

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.**

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA, ON JANUARY 27, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor R. Cord Hall; Samuel M. Bishop; Steve Huppert; Henry D. Showalter; Bradford J. Stipes; James W. Vanhoozier. ABSENT: None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Barry Helms; Clerk of Council Michele Stipes; Town Attorney Theresa Fontana; Finance Director/Treasurer Val Tweedie; Planning Director Nichole Hair; Director of Aquatics Terry Caldwell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER:

MAYOR BARBER called the regular meeting of Council to order and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the meeting minutes of January 13, 2015. Councilman Huppert made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Bishop, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

II. CITIZEN'S HEARING:

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

- a. There were no citizen comments.

III. DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. REAPPOINTMENTS OF CHRISTIANSBURG AQUATIC CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS WHOSE TERMS EXPIRED ON DECEMBER 31, 2014: Steve Simmons and Mark Layne. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to reappoint Steve Simmons and Mark Layne to serve another three-year term on the Aquatic Center Advisory Board, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Bishop, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None. Both men were present for the reappointment and Council thanked them for their presence and for their willingness to serve the community in this capacity.

2. CONSIDERATION OF IMPLEMENTING A CONSENT AGENDA (Stipes). Councilman Stipes requested that Council consider adopting a consent agenda format that would provide for more efficient meetings and would allow additional time to focus on the issues that require more involved attention. Councilman Stipes attends meetings on a regular basis during his day job, and he has experienced firsthand the efficient time management that results from the use of a consent agenda. Resolutions, proclamations, reappointments, meeting minutes, monthly bills, and miscellaneous matters that do not require discussion, are examples of the types of items that would be placed on the consent agenda. Councilman Stipes noted that, at any time, any Council member can remove an item from the consent agenda to have it placed on the regular agenda for discussion, without a vote and without support from other members of Council. Councilman Hall said that at first he was concerned that a consent agenda would create transparency issues, but after reviewing the information provided by Councilman Stipes, he understands that a consent agenda does not interfere with Council's commitment to remain transparent, and he supports the request. Councilman Vanhoozier recommended that Town staff generate a list of the types of matters to be placed on the consent agenda for agenda consistency, and he further recommended that Council be provided with meeting agendas and supporting information in a manner that would allow adequate time for Council review. Meeting agendas and supporting material will be distributed on the Thursday prior to the Tuesday meeting. Mayor Barber and Town Manager Helms will itemize the types of issues to be placed on the consent agenda for Council consideration at the next regular Council meeting.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING A VACANCY ON THE PLANNING COMMISSION. Councilman Showalter reported that Council has discussed the vacancies on the Planning Commission for some time, but has not taken action to fill the seats for a full commission. Currently there are eight filled seats and three vacant seats. Councilman Showalter spoke of the importance of a diverse commission, which is the reason Council voted several years ago to expand the number of members to eleven. Council has set precedence for advertising and interviewing for Planning Commission appointment, and Councilman Showalter stated his support for initiating the process to fill the vacancies. Councilman Huppert commented that the Planning Commission has requested that only nine members serve at one time. He reminded Council that one of the reasons it voted to expand the commission to eleven members was due to attendance concerns; however, attendance does not appear to be a concern with the current commission. Councilman Hall stressed that it was important for Council to support its decision for an eleven member commission and he supports consistency in filling the vacancies through advertising and interviewing. Council discussed the time frame for the application and interview process, and directed Town Manager Helms to advertise the vacancies with a deadline date of two weeks for applications.

4. CONSIDERATION OF DEVELOPING A STANDARD LETTER FROM COUNCIL TO BE SENT TO ALL ANTICIPATED APPOINTEES AND REAPPOINTEES TO TOWN COMMISSIONS, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES, EXPRESSING COUNCIL'S REQUIREMENT THAT THEY ATTEND THE MEETING AT WHICH THEY ARE EXPECTING APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT FOR INTRODUCTION. Mayor Barber emailed to Council a copy of a letter he and the public relations staff drafted addressing the issue of attendance at the Council meeting during which appointment/reappointment is anticipated. If Council approves the letter, Mayor Barber recommended that the Council representative of each committee/commission/board be responsible for distributing the letters to respective members. It was the consensus of Council to adopt the letter and to designate it as a town-wide policy. Mayor Barber and Town Manager Helms will begin working on the letter distribution process.

IV. COUNCIL REPORTS:

1. Councilman Huppert reported on the recent Cemetery Committee meeting, at which the committee voted to open a new section of the cemetery in response to a shortage of surveyed plots. Surveyors have been contacted and work is expected to begin by this summer.
2. Councilman Showalter reported that the Water, Sewer and Solid Waste Committee will schedule a meeting in February to discuss capital projects. He then referenced a citizen's letter regarding downtown revitalization that he and Councilman Bishop will discuss at a future Central Business District Committee meeting.
3. Councilman Hall reported that the Recreation Advisory Commission will meet the first Monday in February at 6:00 P.M. He then noted that a study has been done on city/town status for Christiansburg and he intends to place this matter on a future agenda for Council discussion.
4. Councilman Bishop reported that the fire department covered for the Elliston Fire Department while they attended the funeral of one of their members. Also, on behalf of Fire Chief Hanks, he reminded everyone to keep fireplace flues clean, and he passed along the fire department's appreciation for the continued support of Council.
5. Mayor Barber reported on the progress of the future farmers market that now has a projected opening date of May 7, 2015. The Farmers Market Committee will meet January 28, 2015 at 5:00 P.M.

IV. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORTS:

1. MONTHLY BILLS: Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the monthly bills to be paid February 10, 2015 in the amount of \$1,950,908.23, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Bishop, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.
2. PROGRESS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:
 - Town Manager Helms provided Council with a project status report from the Engineering Department.
 - Street lights are currently being installed along the newly widened portion of Peppers Ferry Road and should be operational in about two weeks.
 - Public Relations Director Becky Wilburn is working with Virginia Tech to utilize work study students for areas of need within the Town departments. The Town is required to pay 20% of the work wages.

- Delegate Nick Rush has introduced legislation (HB 2269) intended to honor those who serve our country by naming the new park-and-ride in Christiansburg the "Kenneth B. Gibson Memorial Park-and-Ride". Sgt. Gibson was a Christiansburg native and graduate of Christiansburg High School who was killed in 2008 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. If the bill is passed, the Town would be responsible for covering the cost of the standard VDOT signage, approximately \$1,500, which VDOT would install. Councilman Bishop raised concerns about honoring one specific individual when so many have died during military service, and Councilman Huppert noted the contributions of others, specifically Sherri Blevins, a Falling Branch Elementary School parent, who was instrumental in bringing attention to the need for relocation of the park-and-ride. Overall, Council was supportive of funding the sign; however, Town Manager Helms agreed to pass along the concerns of Councilman Bishop to Delegate Nick Rush.
- The Town received five responses to the Request for Proposal for the development of a master plan for the Wilson park property. Interviews will take place over the next two weeks.
- February 5, 2015 is the deadline for bids on the Huckleberry Trail extension phase that will extend the trail to Christiansburg High School by fall 2015.

3. CLOSED MEETING:

- a. Councilman Hall made a motion to enter into a Closed Meeting under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body. The Closed Meeting is for the discussion of personnel evaluations of the Town Manager and Finance Director/Treasurer. Councilman Vanhoozier seconded the motion and Council was polled as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.
- b. Reconvene in Open Meeting. Councilman Hall made a motion to reconvene in open meeting, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council was polled as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.
- c. Certification. Councilman Hall moved to certify that the Town Council of the Town of Christiansburg, meeting in Closed Meeting, to the best of each member's knowledge, discussed only the matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law and only such matters as are identified in the Resolution to enter into Closed Meeting. Councilman Vanhoozier seconded the certification and Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier - Aye.
- d. Council action on the matter. No action taken

V. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council, Councilman Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 P.M., seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Bishop, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor