

Council Work Session November 24, 2020

The Altavista Town Council's November 2020 Work Session was held in Council Chambers at the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on November 24, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Agenda

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

Council members

Present: Mayor Michael Mattox
Vice-Mayor Beverley Dalton
Mr. Reginald Bennett
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Jay Higginbotham
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Absent: Mr. Tracy Emerson

Also Present: Mr. J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Town Manager
Ms. Amanda Owens, Assistant Town Manager
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Treasurer/Finance Director
Mr. Thomas Merricks, Altavista Police Chief
Mr. Tom Fore, Altavista Public Utilities Director
Mr. David Garrett, Altavista Public Works Director
Ms. Sharon Williams, Community Development Director
Mr. George Sandridge, Community Development Intern
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Town Administration – by video

2. Agenda Adoption

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the proposed November 24, 2020 Council Work Session Agenda, to which there were none.

Councilman George made a motion, seconded by Councilman Mitchell, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	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 presentations at the November 24th, 2020 Council 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.

Mayor Mattox encouraged town citizens to reach out to Town Council or Town Staff anytime they have questions or concerns regarding the town.

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Items Referred from Previous Meetings

5. Altavista Utilities Department - Melinda Drive HPZ Rebid
Public Utilities Director Tom Fore

Background:

Town Council, at their June 9, 2020 regular meeting, rejected the (one) bid received for the Melinda HPZ Improvements Project and adopted Town Staff's recommendation to consider rebidding the project in 6 to 8 months. The delay would provide an opportunity to get more bidders interested in the project; and hopefully provide some distance from the uncertainty in the market due to the pandemic.

Utilities Director Tom Fore gave Council a brief update on this item/project.

Mr. Fore stated, in preparation for consideration of a rebid of the project, Woodard & Curran was encouraging the town to:

1. Allow for alternate footprint dimensions of the building to satisfy manufacturer standard prefabricated building forms. These will need to be proposed by the contractor with their bid and the town would define an acceptable range of deviation from the dimensions shown on the plans.

2. Consider HDPE as an alternate material of construction for the water main and services. Woodard & Curran would need the town's approval of this material in the distribution system before making any edits to the drawings.

Mr. Fore stated it was staff's recommendation to allow Woodard & Curran to revise and reproduce the bidding documents and rebid this project with their suggestions. He stated the request included utilizing \$8,500 from the current borrowing to revise and reproduce the bidding documents and rebid the project.

Mr. Fore stated he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have in regard to this item/request.

Councilman George asked if the intent of using HDPE was to realign rather than digging up sidewalks.

Mr. Fore stated the proposed bid document revision would provide a contractor with the option to use HDPE as an alternate material, which allows the pipe to be "bored" rather than digging up an entire area.

Councilman Higginbotham asked how much rock was in the project area.

Mr. Fore stated there was little cause for concern with this project in regard to rock. He stated there were sewer lines in the same area and the Utilities Department had replaced that line in the past without complications.

Mr. Higginbotham stated the price for "boring" rather than digging was more cost efficient, to which Mr. Fore agreed.

Councilman Mitchell thanked Mr. Fore for his hard work and due diligence on this project.

There were no additional questions from Council in regard to this item.

There was a unanimous consent of Council to approve the recommendation of Woodard & Curran to revise this project's bid documents and rebid the project; to provide the funds requested; and to place this item on the December 8, 2020 Town Council Consent Agenda.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Fore for the good job he does for the Town of Altavista.

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New Items for Discussion

6. FY2022 Altavista Community Transit System (ACTS) – Budget/CIP
Altavista Town Treasurer/Finance Director Tobie Shelton

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, while Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens was still in training to oversee the ACTS Department, Town Treasurer Tobie Shelton would be addressing Town Council that evening in regard to this item/request.

Mrs. Shelton reminded Council that Town Staff applies annually for a grant through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), for funding of the Altavista Community Transit System (ACTS).

Mrs. Shelton stated this item was being presented at that time due to the DRPT grant application's deadline of February 1, 2021.

Mrs. Shelton provided Council with the proposed FY2022 ACTS Budget and CIP for their approval and authorization to apply for the FY2022 grant funds.

Mrs. Shelton reminded Council that ACTS Operations was typically funded with 50% Federal Funds, 15% State funds, and 35% Town funds. She stated the ACTS CIP funding was budgeted as 80% Federal/State and 20% Town funds. She shared with Council the details of ACTS' operation costs, as well as the CIP costs.

At that time, Mrs. Shelton gave Council a brief review of ACTS FY2020 operations. She stated, as of December 2020, Altavista's Community Transit System would have been in operation for ten calendar years/nine fiscal years.

Mrs. Shelton informed Council the ACTS ridership was almost 17,000 for FY2020, which averaged to 55 riders per day. She stated, although the amount of riders decreased from the previous year, the decrease could be attributed to the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Mrs. Shelton stated, with the decrease in ridership not being a substantial amount, she felt it strengthened the importance that ACTS continued to be a needed public service for the Altavista community.

Mrs. Shelton continued her ACTS review by informing Council that Town Staff had work with Connetics Transportation Group to update ACTS 5 year Comprehensive Plan, which was approved/adopted by Council at their July 14th regular meeting.

Mrs. Shelton stated, although 2020 had been a year of disruptions due to COVID-19, the Altavista Community Transit System adhered to the required safety guidelines and continued to operate.

Mrs. Shelton thanked the ACTS drivers and acknowledged each by name: Carlton Francis, Tony Hines, Alvis "Buddy" Carr, Darlene Hubbard, Eddie Pittmon, and Mike Wolfe.

Mrs. Shelton stated Town Staff was requesting \$128,425 for ACTS' FY2022 Budget and \$25,000 for the FY2022 ACTS CIP (Capital Improvement Program).

Mrs. Shelton stated, with the old fire station (where ACTS buses were previously housed) now being converted into the town's new Innovation Center/Co-worker Space, ACTS' FY2022 CIP was for a new shelter to house the ACTS buses on Public Works property.

Mrs. Shelton stated, at that time, Town Staff was requesting this item be placed on the December 8th Consent Agenda for approval of the proposed ACTS FY2022 Budget and authorization for Town Staff to apply for the DRPT Grant for ACTS funding.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to this item/request.

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Councilman Mitchell referenced the slight decrease in bus ridership (revenue). He asked if there was any change or difference in the proposed budget from the previous year.

Mrs. Shelton stated the ACTS Budget remained about the same, and the ACTS CIP was lower than in FY2021, due to the purchase of a “trolley” being in that fiscal year.

Mrs. Shelton reminded Council the purchase of the fore-mentioned trolley had been placed on hold due to circumstances pertaining to COVID-19. She stated, as of the previous week, the process of procurement for the trolley has been “ok’d” to move forward.

Councilman Higginbotham asked for a description of the garage proposed to house the ACTS buses/trolley.

Mrs. Shelton stated, as discussed with Public Works Director, the \$25,000 CIP item would include a concrete slab floor with a metal cover structure (no sides).

There were no additional questions from Council in regard to this item.

There was a unanimous consent of Council to approve staff’s request and to place this item on the December 8, 2020 Consent Agenda for approval as presented.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale referenced Councilman Mitchell’s question regarding the difference between last ACTS FY2021 adopted budget and the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. He informed Council the ACTS FY2022 proposed operations budget was \$1,300 lower than the previous fiscal year.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would like to take the opportunity that evening to thank Mrs. Shelton for filling in as the ACTS coordinator (a job role initially held by the previous Assistant Town Manager).

Mr. Coggsdale stated Mrs. Shelton was currently training the new Assistant Town Manager, Amie Owens, for the role as ACTS Coordinator. He stated he was confident Ms. Owens would do a good job and he felt the transition would go smoothly.

7. Utilities Department – Sewer Reimbursement Policy Consideration Request

Altavista Public Utilities Director Tom Fore addressed Council in regard to this item.

Mr. Fore stated Town Staff had determined a need for a “Reimbursement Policy” for town citizens that call a plumber due to a sewer blockage that has occurred, particularly on nights and/or weekends, when they do not call the town.

Mr. Fore stated most plumbers, when they find the blockage and it appears to be on the town side of the sewer system, would call the town’s Utility Supervisor, and the Utility Supervisor would determine whose responsible for the blockage.

Mr. Fore continued stating, if the responsibility was determined to be the town, the Utility Supervisor would take over the project at that point.

Mr. Fore stated the situation does not happen often, but the proposed reimbursement policy would address the plumber’s charge incurred by the homeowner if determined the issue was the town’s responsibility.

Mr. Fore stated the Utilities Department was requesting permission to move forward with developing and implementing the proposed (sewer issue) reimbursement policy.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or concerns in regard to this item.

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Councilman Mitchell stated his appreciation for Mr. Fore's hard work and his efforts in addressing this potential issue.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated she felt the policy was a thoughtful way to proceed.

Councilman Bennett stated he felt the policy would be another way for the Town of Altavista to show they care for their citizens.

There were no additional questions or comments from Council in regard to this item.

There was a unanimous consent of Council to approve staff's request and to place this item on the December 8, 2020 Consent Agenda for approval as presented.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Fore for due diligence in this matter and for the hard work he continues to do for the Town of Altavista and the community.

8. English Park Passive Area

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale reminded Council the FY2021 Budget/CIP included funding for a "Passive Trails" project in English Park. He stated the project consisted of several stream crossings to access the small and larger fields along the river, that run parallel to the paved walking trail (Eagle Trail).

Mr. Coggsdale shared with Council an overview map of the area for their visual reference.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the trail was designed to be a natural "mowed" trail. He reminded Council this project's budget of \$150,000 was approved in the adopted FY2021 Budget, with the bulk of the funding being Jenk's Estate proceeds. He shared with Council a breakdown of Jenk's funds and their (previous and projected) expenditures for the funds.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the pedestrian bridge would create a loop from the existing Eagle Trail to the new trail closer to the river and would connect the smaller and larger fields.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council there were three proposals received for the pedestrian bridge project.

	5' width	add for 6'	6' Width	
Bridge Brothers	\$22,966	\$3,500	\$26,466	Alum.
CONTECH Engineered Solutions	\$20,400	\$400	\$20,800	Steel
E.T. Tectonics	\$27,760	---	---	Fiberglass

Mr. Coggsdale stated that Town Staff was recommending the purchase of the 6' wide steel pedestrian bridge proposed by CONTECH Engineering Solutions.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, based on conversations with CONTECH, the town should plan for the installation cost to be equal to the bridge cost. He stated, included in that cost, would be "engineer stamped plans" of the bridge that would be used to receive quotes from local contractors to build the abutments and install the bridge.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Town Staff would like to allocate up to \$50,000 of the \$150,000 budget for this project, to the bridge purchase/installation cost and move forward with this portion of the project.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, in addition, Altavista Public Works would be installing two crossings, one as an entry/exit to the small field, and the other an entry/exist to the larger field, which would also serve as a maintenance entrance. He stated the pipe and stone base installations were projected at \$6,000 in material cost.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to this portion of the pedestrian bridge project.

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Councilman Bennett referenced the “steel” bridge proposed by CONTECH. He stated the picture shared with Council shows the bridge over time and the steel had turned a darker rust color. He asked if there would be any long-term maintenance requirements.

Mr. Coggsdale stated a steel bridge would turn a “patina” color over time. He stated, when that happens, the bridge could be painted if Council desired. He stated the choice of materials would be the preference of Council.

Mr. Bennett stated he liked the patina look of an old steel bridge, but suggested Council take that information into consideration when considering which material to choose for the pedestrian bridge project.

Councilman Mitchell also shared his favor with the patina look of an old steel bridge. He stated he felt it would coincide with the nearby old railroad trestle and its natural/trail surroundings.

Councilman George added to the information of the bridge quotes. He stated all three options included “pressure treated” pine decks/floors, to which Mr. Coggsdale confirmed.

Mr. Coggsdale stated all three options also included standard handrail heights. He stated all quotes were subject to the same criteria, such as minimum load and minimum width.

Councilman Mitchell asked for staff’s recommendation.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated Town Staff was recommending awarding the pedestrian bridge project to CONTECH Engineered Solutions, which was the lowest bid at \$20,800 for a 6’ wide steel bridge.

Councilman Mitchell made a motion to accept staff’s recommendation and authorize staff to award the pedestrian bridge project to CONTECH, with a “not to exceed” budget of \$50,000.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council that an item was not usually voted on at a work session unless the item was a time sensitive issue.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council desired, staff would place this item on the December 8th Regular Council Meeting Consent Agenda for approval.

All Council members were in consensus to place this matter (award of the Eagle/Passive Trail pedestrian bridge project) on the December 8, 2020 Consent Agenda.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, the next portion of this project pertained to the new “passive trail” that will go alongside the river and adjacent to Eagle Trail. He informed Council the Altavista Recreation Committee met on Tuesday, November 16th and recommended Town Council consider converting the proposed trail from a “mowed” trail to one with a stone surface.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the proposed trail was approximately 4,000’ in length. He stated there was also an alternate addition to the trail that would create a loop in the small field closer to the river, which was approximately 1,000’ in length. He stated both of the trails would provide just over one mile of additional trails to English Park.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the Altavista Recreation Committee recommends Town Council authorize staff to develop a bid packet for this item.

Mayor Mattox asked Altavista Public Works Director David Garrett if there would be a long-term cost savings for the town to convert the trail to gravel/stone.

Mr. Garrett stated there would not be much of a cost difference in the two options because Public Works would need to mow the sides of trail with either option.

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Mayor Mattox also asked, if Council chose the gravel option, would the town use true stone, or use “millings” (crushed asphalt) left over from town paving projects.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated the choice/decision would be up to Council.

Councilman George stated it was suggested by the Recreation Committee for the town to use leftover millings from the VDOT project at the north end of Main Street, but the town was unable to procure those millings.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the town has an annual paving program that would begin again in spring 2021. He stated there was a potential to utilize the millings from that program, but he was unsure if there would be enough to complete the passive trail in its entirety.

Councilman Higginbotham suggested to “cut out” the trail’s top soil 12 inches down, use crushed concrete for the base, then top the base with the fore-mentioned millings or stone. He stated, by doing the extra step in the trail’s initial process, would help ensure the trail would hold up over a longer period of time.

Councilman George suggested Council consider allowing Town Staff to acquire quotes from local contractors in regard to stone or milling the trail; for comparison to the cost of Altavista’s Public Works Department completing the work.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the pedestrian bridge project would not be ready for implementation for three to four months. He stated the extra time would allow, if Council desired, for staff to gather the additional information requested by Council.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt it would be helpful at that time for Council to offer Town Staff direction on how they wished to move forward with this project; if their desire was to have the passive trail stoned, use millings, or leave as a mowed trail.

Councilman Bennett suggested allowing staff to gather cost estimates for all three options.

All Council members present were in consensus to do so.

Mr. Coggsdale stated staff would gather additional details in regard to each option and a cost estimate for each to be presented to Council for consideration at their January work session.

9. Town Council Strategic Planning Session – Date Consideration

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale referenced Town Council’s previous decision to conduct a Strategic Planning Session every other year (following Town Council elections). He stated local governments use strategic planning as a tool to set goals, connect to stakeholders, track progress, and communicate results.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Council goals and objectives were the first phase of building a performance management system that links Town Council’s goals to Town Staff work plans; and communicates outcomes to the public.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at that time, staff was seeking Council’s input as to their desired timing of Council’s next Strategic Planning Session. He stated there was previous mentioned that the first quarter of 2021 would be an appropriate time to conduct a session.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the fore-mentioned timeframe would align with the seating of the new Council member, Scott Lowman; as well as, the ongoing FY2022 Budget process.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, in the past, a “professional”, which provides an unbiased and impartial leadership for the discussions, would facilitate Council’s Strategic Planning Sessions.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated there were several items Council needed to decide on, in order for staff to proceed with scheduling the planning session:

- Duration of the session (single day/multiple days/hours)
- Date(s) of the session
- Hiring of a facilitator
- Council's objectives for the session

Mr. Coggsdale stated there were funds in the amount of \$5,000 included/allocated in the FY2021 Adopted Budget for this item.

Mayor Mattox reminded Council of the importance to “prioritize” the town’s most needed items in order for them to be accomplished in the upcoming fiscal year or near future.

Councilman Mitchell referenced the last Council Strategic Planning Session, which was only a few weeks after he joined Town Council in 2019. He stated he felt the budget process could be overwhelming to new Council members.

Mr. Mitchell shared his favor with the planning sessions being scheduled either every calendar year, or non-Council member election years.

Mayor Mattox shared his favor in an “every year” schedule for Council Strategic Planning Sessions. He stated, by doing so, it allows Council to plan their current fiscal year CIP items, while also monitoring the progress of previous fiscal year items/projects. He stated he felt this was a more viable way to accomplish yearly goals.

Councilman Higginbotham agreed with Councilman Mitchell that Council Strategic Planning Sessions should not be the same year immediately after Council elections, in order to give new members time to get familiar with Council procedures and protocols.

Councilman George shared his favor in keeping an every-other-year schedule for Council Strategic Planning Sessions. He stated he did not feel it was necessary to hold them yearly.

Councilman Bennett stated he was in favor of an every year schedule for the planning sessions. He stated he felt two years was a long time and the yearly frequency would help keep everyone “in the loop” on the progress of ongoing projects sooner rather than later.

Mr. Bennett referenced the Booker Building Restoration Project. He stated he felt having an every year schedule for Council Strategic Planning Sessions would give Council a “sharper focus” with ongoing projects that needed to move forward and/or be completed.

Mayor Mattox asked newly elected Council Member Scott Lowman what his thoughts were on the matter of annual or biannual planning sessions.

Mr. Lowman stated he was in favor of an every year schedule, in order to review progress more often.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional comments or input in regard to scheduling for Council’s Strategic Planning Sessions; particularly whether or not they wished to schedule a session for spring 2021.

Vice-Mayor Dalton abstained from this discussion, as she was retiring from Council, effective December 31st, 2020.

All other attending Council members were in favor/consensus of scheduling the next Council Strategic Planning Session next spring (2021).

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager, pertaining to a specific date/month, how long he would need to schedule the planning session.

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Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, as there were seven Council members time to consider, the timeframe/date would depend on each Council member's availability.

Councilman Bennett suggested, if it was Council's desire to hold a planning session every year, it should be on the same date every year, in order to have consistency in the effort, and allow all Council members to prepare/plan for said date.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the earlier the date the better. He suggested March 2021 as the projected month, which would be in the early to mid-stages of the town's budget process. He stated dates and times could be determined closer to that time period.

Mayor Mattox suggested Council prioritize three to four potential CIP items before the planning session, in order to allow the facilitator of the meeting time to research the items.

All Council members attending were in consensus to do so.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated the facilitator should be a "skillful" moderator, as that individual was a valuable part of the planning session's process.

10. Seventh Street Property – retaining wall (issue)

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale addressed Council in regard to this item.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that the cinder block (not the poured concrete) portion of the retaining wall, located on the town lot/property at the corner of 7th Street and Campbell Avenue, collapsed during the most recent rain event. He shared with Council photos of the issue for their visual reference.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at that time, the town had not developed a "future use" for this site. He stated Town Staff was seeking direction from Town Council in regard to how they would like the back portion of the property shored up to prevent further collapse of the bank and/or damage to neighboring property.

Mr. Coggsdale stated staff wanted to be sure that any improvements made were in line with Council's future thoughts on uses for the property, and whether they should be temporary or permanent in nature.

Councilman George stated, since the concrete seemed to hold up well overtime, he suggested clearing the broken debris, backfilling the area, and re-pouring a concrete retaining wall.

Councilman Higginbotham asked Public Works Director David Garrett how tall was the retaining wall, to which Mr. Garrett answered 6-8 feet.

Mr. Higginbotham suggested rebuilding the retaining wall at 5' using a "VDOT spec".

Mr. Coggsdale stated the town had no future plans to develop a road behind the retaining wall, He stated staff would investigate whether a 5' retaining wall, with a slope, would be a viable option for repair and long term remedy.

Mr. George asked how close the town's property and the retaining was to the adjacent nearby house on the hill.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the neighboring house was approximately twenty feet away from the wall.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated it was the town's priority to do whatever it took to protect the neighboring house/property.

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Mayor Mattox asked if it would be a feasible solution to add a ditch behind the retaining wall to divert rain water runoff from the hill toward the road, and possibly help from causing any future damage.

Mr. Coggsdale stated there were “drain pipes” in the existing wall, but they did not seem to be working or they were unable to disburse such a large amount of rain.

Mr. Coggsdale stated staff would be glad to evaluate the situation further and bring Council back some viable options for Council’s consideration.

There was a consensus of Council for Town Staff to do so.

Mayor Mattox requested this matter be a priority for the town.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the town would proceed immediately with cleaning up the area and continue to move toward remedying the situation.

11. Town Code Ordinance Consideration - School Zone Cameras

Background:

Previously, Town Council agreed to proceed with the installation of School Zone Speed Cameras and enforcement in the Town of Altavista limits. Such actions were recently approved by the General Assembly and is set forth in the Code of Virginia §46.2-882.1.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale shared with Council a draft copy, prepared by Town Attorney John Eller, of the proposed Altavista Town Code amendment and new town ordinance pertaining to school zone speed cameras.

At that time, Altavista Police Chief Tommy Merricks addressed Council in regard to this item. He stated he and Attorney Eller would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to this item, to which there was none at that time.

Mayor Mattox asked Attorney Eller if he had any input he would like to offer Council.

Attorney Eller stated the proposed ordinance implements the approved speed camera program and fits with the contract the town negotiated with the speed camera company.

Attorney Eller referenced the existing Town Code regarding school zone speed limits. He stated he amended the code (74-92) so it did not contradict the new ordinance (74-92.1).

Attorney Eller informed Council they were not required to have a public hearing on this matter.

Councilman Higginbotham asked Attorney Eller what changes were made to Altavista’s Town Code in regard to this matter.

Attorney Eller stated ordinance 74-92 was an existing ordinance that he amended to show the \$100 civil penalty from violating school zone speed limits. He stated 74-92.1 was a new ordinance implementing the speed enforcement camera system/program and, if approved by Council, would be added to the Town Code.

Councilman George referenced the civil penalty under the speed camera program. He asked what dollar amount the penalty was.

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Chief Merricks stated the civil penalty would be a fine of \$100 if caught speeding in an Altavista school zone. He stated, since the violation was a civil penalty and not considered a “speeding ticket”, an individual would not have to go to court for the matter.

Mr. Higginbotham stated he did not have a draft copy of the 74-92.1 new ordinance.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would make sure each Council member had a copy of the draft ordinance before they left that evening.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they wished to place this item on Council’s December Regular Meeting Agenda allowing Council additional time to review the draft of the new ordinance (74-92.1) before voting on the item.

There was a consensus of Council to do so.

There were no additional questions or comments regarding this item.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, before moving forward with the agenda, he needed to go back to a previous agenda item.

Mr. Coggsdale referenced Agenda Item #10 – 7th Street Town Property. He informed Council of a request by the Altavista Recreation Committee to consider allowing Recreation Committee Member and AOT President Reverend Ed Soto to come before Council and present them with information in regard to the concept of a parklet for their consideration.

Mayor Mattox stated he did not feel the town was ready at that time to make decisions regarding a use for the 7th Street location.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the presentation would be for informational purposes only.

Councilman Mitchell stated, as a town citizen, Reverend Soto could come before Council at any meeting to offer the information for Council’s consideration.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, as Reverend Soto was a member of two town committees, AOT and the Recreation Committee, Reverend Soto felt, if approved, the two committees could work together on such a project.

Council was in consensus to place the request on the December regular meeting agenda, allowing Reverend Soto to offer a presentation in regard to the concept of a parklet.

Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items)

There were no town citizens present at the November 24th, 2020 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.

Updates/Information Items

12. Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated the information provided in this section was for the benefit of Town Council and to keep everyone informed. He stated, while no official action is needed, input and feedback was always welcomed.

- Abbott Waterline Project (conceptual): Tom Fore, Director of Public Utilities, continues to work with Abbott Nutrition in regard to a proposed water line project along Clarion Road. Abbott is currently reviewing a proposed agreement that would “memorialize” the project and set forth certain parameters of the project. A decision to move forward on this project could be as early as January 2021.

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- Altavista Police Department (APD) Vacancy/Hiring: Chief Merricks updated Town Council in regard to a recent vacancy in his department and how he plans to fill it.

Chief Merricks referenced the two cadets that were currently attending the police academy. He stated the two cadets were doing great and would graduate at the end of December 2020.

Chief Merricks informed Council he had sought certified applicants for the vacant position, but with limited success; however, a town resident, with previous law enforcement experience, had approached him in regard to the position.

Chief Merricks stated the individual seemed interested in getting back into the law enforcement field, but his certification had expired and he would need to go through the academy for training again in order to re-certify. He stated, at that time, the individual was no longer a candidate for the vacancy, because he was no longer interested.

Chief Merricks stated the next class at the Central Virginia Police Training Academy begins in January 2021. He stated he believed a town resident would be committed to the department and provide a local presence.

Chief Merricks requested Council's consideration to allow him to interview a couple of "local" candidates and potentially send one of them to the police academy.

Councilman Mitchell asked if his newly proposed candidate would be treated any differently than any other rookie that may have applied.

Chief Merricks stated they would not be treated any differently. He stated the only difference when hiring new employees was if they were a "certified officer", because they would not have to be sent to the academy.

Mr. Mitchell asked if the proposed position was in the current budget.

Chief Merricks stated the position (salary) was covered in the current budget, as the position would fill a vacancy. He stated there may be a cost above the budget in order to provide the new individual with their police uniform.

Mr. Mitchell suggested the APD add a contingency for this type of loss/vacancy in their future CIP/annual budget.

Chief Merricks stated Councilman Mitchell made a valid point and he would take the suggestion into consideration.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated Chief Merricks had used all avenues available to the APD to fill the vacancy, but when those efforts were not successful, they would not have any other choice but to do what Chief Merricks was requesting.

Mrs. Dalton stated she trusted Chief Merricks' expertise and his decision.

Councilman George asked how many officers the APD were needing at that time.

Chief Merricks stated the APD currently had one vacancy. He stated it felt like the department was missing "three" employees, as the two police academy cadets would not be ready to be on their own for at least nine weeks after they graduate.

Councilman Bennett suggested the police department/town should develop a program that might help create more interest with young people in becoming a police officer.

Chief Merricks referenced the Pittsylvania County Vocational Center. He stated the center has a law enforcement curriculum. He stated he wished Campbell County would develop such a program.

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Mr. Bennett asked if it was possible to develop such a program at VTI (Virginia Technical Institute), located in Altavista.

Mayor Mattox asked Chief Merricks to consider developing a program with Altavista High School senior students in regard to law enforcement.

Vice-Mayor Dalton asked if the three cadets Altavista sent to the police academy that did not stay with the department was because they felt “the grass was greener” somewhere else. (meaning the salary was not sufficient enough for them to stay)

Chief Merricks stated, with one of the three cadets, that was the case. He stated with the other two cadets, the reasons for leaving were “personal”, not financial.

Chief Merricks stated, since their pay increase the previous year, the Altavista Police Department was competitive with the salaries they offer new officers.

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Mitchell for a description regarding the program he previously mentioned pertaining to an incentive for college graduates to stay in town.

Councilman Mitchell stated the program was through the Virginia Tobacco Commission as a Grant/Loan Forgiveness Program. He stated the program was designed as an incentive for college students to return to their hometowns after graduating school – the loan was for remodeling homes.

Mayor Mattox stated the program could also be helpful for the police department.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated staff would look into the program.

Mayor Mattox thanked Chief Merricks and his department for the work they do every day for the Altavista community.

- English Park-Staunton River Bank Erosion: Altavista Community Development Director Sharon Williams has been coordinating this item with assistance from Altavista’s Public Works Director David Garrett.

Ms. Williams stated the erosion issue had been discussed by Town Council and the Recreation Committee for quite a while. She stated staff converted the issue into a “project”, in hopes to move the discussion forward and remedy the issue.

Ms. Williams shared an overview photo of the area for Council’s visual reference.

Ms. Williams informed Council that staff requested the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) visit the erosion site and offer suggestions and/or direction regarding the erosion issue.

Ms. Williams stated the DCR sent their Shoreline Engineer, Michael Vanlandingham, to meet with Mr. Garrett and the two reviewed the erosion site. She stated Mr. Vanlandingham compiled a report for Council’s review, which was in Council’s agenda packet for that evening.

Ms. Williams stated the town was currently working with Hurt & Proffit on three FY2021 CIP projects. She stated staff also asked for their input and potential concepts on this subject matter. She stated Hurt & Proffit recommended a two-part approach using Flexamat panels along with riprap revetment.

Mr. Williams stated, based on a rough estimate, the projected cost to fully tackle the erosion issue was estimated at \$1,438,000 to stabilize the entire river bank in that location.

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Ms. Williams informed Council, as of one week prior to that night's meeting, staff was made aware of a FEMA Grant that was available to assist in such projects. She stated the grant had a 75/25 cost share match requirement.

Ms. Williams stated, due to the short timeframe of the FEMA Grant, staff needed to move forward with submitting the town's grant application. She stated, if FEMA approved the town's application, it would leave a fund balance of approximately \$400,000 as the town's required match, with FEMA awarding the town \$1,000,000.

Ms. William stated, if the FEMA Grant was not approved, the town would need to look at alternate funding sources, or possibly scaling back the project's scope of work. She stated, as things progress, the project would need to be considered for a CIP item.

Ms. Williams stated, at that time, staff was requesting Council's input whether they felt staff was moving in their desired direction regarding funding sources, or any other aspect of this project.

Mayor Mattox asked Ms. Williams, during staff's recent conversations with the DCR's Shoreline Engineer, was there any indication of why the erosion issue was more prominent now than in the past.

Ms. Williams stated one of the main reasons the erosion issue worsened recently was from the excessive rainfall in the area over the past year. She stated, in July 2020, the town set a record number, 2.6 inches of rain, in one day.

Ms. Williams reminded Council of the large rain/storm event in spring 2020. She stated the storm caused multiple trees to fall and float down the river, which also attributed to any erosion issues along the river banks.

Ms. Williams referenced the culverts that VDOT installed when building the bridge that crosses the river at the lower end of English Park. she stated the culverts also contributed a small part in the river bank erosion in that area.

Mayor Mattox informed Council that he "floats" the river quite often and he has not seen a significant change in the river banks or any additional erosion lately.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated a river's currents were constantly in motion with ever-changing water levels. She stated those elements were part of a natural process and out of the town's control.

Mrs. Dalton stated, what the town could control, was how they tackled the river bank erosion issue effecting the town's park (English Park), in order to stop or decrease the erosion from becoming worse.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Council if they had any questions or comments in regard to this item.

Councilman George referenced the "five" major storms/rainfalls in 2020, specifically the two where the river exceeded the river bank and entered English Park. He stated the picnic area along the river bank had suffered damage/erosion causing the need to remove a few picnic tables from the area.

Mr. George stated he suggested the effected picnic area, as well as, the boat ramp area being a part of this project's process.

Councilman Mitchell referenced the "bridge culverts" previously mentioned by Ms. Williams. He suggested staff reach out to VDOT in regard to possibly assisting the town with a remedy for the erosion issue near the bridge, which was located next to the boat ramp.

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Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated staff would contact VDOT and inquire about the matter.

Mayor Mattox shared his favor with Councilman George's suggestion to prioritize the effected picnic area and boat ramp along the river bank in English Park.

Mayor Mattox referenced a comment made by DCR Shoreline Engineer Michael Vanlandingham:

"You should also be aware that success in shoreline erosion control cannot be guaranteed, as there are many variables involved. In this regard, we suggest care in selecting a contractor. Our comments concerning construction are intended as guidelines developed from our experience in viewing structures that have been successful or have failed."

Mayor Mattox stated, as with any natural elements, the future of the river bank would always be uncertain, and any efforts to remedy the erosion issue was a "hit or miss".

Vice-Mayor Dalton referenced Appalachian Electric Power's (AEP) Shoreline Management Plan (document) for the nearby Smith Mountain Lake. She stated the document excludes anyone from disturbing the shorelines of the lake.

Mrs. Dalton stated no one was allowed to add, remove, or disturb any natural element along the shoreline up to an 8,000 feet elevation. She stated the plan's intent was to let nature take its course and evolve as a natural habitat.

Mrs. Dalton stated the English Park river bank erosion issue was considered a "shoreline" issue, and suggested the town consider the expertise behind AEP's plan.

Councilman Higginbotham shared his favor with letting nature take its course.

Mr. Higginbotham stated, however, if an erosion issue was an emergency situation, he felt it acceptable for town staff to make every effort to stop the erosion.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt the town should not do anything that would distract from the natural beauty of the park's trails or riverbanks while floating the river.

Mayor Mattox asked Community Director Sharon Williams if she had any further comments in regard to this matter/item.

Ms. Williams shared her favor with doing as minimal as possible to keep the riverbanks in their natural state, while still addressing the erosion issue.

Ms. Williams stated the \$1.4 million cost estimate was for quoting and grant application purposes only. She stated, if the FEMA Grant was not approved, staff would re-evaluate the scope of work for this project and focus on the most needed issues to address in order to scale down the cost.

Mayor Mattox thanked Ms. Williams for her work on this project.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated the information Council received that evening was the initial preliminary work needed to begin this project and to start the conversation with DCR and their shoreline expert.

Mr. Coggsdale referenced Mrs. Dalton's suggestion for the town to consider reviewing AEP's Shoreline Management Plan for potential ways to help control and/or remedy the town's erosion issue. He stated he would contact AEP and request the information to share with Council and staff.

Councilman Higginbotham asked if the Hurt & Proffit drawing/information included the fore-mentioned picnic area along the river side of English Park.

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Mr. Coggsdale confirmed that it did.

Mayor Mattox stated his favor in allowing Town Staff to continue investigating this item; and to allow staff to continue its pursuit of a FEMA Grant for the project.

Council members were in consensus to do so.

- Recreation Committee Survey:

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale informed Council, in preparation for discussing potential projects for the FY2022 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Altavista Recreation Committee created a survey to solicit feedback on recreation needs in the Town of Altavista. He stated, as of November 18th, there had been 189 responses to the survey.

Recreation Committee Member, Councilman George, referenced a photo given to Council in their work session agenda packet for visual reference. He informed Council of the three highest ranked/liked items offered on the survey: 1) additional pedestrian trails, 2) outdoor event/performance arena, and 3) additional bike trails.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have in regard to any of the agenda items or town projects, to which there were none.

Public Comment

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any citizen(s) attending the meeting that evening that wished to address Council regarding a non-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.

Mayor Mattox encouraged town citizens to reach out to Town Council or Town Staff anytime they have questions or concerns regarding the town.

Matters from Council

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional items or concerns for discussion.

- Councilman George referenced the Altavista Public Works (PW) Department. He asked if PW still had vacancies in the department, or if the two additional positions, previously approved by Council, had been filled.

Public Works Director David Garrett stated he was still in the process of recruiting and interviewing candidates for the two new positions. He stated applications had been slow coming in, making it difficult to fill the positions quickly.

Councilman Mitchell stated one of his neighbors made mention of the town leaf collection truck only having two workers collecting leaves. He stated the town would really benefit when the new workers were hired, because he felt it would make it easier to collect leaves if there were three workers available.

Mr. Garrett stated the number of town employees assigned to leaf collection depends on the number of streets that were designated to be collected that day. He stated sometimes there were two workers and sometimes there were three workers collecting leaves.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated there were three town employees collecting leaves the day her street was been cleaned.

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Mayor Mattox asked if staff had ever conducted a “peer analysis” of surrounding localities for the same services the Town of Altavista offers its citizens.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, if Council desired, staff would conduct the requested analysis for Council’s review and consideration during the upcoming budget process.

Council was in consensus for staff to do so.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the analysis would, not only compare the costs of services, but also offer Council a better understanding of the services the town provides. He stated he felt Council would be surprised, and pleased, at knowing how many services the Town of Altavista provides its citizens.

- Councilman Bennett stated he felt Altavista was a beautiful small town, and he was proud of the many improvements the town had made over the past couple of years, such as upgrades to the neighborhood and community parks, street pavement improvements, and homes being revitalized by local organizations.

Mr. Bennett shared his concern with the “litter issue” in town, especially on the entrance and exits to town. He referenced litter he recently seen on a sidewalk in town.

Mr. Bennett suggested the town consider whether or not additional garbage cans on town sidewalks would help with the litter issue.

There were no further comments from Council on this date.

Closed Session

DATE: Tuesday November 24th, 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)(1) Discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body. (Altavista Economic Development Authority and Recreation Committee).

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Dalton, and seconded by Councilman Higginbotham.

Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	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 PM.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session 6:54 PM.

FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Dalton, seconded by Councilman George, to adopt the certification of a closed meeting.

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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 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
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Jay Higginbotham	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes

Adjournment

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

Mayor Mattox thanked the Town Manager and Town Staff for the hard work they continue to do for the Town of Altavista and the community.

Mayor Mattox adjourned the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk