

Council Work Session May 26, 2020

The Altavista Town Council's May 2020 Work Session was held in Council Chambers at the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on May 26, 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
Mr. Reginald Bennett
Mr. Tracy Emerson
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham
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 that number six (#6) of the agenda had been amended to include item 6h., AEDA Request for a Joint Meeting with Town Council.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the proposed May 26, 2020 Council Work Session Agenda, to which there were none.

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

Motion carried:

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

3. Recognitions and Presentations

There were no recognitions or presentations scheduled for Council's May Work Session.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Tom Fore to give an invocation for the meeting, to which he did.

Mayor Mattox thanked the Town Manager, APD Chief Merricks, and Town Staff for the collective efforts and work they contributed to the safety of Altavista during the recent flood event.

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 had been none.

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5. Items Referred from Previous Meetings

a. FY2021 Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Mr. Coggsdale asked Town Council to consider the allotted time for this item as an opportunity for Council to provide any last minute direction to staff regarding the FY2021 Budget and/or FY2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the proposed budget and CIP would be on their June 9th agenda for consideration of adoption/approval.

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

Mr. Higginbotham asked the Town Manager for an update on the estimated impact to the town's revenue, from both Sales Tax and Meals Tax, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council that Sales Tax Revenue is received each month from a business's sales collected two months prior to the tax due date. He stated the full effect of COVID-19's impact to Sales Tax Revenue would not be known until possibly July.

Mr. Coggsdale, confirmed by Mrs. Shelton (Town Finance Director), stated that Meals Tax is collected each month for the previous month of business. He stated the town had just received April's Meals Tax (due by May 20th). He continued stating the total COVID-19 impact to the town's Meals Tax revenue would not be known for a couple more months.

Mayor Mattox asked staff to update Council on this matter before the scheduled adoption date for the proposed FY2021 Budget.

Mr. Coggsdale agreed to do so when all data is available.

Mr. Bennett stated his favor in Mr. Higginbotham's request for an update on the town's FY2020 Budget before adopting the proposed FY2021 Budget on June 9th. He stated the update should include any impact COVID-19 may have had on the town's budget resources (such as Sales and Meals Tax) in the past couple of months.

There were no additional comments from Council on this matter.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council that Altavista's large industries are currently working/operating under a normal schedule. He stated, even though some businesses in town are not working full-time hours, most of them are operating at some capacity.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt the Town of Altavista was a very "resilient" community and would find a way to make it through this unprecedented pandemic event (COVID-19).

All Council members were in consensus to move forward and place this item on the June 9th Council Meeting Agenda for further consideration and subsequently adoption approval.

6. New and Unfinished Items for Discussion

a. Booker Building Re-use Proposals

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Town Council, at the January 28, 2020 Work Session, they reached a "consensus" to allow staff to conduct certain actions; one of which was to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) regarding interest for additional uses of the Booker Building. He stated this action was in hopes of receiving new ideas and/or partnership opportunities for the town to consider when finalizing the facility's potential "uses" moving forward.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the RFP was issued with a submission due date of Friday, May 15th. He informed Council there were no official proposals submitted/received.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated, secondly, Town Council provided additional direction to the Town Manager regarding the Booker Building. He stated Council asked the Town Manager to gather cost and design information pertaining to the proposed Shade Sail Project, which would be located behind the Booker Building, in the space adjacent to the exterior stage.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Town Staff reported back to Council with information for their consideration relative to a 120' x 38' shade structure, with a quoted price of \$75,179.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, thirdly, was Council's request for staff to obtain proposals by engineering firms providing cost estimates for the items identified in the LPDA Booker Building Use Feasibility Study (provided to Council at an earlier date) as needing improvements.

Mr. Coggsdale referenced the February 25th Council Work Session, when staff presented Council with the engineer proposals for their review and consideration. He stated, after some discussion, Council decided to ask the Town Manager to contact a local contractor to acquire cost estimates for the floor, interior/exterior stages, and bathroom improvements. He stated the task had been completed and the report was presented to Council at their April 7th Council Work Session (continued from the March work session).

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at the April 7th work session, Council decided to invite Mr. Billings, of Point Source Audio, Inc., to give a presentation at the April 14th regular meeting regarding possible audio/visual improvements that could be associated with the facility being used as a multi-purpose "event and performing arts" venue. He stated the estimates could be utilized by Council as a budget number should Council opt to pursue this path.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, in addition, Town Council recently requested staff to inquire with USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) as to whether a feasibility grant for the Booker Building was available. He stated staff checked with the USDA and was informed the earliest the Town of Altavista could apply for the grant would be in spring of 2021.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at that time, staff was seeking guidance and direction from Town Council as to the "next step" in determining (1) the ultimate use of the Booker Building, and (2) the desired improvements to the building they wanted implemented first.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or comments pertaining to this matter.

Mr. Mitchell shared his desire in the Booker Building becoming a "Town Square" for the Altavista community. He stated he felt, if the building was updated, it would be used more often than it is now.

Mr. Mitchell stated, no matter what the Booker Building is used for, he felt the facility needed HVAC, updated bathrooms, and the interior floor improved/renovated.

Mr. Emerson stated, with the 2020 Uncle Billy's Day being canceled, he felt the town could wait on addressing "shade structures" for the back area of the Booker Building.

Mr. Emerson shared his favor in moving forward with improvements the facility is definitely in need of, such as bathroom upgrades, HVAC, and renovating the interior floor. He agreed with Councilman Mitchell that the facility would be used more often if updated.

Mr. Higginbotham suggested Council first decide how much money the town will be spending on each "phase" of improvements. He shared his favor in starting the renovation process with the interior floor, which would not affect, but improve any use of the facility.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the lowest cost option for renovating the Booker Building floor was also the option that offered the least amount of future maintenance.

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Mr. Higginbotham referenced the facility's bathrooms. He stated, while they were in need of being updated, they were still in operating order, so the town could choose to wait on renovating them until a later date if necessary, possibly in "Phase II" of renovations.

Mr. Higginbotham also referenced the exterior stage of the Booker Building. He stated pouring concrete to fix the exterior stage issue would be relatively inexpensive, but with large gatherings currently at a halt (due to COVID-19) the project/improvement could also wait until further along in the facility's intended renovations.

Mr. George shared his favor in the presented "two Phase" process. He stated he would like to see this project moved forward with the implementation of Phase I, and the addition of HVAC to the facility.

Booker Building Improvements – Phase I (estimates)	
Interior Floor	\$27,445 - 47,476
Bathrooms	\$55,419
Exterior – Stage	\$28,000
<u>Exterior - Shade Structure</u>	<u>\$76,000</u>
Total Estimate for Phase I	\$186,864 - \$206,895
<i>(total price depends on floor option selected)</i>	

Booker Building Improvements – Phase II (estimates)	
Audio/Stage Upgrades – interior	\$72,980 - 87,537
Acoustic Treatment – interior	\$33,260 – 45,180
Lighting – interior	\$15,270
<u>Outdoor PA system – rear exterior</u>	<u>\$172,922</u>
Total Estimate for Phase II	\$481,296 – \$527,804
<i>(Phase II may involve a "redesign", which would involve relocating the bathrooms)</i>	

Mr. George asked if the "shade structure" mentioned in Phase I was for a permanent structure, or were the sails removable as the other, similar shade sails in town.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the shade structure quoted in Phase I of the proposed improvements was for a permanent frame, with removable sails. He stated the sails in other locations of town were removed before each winter to preserve their appearance and longevity.

Mr. Bennett shared his belief in the proposed "shade structure" being an important part of the Phase I improvements. He stated, because of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, more and more families were engaging in outdoor activities. He stated he felt the shade structure would be utilized, not only during the annual Uncle Billy's Day Festival, but all throughout the year, for such events as music concerts, art exhibits, etc.

Mayor Mattox suggested Council have a definite "vision" realized for how the Booker Building would be utilized moving forward, before committing to spend funds for any proposed improvements.

Mayor Mattox referenced the USDA Grant, mentioned earlier in the meeting, the town could apply for in spring of 2021. He stated his favor in waiting for the completed study, which would help determine whether or not a use, such as a "music venue" (similar to the Harvester in Rocky Mount), would be financially feasible for the Town of Altavista to pursue for its community.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any final thoughts or comments on this matter.

The overall consensus of Council was to move this project forward by implementing the most minimal improvements options that would not impose on any future decided use(s).

Mr. Mitchell stated he felt all Council members had a vision for the Booker Building, however, the group as a whole did not agree on which vision/use to settle on.

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Mr. Mitchell suggested Council allow staff to form a “committee” of appropriate members to bring forth to Council a report of viable information that would support the possibility of a “music venue” being a potential use of the Booker Building. He stated the proposed committee could inquire from the community whether or not such a use of the facility would be well received.

Mr. Mitchell stated, hopefully, the additional information would help move the project forward and offer Council a direct path to pursue if the vision/use was deemed feasible for the town.

Mr. Mitchell referenced the recent LPDA Study Council approved and received. He stated he felt waiting for the spring 2021 USDA Grant to perform another feasibility study was a waste of time.

Mr. Mitchell shared with Council his favor in setting a “timeframe/deadline” for Council to make a final decision regarding the use(s) of the Booker Building moving forward.

Mr. Emerson referenced Altavista’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He reminded Council the Booker Building facility was mentioned in the plan as being “high priority” for needing updates/renovations.

Mr. Emerson also reminded Council of wedding venues in the area and how much they cost compared to renting the Booker Building. He stated the Booker Building facility was a better economic choice for multiple other events, which the facility was currently being utilized for, but he felt it would be used even more if updated.

Mr. Emerson stated, while Council continues to work through the process of deciding on the facility’s “best use(s)”, the interior floor could be fixed/renovated, and would not jeopardize any idea for future uses.

Mayor Mattox stated he did not agree the bathrooms need to be renovated any time soon, but rather to wait on that portion of the project in case the bathrooms needed to be moved to a different location inside the facility because of a possible use decision.

Mr. Emerson made a motion to move forward with renovating the Booker Building’s interior floor.

Mayor Mattox asked for thoughts from Council regarding the motion.

Mr. Higginbotham stated, if he had to pick one improvement to start the process of renovating the Booker Building, it would be fixing/refurbishing the interior floor.

Mr. George stated he was also in favor of starting the process with renovating the floor.

Mr. George also shared his favor with moving the exterior “shade sail project” forward. He stated installing a shade structure would not hinder any future use of the building, but would act as an asset for the Booker Building facility and English Park.

Mr. Bennett shared his support with moving forward with the shade structure project.

Mrs. Dalton asked the Town Manager where the money to fund the two proposed Booker Building projects (bathroom updates and floor renovation) would come from.

The Town Manager, Mr. Coggsdale, reminded Council there were no funds allocated in the FY2021 Budget for improvements to the Booker Building.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council approved an improvement to be implemented, the town would have to, either remove a project to make room for the proposed Booker Building project, or pull funds from the town’s Reserve Fund to cover the cost of this project.

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Mr. Mitchell referenced the previously approved “Booker Building Exterior Painting Project” currently in the FY2021 Budget/CIP. He stated, since there had been no definite decision regarding the ultimate “use” of the Booker Building, and the building was not in dire need of painting, he suggested Council keep that project in mind if there became a need to remove a project from the FY2021 Budget in order to make room for the recently proposed Booker Building floor renovation.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council there was a “motion” open regarding renovating the Booker Building interior floor. He stated Council could continue the discussion pertaining to “shade structures” after the current motion was concluded.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council, when voting on the proposed floor renovation, Council decide which renovation “option” to move forward with. He stated there had been four (4) proposed options given to Council for consideration; ranging from \$27,445-\$47,476.

Mr. Emerson, seconded by Mr. Higginbotham, motioned to allow Town Staff to move forward with a request for RFP’s regarding renovation of the Booker Building interior floor. He stated the approval was for “Option 1” (costing \$27,445) of the proposed four.

Motion carried:

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

Mayor Mattox stated finding funds for this project could be discussed during a later meeting. He stated he was hopeful the fiscal year 2020 would end in a “surplus” and those funds could be utilized to help cover the cost of this project.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would place this funding discussion on a future agenda, after the end of the current fiscal year (2020). He stated the later date would give Town Staff a better idea of whether or not the town would potentially have a surplus of funds available to help assist in funding the Booker Building Floor Renovation Project.

Mrs. Dalton reminded Council of a previous discussion they had regarding placing items/projects on a CIP list in the “spare of the moment”. She suggested Council stick to their original premise of placing an item in the Budget/CIP when funds were available, not at the last minute, which forces Council and staff to “find” funding for those projects.

There were no additional comments from Council regarding this matter.

At that time, Mayor Mattox resumed the discussion regarding whether or not to move forward with adding a shade structure/sails to the rear exterior of the Booker Building.

Mr. George, seconded by Mr. Bennett, made a motion to approve the town moving forward with adding a shade structure to the rear grass area of the Booker Building.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions or comments regarding this matter.

Mr. Mitchell shared his concern with the “cost verses the need” for this project.

Mr. Mitchell stated he felt this item needed to be evaluated and discussed further before Council makes a final decision on the matter.

Mr. Emerson stated he was not opposed to adding a shade structure to the park area behind the Booker Building, but stated he did agree with Mr. Higginbotham that the structure needed to be permanent, not the proposed “shade sail” option.

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Mr. Emerson referenced the \$76,000 cost estimated for the proposed shade sails. He stated he felt a permanent structure would, not only require less maintenance, but it could potentially have a lower cost, therefore making it a better investment for the town.

Mr. Emerson stated he would like staff to research additional options, including permanent structures and their cost, for Council to consider and discuss further at a later date.

Mrs. Dalton also shared her favor in this project being discussed further at a later date.

Mrs. Dalton stated, taking into considering a “financial aspect”, she liked the idea of Council allowing Town Staff time to evaluate the potential impact the current COVID-19 pandemic may have on the town’s revenue resources, before possibly adding another item/project to the proposed FY2021 Budget/CIP.

Mr. Higginbotham stated, with the uncertainty of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the town’s revenue, he reiterated his favor in postponing the shade structure project until another time best suited to move forward.

Mr. George stated he was not certain a “permanent structure” would be less costly than the proposed shade sail option, but he would support Council allowing staff to investigate additional shade options for this project, including permanent ones, and the cost of each.

Mr. Bennett stated he would not be opposed to waiting to discuss this project further, when staff had more options available to share with Council for consideration.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council there was a “motion” open. He asked Mr. George, after discussing the matter further, did he still intend to keep the motion active.

Mr. George withdrew his motion, in favor of discussing this item further at a later date.

Since Mr. Bennett seconded Mr. George’s original motion, Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Bennett if he concurred with the withdrawal of that motion, to which he did.

Mr. Coggsdale asked Council, regarding the additional shade options they requested, was there a specific guideline, in reference to size, he needed to stay within.

Mr. Emerson suggested not having the shade structure any larger than the exterior stage of the Booker Building. He stated his favor in a permanent structure with the same color metal roof as the Booker Building, for a more visually pleasing aesthetic.

Mrs. Dalton suggested, if any Council member sees a structure they think would be a viable option for this project, take a picture of the structure and send it to the Town Manager.

Mrs. Dalton referenced the “tent option” previously mentioned by the Mayor. She suggested Council consider allowing Town Staff to rent a tent for a weekend. She stated this would give Council cost information for consideration of this option, while offering staff the opportunity to evaluate the task of setting up and taking down a large tent.

Mr. Bennett stated, if it was the town’s intent to only have a “shade structure” for use during Uncle Billy’s Day, then he would understand choosing the tent option, but he felt a permanent shade structure would be utilized by the community all year.

Mr. Mitchell stated the “shade structure project” was being considered for the rear of the Booker Building as an asset to that property. He reminded Council the town’s annual Uncle Billy’s Day Festival was the responsibility of the Altavista Chamber of Commerce, so renting a tent for that event should not be considered as part of Booker Building project.

There were no further comments from Council regarding this item.

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b. AOT/Town of Altavista Letter of Agreement

The Town Manager, Waverly Coggsdale, reminded Council of Town Staff providing them with a draft agreement, at their April 28, 2020 Work Session, regarding Altavista On Track's and the Town of Altavista's mutual relationship to Town Council.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council the agreement was a draft provided by Altavista On Track (AOT), and revised by Town Staff. He stated it was based on examples of existing agreements used by the Department of Housing and Community Development (the state agency that oversees the AOT/Virginia Main Street program).

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at the April 28th Work Session, Council requested the agreement be revised to include "measurable goals" for AOT; also to include a process by which AOT would engage each business located in Altavista's Downtown District about being involved with the organization and offering them the opportunity to serve on the board.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Town Staff had sought additional input from the AOT Board and the item was placed on AOT's May meeting agenda for review of Council's revisions.

Mr. Coggsdale shared with Council a memo he received from AOT detailing their most recent proposed changes to the document. He stated, at that time, Town Staff was seeking input and direction from Council regarding AOT's recently proposed changes and any final thoughts they had pertaining to the matter/agreement.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the Main Street Coordinator position is currently a town funded position and the individual was considered part of the town's personnel system.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the Draft AOT/Town Agreement and/or any of the revisions recently proposed by AOT.

Mr. Mitchell shared his concern with how the new agreement may affect Council's expectations of AOT and their responsibility to the town regarding economic development. He reminded Council that AOT is "limited" to the downtown district.

Mr. Mitchell stated there were several things that could come into play when determining whether or not AOT fulfills their required duties/obligations as outlined in the agreement as "measurable goals". He stated the current COVID-19 pandemic is one of those things.

Mr. Mitchell stated he would hate to see this agreement, if not done correctly, contribute to Altavista On Track being deemed as not being a valuable organization for the town. He stated he felt AOT was an asset to the Town of Altavista, with such attributes as community events and bringing grants to downtown businesses.

Mr. Mitchell also questioned the current "hourly breakdown" in salary of the AOT Director/Main Street Coordinator's position. He asked, since the responsibility was currently being handled by other Town Staff, would the new Main Street Coordinator still have the duty of maintaining the town's website and social media page.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the previous Main Street Coordinator was responsible for those duties due to AOT wanting the position to be "full-time". He stated the position was then broken down into AOT functions (28) and town functions (12) accordingly.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, whether or not the AOT position's salary division remained the same would ultimately be the decision/policy of Council.

Mayor Mattox referenced Council's recent approval to continue its funding support of Altavista On Track. He stated he felt the AOT/Town Agreement was an important part of continuing that relationship.

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Mayor Mattox also referenced the organization's current need to fill the vacant AOT Director/Main Street Coordinator position. He stated, since the individual in this position would be holding town events and visiting local businesses to maintain good "public relations" in the Town of Altavista, he felt the position should be occupied by a citizen of the town/local community.

Mr. Bennett referenced the draft agreement between the Town of Altavista and Altavista On Track. He stated the agreement was decided upon in order to hold AOT "accountable" for its duties and responsibilities to the town.

Mr. Bennett stated, as Council's Ex Officio with the current AOT Board, he felt the organization had a good group of board members that were innovative in thinking and had great ideas for the Town of Altavista moving forward.

Mr. Bennett stated the Town of Altavista needed to work harder at increasing the town's industry and economic growth. He stated he felt it was not only AOT's and The Chamber of Commerce's responsibility, but also Council's responsibility to work together to build a stronger town and community. He encouraged Council to strive to find new and/or better ways to make that happen.

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

Mrs. Dalton suggested the item be considered further at a "regular" meeting.

All Council members were in consensus to place this item on the June 9th Regular Council Meeting Agenda for further discussion and consideration.

c. Town Financial Matters

The Town Manager informed Council that Mrs. Shelton, Altavista's Finance Director, would be addressing Council in regards to these two items.

i. FY2020 Budget Amendments:

Mrs. Shelton referenced a list of budget amendments approved by Council during the 2020 fiscal year. She reminded Council that staff needed to complete the required paperwork for the budget amendments to be finalized.

Mrs. Shelton stated, at that time, staff was recommending this item be placed on the June 9th Consent Agenda in order to complete the approval process of the fore mentioned budget amendments.

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

Mr. Higginbotham, seconded by Vice-Mayor Dalton, motioned to accept staff's recommendation and approve the placement of the fiscal year 2020 budget amendments on the June 9th Council Meeting Consent Agenda for final approval.

Motion carried:

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

ii. Delinquent Utility Account Write-offs

Mrs. Shelton reminded Town Council that each year staff presents Council with a request to write-off delinquent utility accounts (accounts that are five years old or older) or an account were the account holder is deceased.

Mrs. Shelton informed Council that this year there were a total of eighteen (18) accounts totaling \$1,597.92. She stated, at that time, Town Staff was asking for Council's consideration to allow them to write-off these account and adjust the town's financial records accordingly.

Mrs. Shelton stated, if Council accepted, staff recommended placing this item on the June 9th Consent Agenda for final approval.

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

Mr. Higginbotham, seconded by Mrs. Dalton, motioned to accept staff's recommendation and approve the placement of the specified delinquent accounts on the June 9th Council Meeting Consent Agenda.

Motion carried:

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

d. Parks and Recreation – Bridge Projects

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council that Town Staff had been working with Hurt & Proffitt to evaluate bridge projects in the town's two community parks, Shreve and English.

i. Shreve Park:

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the improvement project for Shreve Park was included in the FY2020 Budget and CIP, with replacement of the existing playground equipment (\$125,000) and installation of a new bridge (\$50,000).

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that the playground equipment replacement portion of this project had been completed and a balance of \$42,500 remains under the playground equipment line item in the budget.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, while the primary use of the new bridge at Shreve Park would be for pedestrians, it would be an asset to also have it accommodate town vehicles for maintenance purposes.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that several different bridge/culvert types were reviewed by Hurt & Proffitt for this project, and the estimated costs range from \$81,380 to \$138,800.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if the balance from the playground project and the allocated bridge funding were combined, a total of \$92,500 would be available for this project.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council that this is an existing, previously approved, project. He stated staff recommended moving this project forward by Council selecting a "bridge type" for this location. He stated, if Council approved, staff would seek "bids/quotes" for completion of this project, based on the \$92,500 of available funds.

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

Mr. Emerson asked the Town Manager, Waverly Coggsdale, when the work on the two bridge projects were due to be completed.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Shreve Park was part of a Park Renovation Project, with funds allocated in the FY2020 Budget/CIP for new playground equipment and a new bridge.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the bridge connecting the small field to the large field located in the “English Trails” area of the park is a CIP line item in the proposed FY2021 Budget.

Mayor Mattox asked why the pedestrian bridge at Shreve Park was being replaced.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the current bridge was not ADA user friendly, as it winds back and forth across the creek.

Mr. Bennett stated he visits Shreve Park periodically and he felt the existing pedestrian bridge was in “rough shape” and in desperate need of replacing.

Mr. Higginbotham asked the Town Manager if it was staff’s intent to have the new bridge also be accessible to vehicles.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, since the town is responsible for mowing the park, it was staff’s desire that the new bridge be accessible to their maintenance vehicles.

Mr. Bennett asked, if a pedestrian/vehicle bridge was approved, would the vehicle portion of the bridge be prohibited to everyone except town maintenance vehicles.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if approved, it would be staff’s intent to regulate the vehicle side of the bridge to be accessible only to town vehicles and EMS response vehicles.

Mr. Emerson referenced the original bridge that offered access to Shreve Park over the creek from the Trade Lot Parking area. He stated the original bridge was two culvert pipes with concrete poured over them to form a road access. He stated he felt the original version of the bridge would still be sufficient access into the park.

Mr. Coggsdale stated a culvert bridge had been listed as an option by Hurt & Proffitt.

Mayor Mattox asked how much a culvert bridge would cost.

Mr. Coggsdale stated a culvert bridge was the least costly of the offered options, with an estimated cost of \$81,000.

Mayor Mattox asked for clarification of why a “vehicle” bridge was being considered.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the thought process behind having a vehicle bridge option was, if the town was already needing to replace the existing (pedestrian) bridge, to consider including an option allowing town maintenance and emergency vehicles the ability to enter the park without having to drive through the creek to do so.

Mr. Coggsdale stated it was ultimately Council’s decision of whether or not to have the park access bridge be pedestrian only, or to also include vehicle access.

Mr. Higginbotham stated he felt Shreve Park’s existing “wood” bridge was, not only an asset for access to the park, but it also carried an aesthetic value. He shared his favor in replacing the existing (pedestrian) wood bridge with something similar, but updating it to make it ADA compatible.

Mr. Higginbotham stated he did not feel the limited use by EMS and town vehicles was justification enough for the town to spend almost \$100,000 to include vehicle access for Shreve Park’s new replacement bridge.

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Mayor Mattox agreed with Mr. Higginbotham. He shared his favor in replacing Shreve Park's existing pedestrian bridge with a new "wooden" bridge with ADA accessibility.

Mr. Emerson suggested moving the new bridge back to its original location (over the "make-shift road" crossing the creek – a few feet from the existing bridge).

Mr. Higginbotham suggested Council allow the Town Manager to investigate additional pedestrian bridge options that are wood or wood decked.

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

Mr. Higginbotham suggested Council also allow the Town Manager to consult with a local contractor with bridge building experience for additional insight on the Shreve Park Bridge Project.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council desired, he would be glad to do so.

All Council members were in consensus to allow the Town Manager to investigate additional options regarding the replacement for Shreve Park's access bridge. The additional options are to be pedestrian (in order for Council to compare them to the list of vehicle options they already have); the bridge options are to be wood or wood decked, to be ADA compatible, and all to include bridge specifications wide enough to drive a town mower across it for maintenance purposes.

ii. English Park-Passive Trails:

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council this was a "proposed" project included in the FY2021 Proposed Budget and CIP. He stated it is a project for the development of passive trails, off the existing paved trail, in the passive section of the park.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the proposed funding for this project is \$150,000 with the remaining balance of the Jenk's Fund (\$12,490) being allocated, and the balance coming from the General Fund.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the proposed bridge would connect the small field to a larger field, both of which would feature mown trails. He stated, in addition, a culvert would be planned to create access from the large field to the existing trail that could also be utilized by maintenance vehicles (i.e. repairs, mowing, etc.).

Mr. Coggsdale stated several different bridge types were reviewed by Hurt & Proffitt as possible options for this project, with estimated costs ranging from \$89,300 to \$142,430 for the connection between the small and large field, however, costs for the culvert were still being finalized.

Mr. Eller, Town Attorney and Executor of the Jenks Estate, referenced the town's "Jenks Fund" (a fund specifically designated for use on projects in the back area of English Park known as English Trails). He informed Council there would be an estimated \$20,000 being added to the Jenks Fund in the near future.

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

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the town could use a culvert pipe to join the two fields.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the location of the proposed bridge involved a deep ravine that would be best resolved by the use of a bridge to connect the two fields.

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the proposed bridge would be allowing vehicle traffic.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated the bridge proposed to join the small and large field in the rear area of English Park would be for pedestrians only.

There were no additional comments or questions from Council regarding this item.

e. Town Hall Access/Security CIP Project

Mr. Coggsdale referenced the Town Hall's Security Project previously approved by Council as a CIP item in FY2018 & FY2019. He reminded Council Phase I (FY2018) included improvements to the lobby's front counter for security purposes.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the current item was Phase II (FY2019) of the original two-phase project, but the project had been delayed for various reasons over the past couple of years.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, in addition, the Altavista Police Department (APD) had a renovation project (FY2019 CIP) that has been completed in the past two fiscal years, with the final component being access control for their portion of the building.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council that funds are earmarked in "reserves" for this project. He stated, based on Council's past approval of this project to be included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Town Staff recommends moving forward and awarding the project to the "lowest bidder".

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager if he felt additional security was needed at the Town Hall.

Mr. Coggsdale referenced a previous discussion between Council and staff regarding "advancements" to Town Hall Security. He stated, with a safety glass being added to the front counter in 2018, this would be the next step in security improvements.

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

Mr. Higginbotham asked if the proposed security access "key" would be implemented to all twenty-eight doors of the Town Hall or just the exterior entrances to the facility.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, currently, Town Hall employees, including the APD, have to carry multiple keys to access entry doors and different "sets" of office doors in the Town Hall.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council, by having the proposed security access system in place, it would allow all Town Hall employees to only need one "key fob" to access their designated areas (approved by Administration) within the municipal building.

Mayor Mattox asked if a key fob would be specific to each employee.

Mr. Coggsdale stated each Town Hall/APD employee would receive a key fob specific to that individual. He stated Town Administration would be able to program the key fobs for specific areas designated to that individual's approved access.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the security system would allow Town Administration the ability to "track" entry/exit for each Town Hall area.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the system would also benefit Administration when employees leave Town Hall/APD employment. He stated there would be no worry about getting keys back from the ex-employee, but rather their key fob would be deactivated and ready for reuse.

Mr. Emerson referenced his employer, Campbell County Sheriff's Department, having the same security system. He stated he felt the security system was an asset to a locality.

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

All Council members were in consensus to approve Town Staff's request to move forward with implementing the proposed security system, which was Phase II of the previously approved APD/Town Hall Security Upgrade/Improvement Project in the FY2020 CIP.

f. Town Property (Dearing Ford Business Park) – Mowing Substitute Proposal Follow-up

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council of their request for staff to evaluate the feasibility of “cutting the fields” by Town Staff, versus the cost of allowing a local farmer to prep, plant, and harvest hay from the site.

Mr. Coggsdale stated there was approximately 16 acres of the site that could be utilized for hay. He shared with Council the cost estimated by a local farmer for this proposal:

- Prep: Cut the fields as close as you can to the ground, spray the fields to kill the vegetation, come back and do a “no till” to re-seed with fescue, and fertilize and lime the fields.
- Cost estimated: \$1,200.00 to \$1,500.00 per acre
 - 16 Acres @ \$1,200.00 = \$19,200.00
 - 16 Acres @ \$1,500.00 = \$24,000.00

Mr. Coggsdale also shared with Council the cost staff estimated for Town Staff to mow the Dearing Ford Road property:

- In-house: Cut the 17 acres twice a year - \$1,000 annually
- Outsourced: Bush hog twice a year - \$3,400 annually

Mr. Coggsdale stated, based on the cost to prep and plant the field versus the town's cost to mow the field, the “break-even” point would be between 19 – 24 years at current rates.

Mr. Coggsdale stated it was staff's recommendation to allow Altavista's Public Works Department (Town Staff) to provide the mowing for this site. He stated, if Council approved, the item would be added to Public Works existing schedule for town-owned property maintenance items.

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

Mr. Higginbotham asked, in regards to the consideration of using the property for hay, if staff had asked the local farmer to estimate the cost for only mowing the hay without having to reseed the property.

Mayor Mattox stated the Public Works Director, David Garrett, confirmed there was only “broom straw” currently in the fields of the Dearing Ford Business Park. He stated the property would have to be prepped and seeded for hay to be used as proposed.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the concern was the possibility of losing money if someone came into the business park after the fields had been planted. He stated the effort would then be costly to the town or the local farmer, whichever planted the hay.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council he had requested this cost comparison. He stated the Public Works Department has requested to hire two new employees in their proposed FY2021 Budget. He stated the justification for their request was due to additional “mowing” projects being added to their maintenance schedule.

Mr. Mitchell asked why the conversation had changed from “mowing options for the Dearing Ford Road Business Park” to Public Works' request for new employees.

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Mayor Mattox referenced the fact that the Dearing Ford Business Park was only scheduled to be cut twice per year. He answered Mr. Mitchell stating, he had asked for further details regarding the “additional mowing projects recently added to Public Works”, in order to clarify the justification of Public Works’ employee(s) request.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the Public Works’ request for two new employees was not only for mowing the fields of the Dearing Ford Road property. He stated the Altavista’s Public Works Department had several items added to its maintenance list recently, such as the English Park Splash Pad area.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Mr. Garrett, Public Works Director, was present to answer any questions Council may have regarding his request.

Mayor Mattox thanked the Town Manager and staff for investigating his request for the mowing cost comparison. He stated he would talk to Mr. Garrett at a later time regarding this matter, so the meeting could continue with the item being discussed.

The Town Manager stated, when it comes to information requests by Council, “if you don’t ask, you don’t know”. He stated he was happy to investigate any requests Council may have, in order to help them make an informative decision regarding agenda items.

There were no additional comments from Council regarding this agenda item.

g. Altavista Police Department – Surplus Request

Mr. Coggsdale shared with Council information relative to town property the Altavista Police Department (APD) would like to declare as “surplus”.

Mr. Coggsdale stated it was staff’s recommendation to declare the APD list of property as surplus. He stated any funds from the sale of surplus property is recorded as revenue in the appropriate fund.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or concerns regarding APD’s surplus request, to which there were none.

Mr. Higginbotham suggested the item be placed on the June 9th consent agenda.

All Council members were in consensus to place this request/item on the June 9, 2020 Town Council Regular Meeting Consent Agenda.

Mr. Coggsdale stated it was his intent to establish a process for when Town Staff would approach Town Council regarding surplus items. He suggested twice a year, at Council’s September and March Work Sessions, for this purpose in the future.

All Council members were in favor of the proposed schedule.

h. AEDA Request for a Joint Meeting with Town Council

The Town Manager, Waverly Coggsdale, informed Council of a recent request by Bill Gillespie, Chairman of the Altavista Economic Development Authority (AEDA), to have a joint meeting with Town Council.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at their recent board meeting, AEDA board members felt the two entities needed to meet and discuss Altavista’s AEDA Strategic Plan. He stated it was the AEDA’s intent to evaluate the current focus of the town and whether or not any changes needed to be made to the current focus and/or plans moving forward.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Mr. Gillespie had requested he place the request on that evenings agenda for Council’s consideration of a joint meeting with the AEDA.

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Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager, if Council approved, could the requested joint meeting be placed on the June 23rd Work Session Agenda.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, since this would be considered a “joint meeting” that may last up to an hour, he suggested Council consider allowing staff to schedule the joint meeting at a separate time from any other Council meeting.

All Council members were in consensus to have a separate “work session” for the requested joint meeting with the AEDA. Council was also in consensus for the fore-mentioned meeting to begin at 5:00 P.M. on a specified day within the next month (June).

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would consult with AEDA’s board members regarding a preferred date and inform Council of when the meeting will be scheduled.

Mayor Mattox referenced a previous request by Council for consideration to schedule a meeting for them to further discuss Town Reserves and Town Financial Policies.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council desired, staff could schedule that meeting as well. He suggested, because the subject matter may make for a “lengthy” discussion, Council may also want to consider conducting the meeting as a separate or extended work session.

All Council members were in consensus to do so.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would evaluate the possibility of adding the subject as an agenda item to Council’s June Work Session, with an extended timeframe placed before the meeting.

7. Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items)

There were no town citizens present at the May 26th Council Work Session.

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

8. Matters from Council

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

- Mr. Emerson asked when the trail system at English Park would be reopened to the public.

Mr. Coggsdale, confirmed by Mr. Garrett, Public Works Director, informed Council the English Park Trails were reopened to the public as of that morning, May 26th.

- Mr. George referenced the new commercial business, as part of the Rage Plastics Cooperation, opening another factory at the old Klopman Mills location site in Hurt, Va., just across the river from Altavista. He asked staff if Altavista (specifically the old Lane property) had been considered for the business.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the possibility had been discussed during a conversation he had last year with the company’s site manager and Mike Davidson, Campbell County Economic Development Director.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the determining factor, for Altavista not receiving the mentioned business, was due to “rail” access (railroad), or lack of, at any of Altavista’s potential property options for the businesses desired locations. He stated, the former Klopman Mills location already had railroad access required by the business.

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There were no further comments or concerns from Council.

Mayor Mattox thanked all members of the community for continuing to look out for one another. He stated he looked forward to the time when citizens were, once again, able to attend Council meetings in person.

9. Closed Session

DATE: Tuesday May 26th, 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 Vice-Mayor Dalton, and seconded by Councilman Emerson.

Motion carried.

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

Council went into Closed Session at 6:45 P.M.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session at 7:56 P.M.

FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Dalton, seconded by Councilman Emerson, 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. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes

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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 7:57 P.M.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk