

Council Work Session April 28, 2020

The Altavista Town Council's April 2020 Work Session was held in Council Chambers at the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on April 28, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

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

Council members

Present: Mayor Michael Mattox
Vice-Mayor Beverley Dalton (by phone)
Mr. Reginald Bennett
Mr. Tracy Emerson
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham

Absent: Mr. Wayne Mitchell

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
Ms. Sharon Williams, Community Development Director
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Administration

2. Agenda Approval

Mayor Mattox informed Council item number nine (#9) of the agenda had been amended to include a closed session for that evening.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the proposed April 28, 2020 Council Work Session Agenda, to which there were none.

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

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes

3. Recognitions and Presentations

There were no recognitions or presentations scheduled for the April Work Session.

4. Public Comments - Agenda Items Only

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any citizen(s) attending the meeting that wished to address Council regarding a work session agenda item, to which there were none.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager if there had been any phone calls or emails received from citizens with questions or concerns, to which there were none.

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5. Items Referred from Previous Meetings

a. Town of Altavista - Fiscal Policy Discussion

Mr. Coggsdale stated this item had been referred from Town Council's January 14, 2020 Regular Meeting, when Council discussed the need for Fiscal Policies to guide their decision-making. He stated it was Council's intent to create a consistent and formal process by which fiscal issues may be considered and handled.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council, at the January 14, 2020 Town Council Regular Meeting, Town Staff provided Council with "draft" Fiscal Policies for the Town of Altavista that showed current (existing) policies, town practices, and new policies proposed.

Mr. Coggsdale gave Council a brief overview of the items listed in the draft policy document:

- A. Fund Balance
- B. Budget
- C. Investments
- D. Internal Controls
- E. Capital Assets
- F. Purchasing

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the document was "color-coded", giving Council the ability to see what policies and practices were currently in place, and which were being proposed. He stated this was intended to assist Council with addressing each category, and potentially making decisions whether a policy or practice should remain in the document, or whether to remove a policy/practice from the policy document/financial process.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at that time, staff was seeking input from Town Council as to their desired "next step" for this item.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or comments regarding this item, to which there were none.

Mr. Bennett asked the Town Manager when a decision needed to be made by Council regarding this matter.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, approval of the Draft Fiscal Policy did not have a specific deadline, but he recommended Council consider this matter sometime in the immediate future.

Mr. Bennett asked if the town's "rainy day" funds were separate from other accounts.

Mrs. Shelton, Altavista Financial Director, answered Mr. Bennett stating the "rainy day" Reserve Fund was set apart from other town accounts "on paper", but in actuality, its total was derived from a group of other individual accounts.

Mr. Bennett asked when would be a "justified" time to consider using the Reserve Fund.

The Town Manager, Mr. Coggsdale, answered stating the (rainy day) Reserve Fund was considered the town's "last resort" as a revenue source. He stated using the funds would only be considered if the town had an event happen to cause "major loss of revenue".

Mr. Bennett asked, when the town ends a fiscal year with a "surplus" in funds, are those funds added to the "rainy day fund".

Mr. Coggsdale stated it would depend on what the town's policy stated regarding the matter. He stated, if the "maximum" amount of funds allowed by Town Policy were already in the account, any surplus the town had would not be added to the account.

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Mr. Bennett also asked, if an emergency situation arose and the funds were considered needed, how much of the funds could be used at one time or in one year.

Mr. Coggsdale stated it would depend on the circumstance and the amount of funds allowed for use would need to be appropriated by Council.

Mr. Bennett stated he felt a town's Fiscal Policy was very important to a locality, by allowing the document to set a precedent for the town's future financial process.

Mr. Bennett shared his concern with Council of trying to make any decisions regarding the draft Fiscal Policy in such a short period of time. He suggested Council hold a "retreat" to review the draft policy in more detail.

Mayor Mattox shared his favor with Mr. Bennett's suggestion of a retreat to further discuss and consider the draft Fiscal Policy. He asked for Council's thoughts on the matter.

All Council members were in consensus to do so.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager to schedule a Town Council Retreat for further discussion of the draft Fiscal Policy for the Town of Altavista.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would evaluate and determine the best opportunity for Council to meet and hold a retreat. He stated he would also investigate the best available options for speakers in regards to the retreat's fiscal policy subject.

Mr. George referenced the town's "rainy day" fund previously mentioned and asked the Town Manager how much money was currently in that account.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that staff refers to the "rainy day funds" as the town's "Policy Money/Account". He stated, as of March 31st, 2020, the account had a balance of approximately \$3.4 million that were funds "undesignated" to any town expense or project.

Mr. Higginbotham also shared his favor with Mr. Bennett's suggestion of a Council Retreat to further review the draft Fiscal Policy for Altavista.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the Town of Altavista had worked hard at maintaining a manageable budget over the years. He stated the town should always strive to keep a fund balance that would sustain the town if they ever lost one of their prominent industries.

Mrs. Dalton stated reviewing the draft Fiscal Policy was a "grand exercise" and Council would not be taking it lightly. She shared her favor in an extra work session or a Council Retreat to further review and consider the draft policy.

Mrs. Dalton referenced the upcoming fiscal year's CIP and the fact the town would be using some of its Reserve Fund/Policy Money to bridge the gap between the proposed CIP projects, the town's revenue, and the funds to be borrowed for those projects.

Mrs. Dalton stated she felt, by the town having to use reserve funds for this purpose, Council would be looking at the town's Fiscal Policy with a different point of view.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager to remind Council how the town's General Fund and Expenditure Fund are related to Town Policy.

The Town Manager, Mr. Coggsdale, briefly explained how revenue and expenses effect the town's budget, and ultimately, the town's Reserve Fund/Policy Account.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions or comments regarding this item, to which there were none.

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6. New and Unfinished Items for Discussion

a. Avoca Roof Leak – Quote Consideration and Fund Request

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council of Mike Hudson, Avoca Museum's Executive Director, recently notifying staff of a roof leak he discovered at the Avoca facility.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, after evaluating the situation, Mr. Hudson promptly solicited "quotes" from four area roofing contractors and three (3) responses were received. He stated the Avoca Board had approved awarding the roof repair project to the lowest received quote of \$12,000, from Sean Campbell Custom Exteriors.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, in addition, Mr. Hudson had also informed staff of a smaller project that recently occurred at the Avoca facility, repairing two architectural features (pigeon perches) on the Avoca Visitor Center, at a cost of \$1,700.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the Avoca Museum Board has requested Mr. Hudson to seek approval from Town Council to use a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the former EMS building to pay for replacing the damaged portion of Avoca's roof, as well as the previous "pigeon perch repair project". Both projects total \$13,700.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council there are funds totaling \$200,000 from the sale of the former EMS building that have been earmarked in "reserves" for maintenance of the Avoca Museum.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or comments regarding the request by the Avoca Museum's Board.

Mr. Higginbotham referenced the Avoca Board's decision to award the roof repair project to the lowest bid received. He stated the "lowest bid/quote" does not always offer the best quality of workmanship.

Mr. Higginbotham suggested Town Council authorize the Avoca Board to award the roof repair project at their discretion, not having to use the lowest bidder if another bidder was more qualified for the project.

Mr. Eller reminded Council that Avoca chose to solicit multiple bids instead of investigating who would be the most qualified for the project and only requesting a quote from that contractor. He stated all four contractors asked to bid the project were considered "highly recommended", so Avoca would need to have reasonable criteria as to why they wouldn't choose the lowest bid/quote.

Mr. Higginbotham stated he felt Avoca should have the leeway to use "facts and reputation" as a guideline to award the roof repair project.

Mr. Emerson referenced the proceeds acquired from selling the former Altavista EMS building. He reminded Council of their previous approval to allocate those funds for maintenance and/or CIP projects for the Avoca Museum facility/property.

Mr. Emerson shared his favor in approving Avoca's request.

Mrs. Dalton asked why a "copper" roof was chosen over a standard metal roof.

Mr. Higginbotham stated copper was the highest quality of roofing material available for this type of project and would last an estimated 100 years or more.

Mayor Mattox asked, since the Avoca Museum is a town-owned facility, why the town's Public Works Department was not involved in this project.

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Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that Mr. Garrett, Altavista's Public Works Director, had been consulted on the Avoca roof repair project.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions or concerns regarding the request by the Avoca Museum's Board, to which there were none.

All Council members were in consensus regarding Avoca's Roof Repair Project:

- Allow the Avoca Board to award the project to a contractor of their choosing.
- Allow Avoca to use a portion of the proceeds from the EMS sale to fund the roof project.
- Allow Avoca to use a portion of the proceeds from the EMS sale to pay for a previous project consisting of repairs to the Avoca Visitor Center (pigeon perches).
- Place this item/request on Council's May 12th Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for formal "approval".

b. AOT/Town of Altavista Draft Agreement

The Town Manager, Mr. Coggsdale, reminded Council of their request for staff to work on an agreement that would set forth the relationship between Altavista On Track (AOT), the Town's Main Street Program, and the Town of Altavista.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the intent of the agreement was to formalize the relationship between Altavista On Track and the Town of Altavista, and to provide a mechanism for annual evaluation of the program and its work plan.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council an initial draft agreement had been submitted to Town Staff by AOT and staff had provided input to the draft agreement.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, accordingly, Town Staff had presented the draft agreement to Council for their review. He stated, at that time, staff was seeking input and/or direction from Council before returning the draft agreement to the AOT Board for one final review.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if AOT makes any additional changes, staff would present the proposed changes to Town Council for final review and approval consideration.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions regarding this item.

Mr. Bennett stated he looked over the draft agreement and felt the document was in order. He stated he was in favor of moving forward in the agreement process.

There were no additional comments from Council.

Mayor Mattox questioned why the draft agreement did not require AOT to have a certain "percentage" of the Downtown District's businesses represented on AOT's Board of Directors.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council the draft agreement does state that Altavista On Track would establish a goal of 50% for having Downtown District representation.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt there should be a larger number of "stakeholders" (business owners, property owners, and downtown employees) on the AOT Board, in order to have an accurate portrayal and feedback of what is needed in that area.

Mr. Emerson stated he felt the percentage/number of stakeholders on the AOT Board would ultimately be determined by their willingness to participate. He stated there had not been many to do so in the past.

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Mayor Mattox recommended Council consider requiring AOT to visit each business, organization, and property owner currently in the Downtown District to offer them a place on the AOT Board and encourage their participation in AOT monthly meetings. He stated this should be done each time a new business comes to the Downtown District.

Mayor Mattox stated, by actively participating in the AOT organization, it would mean additional representation and a stronger presence for a business or property owner in the Town of Altavista and throughout the community.

Mr. Bennett stated, by offering a business or property owner the opportunity to be an AOT Board Member, it encourages them to be a part of shaping their on future.

All Council members were in consensus to accept the Mayor's recommendation.

Mayor Mattox again referenced the draft agreement between Altavista On Track and the Town of Altavista in regards to the agreement's mention of the organization's Annual Work Plan. He stated the agreement only mentioned AOT having "goals" for their Annual Work Plan, but he felt AOT should have "measurable" goals and/or plans to hold them accountable.

Mr. Higginbotham agreed the AOT organization should have "measurable" goals and/or plans.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if a goal or plan was too broad/vague, it would be hard to measure. He stated the draft agreement mentions a requirement for the AOT organization to hold at least one meeting "annually", where all Altavista Downtown District Businesses are invited to attend. He stated the "measureable" aspect of that requirement would be how many businesses were represented by participation.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt one of Altavista On Track's main priorities should be economic development. He stated helping the town fill empty buildings with businesses should be an item for measurable accountability.

Mr. Coggsdale stated "economic development" was a part of AOT's Annual Work Plan in the draft agreement.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions or comments regarding this item, to which there were none.

All Council members were in consensus to amend the draft agreement to require Altavista On Track and the Main Street Program to have measurable goals/plans.

All Council members were in consensus to send the amended draft agreement to AOT for their final review in order to move forward with the agreement process.

c. SOL Smart Designation Process Update

Mr. Coggsdale stated, per Council's direction, staff has been working on obtaining the criteria the Town of Altavista is required to have in order to apply for a SOL Smart "Bronze" Designation.

Mr. Coggsdale stated George Sandridge, Administration/Policy Development Intern, had been diligently working with Town Staff to move this process forward.

Mr. Coggsdale shared with Council a recent memo he received from Mr. Sandridge pertaining to the status of this project:

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DATE: April 24th, 2020

FROM: George Sandridge – Administration/Policy Development Intern

TO: Altavista Town Council

CC: Waverly Coggsdale, III – Town Manager

RE: Update on Altavista's SolSmart Designation

Background:

In February 2020, the Town Manager directed staff to explore in depth the SolSmart application and designation process. The past two months has consisted of staff researching the applicability of solar in the Town and the best way to proceed. In addition, staff has met with the Campbell County Building Inspection office to gain insight on the permitting process. Below is a brief summary of the application process and where Altavista stands currently.

Application Process:

To receive a designation of Bronze from SolSmart, a locality must earn at least 60 points. Out of those points, 40 must come from the Permitting and Planning, Zoning, and Development categories. The final 20 points can be earned from the six remaining "special focus" categories: Inspections, Construction Codes, Solar Rights, Utility Engagement, Community Engagement, and Market Development/Finance. Once all required points are earned, Altavista will be ready to submit for designation. This process will take between 2-4 weeks. Due to the recent events surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak, the timeline for applying to SolSmart has shifted.

Currently, the Town has satisfied all requirements under the Permitting category. The Special Focus category is also complete, and the required information just needs to be published on the website. However, the Planning & Zoning category is currently causing the delay. To satisfy that category, staff must present the memo described in PZD-1a to the Planning Commission or relevant zoning body. Since the April Planning Commission meeting was canceled, staff was unable to fulfill this requirement. Staff is consulting with SolSmart officials to see if presenting the memo to Town Council will satisfy this requirement.

Points Summary

Below is a summary of how the Town has earned or will earn the required number of points. Unless denoted with an asterisk, the following steps have already been performed:

Permitting:

- P-1: Post an online checklist detailing the required permits, submittals, and steps of your community's solar PV permitting process – Required*
- P-4: Require no more than one application form for a residential rooftop solar PV system – 5 points*
- P-5a: Conduct a review of solar permit fees for residential and commercial solar PV and compile findings in a memo – 5 points*
- P-5b: Demonstrate residential permit fees for solar PV are \$400 or less – 5 points*
- P-5c: Demonstrate that commercial permit fees are based on cost-recovery and capped at a reasonable level so fees do not become a net revenue source – 5 points*

Planning, Zoning, and Development:

- PZD-1a: Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development and compile findings in a memo – Required*
- PZD-1b: Formally present PZD-1a memo findings to planning commission or relevant zoning body – 5 points**
- PZD-4: Provide clear guidance for solar PV on historic properties and in special overlay districts – 10 points**
- PZD-10a: Ensure that the zoning ordinance permits small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use in at least one zoning district – 5 points*

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- *PZD-11: Post an online factsheet that provides an overview of what zoning allows for solar PV under what conditions (e.g., types and sizes of solar arrays permitted, the processes required, and other relevant information – 5 points**

Special Focus

- *SR-1: Post an online summary of state policies related to a property owner's solar access and solar rights, including links to state-level policy – 5 points**
- *SR-2: Post consumer protection resources on solar PV online – 5 points**
- *CE-1: Create a solar landing page on local government's website with information on the community's solar goals and local resources for solar development – 10 points**
- *MDF-1: Provide online resources on active solar installers and/or local incentives for solar PV – 5 points**
- *MDF-2: Make solar PV metrics publicly available – 5 points**
- *MDF-3: Provide information to consumers about different residential and commercial solar PV financing options – 5 points**

Mr. Sandridge gave Council a brief update on the status of the pre-application process and how far along the town is in the designation process.

Mr. Sandridge referenced the category in “delay”, Planning and Zoning. He stated, due to COVID-19, the April 2020 Altavista Planning Commission Meeting had been canceled and staff was unable to fulfill a requirement for this category.

Mr. Sandridge stated Town Staff had consulted with SolSmart officials for direction regarding this matter and received confirmation that presenting the memo to Town Council that evening would satisfy the requirement.

Mr. Sandridge also referenced the points category “Special Focus”. He informed Council that staff was currently working on obtaining the final 20 points needed, in this category, of the 60 points required to submit the designation application.

Mr. Sandridge stated he was currently focusing on the town's website to include a link to solar options, resources, installers, and state policies regarding this matter.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions regarding this item.

Mr. Bennett asked how much longer the process would take before the town could submit their application for SolSmart's Bronze Designation.

Mr. Sandridge stated he felt confident the town would be ready to submit their designation application within the next two weeks.

Mr. Bennett asked Mr. Sandridge, now being familiar with the designation process, did he think the town would be able to increase their status to “Silver” in the future.

Mr. Sandridge stated, with Campbell County's willingness to help, he felt the town would have no problem in moving to the next level of designation.

Mayor Mattox stated, when a source is placed on Altavista's website, it means the town is confident in that source. He asked Mr. Sandridge how the solar “installers” would be vetted before being placed on the Town of Altavista's website.

Mr. Sandridge informed Council any installers placed on the town's website (solar link) would be taken from a list vetted by the Department of Energy.

There were no additional questions from Council on this item.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Sandridge for the update on the town's SolSmart designation application and its status in the process. He also thanked Town Staff for their work on this project as well.

d. FY2020 BPOL Abatement Discussion/Consideration

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council of the Mayor's recent request to place this matter on the agenda for Council's discussion and consideration.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, with the 2020 BPOL Fee deadline of May 1st quickly approaching, staff was asked to evaluate the impact an abatement of the first \$500 of the BPOL Tax for each town business would have on the Town of Altavista's revenue. He stated the effort would be intended to assist local businesses during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the length of the COVID-19 pandemic was unknown at this time. He stated, accordingly, it was staff's responsibility to evaluate the impact the pandemic may potentially have on the town's revenue sources and current budget.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if the impact was substantial, Town Council may need to consider utilizing the town's "reserve funds" to help maintain a balanced budget.

Mayor Mattox asked Mrs. Shelton, Altavista's Finance Director, if there had been a significant decrease in the town's recent Meals Tax Revenue due to COVID-19.

Mrs. Shelton reminded Council the COVID-19 pandemic started in mid-March. She stated, each month, the town collects Meals Tax from town business according to their revenue from the previous month.

Mrs. Shelton stated the town was currently collecting Meals Tax from the month of March, and there had only been a "slight" decrease from the previous month.

Mrs. Shelton stated she felt the greatest impact would show in May, when the town collects the April Meals Tax. She stated the month of April had been subjected to the most financial impact, and potential decrease, up to that point.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or concerns regarding this item.

Mr. George referenced one of Council's decisions a couple of years ago to assist businesses with annual BPOL Taxes, the introduction of a "Cigarette Tax". He stated the following year the introduction of the Cigarette Tax helped reduce the amount of BPOL Tax due from local businesses by fifty percent.

Mr. George also reminded Council of their previous discussion to consider removing the existing annual BPOL Tax, to be replaced by a set dollar amount. He stated he felt the idea would be a good "economic development tool" for the Town of Altavista, and he would be in favor of continuing that discussion further.

Mr. George, at that time, shared his favor with the Mayor's suggestion to offer all town business a BPOL Tax Relief of their "first" five hundred dollars (\$500) owed.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council the BPOL Tax was based off of a business's total revenue intake, not their profits. He stated for some businesses, that is a big hit to their overall profit margins.

Mr. Bennett asked if all town businesses paid a BPOL Tax.

Mrs. Shelton answered stating industries do not, but they have an annual Machinery & Tools Tax they pay instead.

Mr. Higginbotham suggested waiting until the May 20th deadline for Meals Tax, for observation of the potential revenue impact/loss, before making a decision regarding the suggested BPOL Tax abatement.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council chooses to wait until the Meals Tax deadline before making a decision on the BPOL abatement suggestion, Council would need to consider, and accordingly vote on, extending the deadline for the BPOL Tax. He stated currently the tax was due by May 1, 2020.

Mr. Emerson stated it was uncertain at that time how long the COVID-19 pandemic would be invasive to local revenue sources. He shared his favor in approving the BPOL Tax abatement.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions, comments, or concerns regarding this matter, to which there were none.

Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. George, motioned to approve an abatement for the first \$500 due by an Altavista Business for their CY2020 BPOL Tax.

Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	No
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes

e. VA WARN Membership Consideration

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council of Mr. Tom Fore's, Director of Public Utilities, recent request for Town Council to consider allowing the Town of Altavista to become a partner in the Virginia Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (VA WARN).

Mr. Coggsdale shared with Council a description of VA WARN and information relative to VA WARN's mission that staff gleaned from their website:

What is VA WARN?

"Virginia Water/Wastewater (Systems) Aid Response Network" for Virginia.

The Mission:

The mission of the Virginia Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (VA WARN) is to provide a method whereby Virginia water and wastewater utilities that have sustained damages from natural or manmade events could obtain emergency assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials and other associated services as necessary from other water and wastewater utilities. The objective is to provide rapid, short term deployment of emergency services to restore the critical operations of the impacted utility. Following the impacts of Hurricane Katrina, it became apparent that even with the extraordinary efforts of utilities, water associations, and state regulatory agencies, the demand for resources and knowing where those resources were available overwhelmed the ability to effectively coordinate the initial response.

The Virginia Section of the American Water Works Association (VA AWWA) and the Virginia Water Environment Association (VWEA) have joined together to support and be an advocate for the Virginia Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (VA WARN).

The Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA) is structured to facilitate rapid emergency response between, and among, VA WARN Member Utilities. Having a signed MAA already in place, and on file prior to an emergency, can greatly facilitate planning and prioritizing by other Utilities responding to a/your request for help in time of need.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated Mr. Fore was present to answer any questions Council may have regarding this subject/item.

Mr. Fore referenced the information shared with Council regarding the description of VA WARN and its mission. He stated it would not cost the town anything to become a member of the VA WARN “Aid Response Network”.

Mayor Mattox shared his favor in approving Mr. Fore’s request.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions regarding this item.

Mr. Higginbotham asked Mr. Fore if there was any reason not to join the VA WARN network.

Mr. Fore answered Mr. Higginbotham stating he did not see any viable reason. He stated he felt Altavista being a member of VA WARN would be an asset to the Utilities Department and to the town and recommended doing so.

There were no additional questions from Council regarding this item.

Mr. Higginbotham, seconded by Mr. Emerson, motioned to accept Mr. Fore’s recommendation and approve staff to move forward with the process for the Town of Altavista to become a member of the Virginia Water/Wastewater Systems (Utilities) Mutual Aid Response Network for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes

f. Utility Payment Extension and Cut-Off Day Consideration

Mr. Coggsdale referenced the current “Stay At Home” Order, mandated by the Governor of Virginia, through June 10, 2020. He stated, to ensure all Altavista residents are able to continue to practice good hygiene, by washing their hands with soap and water, to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Town Staff had requested Council’s consideration of suspending the May 5, 2020 disconnection deadline for water services, as well as the accompanied late fees.

Mr. Coggsdale stated staff was recommending an extension deadline for payments of Friday, June 12th, with a new cut-off date of Monday, June 15th.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that staff was scheduled to mail out “late notices” that week. He stated staff would be encouraging utility customers to still make every effort to keep their accounts current during this period, and to use payment methods other than visiting Town Hall in person.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the Town of Altavista offers its residents multiple means of payment methods for their convenience, such as mailing their payments, placing a payment in the Town Hall “drop box”, or making a payment on-line.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding this item, to which there were none.

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Mr. Higginbotham, seconded by Mr. Emerson, motioned to approve staff's request as presented. The action approved the extension of the current utility payment deadline to Friday June 12, 2020, with a cut-off day of Monday June 15th for non-payment. Also approved, no late fees to be implemented during this period.

Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes

7. Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items)

There were no town citizens present at the April 28th Council Work Session.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager if there had been any questions or concerns submitted by citizens through phone calls or emails to Council, to which there were none.

8. Matters from Council

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions, comments, or concerns.

- Mr. Higginbotham asked the Town Manager, Mr. Coggsdale, if the Town of Altavista's current policy stated that "all" town employees were eligible to be "randomly" drug tested.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council the issue/subject had been addressed the previous year and the town's current policy does state "any/all" town employees are subject to random drug testing.

- Mr. Higginbotham asked why the town's park playgrounds were not open with limited access, such as stores are currently doing due to COVID-19.

Mr. Coggsdale answered Mr. Higginbotham stating the town's playgrounds were still closed for safety reasons. He stated it would be impossible for staff to keep up with sanitizing the playground equipment between the use of every child.

- Mr. Emerson made a reference to "signage", or the lack of, for some of the town's park trails. He specifically referenced the new trail that connects Westwood Drive (at Greenhill Cemetery) to English Park.

Mr. Emerson stated he felt the new trail was less known by town citizens due to the lack of signage for the new trail system.

Mr. Emerson stated he remembered a previous discussion by Council for consideration of the type/style of sign to be used for the new trail, and potentially for updating all signs in town's park and trail systems, to also include "mile markers".

Mr. Emerson asked for an update from staff on this matter.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that staff was continuing to work on this project and had planned to be presenting Council with sign options for their consideration soon, but the process was taking longer than anticipated.

There were no further comments or concerns from Council.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Fore to close the open portion of the meeting in prayer.

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9. Closed Session

CLOSED SESSION

DATE: Tuesday April 28th, 2020

I move that the Altavista Town Council convene in closed session in accordance with the provisions set out in the *Code of Virginia*, 1950, as amended,

Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3) regarding discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

A motion was made by Councilman Higginbotham, and seconded by Councilman Emerson.
Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes

Council went into Closed Session at 6:10 P.M.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 6:37 P.M.

FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilman Emerson, seconded by Councilman Bennett, to adopt the certification of a closed meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the town council has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the town council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the town council hereby certifies, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the town council.

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes

Mrs. Dalton did not return to regular session with Council.

10. Adjournment

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

Mayor Mattox thanked the Town Manager and Town Staff for their hard work for the Town of Altavista and the community during the COVID-19 public crisis pandemic.

Mayor Mattox adjourned the meeting at 6:38 P.M.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk