

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026 – 6:30 pm
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

The meeting of the Abingdon Town Council was held on Monday, March 2, 2026, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

A. WELCOME – *Mayor Anderson*

B. ROLL CALL (VIDEO 6:05 – 6:14)

Members of Council Present:	Mrs. Quetsch Vice Mayor Austin Mayor Anderson
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Members of Council Absent:	Mr. Webb Mrs. Pillion
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C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

D. PRAYER

E. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (VIDEO 7:28 – 7:56)

On motion by Mrs. Quetsch, seconded by Vice Mayor Austin, Council approved the agenda as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (VIDEO 7:57 – 8:18)

- February 17, 2026

On motion by Vice Mayor Austin, seconded by Mrs. Quetsch, approved the February 17, 2026 minutes as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye

Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

H. PROCLAMATIONS

I. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public hearing for a proposed Special Use Permit for a home occupation, category c, detached art studio in the High-Density Residential District (R-3). Tax Map No. 014-12-31, 338 Lowland Street, Abingdon, Virginia. **(VIDEO 8:28 – 14:43)**

Senior Planner Gabe Cristofari presented that the applicant/owner requested SUP to operate a professional art studio in a detached accessory building as a Home Occupation Category C in R-3. Building formerly occupied by Grace Lutheran Church; applicant intends to convert church building into single-family dwelling and accessory building to art studio with occasional small classes.

Key Findings/Conditions Discussed:

- Compatible with R-3 district; reduced intensity compared to prior church use.
- Natural screening exists via tree line; recommended to remain intact.
- Parking interpreted as 3 spaces minimum total (2 residential + 1 per 500 sq ft studio).
- Signage: one sign allowed; existing monument sign may be used or replaced (≤ 4 sq ft; non-illuminated). Portable sign allowed per code limits.
- Planning Commission recommended conditions including identifying adequate parking with striping and metes and bounds of property.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments, the public hearing was closed.

2. Public hearing on proposed Special Use Permit for Cottage using Development in the High-Density Residential District (R-3). Tax Map ID 011-1-13, TBD Taylor Street, Abingdon, VA. **(VIDEO 14:43 – 51:13)**

Senior Planner Gabe Cristofari conveyed the SUP to allow cottage housing development in R-3. Site is ~2.33 acres with steep topography and existing vegetative buffer; access via Taylor Street. Plan proposes 15 cottages with shared open space. Mr. Cristofari discussed that the density compliant with code; 15 units proposed, Common open space features: dog park, pollinator garden, picnic area. Private open space minimums and fence standards reviewed, Parking: 2 spaces per unit required; clustered parking due to topography; interior landscaping required, Lighting plan required with site plan submission; Monument sign allowed (≤ 6 ft tall; ≤ 16 sq ft; non-illuminated) and Stormwater/erosion control plan to be submitted; applicant working with Town on stormwater improvements and match funding.

Mr. Cristofari stated that he had received correspondence that he would like to enter into Record. An email from adjacent owner Marie A. McCollum English, PhD (New Jersey address) opposing the project, citing concerns about neighborhood character, density/traffic, outreach to residents, and safety/crime concerns. Staff noted state-required notice procedures were followed (newspaper, certified mail to adjacent owners, website posting, and on-site posting).

Mr. Cristofari stated that staff noted R-3 zoning permits higher density by-right; this proposal is fewer units than some by-right options; Applicant representatives described the project as workforce/attainable housing using a community land trust model to preserve long-term attainability (resale restriction/ground lease); and Timeline goal mentioned: have units started/underway by December (year implied 2026).

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing. Speakers included Sean McMurray (Wellspring Foundation/AHHP) spoke in support, describing intended workforce households and commitment to quality construction. Mayana Rice (Wellspring Foundation/AHHP) presented project overview, explained CLT model, discussed compatibility, open space, infrastructure coordination, and alternative design standards.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing.

3. Public hearing for proposed Zoning Text amendment - Chapter 44. Article 5. Section 5-3-1. Boundaries and proposed Zoning Map amendment to extend the Entrance Corridor Overlay District to the following parcels: **(VIDEO 51:13 – 1:00:43)**

017-1-4	017-17-8	104-A-14	104A-A-34
017-1-4A	104-11-9	104A-2-1	104A-A-41
017-1-48	104-A-13	104A-4-2	104A-A-42
017-17-7	Portion of 104A-3-1	104A-8-4	104A-A-43
017-17-6	Portion of 104A-3-2	104A-A-32	

in the R-3 Residential, B-2 General Business, and OI Office and Institutional Districts.

Gabe Cristofari stated that proposed overlay expansion intended to ensure attractive, well-planned corridor standards for primary entrance into Town. Underlying zoning classifications would not change. Staff noted clarification that residential parcels not adjacent to Porterfield would not be included.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing.

J. RESOLUTIONS

1. **Proposed Special Use Permit** for a home occupation, category c, detached art studio in the High-Density Residential District (R-3). Tax Map No. 014-12-31, 338 Lowland Street, Abingdon, VA. (VIDEO 1:00:45 – 1:01:48)

On motion by Vice Mayor Austin, seconded by Mrs. Quetsch, approved the special use permit with Planning Commission's conditions of parking striping; with the metes and bounds identified.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

2. **Proposed Special Use Permit** for a Cottage Housing Development in the High-Density Residential District (R-3). Tax Map ID 011-1-13, TBD Taylor Street, Abingdon, VA. (VIDEO 1:01:50 – 1:02:29)

On motion by Mrs. Quetsch, seconded by Vice Mayor Austin, approved the special use permit for a cottage housing development.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

3. Resolution supporting Liberty Fest: "*Abingdon's History is America's History*". (VIDEO 1:02:29 – 1:04:58)

Senior Planner Gabe Cristofari conveyed that the Resolution supporting Liberty Fest in connection with the upcoming U.S. 250th anniversary and grant application to the Tobacco Commission. Grant request includes match (previously awarded funds and in-kind), described as no net fiscal impact due to reimbursement.

On motion by Mrs. Quetsch, seconded by Vice Mayor Austin, approved the Resolution for Liberty Fest.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

K. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES (VIDEO 1:04:59 – 1:07:28)

1. **First Reading of Ordinance for proposed Zoning Text amendment - Chapter 44.**
Article 5. Section 5-3-1. Boundaries and proposed Zoning Map amendment to extend the Entrance Corridor Overlay District to the following parcels:

017-1-4	017-17-8	104-A-14	104A-A-34
017-1-4A	104-11-9	104A-2-1	104A-A-41
017-1-48	104-A-13	104A-4-2	104A-A-42
017-17-7	Portion of 104A-3-1	104A-8-4	104A-A-43
017-17-6	Portion of 104A-3-2	104A-A-32	

in the R-3 Residential, B-2 General Business, and OI Office and Institutional Districts.

Mayor Anderson questioned should this proposal be rejected. Hearing no comments, the matter will be placed on the March 19, 2026 agenda for second reading.

L. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES (VIDEO 1:07:29 – 1:09:54)

1. Second Reading of Ordinance to repeal, amend, and reenact Article II. Sewers and Sewage Disposal including revisions to (§ 74-36) and Division 4 (Wastewater Discharge), §§ 74-92, 74-93, 74-95, 74-110, 74-128, 74-141, 74-143, 74-158, 74-160–162, 74-167–168, 74-182, 74-185, 74-207, and 74-213, relating to pretreatment standards, permits, monitoring and reporting, inspections, enforcement, and prohibited discharges.

On motion by Vice Mayor Austin, seconded by Mrs. Quetsch, approved the second reading of the Ordinance to repeal, amend and reenact as set forth in the agenda item.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye

Mayor Anderson Aye

M. CONSIDERATION OF BIDS (VIDEO 1:09:55 – 1:12:32)

1. Consideration of bids for on-call general maintenance and repairs contracting services

Director of Public Works Michael Surret advised that an RFP for general contracting services was issued with two respondents, Belfor Property Restoration and Appalachian Contracting LLC. Staff recommended awarding both for on-call services that are funded through existing budget lines, grants, or emergency needs.

On motion by Vice Mayor Austin, seconded by Mrs. Quetsch, approved the contracts for both firms jointly in their areas of expertise.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

N. NEW BUSINESS

O. OLD BUSINESS

P. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM TOWN MANAGER

1. Presentation of 2025 Barter Theatre recap (VIDEO 1:12:39 – 1:26:09)

Producing Artistic Director Katy Brown and Managing Director Matt Campbell presented the highlights to Council:

- “Grinch” became best-selling show in Barter history.
- 2025 attendance and outreach figures reported (performances, student visitors, regional visitors).
- Employment and volunteer numbers shared.
- 2026 season preview provided (20 shows; Virginia 250 focus including “Kings Mountain”).
- Programs: Barter Connects, multiple playwriting festivals, accessibility initiatives (pay-what-you-will, \$22 seats, captioning, sensory-friendly, student ticket support).
- Challenges discussed: housing for workforce/artists, insurance costs, rising overhead, discretionary spending trends, and planned 2027 Smith Theatre interior renovation requiring a closure period.

Council comments included appreciation and questions about student ticket assistance funds.

Vice Mayor Austin requested an update regarding signage. Town Manager Mike Cochran discussed the signage recognizing Abingdon High School state championships (artwork received; design in process) and seasonal conditions and scheduling. (VIDEO 1:26:10 – 1:28:11)

Q. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS (VIDEO 1:28:12 - 1:29:40)

Mrs. Quetsch expressed her privilege to serve. Mayor Anderson noted his attendance at the Barter's Black playwriting event and expressed his support.

R. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES (VIDEO 1:29:40 – 1:31:06)

1. Tourism Advisory Committee
 - appointment to fill the unexpired term of Hanah Eichen as the retail or Downtown Business Owner
2. Economic Development Authority
 - reappointment of Link Elmore, who is eligible to serve an additional term

On motion by Mrs. Quetsch, seconded by Vice Mayor Austin, appointed Morgan Ford to fill the unexpired term of Hanah Eichen to the Tourism Advisory Committee, and reappointed Link Elmore to the Economic Development Authority for an additional term.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Webb	Absent
Mrs. Quetsch	Aye
Mrs. Pillion	Absent
Vice Mayor Austin	Aye
Mayor Anderson	Aye

S. CLOSED SESSION

T. ADJOURNMENT

Having no further matters, Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting.


Dwyane Anderson, Mayor


Kimberly Kingsley, Clerk