

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 20, 2007 AT 7:30 P.M.**

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA, ON FEBRUARY 20, 2007 AT 7:30 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Ballengee, Councilmembers Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None. Also present Town Manager Terpenney, Assistant Town Manager Helms, Town Clerk Stipes, and Town Attorney Waddell. ABSENT: None.

MAYOR BALLENGEE stated there was a quorum present of Council Members.

Pledge of Allegiance led by former Councilman Dale Ashworth.

REGULAR MEETING

MAYOR BALLENGEE called the Regular Meeting of Council to order and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes of February 6, 2007. There being none the Minutes were approved as presented.

COUNCILMAN BARBER introduced visiting Boy Scout, Chris Poff, of Troup #42. Chris is working towards earning a merit badge in Citizenship in the Community. Councilman Barber welcomed him to tonight's meeting and wished him well in his advancement in the Boy Scouts.

CITIZEN HEARINGS:

MAYOR BALLENGEE opened the Citizen Hearings for those desiring to address Council.

MICHAEL ABRAHAM TO ADDRESS COUNCIL – Mr. Michael Abraham, a Christiansburg native with three businesses located in Town, presented Council with a “ten minute version of an hour-long seminar” he has given several times around the area regarding a possible energy crisis with many political, social, and environmental ramifications. The energy crisis, he said we face, will affect us as a town, nation, and world. Mr. Abraham said he is not an alarmist by nature, but believes the energy crisis is of epic proportions and feels strongly compelled to educate others of the threat. Mr. Abraham briefly addressed several points: (1) Energy is the life-blood of all creatures. Rising population is depleting natural energy sources. (2) Fossil fuels are non-renewable and limited. (3) We are not in trouble when we “run out”, but much sooner, when we pass “peak”. (4) The few countries still producing oil are clustered around the Persian Gulf. (5) Technology and energy are not the same thing. (6) Mr. Abraham believes there will be no energy source to augment the projected shortfall of diminishing oil, once “peak” is past. (7) All changes in the environment produce winners and losers – preparation matters. Mr. Abraham said changes must begin at the local level. He would like to see the Town educate and encourage its citizens to conserve energy by providing alternate transportation methods for its residents, such as a walking and bicycling system to its retail/commercial areas. Mr. Abraham thanked Council for the opportunity to speak and said he would be happy to give a more detailed presentation at a future meeting, if Council so desires. Mayor Ballengee thanked him for the presentation.

MAYOR BALLENGEE said he has been approached by members of the Sierra Club concerning possible “Cool Cities” status for the Town of Christiansburg. If Town Council is interested in information concerning this status, Mayor Ballengee will invite the Sierra Club to bring a presentation to Council. It is the consensus of Council to invite the Sierra Club to address Council regarding the “Cool Cities” status. Mayor Ballengee will invite them to come before Council in the Spring.

There being no one else to address Council, MAYOR BALLENGEE closed the Citizen Hearings.

DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

PRESENTATION TO, AND REPORT FROM, FORMER COUNCILMEMBER DALE ASHWORTH – Mayor Ballengee welcomed former Councilman Dale Ashworth to the meeting. Mr. Ashworth served on Town Council for eight years and currently represents the Town on the New River Valley Airport Commission and on the Virginia Tech Montgomery County Executive Airport Authority. Town Council previously adopted a resolution honoring Mr. Ashworth's service on Town Council, and tonight Mayor Ballengee, once again, thanked Mr. Ashworth for his service to the Town and presented him with his nameplate engraved with his dates of service. Mr. Ashworth was pleased to receive his nameplate and thanked Mayor Ballengee for the recognition. Mr. Ashworth then addressed Council regarding the New River Valley Airport. Mr. Ashworth said the airport is eligible to receive a federal grant, with a two percent (2%) matching portion, for runway maintenance. The two percent matching will be allocated among the airport's members and surrounding jurisdictions, based on distance to the airport. The funding is for overlay of the runway and total cost to surface the runway is Four Million Dollars (\$4,000,000.00). The Town of Christiansburg's portion would be Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$9,800.00), which is in addition to the Town's usual annual funding. The airport commission must assure the FAA that it can meet the two percent (2%) match before the grant can be approved, and the commission must have a commitment from the Town by June. Mr. Ashworth stated that without the desperately needed runway maintenance, the custom's office will relocate to Roanoke, and the airport will shut down. Councilman Stipes pointed out that the New River Valley Airport is able to accommodate a 747 sized airplane. Mr. Ashworth agreed stating, that, combined with the free trade zone, makes the airport a valuable resource for the New River Valley. Councilman Barber commented that the runway hasn't been resurfaced since the 1960's. Mr. Ashworth thanked Council for its time and consideration.

CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT TO THE CHRISTIANSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION – Mayor Ballengee reported that Mr. Robert Dobson's term on the Planning Commission expires on February 28, 2007. Mr. Dobson, who was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Councilman Stipes, has requested that he not be reappointed. Councilman Stipes said he recommends allowing the Planning Commission to review the applicants and to make a recommendation to Council, as done in the past, since the Planning Commission members will be working directly with the new appointee. Councilman Wade commented that it has not always been done this way in the past. Councilman Canada said that Mike Byrd has expressed an interest in being appointed to the Christiansburg Planning Commission. Councilman Canada believes Mr. Byrd is qualified to serve in this capacity. Councilman Huppert stated that he believes the Planning Commission should have some say in who is appointed, since they are the ones who will be working with the appointee, and that Town Council should not overshadow the Planning Commission. Manager Terpenney said that Mr. Kevin Conner of Gay and Neel, Inc. has expressed an interest in serving on the Town's Planning Commission. Mr. Conner has worked closely with the Town over the years and is qualified to serve. Councilman Wade commented that he believes there may be a conflict of interest if Mr. Conner is appointed. Councilman Barber agreed and said he will support Mike Byrd. Councilman Canada made a motion to appoint Mike Byrd to serve a term on the Christiansburg Planning Commission, seconded by Councilman Wade. Councilman Huppert said he still believes the Planning Commission should have the opportunity to review all the applicants and make a recommendation to Council. Councilman Stipes agreed with Councilman Huppert. Councilwoman Carter said, while she believes Mr. Byrd is a good candidate, she does not feel good about making a rash decision on such short notice. Councilwoman Carter said she would like more time to consider the appointment. Councilman Canada said he made the motion to appoint Mr. Byrd because several Councilmembers encouraged Mr. Byrd to put his name in as a candidate. Mayor Ballengee polled Council on the motion as follows: Barber – AYE; Canada – AYE; Carter – AYE; Huppert – NAY; Stipes – NAY; Wade – AYE.

MAYOR BALLENGEE commented that it is the 215th anniversary of the Town of Christiansburg and he has given Council commemorative stickers to be used on correspondence.

TOWN MANAGER REPORTS:

TOWN MANAGER TERPENNEY reported that a public hearing set for March 6, 2007, for a drainage easement vacation request at Corning Drive and Midway Plaza Drive, has been cancelled, at the applicant's request.

CLOSED MEETING:

1. Request for a Closed Meeting under Section 2.2-3711 A(1), *Code of Virginia*, for the discussion of personnel matters – Chief of Police. On motion by Councilman Wade, seconded by Councilman Huppert, Council voted to enter into a

Closed Meeting. Town Clerk Stipes polled Council as follows: AYES: Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. NAYS: None.

2. Upon a motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Stipes, Mayor Ballengee declared Council out of Closed Meeting and into Regular Session. Town Clerk Stipes polled Council as follows: AYES: Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. NAYS: None.
3. CERTIFICATION – Councilwoman Carter 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 personnel and legal 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 Barber seconded the certification and Council voted as follows: AYES: Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. NAYS: None.
4. COUNCIL ACTION ON THE MATTER – Councilman Barber made a motion to offer an interim Police Chief position, for an indefinite period of time, to Captain Dalton Reid of the Christiansburg Police Department. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wade. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. NAYS: None. Councilman Wade made a motion to authorize Town Manager Terpenney to act as interim Police Chief, for an indefinite period of time, if Captain Dalton Reid refuses the offer. Councilwoman Carter seconded the motion and Council voted as follows: AYES: Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. NAYS: None.

TOWN MANAGER TERPENNEY gave each Councilmember a synopsis of proposed changes to Chapter 30 “Zoning” of the *Christiansburg Town Code*, which are to be considered by Town Council at the public hearing, on March 20, 2007, at the regular Town Council meeting.

COUNCILWOMAN CARTER said she has had several residents question her about possible tree limb removal by the Town, due to the recent ice storm. Manager Terpenney commented that some of the limbs have been removed by Town crews, but there is no formal clean-up until the Spring Clean-up in April.

TOWN MANAGER TERPENNEY reported that the Town has received a large check from the Town Attorney for a collected back tax bill from a Christiansburg hotel for lodging tax.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to bring before Council the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 P.M, on motion by Councilwoman Carter, seconded by Councilman Barber. Council voted as follows: AYES: Barber, Canada, Carter, Huppert, Stipes, and Wade. NAYS: None.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

Richard G. Ballengee, Mayor