

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 28, 2017 – 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, VIRGINIA, ON FEBRUARY 28, 2017 AT 7:00 P.M.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Steve Biggs; Assistant Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Clerk of Council Michele Stipes; Town Attorney Theresa Fontana; Planning Director Andrew Warren; Finance Director/Treasurer Valerie Tweedie; Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson; Assistant Director of Engineering Todd Walters; Director of Public Works Jim Lancianese; Director of Human Resources Dave Brahmstadt; Director of Public Relations Melissa Powell; Police Chief Mark Sisson; Farmers' Market Manager Sarah Belcher.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Moment of Reflection
- B. Pledge of Allegiance

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

- A. Add Approval of Contract for Insurance Brokerage Services as item VIII.A.6.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Meeting Minutes of February 14, 2017

- B. Schedule a Public Hearing for April 11, 2017 for a Conditional Use Permit request for a public amusement center (trampoline park and fun center) in the B-3 General Business zoning district at 200 Midway Plaza Drive NW.

- C. Monthly Bills

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

V. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- A. No comments.

VI. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Introduction of New Town Employees

- 1. Introduction by Michael Huesman, Landscaping/Right-of-way Crew Supervisor:

- Joey Gusler, Maintenance Right-of-Way Worker

2. Introduction by Valerie Tweedie, Finance Director/Treasurer:  
- Deanna Cox, Deputy Director of Finance

3. Introduction and Administer of Oath of Office by Police Chief Mark Sisson:  
- Sherri Neece, Patrol Officer  
- Christopher Catron, Patrol Officer

B. David Franusich to present on Downtown Christiansburg, Inc.

David Franusich, President of Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. (DCI), introduced to Council Vice-President Justin Sanders and reported on behind the scene preparations for upcoming annual events. Events scheduled for 2017 include a wine and artisan festival, Movies in the Park, and the annual Food Truck Rodeo. Mr. Sanders said DCI was grateful for the support of the town, and he spoke about the group's goals to create a welcoming and vibrant downtown. Mr. Sanders said that DCI relied on volunteers to strengthen and grow its efforts to revitalize downtown Christiansburg, and he welcomed citizens to become involved with the organization. DCI will be working with the town to develop a master plan for the downtown and Cambria areas, and Mr. Sanders said the group was looking forward to the opportunity. Mr. Franusich offered to answer questions of Council.

C. Karen Blair, Co-Director of External Relations at Virginia Tech, to present on The Big Event 2017.

Using PowerPoint, Karen Blair, Co-Director of External Relations at Virginia Tech, reported on The Big Event, a student-run community service effort scheduled for April 8, 2017. Each year the Virginia Tech community, along with community volunteers, complete thousands of community service projects throughout the New River Valley, and Ms. Blair noted that it had grown into the second largest event of its kind in the nation. In 2016, The Big Event saw 9,200 volunteers complete 1,102 service projects, 400 of which were in Christiansburg. Ms. Blair said the goal was to grow even larger in 2017 and she explained how the Christiansburg community could get involved by volunteering or making job requests. More information and forms can be found on the event website and social media accounts. Ms. Blair offered to answer questions of Council. Councilman Huppert talked favorable about his past experiences with The Big Event and he thanked organizers for their efforts. Council thanked Ms. Blair for the presentation and for the group's efforts in serving the community.

D. Ashley Briggs to report on the Bikeway Walkway Committee 2016 Annual Report.

Ashley Briggs, member of the Bikeway Walkway Committee, presented Council with a copy of the Bikeway Walkway Committee 2016 Annual Report. Ms. Briggs briefly reviewed the report that outlined the accomplishments and ongoing projects of the committee, and highlighted future goals including a bike share program. Ms. Briggs spoke about the sponsorship program designed to allow individuals and businesses opportunities to become involved in providing recreational amenities for the Huckleberry Trail. Flyers detailing the program have been distributed into the community and can be found on the Town's website. She shared that the Huckleberry Trail extension from Food Lion to Christiansburg High School was in the design phase, and would be funded by VDOT Revenue Sharing and Transportation Alternatives grant. In closing, Ms. Briggs called attention to information regarding the implementation of a trail study that included eight connector trail projects, and she offered to answer questions of Council. Council thanked Ms. Briggs for the review of the annual report.

E. Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the NRV Regional Commission, to present on the results of the NRV Regional Broadband Survey.

Kevin Byrd and Christy Straight presented Council with a copy of the results of the NRV Regional Broadband Survey that represent Christiansburg, Blacksburg, and Montgomery County, with over 1,800 responses. The survey collected information on the experiences of residents and businesses with their current internet service, connection types, types of usage, and desired improvements to internet service. Mr. Byrd explained that the information provided by the survey could be used by the localities to encourage internet providers to make advances that would meet the needs of customers, and he advised

on ways the Town could foster better broadband service for its citizens. Mr. Byrd reviewed the survey results with Council and noted that the next step was to share the survey results with local internet service providers. Council talked about the importance of having reliable, affordable broadband service available to the community, and they thanked Mr. Byrd for the NRV Regional Commission's involvement by providing the useful survey information.

F. Ernie Wade, Kiwanis Club of Christiansburg, to address Council regarding the Wilderness Trail Festival.

Ernie Wade and Jim Vanhoozier of the Kiwanis Club thanked Council for its support of the Wilderness Trail Festival and reported on the plans for the 44<sup>th</sup> annual festival scheduled for September 16, 2017. Mr. Wade requested street closings of West Main to Dunkley, up to East Main to Burger King, and North Franklin to Papa Johns. Kiwanis estimated approximately 7,500 attendees last year, and expects a good turnout for this year's festival. It was noted that there were no citizen complaints received from the 2016 event. Mr. Vanhoozier talked about the anticipated expansion of the festival, and commented that Kiwanis was working on ways to provide better pedestrian flow through the festival. Councilman Hall asked if Kiwanis had the support of business owners that would be impacted by the requested street closures. Mr. Vanhoozier reported that Kiwanis received no complaints from business owners resulting from last year's street closures, and did not anticipate complaints this year. Permit applications have been submitted to the Town. Councilman Showalter thanked Kiwanis for its efforts in organizing the Kiwanis Trail Festival, and Councilman Huppert said it was important for Council to support the goals of Kiwanis concerning the festival.

G. Paula Alston, Director of the Montgomery - Floyd Regional Library, to provide an update on the library.

Paula Alston thanked Council for its continued financial support of the library, which helps to budget the more than 245 programs and classes offered to all ages. She then introduced Selena Sullivan who joined the library on January 1 as program director. Ms. Sullivan said she has received a warm welcome from Christiansburg-Floyd Regional Library community, and she reported on the programs and events scheduled for 2017. Ms. Alston then reported on the services and operations of the library and provided numbers on computer usage and ebook services. She noted that the library has begun taking passport applications. A feasibility study by Thompson Litton was completed in 2016, which provided direction for the Christiansburg and Blacksburg libraries. In terms of the facilities, the study found that the Christiansburg building was structurally sound, but needed some improvements, and the recommendation was to renovate and expand the Christiansburg site. The building is currently 15,000 sq. ft. and the goal was to expand to 30,000 sq. ft. within the next five to seven years. Ms. Alston reported that a slight decrease in state aid was expected, but that Christiansburg and Montgomery County continued to be supportive partners, and she thanked the Town for the recycling and garbage services it provided each week. In closing, Ms. Alston announced that she would be retiring from her position with the library on May 1, and the board was currently seeking a replacement director. She offered to answer questions of Council. Councilman Stipes said he had observed that the library was a welcoming environment for the area's homeless, and he expressed his appreciation for the library staff's acceptance of everyone without restrictions. Council thanked Ms. Alston for her service to the community, and Councilman Huppert said she made the Christiansburg community a better place through her service at the library.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Council action on:

1. New River Valley Regional Water Authority Mutual Aid Agreement.

Town Manager Biggs provided a brief overview of the proposed New River Valley Regional Water Authority Mutual Aid Agreement presented for consideration. The mutual aid agreement would allow the water authority to call on authority members for assistance with maintenance and repairs to the

authority's infrastructure during emergency situations. Assistance could include providing resources to address utility issues, and providing additional manpower and equipment. Response would be at the sole discretion of each member locality, and costs incurred would be reimbursed by the water authority. Town Attorney Fontana drafted the proposed mutual aid agreement, which was requested by the water authority to prepare for potential emergency situations. It was noted that the Montgomery County Public Service Authority (PSA) was included in the agreement, and Councilman Showalter said he wondered if the county was committed to putting resources into taking care of its own water and sewer lines. Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson said that issue was discussed during the initial meetings and it was determined that the PSA did have the necessary resources to maintain and repair its lines. Mr. Nelson added that with the expansion of the water authority, provisions were needed to identify who was responsible for the maintenance of each water line, and those designations have been included in the proposed mutual aid agreement. Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the New River Valley Regional Water Authority Mutual Aid Agreement as presented, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

2. College Street Basin Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Engineering Contract.

Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson reported that the design contract under consideration was for the College Street sanitary sewer rehabilitation and replacement project. The sewer line extends from Crab Creek to the center of Town. The Town is undertaking efforts to study the system to provide design plans for repairs to the sewer system at a cost of \$345,000. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the contract as presented, seconded by Councilman Collins. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

3. Hans Meadow Drainage Improvement Preliminary Engineering Contract.

Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson reported on the importance of the contract in addressing the drainage needs of the flood prone Hans Meadow area. The engineering contract is for environmental design and is in the current year annual budget. Councilman Huppert noted that funding for the project was provided through the storm water maintenance fee imposed in 2016, which he said was important for citizens to know. Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the contract as presented, seconded by Councilman Collins. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

4. Amendment to the Small Purchases Procedures Policy (Tweedie).

Council was provided a copy of the proposed amendment in the agenda packet for review. Finance Director/Treasurer Val Tweedie explained that the proposed amendment was to the procurement process for small contract services, and was meant to provide for a more efficient and timely process in making small purchases. Mrs. Tweedie recommended approval of the amendment. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the amendment as presented and recommended by Mrs. Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Huppert. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye.

5. Proposed ordinance regarding interference by pedestrians on public roadways and highways (Fontana, Sisson). Council was provided a copy of the draft ordinance in the agenda packet for review.

Town Attorney Theresa Fontana reported that the Town currently has an ordinance addressing aggressive solicitation; however, she has advised the Police Department to not enforce the ordinance due to a 2015 Supreme Court ruling that content neutral ordinances were unconstitutional. Attorney Fontana said she drafted the proposed ordinance to be narrowly tailored to prohibit individuals/pedestrians from entering roadways to interact or conduct business with motorists and impede traffic, but does not limit or impact free speech. Violation would be considered a traffic infraction with a summons and a fine, according to Police Chief Sisson. Chief Sisson discussed the limitations of the ordinance with regard to enforcing it as a traffic infraction, and he described some of the situations faced by the Police Department that could be addressed by the proposed ordinance. After reviewing the proposed ordinance, Councilman Hall recommended it be modified to define "operating vehicle" for clarity. Councilman Collins asked if aggressive actions of panhandlers could be addressed with the proposed ordinance; Attorney Fontana replied that aggressive behavior would fall

under criminal law, rather than the ordinance. Council noted that it had discussed the need for this type of ordinance in the past, and the proposed ordinance was the result of those discussions and research by Town Attorney Fontana and Police Chief Sisson. Attorney Fontana said she was working to update numerous Town ordinances to address current needs and comply with state law. Attorney Fontana said she would amend the ordinance to clarify the term “operating vehicle” prior to Council action.

6. Approval of Contract for Insurance Brokerage Services. Town Manager Biggs explained that when the Town bids for insurance services, it uses a broker to negotiate on behalf of the Town. He reported that the firm being recommended has gone through a competitive RFP process, had received good references, and was a value-based provider at a cost of approximately \$30,000 per year. Town Manager Biggs said he supported the recommendation. Councilman Showalter asked if it would be appropriate to consider creating an employee wellness incentive program. Manager Biggs replied that he could collaborate with the broker and insurance provider to develop a wellness incentive plan, but at this point, as a first step, the focus needed to be on plan construct and implementation. Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the contract as recommended, seconded by Councilman Collins. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

B. Discussion of appointments to the New River Valley Solid Waste Authority Board of Directors.

Councilman Showalter explained that former Public Works Director Ricky Bourne served on the New River Valley Solid Waste Authority until his resignation last year. Mayor Barber has served in the interim. Historically, the position has been filled by a staff member, and as a service authority, Councilman Showalter said he believed it was important to assign a staff member with experience in logistics. Council noted that Wayne Nelson, Director of Engineering, currently served on the Regional Water Authority, which was distinctly different from the New River Valley Solid Waste Authority; Town Manager Biggs commented that it would be difficult for the new Director of Public Works, Jim Lancianese, to attend afternoon meetings, since he was experiencing increased responsibilities due to the restructuring of the Public Works Department. Councilman Hall said he thought former Town Manager Barry Helms would serve well on the authority. Town Manager Biggs commented that it was not unusual for the Town to appoint citizen representation on committees, boards, and authorities, and that Barry Helms would be an appropriate appointment to the New River Valley Solid Waste Authority. Council asked that Town Manager Biggs consult the bylaws pertaining to appointees and reach out to Barry Helms if no conflict is found.

C. Discussion of appointments to the Regional Water Authority Board of Directors.  
See discussion of item VIII.B.

D. Discussion regarding Christiansburg High School involvement in local government (Barber).

Mayor Barber reported that he had not had a chance to meet with Tony Deibler, Principal of Christiansburg High School regarding a student liaison to Council, but recommended that any student appointed be someone currently serving on student government. Council discussed the importance of legitimizing the position by engaging the student with Council and by giving him/her responsibilities. Councilman Collins said he spoke with Principal Deibler about the appointment of a student liaison and that he was excited to work with Council. Councilman Showalter recommended that Mayor Barber and Councilman Collins work together on this matter.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

X. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Town Manager Steve Biggs: No report.

B. Town Attorney: No report.

C. Other Staff: No report.

#### XI. COUNCIL REPORTS

- A. Councilman Huppert reported on the Christiansburg High School wrestling team's sixteenth consecutive championship, and he recommended honoring the team with a sign. Mayor Barber noted that the matter would be discussed by Council at its next regular meeting.
- B. Councilman Showalter reported on the recent NRV Regional Commission meeting and expressed appreciation for the dialogue and productiveness of the group. The commission has been working closely with Radford to restore the Little River Dam, and to assist Radford University with an economic study that has resulted in an anticipated increase in enrollment. The commission heard a presentation from Fire Wise, a group that encourages policies and ordinances pertaining to fire safety. The group was inspired by the 2016 Gatlinburg wildfires and Councilman Showalter said he anticipated that the group would be working with NRV communities in the coming years.
- C. Councilman Stipes reported on the February 23 meeting of the Montgomery County Economic Development Commission. At that meeting, Michael St. Jean, Executive Director of the Virginia Tech Montgomery Executive Airport, reported on the current airport expansion project. In addition to runway extension, there has been one new corporate jet hangar constructed and two more proposed. Councilman Stipes noted that the Town's investment in the Economic Development Commission of \$50,000/year has not increased in twenty years, and approximately \$18.00 for every \$1.00 invested comes back into the community as revenue.
- D. Councilman Hall reported that the next Recreation Advisory Commission meeting was scheduled for March 6, and he encouraged citizen involvement. Referencing a recent email, Councilman Hall commended Recreation Department staff on its efforts to work with citizens to address concerns at the recreation center. Councilman Hall then noted that April was Child Abuse Prevention Month and that he appreciated the Town's efforts to bring awareness to the issue of child abuse. He reported that a seminar would be held at the Pulaski County Courthouse on April 6 at 6:00 p.m., and at the Montgomery County Courthouse on April 27 at 6:00 p.m., to bring community awareness to the issue of child abuse and child abuse prevention. He encouraged all of Council and the community to attend.
- E. Councilman Bishop reported on the recent Tourism Development Council meeting where the focus was on statistical planning for the school years 2018 – 2020, and grant application review. He then reported on the recent Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce meeting where members heard a presentation from NRV Regional Commission on the results of the NRV Regional Broadband Survey, and discussed the idea of a shared bicycle program. Councilman Bishop said he attended the recent Christiansburg, Blacksburg, Montgomery County monthly liaison meeting, along with Randy Wingfield and Steve Biggs, where the shared bicycle program was also discussed. Several elected officials, including Councilman Bishop, were asked to sit on a panel at Virginia Tech to meet with students interested in local government. Approximately 30 – 35 students attended and Councilman Bishop said it was a good experience. In closing, Councilman Bishop reported that he had spoken with Brad Epperley, Director of Parks and Recreation, regarding the Bikeway Walkway Committee sponsorship program, and had met with several community organizations seeking support for the program.
- F. Councilman Collins reported that he had spoken with Christiansburg High School Principal, Tony Deibler, regarding ways to recognize the wrestling team's 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive state championship. Mr. Deibler said the school was working with Recreation Department staff to organize a 16-year reunion for the wrestling team with a parade and community celebration.
- G. Mayor Barber thanked Councilman Bishop for serving as vice-mayor in his absence during the recent Council work session. He then reported that he was working with Police Chief Sisson to rename the park located next to the armory in honor of fallen Christiansburg officer Scott Hylton and all fallen officers. More information on the renaming will be provided when available.

#### XII. OTHER BUSINESS

##### A. Closed Meeting:

1. Councilman Bishop made a motion to enter into a Closed Meeting under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(5), for discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an

existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community. The Closed Meeting is being held to discuss economic development. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hall and Council was polled as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

2. Reconvene in Open Meeting

3. Certification. Councilman Bishop 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 Collins . Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

4. Council Action on the Matter. No action taken by Council.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 10:48 P.M.

---

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

---

D. Michael Barber, Mayor