

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2013 – 6:30 P.M.
DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Work session meeting of the Abingdon Town Council was held on Wednesday, February 20, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Municipal Building.

A. ROLL CALL

Members of Council Present:

Mayor Edward B. Morgan
Mrs. Cathy Lowe, Vice Mayor
Mr. Jason N. Berry
Mr. Richard E. Humphreys
Mr. Robert M. Howard

Administrative Staff:

Gregory W. Kelly, Town Manager
Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk
Garrett Jackson, Asst. Town Manager/Dir. of Planning
Deborah Icenhour, Town Attorney
John Dew, Dir. of Public Services/Construction
Mark Godbey, Town Treasurer

The following items were discussed by Council:

1. Mr. Kelly, Town Manager presented the Council with a history of the Kroger Fuel Center issue that was recently before the Planning Commission for consideration. Mr. Kelly reported that Kroger Fuel Center had requested a Certificate of Appropriateness to locate on the property currently owned by Shoney's, which is currently in the process of building a new restaurant on their site. In addition, Mr. Kelly noted that the property was properly zoned for this use and that it was only before the Planning Commission because it is located in the historic entrance overlay district and as such, required the planning Commission's approval of the outer appearance of the building. Mr. Kelly noted that the Planning Commission, in the interest of safety and compromise, had approved the COA with a restriction on delivery times of fuel to between the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Mr. Kelly indicated that he felt Kroger would appeal the delivery time restriction on the COA and that appeal would be before Council for consideration at the March meeting. Mr. Jackson, Assistant Town Manager commented that Kroger was unable to consider another location for their fuel center because their corporate office required the fuel centers to be located so many feet from the main Kroger grocery building and this site met that

qualification. Mr. Humphreys noted his opposition to the location of the fuel center because of the increased traffic it generate on Cummings Street and recommended that the Council consider declaring no left hand turns by motorists exiting all business establishments that front Cummings Street. Mr. Howard expressed his disagreement with the proposal of no left hand turns on Cummings. Discussion ensued on the issue and Mr. Kelly commented that he felt Council might want to consider asking the Planning Commission to consider reviewing the zoning in the entrance corridor overlay which could provide a clearer plan to deal with these types of request that may come up in the future. Mr. Dew and Mr. Jackson commented that the Council may be able to consider asking that Kroger have a traffic study completed that would address the safety concerns expressed by the Council. However, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Kelly noted that this was something that was allowed for in the subdivision ordinance and was not expressly granted in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Humphreys asked that the town staff prepare an appropriate motion that Council could consider if they decide to ask Kroger to procure a traffic study.

2. Mr. Jackson indicated that he had filed the grant application relative to the pursuit of a mixed use development in the town. Mr. Jackson reported that he would know the results of the grant application by the first of April. Mayor Morgan asked town staff to proceed with drafting the RFP for this project so it would be ready to go out as soon as the grant application results are known.
3. Mr. Godbey, Town Treasurer reported on the recent increase in the assessments of real property located in the town. Mr. Godbey inquired if the Council wished to leave the real property tax rate at its current rate of \$.28 cents per \$100.00. Discussion ensued and Mr. Kelly commented that it would be his recommendation that the increase in tax revenue gained from the property assessment increase be used for the payment of debt service on the loan the Town will be acquiring soon for the K-Va-T obligation. The general informal consensus of the Council members was for the Town Manager to proceed with the advertisement for a public hearing for the real property tax rate for the town to remain at \$.28 cents per \$100.00 for FY 2013/2014.
4. Mr. Kelly commented on the neighborhood meeting held at the Senior Center on February 5th for the Whites Mill/Court/Oakhill sidewalk project. Mr. Kelly noted that several of the property owners affected by the project had reservations about signing the easements the town would need to proceed with the project. Mr. Kelly commented that town staff continued to work to obtain the necessary easements but asked the Council how they wished to proceed if a property owner refused to grant the town an easement. The general consensus of the Council members was for the staff to move forward with acquiring easements for this project and to use the eminent domain process when formally authorized by the Council at a later date, if necessary.
5. Mr. Howard inquired if the Council members would consider appropriating funding to the Washington County Life Savings Crew toward their capital project of a new building. Mr. Howard indicated that services provided by the Crew had been beneficial to many town residents and the funding would help with their project. Discussion ensued about an event to present the Life Saving Crew with the donation. Council members agreed on the donation amount of \$20,000 and asked that the formal appropriation be listed on the upcoming March 4th Council agenda for action.
6. Mr. Kelly commented that Mr. Godbey had gathered bids from several local banks relative to acquiring two new town trolleys from Kannapolis Charters in Kannapolis, North Carolina. Mr. Kelly indicated that the best interest rate provided was from BB&T Bank at 1.69% for three (3) years on \$160,000. Mr. Kelly indicated that Council would need to hold a public hearing on the

proposed financing and it would appear on the March 4th regular agenda for consideration. Discussion ensued about the possibility of renovating the existing structure on the Associated Tree Property on Russell Road for use in housing the town trolleys and the District 3 Office. Mrs. Lowe indicated that she hoped the main focus of that property would be for additional parking for Little League baseball games.

7. Mr. Berry provided an update on the King School of Medicine project and indicated that he would keep Council apprised of new developments as they occur.
8. Mr. Dew commented on the status of the Country Club Stormwater Management Project. He reported that he hoped to have the bid opening for the project on the April 1st Council agenda for consideration. Mr. Kelly reported on a recent complaint received from a Country Club property owner who is not a party to the current stormwater management project.
9. Ms. Icenhour, Town Attorney reported that she was glad to be back to work after her recent surgery and recuperation.
10. Mr. Howard inquired about the status of the mural project that is being spearheaded by Advance Abingdon. Mr. Howard inquired about the removal of the concrete pad and funding of \$5,000 needed for the project. Mr. Kelly indicated the funding request could come from the line item already in the current budget for the construction of a restroom facility, which is a project that is now on hold.
11. Mr. Humphreys reported on the St. Patrick's Day event that the Senior Center is holding and inquired if the Council would be willing to appropriate \$750.00 to the event. Ms. Rosenbaum indicated that she would add that item to the March 4th agenda for consideration. Mr. Humphreys also inquired about the status of the Pawnbroker's Ordinance.
12. Mr. Berry reported that he was contacted about the sale of the livestock building off of Route 75 and indicated that the caller wondered if the Council had an interest in purchasing the property.
13. Mayor Morgan reported on his attendance at a recent Washington County Board of Supervisors meeting relative to a resolution supporting Crooked Road's designation as a National Heritage Trail.
14. Mrs. Lowe reported on a change in the Directorship at Heartwood with the recent hiring of Lou Ellsworth as Acting Director. Mrs. Lowe also reported on the Senior Center and the challenges facing the Finance Committee.
15. Mr. Kelly reported on his plan to hire Betsy White as a consultant for the town's Cultural Heritage Initiative once a final report was received from Ashley Cooper on the town's historical properties.
16. Mayor Morgan inquired about the status of the Arthur Campbell awards.
17. Mrs. Lowe reported that she has a new grandson born earlier in the week.

Mayor Morgan declared the meeting adjourned.

Edward B. Morgan, Mayor

Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk