

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 – 6:30 P.M.
DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Work session meeting of the Abingdon Town Council was held on Wednesday, September 18, 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. 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
Sean Taylor, Assist Planning Dir.
Kevin Sigmon, Town Arborist

Visitors:

Daniel and Monica Shew, Betsy White, Daveena Sexton,
Steve Burke, Mike White, and Vickye Hall

The following items were discussed by Council:

1. Daniel Shew, Chairman of the Fields Penn Committee addressed the Council to report on a recommendation from the group. Mr. Shew commented that the Committee would like to recommend that the Town consider hiring a full-time staff person to work at the Fields Penn Museum, emphasizing its importance to the town as a house museum. Mr. Humphreys expressed his agreement for the recommendation as a Council member representative on the Committee. Mr. Jackson, Assistant Town Manager, commented that he did not agree with the staff recommendation and reported that 2 part-time staff persons had recently been hired. Mr. Kelly recommended that the Council consider the report by Betsy White, Consultant for Cultural Heritage Initiative as it relates to the Fields Penn Museum.
2. Betsy White, Consultant for the Cultural Heritage Initiative provided Council with a summary of the report she has prepared relative to town owned properties Retirement, Fairview, Fields Penn, Summers Law Office, Findlay House, Hassinger House and the Train Station as well as gardens and pathways located throughout town. Ms. White noted that the town may want to consider planting a lavender garden, which is a popular herb used for lotions, cooking and herbal

remedies. Mr. Kelly noted that the Council should consider adopting the report, once they have had adequate time to review. Mr. Humphreys expressed his desire to see Fields Penn Museum open October during the fall leaf season as well as a flow chart on how Ms. White would see her report recommendations develop over the next several years.

3. Daveena Sexton, Director of the Abingdon Senior Center thanked the Council members for their support of the Center but noted that they were struggling financially during the economic downturn. Ms. Sexton commented that the reduction in support from United Way had impacted the organization and she expected to come back before Council in the present budget year to ask for a supplemental appropriation in addition to the annual appropriation already approved.
4. Steven Burke reported to Council on his recent dismissal from the Abingdon Fire Department and referred to a report he and Mike White, former member of the Department had prepared detailing their experience. Mr. Burke asked the Council to intervene and direct the Chief to accept he and Mr. White back into the department. Mayor Morgan noted that Council may want to consider this matter at the October meeting. Ms. Icenhour commented that the Town Charter provides only that Council appoint the Chief and Assistant Fire Chief at the organizational meeting every 2 years.
5. Kevin Sigmon, Town Arborist addressed Council about the upcoming tree removal project on Cummings Street, adjacent to Veterans Memorial Park. Mr. Sigmon also reported on the town's brochure regarding the Tree Initiative.
6. Ms. Icenhour, Town Attorney reported that she had filed the necessary Writ of Petition to allow for a special election to be held in May to fill the vacant term of Jason Berry, who resigned from Council on September 3rd, 2013.
7. Mayor Morgan reported on a meeting he had attended regarding the Infill Development project.
8. Mr. Kelly noted that he expected to include a recommendation to Council on the October regular agenda relative to a refinancing option for existing town debt, through Davenport & Company.

Mayor Morgan declared the meeting adjourned.

Edward B. Morgan, Mayor

Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk