

Council Work Session January 26, 2020

The Altavista Town Council's January 2021 Work Session was held in Council Chambers at the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on January 26, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Mayor Mike Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.

Council members

Present:

Mayor Michael Mattox
Vice Mayor Reginald Bennett
Mr. Tracy Emerson
Mr. Timothy George – by phone
Dr. Scott Lowman
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Absent:

Mr. Jay Higginbotham

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

1. Agenda Adoption

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the proposed January 26, 2021 Council Work Session Agenda, to which there were none.

Councilman Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lowman, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried:

VOTE:

Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
Vice Mayor Bennett	Yes
Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
Mr. Timothy George	Yes
Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

2. Recognitions and Presentations

- FY2022 Budget – Agency/Non-profit Presentation

Town of Altavista Treasurer/Finance Director Tobie Shelton stated Town Council provides this opportunity for local agencies/nonprofits to deliver their annual fund request. She stated a representative from each agency was encouraged to attend the work session to answer any questions Council may have. She informed everyone the presentation process was a step related to the annual development of the town's Draft Budget.

Mrs. Shelton stated, following the presentations, Town Council would provide direction to Town Staff in regard to each fund request and their potential inclusion in Altavista's FY2022 Draft Budget. She stated the town's Draft Budget would be delivered to Town Council at their Regular Council Meeting on Tuesday, February 9th.

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Mrs. Shelton shared with Council each agency's fund request for FY2022:

Altavista Area YMCA	\$100,000
Altavista Chamber of Commerce	\$30,000
Altavista on Track	\$5,000
Altavista Senior Center	\$1,000
Small Business Development Center	\$6,000

At that time, each agency gave Council a presentation including CY2020 follow-ups and their intentions moving into 2021, such as community involvement and events.

- Altavista Area YMCA – Executive Director Steve Jester

Mr. Jester stated he felt the YMCA was a very important part of the Town of Altavista. He stated the Y's success was partly in part to the unique partnership between the town and the YMCA.

Mr. Jester stated town support, along with membership and program fees and charitable contributions, enables the YMCA to provide multiple programs to the community.

Mr. Jester stated, between the COVID-19 pandemic and the flood issues that occurred, 2020 was a challenging year for the YMCA, but they worked through it and persevered. He shared his appreciation for Town Staff and Town Council during the difficult times.

Mr. Jester stated he appreciated the opportunity to update Council on the YMCA; and he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Councilman Mitchell asked Mr. Jester to give a brief summary of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on the Altavista Area YMCA.

Mr. Jester informed Council the Altavista YMCA normally had approximately 3,000 memberships on an annual basis, but those numbers dropped about 20% in CY2020. He stated a large number of the YMCA's members were senior citizens, which had the biggest impact to memberships due to COVID-19.

Mr. Jester stated use of the YMCA Childcare Center had been increasing slowly over the past few months. He stated offering childcare had become a large expense for the YMCA during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to the staff-to-child ratio change.

Mr. Jester stated the YMCA did not normally rely on federal and state funding, but during the pandemic, the YMCA was able to utilize the available grant funding in order to keep the YMCA Childcare Center open.

Mr. Jester informed Council the YMCA was encouraging individuals to keep their memberships by offering them "donation receipts" for their membership cost, to be used towards their taxes.

Councilman Emerson stated he felt the Altavista Area YMCA was one of the "jewels" of the community. He thanked Mr. Jester and the YMCA Staff for all their hard work.

Councilman George stated he fully supported the YMCA organization.

Councilman Lowman stated he supported the YMCA as well.

Mayor Mattox stated he also felt the YMCA was one of the crown jewels of Altavista. He stated he was proud the town was able to help support the organization and he looked forward to another year of the successful partnership between the town and the YMCA.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Jester for his presentation and for his efforts at the YMCA to continue offering the community its quality facility and programs.

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- Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce – Chair Elect Romonda Davis

Mrs. Davis shared with Council the Chamber of Commerce's (the Chamber) appreciation for the Town of Altavista's previous support of the organization.

Mrs. Davis stated the Chair Elect for each Chamber Committee (Business, Civic, and Financial) would be presenting Council with committee updates that evening. She stated the presentations were to show how the Chamber of Commerce was a "valuable" part of the community, and with the town's support, could continue

Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce Board Member, Chamber Executive Committee Secretary, and Civic Committee Chair Coby Worsham addressed Council at that time.

Mr. Worsham stated, as a citizen and volunteer in the community, he thanked Town Council for the work and value they provide to the Town of Altavista and community.

Mr. Worsham informed Council the COVID-19 pandemic in CY2020 hindered the Chamber's ability to hold its traditional civic events, therefore resulting in a major loss of revenue for the organization.

Mr. Worsham referenced Altavista's Annual Christmas Parade that, due to COVID-19, was held in 2020 as the town's first "reverse parade". He stated, with help from Altavista's Public Works Department, the Altavista Police Department, Altavista Fire Company, and the Altavista Ruritan Club, the Chamber was able to hold a successful parade, with approximately 1,000 cars attending in the parades two hour timeframe.

Mr. Worsham stated, now having more time to raise funds and plan ahead for the event, it was the Chamber's intent to hold a reverse parade again in 2021, with more participants anticipated and a better "traffic flow".

Mr. Worsham informed Council the Chamber had started planning for the 2021 calendar year of events. He stated the Chamber hopes to bring back its TGIF events throughout the summer; as well as, the town's annual Uncle Billy's Day Festival, which had been scheduled tentatively for the first weekend in June.

Mr. Worsham stated there was a potential for the Chamber to add new activities to their event calendar, including a "drive-in movie" and a fall festival. He stated the Chamber would move forward with the fore-mentioned events as long as state and local (COVID) guidelines allowed for such gatherings.

Mr. Worsham stated the Chamber of Commerce was asking for Town Council's consideration to continue supporting the organization, in order for the Chamber to continue providing the these civic events to the Town of Altavista and its community.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Worsham for his time and community service.

At that time, Cody Cyrus, Chamber of Commerce Board Chair Elect and Chamber Business Committee Chair, came before Council with business committee updates.

Ms. Cyrus stated the Chamber Business Committee had a busy year recognizing several businesses through "ribbon cuttings". She stated one of the biggest, and best attended events was for the National Center for Healthy Veterans. She stated the Chamber was proud to be a part of welcoming the center to the Altavista community.

Ms. Cyrus stated the Chamber also helped a few businesses with "ribbon re-cuttings". She stated, due to COVID-19, these events helped citizens know which businesses were open during the initial pandemic timeframe.

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Ms. Cyrus stated, in 2020, the Chamber partnered with Altavista On Track (AOT) to help the retail community with Altavista's Holiday Open House, an annual town-wide event. She stated, with AOT's help, the Chamber was able to subsidize the cost for a few town businesses for their television spotlights on "Living in the Heart of Virginia".

Ms. Cyrus stated, due to COVID-19, the Chamber Business Committee also had to cancel some of their 2020 events and activities, adding to the decrease in the Chambers incoming revenue.

Ms. Cyrus informed Town Council the Chamber Business Committee was planning to restructure its 2021 event calendar, by offering all events virtually. She stated this would allow the committee to hold more events than in previous years.

Ms. Cyrus stated there were ten virtual "Coffee & Conversation" events tentatively scheduled in 2021, for education and networking purposes, instead of only having four in person as in the past. She stated the "Lunch & Learn" events would also be virtual.

Ms. Cyrus stated the Chamber of Commerce felt these changes would add "value" to Chamber's membership benefits.

Ms. Cyrus stated the Chamber heard from the small business community that they were not prepared for the "online sales" and marketing required to sustain their businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated the Chamber intends to focus on those issues and help by offering additional (virtual) meeting events in 2021.

Ms. Cyrus informed Council the Chamber Business Committee has partnered with Campbell County to offer "Q & A" (question and answer) webinar in regard to COVID relief resources and funding available for the Altavista area.

Ms. Cyrus concluded her presentation by giving Council a brief description of the Chamber Business Committee's new "affiliate" program, which would offer member-to-member benefits. She stated the program would allow Chamber members to share, or swap, their business services with other members at a discounted cost.

Ms. Cyrus stated she felt the sole function and purpose of a Chamber of Commerce Business Committee was to be a "voice" for the town's business community; and to help the Chamber identify the businesses that need help to survive and thrive.

Ms. Cyrus stated, with consistent efforts from the Chamber Business Committee, and continued support from other local organizations, it was the Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce's intent to help every Altavista business "stay in business", which was beneficial to everyone involved (the businesses, the town, and the community).

Mayor Mattox thanked Ms. Cyrus for her time and her presentation.

At that time, Nathan Dowdy, Chamber Executive Committee Treasurer, came before Council with updates and the intended 2021 plans of the executive committee.

Mr. Dowdy stated he was a lifelong member of the Altavista community (born and raised in adjacent Lynch Station and a graduate of Altavista High School), and he felt it was a privilege for him to work and serve in his hometown. He thanked Town Council for their service and leadership for the town and community.

Mr. Dowdy stated, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2020 was an emotional and financial struggle for both businesses and families.

Mr. Dowdy stated, as fore-mentioned by his Chamber Committee colleagues that evening, the Chamber of Commerce was unable to generate funds from holding its traditional events, therefore causing a significant loss in total annual revenue.

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Mr. Dowdy stated, unlike the small businesses the Chamber of Commerce serves, the Chamber was a 501c6 organization, therefore was unable to utilize CARES Act Funding in 2020 to cover its loss in revenue. He stated recently new guidelines were put in place and he would investigate the Chamber's eligibility for the new 2021 year.

Mr. Dowdy stated he had come before Council that evening to ask for the town's continued support of the Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Dowdy thanked Town Council for their time and consideration of the Chamber's fund request. He stated he looked forward to a new and hopefully profitable year, allowing the Chamber to become a "self-sustaining" organization.

At that time, Romonda Davis returned to the podium and stated she would be glad to answer any questions Council may have in regard to the Chamber of Commerce and/or its fund request.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions for the Chamber of Commerce.

Councilman Mitchell stated he appreciated the Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce and the work they do, not only for the town's businesses, but also for the community.

Mr. Mitchell referenced the 2020 Altavista "Reverse" Christmas Parade and stated he also felt it was a success and that everyone enjoyed the parade.

Mr. Mitchell also referenced the Chamber's mention of having additional seminars and virtual meetings in the year 2021. He encouraged the Chamber to advertise and market the events as much as possible, in order for businesses and citizens to be more aware of what the Chamber of Commerce does and has to offer its community.

Councilman Emerson stated he also felt the Chamber of Commerce and all of its members and committees do a great job for the Town of Altavista. He thanked Mrs. Davis for the Chamber's hard work and service to the community.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated he was impressed with how the Chamber "worked around" the COVID issue. He stated the Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce had a great group of people in its organization and he felt they were moving in the right direction.

Mr. Bennett thanked the Chamber for the work they do for the Town of Altavista.

Councilman George also shared his appreciation for the Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce and all they do for the town and the community.

Mr. George stated the Altavista Recreation Committee had a couple of projects that may benefit from a partnership with the Chamber and he looked forward to working with them.

Councilman Lowman thanked the Chamber for the work they do, and stated he looked forward to meeting more of the Chamber's Board Members and working with them in the future.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt the current Chamber Board was one of its strongest to date. He stated, when something goes wrong, they find a way to fix the issue immediately.

Mayor Mattox asked if the town was current with its payments to the Chamber, to which Mrs. Davis stated she was unsure.

Mayor Mattox asked Town Staff to follow-up on the matter.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mrs. Davis and the other Chamber Members present that evening for their time and each of their presentations.

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- Altavista On Track (AOT) – Board President Reverend Ed Soto

Reverend Soto updated Council with AOT's 2020 year-in-review, as well as, a brief overview of their plans and intentions for calendar year 2021.

Reverend Soto referenced the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. He stated, like other town organizations, Altavista On Track had also been affected by the unprecedented issue.

Reverend Soto stated, due to COVID-19, AOT held their largest fund raising event, the Altavista Annual Gibley Jog, virtually in 2020. He stated the event did not draw as many participants as in previous years, resulting in a loss of the event's normal revenue.

Reverend Soto stated AOT was also forced to cancel their Annual Block Party, held on Broad Street. He stated AOT partners with Altavista's library, Staunton River Memorial, for this community favorite event. He stated AOT hoped to be able to include the Block Party in their annual schedule of events in the near future.

Reverend Soto reminded Council of AOT's support for the town's small business community by offering \$500 Grants during the initial "hit" of COVID-19, to be used for such things as rent, utilities, and/or marketing their business online.

Reverend Soto stated AOT also partnered with the Altavista Area Chamber of Commerce in 2020, by participating in the state's annual Shop Small Event and hosting "Shop Small Altavista".

Reverend Soto stated, moving into calendar year 2021, it was AOT's intent to expand the Altavista Downtown District, which would help AOT to include and impact more local businesses. He stated AOT was currently discussing this change/growth with the DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development) and representatives from AOT's state affiliate, the Virginia Main Street Program.

Reverend Soto stated there had been "good feedback" on the 2020 Altavista Christmas Ornament, so AOT planned to continue the fundraising effort in 2021.

Reverend Soto referenced AOT's recent support of the town's new SPARK Innovation Center (an AEDA project), by contributing funds for a feasibility study on the project.

Reverend Soto also informed Council that AOT was currently working with Avoca Director Mike Hudson to bring additional signage to town, highlighting some of the town's historic buildings in the Downtown District.

Reverend Soto stated Altavista On Track would continue to partner with other Altavista organizations and encourage citizens to spend time in, and support their community.

Reverend Soto referenced AOT's recent transition in leadership and the new Main Street Interim, George Sandridge. He stated the AOT Board was looking forward to a new year and working with Mr. Sandridge on future endeavors.

Reverend Soto stated AOT continues to look for grant funding and new fund raising opportunities. He assured Council that Altavista On Track would always aspire to engage and support the Altavista community.

Reverend Soto thanked Council for their time and stated he would be glad to answer any questions they may have.

Councilman Mitchell stated he appreciated the work Altavista On Track does for the Town of Altavista, and stated he looked forward to working with them in the 2021.

Councilman Emerson also shared his appreciation for the AOT organization and thanked Reverend Soto and the AOT Board for the work they do for the town.

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Vice Mayor Bennett stated he was proud to be a part of AOT as Town Council liaison. He stated he was privileged to see their dedication and hard work first hand, and he appreciated AOT's continued efforts in making the Town of Altavista thrive.

Councilman George agreed with Vice Mayor Bennett and thanked AOT for their work.

Councilman Lowman stated Altavista On Track had a strong Board and volunteer group, and he felt they had "a ton of potential". He stated he was impressed with their previous accomplishments and looked forward to seeing what they do in 2021.

Mayor Mattox referenced the recent joint meeting between AOT and the Altavista Economic Development Authority (AEDA). He stated he was very impressed with the group's collaboration and he appreciated the two groups working together to make Altavista a better place to work, live, and play.

- Altavista Senior Center -
Campbell County Recreation Department, Stormi Anderson Arrowood (virtual)

Ms. Arrowood reminded everyone the Altavista Senior Center was located on Avoca Lane in Altavista. She stated the center has approximately forty members that, during normal times, usually meet on Tuesdays.

Ms. Arrowood stated, due to COVID-19, the center had not been open to its members since March of 2020. She stated, however, the center was keeping in touch with its seniors by sending them "goodie bags" to help keep them in good spirits.

Ms. Arrowood stated the center plans to reopen for its members soon. She stated, due to COVID guidelines and restrictions, it was their intent to have meetings located outside, and also offer its members outside activities within the community, in order to keep everyone safe, while still offering the fellowship the seniors were used to.

Ms. Arrowood stated the funding provided by the town helps the center offer its seniors items they may not otherwise be able to afford, such as transportation to local volunteer opportunities and community activities, such as Bingo at the local nursing home.

Ms. Arrowood stated she would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to the Altavista Senior Center's calendar year 2021 fund request (FY2022 Budget), to which there were none.

Every Council member thanked Ms. Arrowood and the center for their work.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated there was a high ratio of seniors living in the Town of Altavista, and some have no family to care for them. He thanked Ms. Arrowood and the center for the work and support they offer the town's seniors.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated it was important for a locality to have agencies such as the senior center, in order to keep its seniors encouraged and involved with the community.

Mayor Mattox agreed with the Vice Mayor's statement. He stated he would also like to personally thank Ms. Arrowood and the Altavista Senior Center on behalf of the Town of Altavista for the good work they do for the town's senior community.

- Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) –
Executive Director Stephanie Keener (virtual)

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Ms. Keener reminded everyone the SBDC served the Town of Altavista, the City of Lynchburg, and the counties that surround Lynchburg. She stated the SBDC's office was hosted (located) locally at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance.

Ms. Keener informed Council the SBDC assisted one hundred and five (105) businesses in CY2020, with four of those businesses being located in Altavista.

Ms. Keener stated the SBDC appreciated the support the Town of Altavista had given them in previous years, and looked forward to that continued partnership.

Ms. Keener stated, since there were new members on Town Council, she would give them a brief description of the SBDC's mission and purpose.

Ms. Keener stated the Lynchburg office was one of twenty-nine Virginia SBDC offices across the Commonwealth of Virginia. She stated its headquarters was located at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

Ms. Keener stated the SBDC's main purpose was to provide training and technical assistance to small businesses. She stated the program was available to any individual that was considering opening a new, or expanding an existing small business.

Ms. Keener stated the program was a "cooperative agreement" between the US Small Business Association, multiple career institutions across the Commonwealth of VA, and Virginia's local government. She stated the program's services were either free or at low cost to their clients; and information regarding a client remained confidential.

Ms. Keener stated the funding invested by localities, like the Town of Altavista, allows the SBDC to offer its clients educational and advisory services for development, growth, and expansion of their business, with topics such as employment research, investor relations, financial advisors, marketing resources, and more.

Ms. Keener stated the SBDC works closely with the local government and local financial institutes to keep their advisory information current.

At that time, Ms. Keener gave Council an overview of the SBDC's plan for 2021.

Ms. Keener stated the SBDC has partnered with Altavista On Track and the Chamber of Commerce to revise the town's (previously known) "Pop-up Program" to provide a multi-week entrepreneurship program for Altavista Businesses in late spring 2021.

Ms. Keener referenced the SBDC's Start Smart Program, which focuses on new and early-stage businesses. She stated the program had been expanded to include a "Budget and Tax check-in" class, and a "Digital Toolbox" class.

Ms. Keener informed Council the SBDC would be offering a new event in 2021, a COVID-19 Impact and Recovery class. She stated, due to COVID-19, the SBDC moved most of its events/classes online.

Ms. Keener concluded her presentation and stated she would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions for Ms. Keener in regard to the Small Business Development Center's 2021 funding request (FY2022 Budget).

Councilman Mitchell stated he appreciated the work the SBDC does throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. He stated he would like to see the SBDC give more help to Altavista's organizations, like Altavista On Track and the Chamber of Commerce, with marketing and advertising of the town's small business initiatives and business related projects and events/activities.

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Ms. Keener agreed the SBDC needed to improve their assistance with marketing and the issue was on their “radar” and intended plans for 2021.

Councilman Emerson also thanked Ms. Keener and the SBDC for what they do for the Lynchburg Region, Town of Altavista, and the community.

Vice Mayor Bennett referenced the SBDC, Altavista On Track, and the Chamber of Commerce. He stated he would like to see the town partner with all of its local agencies and combine their information in one place, such as the town’s web page. He stated he felt having all the information in one place would be beneficial to businesses.

Councilman George thanked the SBDC for the hard work they do.

Councilman Lowman stated he personally utilized the SBDC’s services almost twenty years ago. He stated what the SBDC does for entrepreneurs and small businesses to “get started on the right foot” was priceless and much appreciated.

Mayor Mattox also thanked Ms. Keener for her work with the SBDC and for what they do for the Town of Altavista and the community.

- Central Virginia Planning District Commission (PDC) Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Kelly Hitchcock, CVPDC Planning and Development Director

Background:

The Central Virginia Planning District Commission Hazard Mitigation Plan – 2020 Update (CVPDC HMP 2020) identifies hazard, such as flooding, severe weather, wildfires, area of vulnerabilities, as it establishes goals and objectives, presents regional and locality-specific strategies, and/or potential actions to lessen the overall impact to households, businesses, and properties from natural disasters. The CVPDC HMP was developed through a comprehensive public outreach process, and through the leadership and guidance of the HMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of local, state, and regional governmental staff, local business, non-profits, and local citizen stakeholders. Altavista was represented throughout the Plan’s development on the TAC by Sharon D. Williams, Community Development Director, and Thomas Fore, Director of Public Utilities. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Town Manager and David Garrett, Public Works Director, were also directly involved in contributing to the development of the Altavista Town HMP Mitigation Strategies, as well as the Regional HMP. The CVPDC HMP 2020 can be accessed on the CVPDC Hazard Mitigation Plan website

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local governments, as a condition for eligibility to receive federal mitigation funds, establish a plan to identify hazard risk, vulnerabilities, and strategies. The Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC), in partnership with its member localities, state and local agencies, and public stakeholders, had completed the regional pre-disaster plan, or “Hazard Mitigation Plan”.

Altavista Community Development Director Sharon Williams informed Council the CVPDC Planning and Development Director, Kelly Hitchcock, would be delivering Council a presentation in regard to the CVPDC HMP.

Ms. Williams stated, after Ms. Hitchcock’s presentation, Town Staff would ask for Council to consider the adoption of the 2020 Central Virginia Planning District Commission Hazard Mitigation Plan as Altavista’s HMP moving forward.

At that time, Ms. Hitchcock gave Town Council a brief overview of the HMP process.

Ms. Hitchcock shared with Council the project’s entire list of team members, which included Altavista’s participating members fore-mentioned by Ms. Williams.

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Ms. Hitchcock informed Council the adoption of the 2020 CVPDC HMP assured participating jurisdictions continued entitlement for FEMA and other federally-funded grant assistance: the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program, the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program, and the Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dam Grant Program.

Ms. Hitchcock stated that funding for the HMP project was provided through a grant from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), with the appropriate match made by each CVPDC locality.

Ms. Hitchcock shared with Council a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) used during the CVPDC HMP process.

1. Identify and profile the hazards that could affect the jurisdictions in the CVPDC area.
2. Determine which community assets are the most vulnerable to damage from these hazards.
3. Estimate social, economic, and environmental losses from these hazards and prioritize the potential risks to the community.

Ms. Hitchcock stated all jurisdictions in the CVPDC area were vulnerable to natural, technological, and man-made hazards that could threaten the safety of residents, and have the potential to damage or destroy both public and private property, cause environmental degradation, and/or disrupt the local economy and overall quality of life.

Ms. Hitchcock stated, while many disasters are possible for any given area in the United States, the most likely hazards to potentially affect the communities in the CVPDC area generally included the hazards in the 2020 HMP update.

Ms. Hitchcock stated a ranking analysis was used to help identify which hazards should be considered a priority in the CVPDC Region. She stated drought, flooding, and urban fire hazards were ranked the highest in hazard risk; and earthquakes, fog, land subsidence/karst, and landslide hazards were ranked as low hazards for the region.

Ms. Hitchcock stated the “Mitigation Strategy” section of the HMP presents goals, objectives, and specific actions to assist in minimizing the vulnerability and impact of natural and man-made hazards. She stated the mitigation strategies were meant to be comprehensive with both regional and location-specific actions, while, at the same time, being feasible for the regional and jurisdictional capabilities.

- Information & Outreach Goal:
Increase hazard awareness and preparedness activity participation by area individuals, property owners, and businesses.
- Prevention Capacity Goal:
Through governmental operations, business and private sector partnerships, advance planning initiatives, voluntary and regulatory programs (e.g. code enforcement), and maintenance practices to lessen hazard impacts.
- Property Protection Goal:
Support property and infrastructure fortification programs and projects to lessen hazard impacts to lives, property, and infrastructure.
- Structural Projects Goal:
Execute measures that significantly lessen the impact of natural hazard impact to lives, communities, property, and infrastructure in the region.
- Natural System Resiliency Goal:
Preserve the function and resiliency of the region’s natural resources and sensitive landscapes.

Ms. Hitchcock stated the success and value of the CVPDC HMP as a mitigation tool and resource relied on plan integration, monitoring, evaluation and, when necessary, amendments. She stated, although adoption of the HMP was essential, its success was the structural integration of the HMP within a locality’s community and regional plans, regulatory systems, departmental procedures, and funding structure.

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Ms. Hitchcock stated, it was important to point out, the adoption of the HMP was not an obligation that “you must” or “a guarantee that you will”. She stated the strategies were in place for localities to attempt if viable and/or feasible for them to implement.

Ms. Hitchcock stated many of the mitigation strategies, especially property protection, structural, or natural system resiliency projects, would require considerable planning and large financial investment. She stated execution would require continuously seeking funding opportunities, including federal and state grant programs, incorporation, and dual benefits across departments and agencies to capitalize on funding efficiency and integration within a locality’s capital improvement plans (CIPs).

Ms. Hitchcock stated the CVPDC would be responsible for convening a CVPDC Mitigation Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC), similarly comprised of locality and agency stakeholder representatives. She stated the CVPDC planned to facilitate twice-yearly MPAC meetings, where mitigation strategy implementation, including regional, locality-specific, and stakeholder summaries, would be reported.

Ms. Hitchcock stated the CVPDC Hazard Mitigation Annual Report, as well as regular program features throughout the year, would be made available for public comment and housed on the Central Virginia Planning District Commission Mitigation Plan Website.

Ms. Hitchcock informed Council that FEMA recognized the CVPDC HMP as a “best practice” for its localities. She encouraged Council to utilize the CVPDC website for additional information regarding Hazard Mitigation Planning and the 2020 CVPDC HMP proposed for Altavista’s adoption.

Ms. Hitchcock reminded Council that Altavista had identified fourteen (14) strategies for the HMP, unique to the Altavista community, which included information, outreach, and coordination with other CVPDC localities.

Ms. Hitchcock stated the CVPDC submitted the final draft of the HMP to VDEM in October 2020 and they provided amendments to the draft plan. She stated the CVPDC met their obligation to FEMA and VDEM and held a third “public review” meeting to conclude the draft HMP process.

Ms. Hitchcock stated there was a formal review meeting between FEMA and the CVPDC that was held on December 21st, 2020. She informed Council, after a few FEMA recommended revisions, the draft HMP was resubmitted and approved/adopted by FEMA (pending locality adoption) on January 22nd, 2021.

Ms. Hitchcock stated the CVPDC HMP was a 5-year document, starting the day after the first locality adopts the plan.

Ms. Hitchcock concluded her presentation and stated she would be happy to answer any questions Council may have in regard to the CVPDC HMP.

Councilman Mitchell asked if the HMP only covered “natural” disasters.

Ms. Hitchcock answered stating, by FEMA regulations, the HMP was required to include natural disasters. She stated it was up to each individual locality if they desired to go beyond that requirement.

Ms. Hitchcock stated the 2020 CVPDC HMP did include some “man-made” hazards.

Vice Mayor Bennett thanked Ms. Hitchcock for the comprehensive work done on the HMP. He stated he felt the HMP was another way the Town of Altavista could add to its efforts in keeping its citizens and community safe.

Councilman George and Councilman Lowman both thanked Ms. Hitchcock for the CVPDC HMP update and her presentation.

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Mayor Mattox asked Council for their input on placing this item on Council's February 9th Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for adoption approval of the CVPDC HMP.

All Council members were in consensus to do so.

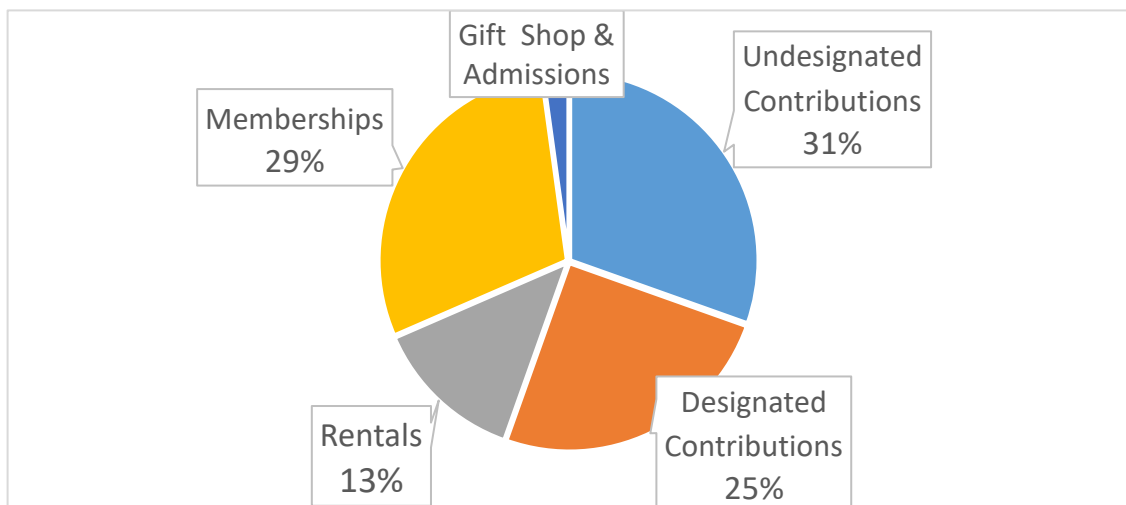
- Avoca Museum Annual Report – FY2020
Avoca Executive Director Mike Hudson

Explanation:

Avoca is a town-owned property and a Board of Directors oversees the museum activities. The museum director is a town employee. The Town of Altavista funds the personnel cost of the museum; while the Avoca Board funds the operations costs. Each year the Executive Director of Avoca provides Town Council with an "annual report", detailing the activities of the museum and its Board of Directors over the past year.

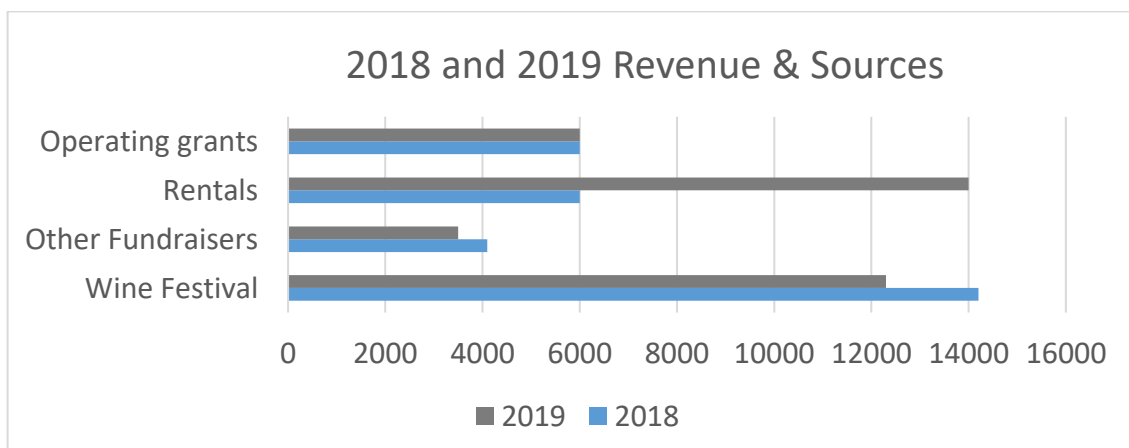
Mr. Hudson thanked Town Council for their time and the opportunity to share Avoca Museum's 2020 Annual Report. He shared a PowerPoint regarding the annual report; and briefly discussed how the recent COVID-19 pandemic had effected American museums.

Mr. Hudson referenced the first graph of the PowerPoint, Avoca's 2020 revenue sources.



Mr. Hudson stated, with 430 households from around the world contributing to the museum annually, the bulk of Avoca's revenue comes from memberships, ranging from \$25 to \$5,000 depending on the donor. He stated Avoca collected approximately \$26,000 in membership dues in CY2020.

Mr. Hudson shared a chart showing Avoca's previous two years of "self-funding" revenue.



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Mr. Hudson stated Avoca's Annual Wine Festival and "rental" of the property for occasions such as weddings, were two of the museum's largest revenue sources. He stated, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Avoca was unable to do either of those things in CY2020, resulting in a huge loss of annual revenue to the museum.

Mr. Hudson stated, not being able to utilize those two revenue resources, posed a unique challenge for the museum. He informed Council, however, with continued membership support, and public and private grants, Avoca was able to make it through 2020 without the threat and consideration of having to close the museum.

Mr. Hudson informed Council, prior to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, American Museums were already closing at an alarming rate. He stated, unfortunately, COVID-19 only increased that number.

Mr. Hudson stated the Avoca Museum was blessed to have an unwavering Board of Directors, multiple volunteers, and the continued support of its members to keep it going.

Mr. Hudson shared with Council a brief overview of what Avoca was currently working on to strengthen the organization.

1. Implementing new and comprehensive accounting software and practices.
2. Collaborate with Town Staff to identify and remediate weaknesses and repair needs in the Avoca property's historic structures.
3. Direct new historical research and archive the museum's thousands of artifacts, documents, letters, and books.
4. Find more efficient ways of consolidating and storing the museum's collections.
5. Identify areas of electrical hazards and have them remediated.
6. Leverage a capital campaign to solve the museum's landscaping storage needs.
7. Escalate a grant-writing campaign for the next fiscal year.
8. Diminish landscaping and minor repair costs.
9. Plan for future "special events" (though, despite the efforts, many may still be cancelled due to the continued presence of COVID-19).
10. Upgrade the museum's research databases and printing capabilities.
11. Implement cleaning/sanitation practices designed to target the spread of COVID-19.
12. Design new and engaging exhibits and educational programs the museum would provide to the community in the future.

Mr. Hudson thanked Council for their time. He stated he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have in regard to the Avoca Museum CY2020 Annual Report.

Councilman Mitchell thanked Mr. Hudson for his work at Avoca. He stated he looked forward to the time when Avoca could resume its regular schedule of annual events.

Councilman Emerson stated the Avoca Museum and property was one of Altavista's "jewels" in the community. He stated he always enjoyed their events he has attended.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated he had always loved local "history". He stated he felt Mr. Hudson and the Avoca Board of Directors were doing a fabulous job at Avoca.

Vice Mayor Bennett suggested Avoca consider allowing its members to pay their membership dues online with "auto-draft", or through PayPal. He stated he felt, by doing so, it could potentially increase Avoca's memberships and revenue.

Mr. Hudson thanked the Vice Mayor for his suggestions. He informed Council that Avoca would be offering "auto-draft" for membership dues in CY2021 (for the first time).

Vice Mayor Bennett referenced the Altavista Area YMCA offering their members a receipt for their membership dues in order to use it as a "tax write-off". He suggested Avoca also consider doing so, which would be an additional benefit to its members.

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Mr. Hudson stated, with Avoca being a 501c3 organization, all monetary gifts/donations, including membership dues, were tax deductible.

Councilman George also thanked Mr. Hudson for the work he does at Avoca and for the Town of Altavista and its community. He stated, in reference of COVID-19, he also looked forward to “things getting back to normal” and being able to attend Avoca events.

Councilman Lowman thanked Mr. Hudson for his annual report. He stated he was glad to hear that Avoca was able to successfully navigate through the “COVID-19 storm”.

Mr. Hudson thanked Mr. Lowman and welcomed him to Town Council.

There were no additional comments from Council for Mr. Hudson in regard to Avoca.

Mayor Mattox also thanked Mr. Hudson for Avoca’s annual report and stated he felt it was one of his best presentations to date. He stated he was happy to hear that Avoca was doing well, and he was confident in its leadership the museum would continue to do so.

3. Citizen’s Time - 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.

4. Items Referred from Previous Meetings

There were no “items” from previous meetings scheduled for the January work session.

5. New Items for Discussion

There were no “new” items for discussion scheduled for the January work session.

6. Updates/Informational Items

A. Dalton’s Landing Canoe Launch Project (a.k.a. Dalton’s Landing)

Background:

Dalton’s Landing Canoe Launch is a project that has been planned for several years. Town Council approved the Dalton’s Landing Canoe Launch Project as part of the town’s Capital Improvement Plan in 2017. Construction began in October 2020. The contract states that {excerpted language} ‘work will be substantially completed on or before February 15, 2021 and completed and ready for payment on or before March 15, 2021’. Due to severe weather in November, and the need for a change order to remedy soil stabilization issues, the project is currently behind schedule. There is a permit with Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) that says no “in-river” construction can be done between March 15 and June 15 due to the endangered fish, the Roanoke Logperch, and its spawning season. Since there were delays in the site preparation, the parking lot cannot be paved until the asphalt plant re-opens; however, other construction on the launch itself will be continuing. The contractor, engineers, and town have been working together to develop a plan to have the project meet the in-river deadlines and move the project forward as quickly as possible, while still remaining within the scope of the project.

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Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens addressed Town Council in regard to this item. She informed Council that Engineer Tim Guthrie, Gay & Neel, was present that evening to give them a brief update on the current progress of this project.

Mr. Guthrie referenced the project's original design and stated it called for three feet depth of water, with cofferdams included. He stated, due to recent rainfall, the depth of water was staying around seven feet over the past couple of months.

Mr. Guthrie stated there were two alternative options available for Town Council to consider. (1) to modify the original design, and (2) to "build up" the cofferdams to allow for the increase in water depth. He stated both options would increase the project's initial cost, but modifying the plan would also cost the town valuable "time".

Mr. Guthrie informed Council that he was working with the contractor of the project, who was currently working with Smith Mountain Lake Dam, in order to find a "window of favorable weather conditions" to allow a two-week timeframe for the project to move forward as planned.

Mr. Guthrie stated Gay & Neel extended the permit for the project, in case it became necessary, but they still hoped to complete the "in-water" work by March 15th.

Mr. Guthrie stated, with Smith Mountain Lake Dam's cooperation, and if the weather stays favorable, the work could be completed as planned and not have to be modified.

Mr. Guthrie stated he would keep Town Staff and Council informed of the collaboration with Smith Mountain Lake Dam and of the projected timeframe.

Mr. Guthrie asked for Council's input and if they had any questions.

Councilman Mitchell asked if March 15th was the intended completion date or the date to be out of the water.

Mr. Guthrie stated, due to environmental restrictions, the town/contractor had to be out of the water by March 15th. He stated the remaining aspects of the project (such as the asphalt parking lot) would start after the in-water phase was completed.

Mr. Guthrie reminded Council, if the in-water phase was not completed by March 15th, the town would have to extend the project until September.

Mr. Mitchell asked for details of the second available option.

Mr. Guthrie stated the second option consisted of raising the cofferdams to eight feet and additional riprap (rock), which would increase the project's cost by approximately \$15,000-\$20,000.

Councilman Emerson asked what would determine the fore-mentioned "two-week window of opportunity" for the in-water construction phase of the project.

Mr. Guthrie stated the weather/rainfall was the main factor in that consideration.

Mr. Emerson asked, if the cofferdams were raised to eight feet, could the project continue as planned.

Mr. Guthrie stated that was correct. He stated the water had been fluctuating from three to seven feet lately, so an eight feet cofferdam would be viable for the project.

Mr. Emerson asked if there were any funds remaining in the project's budget to move forward with raising the cofferdams.

Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens stated, after proposed signage and amenities, there would be approximately \$48,000 remaining in the budget.

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Mr. Emerson stated he did not favor having to postpone the canoe launch project until September. He suggested, since the project had been ongoing for three years, Council should consider doing everything possible to move the project forward.

Mr. Mitchell stated he believed in doing a project “correct” the first time, and not having to complete this project in pieces with a completion date “extension”.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale asked Mr. Guthrie, if the weather did not cooperate and a change order had to be made to raise the cofferdams, was there a cut-off date the town needed to be aware of in order to implement the change order.

Mr. Guthrie stated, if the contractor and Smith Mountain Lake Dam representatives felt there would not be an upcoming weather opportunity to move forward, there would still be time to utilize the option of raising the cofferdams to complete the in-water construction phase by March 15th.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked if raising the cofferdams would extend the initial estimated two-week timeframe needed for the in-water construction phase.

Mr. Guthrie stated the contractor had completed some pre-construction work, so even if the cofferdams had to be raised, the in-water construction should still only take two weeks to complete.

Councilman George stated, since there were funds remaining in the canoe launch budget, he would be ok with utilizing those funds to help move this project forward if necessary.

Mayor Mattox asked if the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) would allow the town a “variance” on the timeframe for exiting the water by March 15th.

Mr. Guthrie stated the DWR would allow an extension on the permit to allow for additional “years” to complete the project, but not the March 15th to June 15th timeframe for in-water construction, due to environmental restrictions.

Mayor Mattox asked for Council’s input for how to move forward with this item.

All Council members were in consensus, if weather conditions were not favorable to move the project forward as initially planned; to utilize remaining project funds and allow the contractor to raise the cofferdams to eight feet, in order to complete the in-water construction phase of the Dalton’s Landing Canoe Launch Project by the DWR’s deadline of March 15th.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated he would work with Mr. Guthrie to determine a “cut-off” date for determining whether or not the town would need to modify its initial in-water construction plan to include raising the cofferdams and still meet the March 15th deadline for completion.

Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens stated, if it was determined the cofferdams would need to be raised and additional funds needed to be used, Town Staff would bring the change order before Council for approval consideration.

There were no additional questions or comments in regard to this portion of the item.

At that time, Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens addressed Council in regard to the proposed signage and trash cans for Dalton’s Landing.

Ms. Owens reminded Council the initial Dalton’s Landing Canoe Launch Project did not include lighting for the site. She stated the idea was suggested by Council and therefore investigated by staff.

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Ms. Owens stated, due to the Town of Altavista being a SolSmart Bronze Designee, she looked into “solar” lighting for the site area. She shared a chart showing the proposed locations for the solar lights. She stated the entrance light would be a single-head, with the other three being double-head lighting.

Ms. Owens informed Council the cost of the proposed solar lighting was \$28,000, and would need Council’s approval of the change order. She stated, if Council desired, she would place the change order approval on Council’s next meeting agenda.

Mayor Mattox asked what the town’s policy would be in regard the “hours of operation” for Dalton’s Landing.

Ms. Owens stated the hours-of-operation for Dalton’s Landing was also an item for Council to consider and/or determine that evening.

Councilman Emerson stated, occasionally time “slips up on a person”, which could leave them in the dark getting out of the river. He shared his favor in having the lights.

Mayor Mattox referenced a conversation previously had by Council in regard to the hours-of-operation for Dalton’s Landing. He stated he thought it had been determined the site would be closed at “dusk”, in order to deter any mischief after dark.

Councilman Mitchell asked if the English Park Public Boat Ramp closed at dark.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale reminded Council the only gate at English Park was beside the Booker Building and only closed the entrance to the “park” itself. He stated the boat ramp and parking area adjacent to the boat ramp always stayed open.

Councilman Emerson stated there were several boat ramps in Campbell County that were always open. He stated the Town of Altavista would not be the only law agency patrolling and enforcing rules at the Dalton’s Landing property. He stated State Troopers, Campbell County Sheriffs, and the VA Game/Fishery Wardens would all be responsible for doing so.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale reminded Council the security gate was added to this project due to an objection of the canoe launch being in that area. He stated Council felt adding the gate would help deter any mischief and calm those concerns.

Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens stated, at that time, staff was seeking Council’s direction on the desired hours-of-operation for Dalton’s Landing.

Councilman Mitchell suggested, if the proposed lights reflected onto an adjacent neighbor’s house, Council should take that into consideration before voting.

Ms. Owens informed Council that Town Staff had been working with VODT in regard to the proposed solar lights and making sure the lighting would not cast out past the parking area onto the road, or into adjacent homes.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated, if an individual was on the river at dusk, the lights would help guide them to their take-out destination.

Mr. Bennett also reference the town’s fore-mentioned SolSmart Bronze Designation. He asked if the proposed solar lights were approved by Council, could their installation be used as a “stepping stone” towards the next SolSmart level (silver).

Ms. Owens stated she would investigate the possibility.

Councilman Lowman asked what the life-expectancy was for the proposed solar lights.

Ms. Owens stated the battery life was five to seven years, and the lights themselves had a twenty-year life expectancy.

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There was a consensus of Council to allow staff to move forward with the purchase of the four proposed solar lights, at a total cost of \$28,000.

At that time, Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens shared a photo of the proposed entrance/information sign structure for Dalton's Landing; a triple-wood frame, with a stone foundation. She stated, if approved, the cost of the structure would be \$7,500.

Ms. Owens stated the sign would include a directional map to Altavista, if an individual was exiting the river at Dalton's Landing. She stated the sign could be formatted to have any information the town wanted the sign to have.

Councilman Emerson suggested the sign also have a "waterway map" showing the distance between local take-outs, such as Brookneal.

Councilman Mitchell stated there was a waterway map, as Mr. Emerson suggested, located at the dam for Ms. Owens to reference.

Councilman George stated the sign was also meant to recognize the "Dalton Family".

Ms. Owens stated, it could not be seen in the reference photo, but the sign did include reference to the Dalton Family for their contribution to the canoe launch project.

All Council members were in consensus to allow Town Staff to move forward with the proposed sign for Dalton's Landing, at a cost of \$7,500.

Ms. Owen continued by sharing with Council a photo of the trash cans proposed for locating at Dalton's Landing. She stated the proposed trash cans were ADA compliant, and also wildlife resistant.

Ms. Owens informed Council the amenities at Dalton's Landing would also include two picnic tables, similar to the replacements at English Park. She stated both the trash cans and picnic tables had a total cost of \$6,000.

All Council members were in consensus to allow Town Staff to move forward with the proposed trash cans and picnic tables for Dalton's Landing, at a cost of \$6,000.

Ms. Owens concluded her requests and updates by informing Council of her collaboration with Gary Robinson, with VDOT, in regard to "brown signage" for the Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch, to be placed at the town's entrance ramps, and also two miles each way north and south of Altavista.

Mayor Mattox asked if funds were allocated in the Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch Project's budget for permanent "porta-pottys".

Vice Mayor Bennett stated he felt the addition of porta-pottys was a necessary amenity.

Ms. Owens stated she would look at the budget and investigate the options.

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

B. Boat Ramp (English Park) – Town/DWR Agreement and Access Permit

Background:

State legislation was approved and became effective January 1, 2021, that requires an access permit for use of Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) owned or managed boating access sites. The boat access point located in English Park was a joint project between the Town of Altavista and the DWR (formerly the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries).

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An agreement exists between the two entities, which would require the access permit for use of this boating access site. The access permit would be required, unless you have a valid Virginia hunting, trapping or fishing license, a DWR Restore the Wild Membership, or current certificate of boat registration issued by DWR. The Town has the option to keep the agreement in place or rescind it; this would affect whether the access permit would be required. An individual or group can purchase an access permit: Daily Access Permit = \$4.00 per person; an Annual Access Permit = \$23.00; and Group Permits start at \$26 (1-12 people) and increase by \$25 for each increase in the group, up to the next dozen individuals.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, with the new legislation, Town Council would need to make a decision concerning whether or not to continue the agreement, which would require the new access permit fee to be charged; or to do away with the agreement and allow use of the boat ramp without the permit. He stated ending the agreement would take away any obligation of DWR concerning the boat ramp and the facility would become the sole responsibility of the Town of Altavista.

Councilman Emerson shared his favor with the town ending their agreement with DWR in regard to the English Park boat ramp. He stated he felt the boat ramp was a public recreation spot provided by the town that should not require a permit for use.

Mayor Mattox agreed with Councilman Emerson's statement.

Councilman Mitchell asked, if the town remained in the agreement with DWR, who would be responsible for enforcing the permit access (writing tickets).

Mr. Coggsdale stated Conservation Officers/Game Wardens would be responsible for enforcing the permit access requirement.

Councilman Emerson stated any Law Enforcement Officer could write a ticket for the noncompliance of the boat ramp permit requirement. He stated it would depend of the authority given by the DWR.

Councilman George asked if the DWR contributes to the maintenance of the boat ramp.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, as per the agreement, they did not. He stated the DWR only contributes if the boat ramp gets washed away.

Mayor Mattox asked if the town's insurance would cover such an event as the boat ramp being "washed away" by flooding.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if there was ever such a catastrophic flooding event to wash the boat ramp away, the town may need to rely on other resources, such as the Hazard Mitigation Plan mentioned earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council chose to terminate its agreement with DWR, the town would need to give them a 180 day (6 month) notice as such.

Councilman Mitchell asked when the 180 day timeframe began.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he thought the agreement automatically renewed January 1st of each year. He stated, if Council desired to begin the termination process, he would investigate the matter further and work out the details and deadline date with his contact at DWR.

There was a consensus of Council to begin the termination process of the town's agreement with the Department of Wildlife Resources in regard to the English Park Boat Ramp.

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Mr. Coggsdale stated, if there was any follow-up needed from Council, he would place the item on their February Regular Council Meeting.

Town Attorney John Eller informed Council, in reference to “paragraph three” of the Town/DWR Agreement, the agreement automatically renewed on a “fiscal year” basis.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council desired, Town Staff would submit the town’s letter of intent to discontinue the agreement by January 31st. He stated this would meet the 180 day notice requirement to end the agreement by the start of the next fiscal year, July 2021.

All Council members were in consensus to allow Town Staff to do so.

There were no additional comments in regard to this item.

C. Utility Department Project Updates

i. McMinnis Water Line Project

Background:

The Town of Altavista hired Hurt & Proffitt to design the project that consists of replacing the existing 18,000 +/- feet of 8” water line between McMinnis Spring and the Bedford Avenue Tank. Hurt & Proffitt serves as the project engineer for design, bidding and construction administration; their contract totals \$104,940. At this time the plans, technical specifications and front-end documents are complete and staff is ready to move to the “bidding phase” of the project. The original cost estimate for this project was \$1,883,950.

Town Council previously approved the McMinnis Water Line Replacement Project as part of the Town’s Capital Improvement Plan in 2019. Mr. Bif Johnson of Hurt & Proffitt provided Council an update on this project at its January 12, 2021 Regular Meeting.

Altavista Utilities Director Tom Fore stated, at that time, staff was requesting Council’s consideration to move forward with bidding this project and placing the item on Town Council’s February 9th Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for approval to move forward.

All Council members were in consensus to do so

ii. Emergency Generator Project

Altavista Utilities Director Tom Fore introduced Scott Bortz, with Peed & Bortz, and stated Mr. Bortz would be updating Council on this item.

Mr. Bortz referenced the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Grant. He reminded Council the total award was \$523,005, with the town providing a 5% (\$24,905) match.

Mr. Bortz stated the generator project for the Staunton River Pump Station, Bedford Ave. Pump Station, McMinnis Spring and Reynolds Spring would become the Town of Altavista’s system-wide emergency power source for the town’s water supply.

Mr. Bortz stated three out of the four generators would be “ground mounted” with the fourth being on a platform.

Mayor Mattox asked if the emergency generators would cover town industry, or only residents.

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Utilities Director Tom Fore stated the emergency generator system would allow the town to supply water to all of its customers, including industrial.

Mr. Bortz stated the new emergency system did not cover the Altavista Water Treatment Plant, but the facility had its own generator for emergency use.

Mr. George asked if the new emergency generator system would help eliminate the need for the town's waste water overflow pond.

Mr. Fore stated the water supply emergency generator system would not cover the town's waste water facility. He stated, however, once the Altavista Waste Water Plant's new "Class A Facility" generator was up and running, the overflow pond would not be necessary.

Mr. Bortz stated, at that time, he and Town Staff were seeking direction from Council on moving forward with this project. He stated, the goal was to "advertise" by mid-February, with a "notice to proceed" by April, and completion by August or September of 2021 (before hurricane season).

Mayor Mattox asked Mr. Fore if he had reviewed the plan and was happy with the plan to move forward, to which Mr. Fore stated he was.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions in regard to this project/request, to which there were none.

All Council members were in consensus to move forward with this project and place the item on their February 9th Regular Meeting Consent Agenda.

D. Town of Hurt Request – Utility Connection Modification at WTP

Background:

The Town of Hurt recently received a Consent Order from the Virginia Department of Health regarding noncompliance with the disinfection by-products regulations. The requested piping revision would allow Hurt to obtain water from outside the Altavista Water Plant's "clearwell", enabling the Town of Altavista to modify its chlorine application point later in the treatment process. The modification would reduce the disinfection by-products formation and help the Town of Hurt regain regulatory compliance. The design and construction of this plan/request would be coordinated with the Town of Altavista's Water Treatment Plant Staff.

Altavista Utilities Director Tom Fore informed Council, if approved, the Town of Hurt had agreed to pay for the entire cost of the planned modification.

Mayor Mattox stated the Town of Hurt was one of the Town of Altavista's water customers. He stated he felt it was the town's duty to provide quality service to all of its customers. He shared his favor in Altavista "taking care of their neighbors" (the Town of Hurt).

Mr. Fore asked Town Council, if they agree to the Town of Hurt's request to install a new 2" Service line connection to the 16" water main in front of the Altavista Water Treatment Plant, he suggested they do so with the following agreement requirements:

1. That the Town of Altavista will allow this line until the Town of Altavista needs to relocate this line due to any future expansion. If it needs to be relocated the Town of Hurt will pay the relocation expense.
2. Install meter at the connection at the Town of Hurt's expense.
3. Town of Hurt maintain the lines from the end of the meter to the Town of Hurt Pump Station.
4. Restore the site to its original condition once the connection is made.

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Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions in regard to this project/request, to which there were none.

All Council members were in consensus to move forward with this project and place the item on their February 9th Regular Meeting Consent Agenda.

E. Tax Billing Discussion

Background:

Recently the Campbell County Board of Supervisors voted to implement “semi-annual tax billing” for real estate and personal property taxes. Town Staff had conversations with Calvin Massie, CC Commissioner of Revenue, in regard to this item and whether it would be a “requirement” of the Town of Altavista to do the same.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale informed Council that staff was still awaiting the answer on whether it would be a requirement for the town, or optional. He stated, however, staff would like to be proactive on this item.

Mr. Coggsdale stated staff looked at several options, in case Mr. Massie indicates that implementation would be optional.

- Keep real estate and personal property billing/payment on an annual basis (due December 5th) with continued education efforts that the town accepts payments at any time before the due date.
- Implement real estate and personal property semi-annual billing/payment, with an implementation date of June 2022.
- Implement real estate and personal property semi-annual billing/payment, with an implementation date of June 2023 (this would provide a year for the County to work through any

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated Town Staff had already been educating and promoting to town’s citizens their ability to pay on their town taxes at any time throughout the year.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, at that time, Town Staff was seeking direction from Council on town tax billing; whether to stay annual, or implement semi-annual billing.

Vice Mayor Bennett asked if a public hearing would be required for this item.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, a public hearing would only be necessary if the town needed to revise its Town Code to reflect a new billing cycle. He stated, otherwise, a public hearing was not required.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, if Council desired, they could choose to inquire for “public input” for this matter.

Councilman Mitchell asked, if a tax bill was sent out in June, did it have to be paid then, or could an individual pay on the bill until the December 5th deadline.

Mr. Coggsdale stated Campbell County’s new plan requires their taxes be “paid” semi-annually.

Mayor Mattox stated Altavista could choose to send tax bills semi-annually, but give citizens the choice to either pay semi-annually, or pay entire bill by December 5th.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council that citizens already have the option to pay on their tax bill throughout the year. He stated semi-annually tax “mailing” would involve twice the work for Town Staff, if the bills are still due in December.

Mr. Mitchell shared his favor with Altavista keeping its current “annual” tax billing.

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Vice Mayor Bennett shared his favor with semi-annual tax billing. He stated some individuals like having the option to pay a “big” bill (such as real estate and property taxes) in halves, or installments, rather than all at one time.

Mr. Bennett also reminded Council the Town of Altavista would receive a one-time 50% “windfall” of tax revenue, if they chose to implement semi-annual tax billing.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale confirmed Mr. Bennett’s stated. He stated the first year the billing would be implemented, the town would receive approximately \$250,000 in additional tax revenue.

Councilman Emerson asked Council to also consider that semi-annual tax billing would change a lot of other things the town does as well.

Mr. Emerson referenced his employment position at Campbell County. He informed Council he had to turn in his annual budget two to three months earlier than normal, due to the county’s new semi-annual tax plan.

Vice Mayor Bennett stated the first year was a transition year, and the extra work associated with semi-annual billing would “level out” over time.

Mayor Mattox asked Altavista Treasurer/Finance Director Tobie Shelton what percentage of citizens currently pay their tax bills on time.

Mrs. Shelton informed Council approximately 95% of Altavista’s citizens were current with their town tax bills.

Mayor Mattox stated the town would only be servicing 5% of its citizens if it went to semi-annual tax billing.

Councilman Mitchell stated he did not agree with changing to semi-annual tax billing for only 5% of the town’s citizens, when the citizens of Altavista already have the option to pay their town taxes ahead of the deadline and throughout the year.

Mr. Mitchell suggested the town continue educating the citizens of that option, and consider advertising the option more often throughout the year.

Councilman Emerson stated, whether town taxes are due in June or December, citizens are responsible for budgeting for that bill. He agreed with Mr. Mitchell for the town to continue educating town citizens of their option to “pay ahead”.

Councilman George stated he would defer his decision until more information was available.

Councilman Lowman asked what effect it would have on Town Staff if the town went to semi-annual tax billing.

Mrs. Shelton reminded Council, during tax billing season, Town Staff prints their own tax bills, hand-stuffed each tax bill envelope, and reconciled each account, so staff would be affected by accruing those large tasks twice a year, instead of once.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, while it was important for Council to have the discussion in regard to semi-annual tax billing, but a decision did not have to be made until staff was informed by Campbell County if it would be required or not.

Vice Mayor Bennett reminded Council there was only one other county in Altavista and Campbell County’s surrounding jurisdiction that did not have semi-annual tax billing, which was Amherst County.

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Mayor Mattox asked if the town offered an option for tax bills to be “auto-drafted”.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the town did have the auto-draft option for utility bills, but currently not tax bills.

Mrs. Shelton stated she would investigate the possibility further for an auto-draft option for tax billing.

Councilman Emerson suggested town staff incorporate a “public inquiry” with the town’s next quarterly utility bills (April 2021).

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional questions or comments in regard to semi-annual tax billing, to which there were none.

There was a consensus of Council to place this item on a future agenda, to allow time for Town Staff to hear from Campbell County to whether or not the Town of Altavista would be required to adhere to semi-annual tax billing.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated he would keep Council informed when staff received additional information from Campbell County in regard to this matter.

F. English Park Recreation Project Discussion

Background:

Councilman George requested that two items, related to proposed improvements in English Park, be placed on Council’s agenda. The two items relate to (1) a new restroom facility along Eagle Trail (parking lot area), and (2) construction of new athletic fields in the newer section of English Park.

Mayor Mattox stated, since Councilman George (present via phone) was having difficulty hearing the meeting over the phone, he asked Councilman George if he would like to postpone this discussion until he was physically present for a meeting.

Councilman George stated he was in favor of placing the item on a future agenda.

G. Avoca Board Request – to Amend Security Camera System Project

Background:

Avoca Executive Director Mike Hudson presented the original security camera system request to Town Council at their August 11, 2020 Regular Council Meeting, which was approved. The cost was \$3,262.50 and Council authorized the use of the “reserve” maintenance funds. Since Avoca is a town-owned property, the town requested the Avoca Board always run projects by Town Council for approval, especially if they would like to utilize the “reserve” maintenance funds (proceeds from the sale of the town’s previous Life Saving Crew building).

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale informed Council the Avoca Board of Directors recently voted to request two additional security cameras, to be purchased and installed on the Avoca premises. He stated the anticipated cost was \$1,600 and Avoca would like to utilize the “reserve” maintenance funds that were set aside for Avoca.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager who was in control of the fore-mentioned “reserve” maintenance funds.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, currently, the reserve funds from the sale of the town’s previous Life Saving Crew Building was controlled by Town Council. He stated, if Avoca has a project request to utilize the funds, the request was brought before Council for approval consideration.

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Mr. Coggsdale asked Mr. Hudson if the request was time-sensitive, or if an approval could wait until the February 9th Regular Council Meeting.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to Avoca's request, to which there were none.

There was a consensus of Council to place this item on the February 9th Regular Council Meeting Consent Agenda.

7. Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items)

There were no town citizens present at the January 26th, 2021 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 items or concerns for discussion, to which there were none.

9. Closed Session

CLOSED SESSION

DATE: Tuesday January 26, 2021

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 and consideration of prospective candidates for employment; and performance of specific public officers/employees of any public body. (AOT Main Street Coordinator position).

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Bennett, and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.
Motion carried.

VOTE:	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

Council went into closed session at 7:30 PM.

Notice was given that Council was back in regular session 7:35 PM.

FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Bennett, seconded by Councilman Mitchell, 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 provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

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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
	Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mayor Michael Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Dr. Scott Lowman	Yes

Notice was given, there was no official action taken by Council during this closed session.

10. 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 7:38 PM.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk