

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
WORK SESSION MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017 – 5:30 PM
ARTHUR CAMPBELL ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Work Session meeting of the Abingdon Town Council was held on Monday, February 6, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Arthur Campbell Room of the Municipal Building.

Welcome by Mayor Lowe

A. ROLL CALL

Members of Council Present:

Mrs. Cathy Lowe
Mr. Richard E. Humphreys
Mr. Robert M. Howard
Mrs. M. Cindy Patterson
Mr. J. Wayne Craig

Administrative/Town Staff:

Greg Kelly, Town Manager
Cecile Rosenbaum, Asst. Town
Manager/Clerk
Deb Icenhour, Town Attorney
Chuck Banner, Treasurer
Kim Kingsley, Paralegal/Deputy Treasurer
Sean Taylor, Planning Dept.
John Dew, Dir. Of Construction/Public Services
Kevin Costello, Dir. of Tourism
C. J. McGlothlin, IT Department
Tonya Triplett, Community Dev. Coordinator
Kevin Sigmon, Arborist
Jennifer Montgomery, Main Street Director

Visitors:

Scott Sikes, Kathy Shearer, Dr. Charles Bartlett,
James Anderson, Carolyn Lee, Rich Macbeth
and others

The Council discussed the following:

C1. Presentation by Kathy Shearer and Dr. Charles Bartlett regarding possible grave sites on The Meadows property.

Kathy Shearer with Washington County Historical Society presented to Council that during the 1800's graves were not marked with headstones but with small stones/rocks as foot/head makers surrounded by a fence. Ms. Shearer and Dr.

Bartlett indicated that they felt the Meadows property should be tested for possible grave sites and offered to review the property prior to any development. Mr. Humphreys inquired about the status of the permits currently pending with Corps of Engineers and DEQ for the Meadows property. Ms. Rosenbuam responded that at several meetings she attended with both agencies, it was highly recommended that nothing on the property be disturbed until after the permit process is complete. After lengthy discussion, the Council agreed to discuss the matter further during the regular meeting.

C2. Presentation by Jennifer Montgomery, Abingdon Main Street

Jennifer Montgomery, Director of Abingdon Main Street, presented a Letter of Agreement between Abingdon Main Street and Virginia Main Street which will establish the continuation of the Main Street program. Ms. Montgomery stated that the letter of agreement basically set forth expectations and performance standards for grants, etc. She stated that she would be asking the Council to request Mr. Kelly to sign on behalf of the Town. Mayor Lowe stated that she had reviewed the letter of agreement and that she was concerned that Section 1. Requirements of the Local Organization #2 needed to be discussed more prior to signing. Mayor Lowe noted that the letter specified the development of plan and she wanted to review that plan before authorizing the Town Manager to sign the document. Ms. Montgomery agreed to provide the plan at the March work session meeting.

D1. Update on Heritage TV

Mayor Lowe reported that she had met with representatives from Heritage television which was interested in broadcasting the monthly council meetings. Mr. Kelly noted that he had spoken with the Director of Information Technology, Floyd Bailey and he had indicated that the request could be accommodated to allow monthly meetings to be televised. Ms. Patterson commented that she would like to see Council's work session meetings recorded as well and hold all meetings in the Council Chambers. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that staff would provide an estimate on recording equipment for the Arthur Campbell meeting room at the March work session meeting.

D2. Update on partnership with VHCC

Councilman Howard updated Council on the project to bring more VHCC students into town to shop and dine. Mr. Howard noted that a banner had been designed to hang on town light poles and presented a design to review. He stated that quotes for 50 double sided banners and bracket in the amount of \$5,517.63. Mr. Howard stated that VHCC has indicated that they will purchase ½ and ask the Town to purchase the remainder at a costs of \$2,758.82. Abingdon Main Street, Community Development

Coordinator and Mr. Howard continue to work on details regarding the student discount program.

D3. Update on Appalachian Power project involving Virginia Highlands Airport

Mayor Lowe reported on current bills before the General Assembly that may affect Appalachian Power and their west end upgrade project in the County as it relates to the Virginia Highlands Airport property.

E1. Presentation by John Dew, Director of Public Services/Construction Regarding award of contract for construction, engineering, and inspection services for the Green Spring Road Realignment project.

John Dew recommended to the Council to enter into an agreement with AMT for construction, engineering and inspection services for the Green Spring Road Realignment project. He requested Council to consider authorizing Mr. Kelly to draw execute all documents with AMT. After lengthy discussion, the matter would be voted upon during the regular meeting.

E2. Consideration of properties available for purchase by the Town

Mayor Lowe stated that three property owners had contacted the Town with regard to purchase. After discussion regarding the properties, the matter will be addressed at the regular work session.

E3. Update on employee health insurance renewal

Greg Kelly advised the Council that he had been notified that the annual health insurance will increase by \$123,000. Mr. Kelly noted that Council had agreed at the January meeting to send out an RFP for health insurance and they are due on February 21, 2017. Mr. Kelly commented that he would update Council at the March meeting.

E4. Update on form for use by Town Arborist

Ms. Icenhour, Town Attorney presented the form Council had requested at their January meeting to notice property owners that the Town may trim trees, overhang, or foliage. Council agreed that the form was sufficient.

E5. Update on Town ordinances

Ms. Icenhour, Town Attorney stated that would be presenting the second reading of a Zoning ordinance during the regular meeting. Further, she stated that she felt the next ordinance that she would be proposing would be changes to the Business License, including lodging tax and/or meals tax for Airbnb and/or Homestay. Discussion ensued regarding the issuance of business licenses and Ms. Icenhour commented that she would provide a draft of the ordinance at the March 6, 2017 work session.

E6. Update on FRP for Town's liability insurance

Cecile Rosenbaum stated that the property and casualty insurance will increase \$60,000 for the upcoming year. As instructed, an RFP has been sent and due on February 24, 2017. An update will be provided during the March 6, 2016 meeting.

E7. Reports on town owned properties

This matter will be on the March work session agenda for discussion.

E8. Update relative to former auditing firm

Cecile Rosenbaum updated the Council stating that the information had been filed with the Virginia Board of Accountancy, however the Town has received no additional contact/information.

E9. Update on mission statements relative to boards and commissions

Cecile Rosenbaum reported that the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Review Board were working on statements and would hope to present them at the March 6, 2017 work session for review prior to placing them on the Town's webpage.

E10. Report on activities of Community Development Coordinator

Tonya Triplett reported that she had been attending lots of meetings, including the EDA and the Business Challenge to name a few, and helped to develop a community survey to better understand the community's needs. Ms. Triplett noted that she would be moving on February 7 to the CVB. She further stated that she had made headway in obtaining the contact information for property owners with vacant buildings.

E11. Update on information provided to Council relative to the West Main Street near Brown Dental Associates

Councilman Humphreys stated that he would like to view this area again to discuss a possible solution. After discussion, Mr. Kelly suggested that Wayne Craig, John Dew, Mr. Humphreys and himself view the area in question to discuss prior to the March 6th work session meeting.

E12. Update on research requested at January Council meeting relative to air quality concerns surrounding the Meadows property

Mr. Craig inquired about air quality issues relative to the Meadows property and Council agreed to discuss it further in the regular meeting.

F1. Update on the tennis court air dome at the Coomes Center

Mr. Kelly commented that all indications were that the tennis dome will be too costly for the town to put up and Kevin Worley was seeking possible ways to donate it to another business.

F2. Update on Urban Pathway Project

Mr. Dew, Director of Public Services/Construction reported that the Urban Path project was before the Washington County Board of Supervisors on February 14, 2017 and that he has also been in contact with the other property owner and his attorney to move this matter forward.

F3. Update on VDOT upkeep of exit ramps

Mr. Dew stated that he again contacted the Abingdon residency requesting a land use permit. He reiterated that he strongly objects to the Town staff picking up debris Exit 17. Also, Deb Icenhour stated that she had contacted the Town's insurance provider and they had indicated that they did not provide coverage for staff if they were to be injured while working on an Exit ramp. After discussion, Council instructed Mr. Dew to contact VDOT to express a need for clean up to be more consistent, particularly during times the town is holding events.

F4. Update on split rail fence at Exit 1

After discussion, Council instructed Mr. Dew to obtain prices for split rail fencing for the Exit 17 ramp. Mr. Dew indicated that he would seek quotes for cost of installing split rail fencing.

F5. Update on Tourism Zone project

Kevin Costello, Dir. of Tourism inquired if Council had additional question about the Tourism Zone plan he previously presented to Council. Council asked if Mr. Costello could break the zones into different areas defined on a map. It was suggested that we start with the downtown first and end with the interstate zone. Council noted that they may wish to discuss this further during Mr. Costello's budget meeting with Council.

Mayor Lowe declared a 5-minute recess for Council and Town staff to reconvene in the Council Chambers for the regular 7:30 meeting.


Cathy C. Lowe, Mayor


Cecile Rosenbaum, Town Clerk