

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2009 – 5:30 P.M.
DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A work session of the Abingdon Town Council was held on Monday, February 2, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Municipal Building.

A. ROLL CALL

Members of Council Present: Mayor Edward B. Morgan
Lois H. Humphreys
Mrs. Cathy Lowe
Mr. Jason N. Berry

Absent: Dr. French H. Moore, Jr., Vice Mayor

Administrative Staff: Gregory W. Kelly, Town Manager
Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk
Debbie Icenhour, Town Attorney
Floyd Bailey, Director of Information Technology
Jim Cowart, Economic Development Coordinator
Rob Case, IT Department
Myra Cook, Director of Tourism
Kevin Worley, Dir. Parks and Recreation
John Dew, Dir. of Public Services/Construction
Jim Smith, Town Engineer/Dir. of Wastewater Operations
Beth Minnick, GIS Coordinator
Tyler Vencill, JR Engineer
Aaron Widener, Visitor Center Manager

Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order and Cecile Rosenbaum, Town Clerk called the roll.

The following items were discussed by Council:

1. Myra Cook, Director of Tourism, gave a presentation on new ideas and concepts that she and Town staff members have been working on regarding Tourism in the Town of Abingdon. Town staff members, Aaron Widener, Visitor Center Manager and Jim Cowart, Economic Development Coordinator introduced several of the concepts that would help promote Abingdon as tourist destination. The new concepts included the tourism theme, "Indulge Your Senses" and included ideas such as a Mountain Bike Festival, Movies in the Park, sponsored by the Main Street group, Art in Yard at the Fields Penn House with a storyteller, Easter and Christmas themed events targeted towards families, Blues and Bluegrass Festival, fly fishing and bass fishing events, bird watching events, wildlife and photography exhibits, historical/architectural dig opportunities on Town historic properties,

and other events and ideas. Council members responded with questions and suggestions and expressed their desire to see these ideas come to fruition.

2. Mr. Morgan reported on his meeting with the members of the ElderSpirit board and the Council's dinner with the community. Mr. Morgan indicated that the board had informed him that they had enough funds to carry them through March as it stand right now.
3. Mr. Kelly passed out a letter to the Council members regarding a request from the Youth Coordinator for the Virginia Highlands Festival. The letter indicated that the Festival was requesting to use the Farmer's Market to hold their children's activities and asked if the Council would approve the request. Discussion ensued and the Council, by consensus, denied the request to use the Farmer's Market because it's intrusion on the already scheduled market days but suggested other locations such as Veterans Memorial Park, the Creep Trail Y Park, and Latture Field if it did not conflict with other events at that location.
4. Mr. Morgan commented that he would like to see a sign placed on chain fencing that was placed across the entrance to "Retirement" located on The Mustering Grounds.
5. Mr. Morgan suggested that the Council may want to consider establishing a public oversight committee to review the budget.
6. Mr. Kelly advised the Council members that the Nicholas Knoll Development had been reviewed by the Town Engineer, Jim Smith, and given the Council's current position on water related issues in Town, he was comfortable with Mr. Smith's denial of their request for variance. Mr. Kelly indicated he felt that the standards set forth in MS19 should be strictly adhered too until such time as the Council formally takes other action. Council members concurred with Mr. Kelly's comments and no formal action was taken on the matter.
7. Council members commented that they would like to have the minutes from the Fire Department meetings included in their monthly packets.
8. Mrs. Lowe inquired if the IDA had been able to secure a quorum for a meeting and Mr. Cowart indicated that they had not but he would continue to try.

On motion of Mrs. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Berry, the Council recessed in order to begin their regular 7:30 p.m. meeting.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Berry	Aye
Mrs. Lowe	Aye
Mrs. Humphreys	Aye
Mayor Morgan	Aye

The motion carried.

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Edward B. Morgan, Mayor

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Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk