

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 8, 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 DECEMBER 8, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Samuel M. Bishop; Steve Huppert; Henry D. Showalter; Bradford J. Stipes. ABSENT: Vice-Mayor R. Cord Hall; James W. Vanhoozier.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Barry Helms; Assistant Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Clerk of Council Michele Stipes; Town Attorney Theresa Fontana; Planning Director Nichole Hair; Finance Director/Treasurer Val Tweedie; Director of Human Resources and Public Relations Becky Wilburn; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell; Town Planner Will Drake; Town Planner Sara Morgan; Director of Public Works Ricky Bourne; Superintendent of Public Works Jim Lancianese; Fire Chief Billy Hanks; Farmers' Market Manager Sarah Belcher.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC HEARING

1. An ordinance amending Chapter 36 "Utilities" of the Christiansburg Town Code in regards to changes related to shifting water, sewer, and garbage billing from bi-monthly billing to monthly billing. Town Manager Helms explained the ordinance amendment that would cut the two month minimum rates and costs in half for water and sewer services to accommodate the Town's intent to begin monthly billing for these services. The Town expects to begin monthly billing for service in May or June of 2016.
2. A Conditional Use Permit request by Apple Acres Properties, L.L.C. for contractor equipment storage at 1950 Palmer Street, N.W. (tax parcels 436 – ((2)) – 14, and 15) in the B-3 General Business District. Town Manager Helms reported that the Planning Commission has studied this matter, but has not yet made a recommendation. Owner of the property at 1950 Palmer Street, and Christiansburg resident, Gary Fain, explained that he met with the Planning Commission to develop a plan that would allow his leaser to continue to use the property on Palmer Street as a storage site for heavy contractor equipment. As a result of the meeting, the Planning Commission wants him to screen the property in a manner that would effectively eliminate visibility of the large dump trucks parked on the property. Mr. Fain provided Council with photographs and video of the property from various angles along North Franklin Street to indicate the visibility of the equipment located on the property. Mr. Fain explained that screening (fencing) along the front of the property would interfere with the ingress/egress and would force the contractor business to relocate. According to Mr. Fain, the contractor serves the Christiansburg community and provides approximately ten jobs. The business has been using the property on Palmer Street for approximately one year, and he is not aware of any complaints from the community. Based on the information he has provided, Mr. Fain requested that Council modify or eliminate the Planning Commission's screening requirement for the property located at 1950 Palmer Street, and he offered to answer questions of Council. Council agreed it would discuss the request after the Planning Commission offered its recommendation.

REGULAR MEETING

- I. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR BARBER. Mayor Barber stated there was a quorum of Council present.
- II. CONSENT AGENDA:
 1. Council Meeting Minutes of November 24, 2015

Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

III. RECOGNITIONS:

1. Mayor Barber presented Planning Director Nichole Hair with a plaque recognizing her dedication to Christiansburg through her service as Planning Director and Zoning Administrator, and through her involvements on various Town committees and commissions, including the Planning Commission. Ms. Hair has accepted the position as Deputy Town Manager of Pulaski and her last day with Christiansburg will be December 31. Ms. Hair thanked Mayor Barber and Council for the recognition and expressed her appreciation for the opportunities Christiansburg has offered her through the years.

IV. CITIZEN'S HEARING:

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS:
 - a. No comments

V. STAFF REPORTS:

1. Update on the Public Relations Department by Becky Wilburn, Director of Public Relations. Becky Wilburn thanked Council for the opportunity to speak and recognized public information specialist, Allison Long, the only other full-time employee of the Public Relations Department. Ms. Wilburn reported to Council on the operations of the department since its beginning five years ago, and provided an overview of the types, and volume, of information disseminated to the public, and internally, through numerous avenues including the website, social media, local government television channel, newsletters, and other printed materials. Ms. Wilburn spoke about the importance of the working relationship the department has with local news representatives, and how it benefits the Christiansburg community during times of distressing events. The department continues to focus on meeting future goals designed to improve interoffice communication and expand on communication avenues. Ms. Wilburn offered to answer questions of Council. Councilman Huppert expressed his appreciation for the public relations bylines in the local newspapers, and for the Town's newsletter. Mayor Barber said he is pleased with the improvements to information output and communication with media and citizens since the beginning of the Public Relations Department. Councilman Stipes commented that he has noticed that community perception of local government as an "open government" has improved with the increases in transparency resulting from the efforts of the PR department. Council commended Ms. Wilburn and Ms. Long on improving communication with the community and news media, and also for their responsiveness in providing information to Council when requested.
2. Fire Chief Billy Hanks to provide a report on the Local Emergency Planning Committees. Chief Hanks presented Council with a proposal to dissolve the current Town of Christiansburg Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and to merge with the Montgomery County – Blacksburg LEPC. The Christiansburg committee is currently non-functioning, while the Montgomery County – Blacksburg LEPC is an active committee that meets on a regular basis and has active members from all over Montgomery County. Chief Hanks explained that the LEPC is responsible for developing and implementing an emergency response plan, the purpose of which is to prevent, prepare for, and respond to, emergency situations. Merging with the Montgomery County – Blacksburg LEPC would benefit Christiansburg in many ways, especially through regional collaboration and the amount of information collected and shared among LEPC members. Captain Ramsey and Terry Delaney have been attending the Montgomery County – Blacksburg LEPC meetings for the past eighteen months, and LEPC members are eager for Christiansburg to join its membership. Grant funding would not be impacted because Christiansburg would still belong to an LEPC. Chief Hanks offered to answer questions of Council. Town Manager Helms expressed his support for Chief Hanks' request.

Councilman Stipes made a motion to add Council action on Fire Chief Hanks' request to dissolve the Christiansburg LEPC, and to join the Montgomery County – Blacksburg LEPC, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Ayes: Bishop, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes. Nays: None.

VI. DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. Report from the Central Business Advisory Committee (CBAC). Councilman Showalter provided Council with a brief background on the development of the CBAC, and introduced committee members Tacy Newell, Karen Drake, Emilie Tydings, Christina O'Conner, and Michael Thom. Other members not present are: Jamie Bond, Meghan Dorsett, Donna Speaks, and Linda Wurtzburger. Councilman Showalter then thanked the Town staff members who participate on the committee, and he expressed his appreciation for the commitment of the volunteers to promote and enhance the vibrancy of downtown Christiansburg and Cambria. Council was provided a copy of the CBAC

preliminary report dated December 2015, which was presented by Karen Drake and Tacy Newell. A copy of the report is attached herewith.

2. Craig Moore, Planning Commission Chairman, to provide Council with an update and Planning Commission recommendation on the urban agriculture study. Craig Moore thanked Council for the opportunity to speak, and noted that the Planning Commission has studied urban agriculture specific to the keeping of chickens in residential zoning; however a public hearing has not been held, and, therefore, the recommendation provided in the draft ordinance submitted is not official. Mr. Moore reported that one Planning Commission member voted against the recommendation due to health and safety concerns. Council was provided with a copy of the draft ordinance and applicable zoning permit for the keeping of chickens and beehives with restrictions, and the Planning Commission's is willing to move forward with scheduling a public hearing on the matter, if Council desires. Town Planner Will Drake assisted the Planning Commission with drafting the ordinance and is able to address questions from Council and the public. Councilman Bishop made a motion to move forward with receiving public input on the matter by scheduling a public hearing, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Bishop, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes. NAYS: None. Town Council will schedule a public hearing after the Planning Commission schedules its public hearing.
3. Appointment of Assistant Town Manager Randy Wingfield as zoning administrator. Randy Wingfield has served in this position before, and is qualified for the appointment. Councilman Huppert made a motion to appoint Randy Wingfield to serve as the Town's zoning administrator, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Showalter – Aye.
4. Fire Chief Billy Hanks' request to dissolve the Christiansburg Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and to merge with the Montgomery County – Blacksburg LEPC. Councilman Huppert made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

VIII. COUNCIL REPORTS

- a. Councilman Huppert reported on the Christmas tree lighting at Montgomery Regional Hospital earlier tonight. One of the light bulbs was lit in honor of Relay for Life, and he expressed his appreciation for the year-round focus on raising money for cancer research. The 2016 Relay for Life will be held at Christiansburg High School on June 3.
- b. Mayor Barber reminded Council of the Christmas parade and farmers' market on Friday and invited them to walk in the parade as a group, along with their families. Fifty-three vendors and three food trucks have applied to participate in the farmers' market, which will be held from 4 – 9 P.M. Farmers' Market Manager Sarah Belcher reported on the planning and organizing of the event.

IX. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORTS:

1. PROGRESS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Rescue Chief Joe Coyle has requested a budget amendment to provide funds for the placement of flashing yellow caution lights on Depot Street near the rescue squad and fire station to warn of rescue and fire activity. Chief Coyle recommended postponing electronic polling system, exterior sign, and simbulance, which would provide \$24,000 in revenue recovery money to fund the caution light project. Town Manager Helms recommended approving the request. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.
- b. Town Manager Helms introduced to Council Sarah Morgan, Town Planner II, who will serve as interim Planning Director.

VII. CLOSED MEETING:

1. Councilman Stipes made a motion to enter into a Closed Meeting under (1) Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(3), for the discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. The discussion pertains to property located on Roanoke Street. And, (2) 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 discussion pertains to the replacement of Town Manager Helms upon his retirement. Councilman Bishop seconded the motion and Council was polled as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

2. Reconvene in Open Meeting.
3. Certification. Councilman Stipes 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, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.
4. Council action on the matter. No action taken.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 9:49 P.M.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor