribute to the renovation's construction, the lower the overall budget would be.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, with the desired timeframe already in mind by Council for the completion of the playground, the more time taken to complete the design aspect of the plan the further out the playground's completion date would be.

Mrs. Dalton stated it would be helpful in the final decision to have the cost list of the individual splash pad components.

Mr. Bennett asked was the featured company in the design of the splash pad components, Vortex, the only local company that could be used, to which Mr. DuBois answered Vortex is not the only option, but is by far the best for the playground design plan proposed for Altavista.

Mr. Coggsdale asked Mr. DuBois what the ideal timeframe would be for him to have the design plan approved by Council.

Mr. DuBois stated ideally as soon as possible in order to move forward with the project and stay within the desired completion date requested.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. DuBois would it be possible for him to return in two weeks for the December Regular Council Meeting with answers to the questions and concerns asked by Council to be addressed, or would he need more time.

Mr. DuBois stated he would be able to attend the meeting in December and would have all the information with him requested by Council.

c. BGF Environmental Item

Mr. Coggsdale shared the reason a presentation was being brought before Council was because BGF had previously expressed an interest in exploring options related to remediation of an environmental issue involving storm water from their plant on Amherst Avenue.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated town staff members had periodically met with BGF representative, Mr. Greg Slominski, to stay informed on their thoughts and progress and felt it was a good time in the process for BGF to brief Council on their proposed concept. He stated staff had only granted BGF permission to “explore” their options, some of which would utilize town-owned property, but at this point in the process needed input from Council on how to move forward.

Mr. Slominski gave a Power Point presentation highlighting three main topics; How We Got Here, Where We Go from Here, and Action Phase 2019 & 2020. He started by showing Council pictures of the particular piece of town property BGF would use in their plan if approved.

Mr. Slominski stated they were working on an improvement plan of how the storm water discarded by the BGF facility could be better regulated, which is mandated by the EPA (environmental protection agency) because of chemicals that could possibly get into the water.

Mr. Slominski stated the chemicals, or PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyl), were widely used in similar facilities and are harmless in small amounts, but still have to be regulated to keep large amounts from getting into the river at one time.

Mr. Slominski stated the current plan draft would cost BGF millions of dollars, but would achieve approximately 94% of the desired end result of the improvement plan. He continued stating if Council allowed BGF to utilize the town owned property with a wetland installation it would extend their efforts and possibly reach a 98% end result from the improvement plan.

Mr. Slominski stated the proposed wetland area would be an asset to the town by offering the site to its citizens as a scenic area to enjoy with sidewalks and possibly bridges. Town could even choose to connect the area to the nearby riverfront English Park.

Mr. Slominski stated by combining BGF’s efforts with the town’s assistance would give everyone involved the best possible end result.

Mr. Slominski concluded his presentation by asking what Council thought of the proposed wet land area and asked for direction on moving forward. He continued BGF was not likely to spend the extra money involved in investigating the possibility of using a wetland system unless Council was interested in allowing the wet land area to be installed on their property.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Slominski what was needed from Council at this time.

Mr. Slominski stated BGF only needed a direction from Council whether they would be interested in allowing BGF to use the town property and then move forward with investigating the use of a wetland for environmental purposes.

Council members were all in consensus to allow BGF to move forward.

d. Transit Budget Review

Mr. Coggsdale stated staff would be briefing Council on the proposed FY2020 budget for the Altavista Community Transit System (ACTS) and asked Council to give input on any desired modifications to the budget.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the DPRT (Virginia Department of Public Rail and Transportation) funds a majority of the operation cost for the transit system and the application for that grant is due by the end of January, so staff is asking Council to review the budget early and allow it to be placed on the December consent agenda for approval and be ready in time to submit the grant application.

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Mrs. Shelton shared with Council the funds obtained to operate the transit system come 50% from Federal funds, 15% from State funds, and the remaining 35% were local responsibility.

Mrs. Dalton asked what the town's total cost responsibility would be after all aspects of the budget are finalized and all grants are received.

Mrs. Shelton stated the local share equates to \$35,210 of the proposed budget total of \$105,600. Annual fare box revenue is estimated at \$5,000 which is deducted from the total budget (\$105,600) for grant purposes. She continued \$77,000 is also included for Capital Improvements and the local share for CIP is budgeted at 20% which equals \$15,400. The total local funds being requested, based on the draft budget would be \$50,610 with the remaining \$131,990 coming from grant funding and passenger revenues.

Mr. Higginbotham asked why the medical insurance part of the budget had increased so much.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the last budget was lower in that category because the staff member previously overseeing the transit system already had medical insurance outside of their town position. He continued the addition of medical insurance to the proposed FY2020 budget would cover the position in the case the person does not already have medical insurance elsewhere.

Mr. Bennett stated he recently took an opportunity to ride Altavista's transit system. He shared positive comments from the passengers also riding the bus the same day, stating all shared their thankfulness for Altavista offering its citizens a public bus system because they would not otherwise have transportation.

Mayor asked if Council had any further questions for staff regarding the proposed budget or if they were ready to allow staff to move forward.

Council members were all in consensus to allow staff to place the proposed FY2020 transit budget on the December meeting consent agenda for approval.

e. Opioid Crisis Discussion

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council of a law firm, Sanford Heisler Sharp, pursuing a public interest recovery lawsuit as a "Proposed Opioid Epidemic Cost Recovery Action". He asked Council to look over the information provided to them regarding the lawsuit and offer staff direction as to whether Council had any interest at this time for Altavista to participate in the legal action.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he recently talked with Mr. Frank Rogers, Campbell County Board of Supervisors, and Mr. Rogers stated Campbell County had the same subject on their December consent agenda for consideration.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would follow up with Campbell County to keep Council informed of how the surrounding communities are addressing the issue.

Mayor Mattox asked Police Chief Merricks what the APD was seeing in the field regarding the opioid crisis and asked for the Chief's thoughts on a direction Altavista should consider in the matter.

Chief Merricks stated, even though Altavista had not seen a large amount of cases on the issue, he felt the opioid crisis is definitely worth the town's time looking into the subject and possible ways the town can help its citizens in case of possible future opioid emergencies.

Chief Merricks shared when recently on duty with other officers, they came in contact with a citizen with opioid substance abuse, so he is aware of the issue in the local area. He continued even though it is not currently a large issue, it had the potential of becoming a larger issue in the future.

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Chief Merricks stated the APD is currently looking into being trained with Narcan, a nasal spray used to help in emergency cases of opioid abuse, so the department would be ready in case a situation of such nature would occur.

Mayor Mattox if there were any meetings in the local area staff or Chief could attend to gather additional information regarding the opioid crisis.

Chief Merricks stated there was an upcoming meeting scheduled in Richmond he would be attending concerning the recent increase in opioid abuse cases in the surrounding areas. He stated he hoped to learn more on the subject and would report back to staff and Council with information he collected at the meeting.

Mrs. Dalton asked if Campbell County participated in the lawsuit would Altavista be obligated to participate as well.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the two governments are considered separate and Altavista would not have to participate in the lawsuit if they chose not to.

Mr. Emerson stated there are currently opioid overdose cases in the county at least once a week, so the Campbell County Police Department were also getting Narcan as a tool in helping them be better prepared for overdose emergencies.

Mr. George stated he recently talked with a YMCA employee that stated all local YMCA facilities were starting to carry overdose emergency kits as a precaution.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they would consider allowing Chief Merricks and Town Manager Coggsdale to gather more information and make the decision whether or not to participate in the opioid crisis recovery lawsuit.

Mrs. Overbey shared her concerns with Council moving forward too quickly without more investigation. She stated the terms of participating in the recovery action lawsuit state all parties involved would be responsible for any legal fees accrued if no monetary recovery was achieved.

Mr. Higginbotham agreed with Mrs. Overbey and stated Altavista would not have as much recovery needed as bigger companies in the lawsuit would, so the effort could cost the town more in legal fees by participating if money is not recovered in the lawsuit. He stated he would rather the town be proactive with training and purchasing any other tools needed by its officers for overdose emergencies.

Mrs. Dalton stated the town would always have the option to join the lawsuit in the future if they felt it necessary to do so.

Council members were all in consensus not to participate in the proposed opioid abuse epidemic recovery action lawsuit.

Mayor Mattox stated his appreciation to Chief Merricks for already being proactive regarding the opioid abuse epidemic seemingly increasing in the community and surrounding areas by actively seeking training opportunities and the APD purchasing the Narcan product for use in an opioid emergency.

f. Utility Payment Method Update

Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Town Finance Director, addressed Council with details regarding a new bill paying option for town customers. She stated in a continuing effort to provide customers with the most efficient services possible, the town is now offering its citizens an automatic payment processing option for paying their utility bills.

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Mrs. Shelton stated staff recently researched options for the ability to offer town customers another payment option. She stated staff worked with First National Bank of Altavista and Central Square, the vendor for software already used by staff, with the result being an auto-pay option for utility bills. She continued the option is currently only available for utility bills.

Mrs. Shelton stated customers would still receive their water bill cards in the mail, but for the customers choosing to participate in the auto-pay option, the amount due would be deducted from their banking account five days after the bill date.

Mrs. Shelton stated staff would like to deliver a flyer explaining the bill pay option and an application form when town calendars are delivered this year.

Mr. Bennett asked would there be a fee for customers choosing auto-pay.

Mrs. Shelton stated there was a small cost to the town for the service, but the auto-pay option would be free to customers choosing the option.

Mr. Bennett suggested staff include the option is free on the flyer being handed out to citizens.

7. Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items

Mrs. Gilliam stated she only had a comment for Council's consideration. She stated in regards to listening the opioid abuse conversation, she would like Council to investigate whether the local businesses in Altavista are having trouble hiring applicants because of failing their drug test.

8. Adjournment

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any additional concerns from Council.

No one came forward with additional concerns, questions, or requests.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council to be at the December regular council meeting early at 6:30 p.m. He stated there would be a small reception for Council members leaving this year and new Council members starting their term in January 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk