



**TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA
TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT
THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021 – 8:30 am
JUBILEE HOUSE RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER
822 East Main Street, Abingdon, Virginia**

DRAFT AGENDA

A. WELCOME – *Mayor Webb*

B. ROLL CALL – *Kim Kingsley, Clerk*

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – *Mayor Webb*

D. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS – *Kimball Payne, The Berkley Group*

- Suggested goals for the retreat:
 - Get to know each other better and build relationships
 - Work as a team and develop consensus
 - Identify steps to improve Council effectiveness
 - Gain a better understanding of Council, Mayor, and Manager roles and responsibilities
 - Develop a plan for utilizing ARPA funding
 - Identify major goals and priorities
 - Identify objectives, with assigned responsibility and timelines, to advance the goals
 - Craft a work plan for the next 18 to 24 months
 - Understand constraints to progress and identify means to overcome them

- Themes that may run through the day:
 - Council dynamics and processes
 - Council/manager/mayor roles, responsibilities, and relationship
 - Public engagement
 - Limitations – staff, finances, time, statutes, Dillon Rule

- Ground rules
 - Everyone participates
 - Engage
 - Be honest
 - Listen to each other
 - Respect different opinions
 - No idea is too outlandish
 - Seek to understand

- Ask questions
- Seek consensus (formal action at a future Council meeting)
- Use the parking lot for issues that may evade consensus or require more background
- Have fun
- We will take breaks when it seems appropriate

Questions for Council:

- *Why do you serve on Council? What would you like to be remembered for? Tell your colleagues something about yourself that they probably don't know.*
- *What do you hope Council accomplishes by the end of the retreat?*
- *Describe the Town of Abingdon in the future (5,10, 20 years). What would be different/better as a result of this Council's initiatives?*

What the Facilitator Heard During Interviews with Council Members

Common Themes

- ARPA funding and how to use it
- Infrastructure projects: Park St, Main St. flooding, Fields Penn House; Meadows complex
- CIP
- Council relations; unity, communications
- Council/Manager roles and responsibilities
- Rules of Procedure for effective meetings
- Outsourcing operations at the WWTP

Other Issues/Ideas

- Tourism plan
- Non-profit advisory council
- Charter change
- Historic properties
- Events philosophy
- Mountain bike park
- Stable finances
- Disposition of underutilized Town properties

Discuss Town Council Expectations, Relationships, and Effectiveness

- *How is Council doing as a governing body?*
- *What is working well?*
- *What areas might need improvement?*

- *Are there any expectations that are not being met?*
- *What is the quality of communications among Council members?*
- *How effective, useful, or relevant is Council's Code of Ethics? What changes might be appropriate?*
- *How effective, useful, or relevant are Council's Meeting Rules and Regulations? What changes might be appropriate?*

Discuss Council/Manager Roles and Responsibilities and Expectations

- *How is the relationship between the Manager and Council?*
- *Are roles, responsibilities, and boundaries understood and respected by Council members, employees, and the public?*
- *Are performance expectations documented, understood, and followed up on?*
- *What areas need clarification or improvement?*
- *What is the quality of communications between the Manager and Council?*

Discuss Town Operations

- *Are there other areas of Town operations that should be addressed?*
- *What is the Town doing well?*
- *What could be done better?*
- *Is there anything that the Town is not doing that it should be doing?*
- *Is there anything that the Town is doing that it could stop doing?*

12:00 p.m. Break for Lunch

12:30 p.m. Reconvene

Discussion of Specific Topics

1. How to utilize ARPA funding: principles, constraints, approach
2. Capital Improvement Plan Development
3. Alternative Service Delivery Principles and Philosophy
4. Anything else identified by Council

Identify Priorities, Assign Responsibilities and Timelines

Discuss Immediate Needs

- *What issues need immediate (within FY 2022) action?*
- *What three things would you like the Council and staff to accomplish over the next 18-24 months?*

Longer Term Planning

- *What longer term projects would be beneficial and worth initiating?*
 - *It might require a multi-year commitment of resources.*
 - *The payoff might be further out.*
 - *The impact might be greater and longer lasting.*

Organizing for Success

- *What is needed to accomplish the tasks?*
 - *What assets have you got presently that can be utilized?*
 - *What limitations are you facing, if any? (staff, finances, time, consensus, commitment, statute, policy, practice, etc.)*
 - *What can you do to overcome the limitations?*
- *What is Council's role in ensuring success? What does Council need from staff?*
- *What information would be useful to Council to provide accountability: periodic reports, financial reports, project progress reports?*
- *How will your plan and progress with implementation be communicated to the public?*
- *How and how often will the work plan be reviewed and modified?*

4:15 p.m. Wrap Up

- *Is there any unfinished work?*
- *What next steps do you want to take?*

Facilitator's responsibilities and comments

Final comments from the Mayor, Council members, and the Town Manager

E. ADJOURNMENT