

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 27, 2020 – 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 OCTOBER 27, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor Merissa Sachs; Samuel M. Bishop; Johana Hicks; Steve Huppert; Henry Showalter; Bradford J. Stipes. ABSENT: None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Andrew Warren, Clerk of Council Michele Stipes; Deputy Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Treasurer/Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

- A. Councilwoman Hicks requested the monthly bill list be removed from the consent agenda for discussion.
- B. Councilwoman Hicks requested that a discussion regarding a Code of Ethics violation be placed on the agenda. Mayor Barber advised a discussion of that manner would need to be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to remove the monthly bill list from the consent agenda, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. *To Be Rescheduled Pending Planning Commission Recommendation* - Rezoning request by Gay and Neel, Inc. (applicant) for property owned by Golden Triangle Development LLC, located east of the terminus of Simmons Road, N.E. (tax map no. 499-1-5A, 6, 7, 8, 9) and at 390 Teel Street, N.E. (500-5BK2-46, 47, 48, 49). The request is to rezone the approximately 9.56acre property from A, Agricultural and R-2, Two-Family Residential to R-3, Multi-Family Residential with proffers. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

- B. *To Be Rescheduled Pending Planning Commission Recommendation* - Conditional Use Permit request – contingent on the preceding request – by Gay and Neel, Inc. (applicant) for property owned by Golden Triangle Development LLC, for a planned housing development to consist of single-family homes at a density of development not to exceed 6.38 units per acre located east of the terminus of Simmons Road, N.E. (tax map no. 499-1-5A, 6, 7, 8, 9) and at 390 Teel Street, N.E. (500-5BK2-46, 47, 48, 49) in the R-3, Multi-Family Residential District. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2020.
- B. Monthly Bill List (see below)
- C. Contract approval for Time Technologies Inc. for LED signs at Town Hall, Fire and Rescue, and Recreation Center not to exceed \$185,000.
- D. Schedule Public Hearing on December 8, 2020 for rezoning request by RWW36, LLC (applicant) for property owned by Mary Maxie Jewell Trust, Mary Stewart, Janet Epperly, Bill Jewell, Trustees located west of Weddle Way, N.W. (tax map no. 435-A-13). The request is to rezone the approximately 4.36-acre property from R-1A (Rural Residential) to R-2 (Two-Family Residential). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.
- E. Schedule Public Hearing on December 8, 2020 for a proposed ordinance to amend Chapter 42, “Zoning” of the Christiansburg Town Code for the purpose clarifying the allowance of structural projections such as roof eaves, gutters, architectural features, porches, and decks into minimum required yards.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve items A, C, D, E of the consent agenda, seconded by Councilwoman Hicks. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

Monthly Bill List. Councilwoman Hicks asked why there was a payment to the Roanoke Chamber of Commerce included in the monthly bill list. Finance Director Val Tweedie explained that the funds supported the Small Business Development Center, which was run out of Roanoke, but provided small business start-up assistance in Christiansburg and the New River Valley. Town Manager Wingfield added that the money funded Cheryl Tucker’s position, who is the business liaison for the New River Valley. Mrs. Tweedie also answered a question related to the Town’s time-keeping system.

Councilwoman Sachs made a motion to approve the monthly bill list, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Public Health Director Ashley Briggs and Program Manager Melanie Morris of the New River Valley Business Continuity Team to provide an update on the group’s activities. Public Health Director Ashley Briggs and Program Manager Melanie Morris introduced to Council the New River Valley Business Continuity Team (BCT), a division of the New River

Valley Regional Commission, that serves to assist businesses affected by Covid-19 to continue safe operations. When exposure or potential exposure has occurred, the BCT provides the resources necessary for continued operations that include development of a business-specific continuity plan, facility cleaning, and education outreach for employees and the public about best practices for reducing exposure and spread. In addition, the group offers businesses assistance with management of CARES Act funding and reimbursement program. The BCT works in partnership with the New River Health District and the Virginia Health Department to provide around-the-clock assistance to businesses and is grant funded by Go Virginia Round 1.

- B. Jason Dowdy of the Montgomery Tourism Development Council to address Council.

Jason Dowdy, part owner of Milestone Development who owns the Fairfield Inn, Homewood Suits and Holiday Inn Express, addressed Council as Chairman of the Montgomery County Tourism Development Advisory Council in support of the proposed Town park. Mr. Dowdy encouraged Council to support development of the proposed Town park and highlighted that the park would provide diversification of the Town's tourism product, would attract new visitors and group visitors that would generate revenue, would generate an increase in sports tourism that would add to the overall positive economic impact in Christiansburg, would benefit the community through the tax revenue, would create jobs through an increased demand for goods through sports tourism, and would increase the overall quality of life in Christiansburg. In closing, Mr. Dowdy noted that the park supported the economic development strategies and goals of the Town and talked about the success of the Town's aquatic center and recreation center to positively impact the community through sports tourism. Mr. Dowdy stated that approval of the park would be an investment that would have increasing benefit to the community through the years. Councilwoman Hicks commented on the funds that would be needed to build the park and expressed that this was not something that should be considered during a pandemic. Councilman Huppert expressed appreciation for Mr. Dowdy's presentation, and Councilman Showalter thanked him for his presentation and for his investment in the community as a hotel owner.

- C. Representative from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission to provide a letter of support for the Regional Park.

Diane Fenton, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, described the timeline and process for development of the proposed park plan that included public input through surveys and multiple public meetings over several years, and that aligned with the goals set forth in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The proposed Town Park has received unwavering support by the advisory commission, and Mrs. Fenton urged Council to also offer its support for the proposed park plan.

Councilwoman Hicks said she thought it was usual for Town Council to direct advisory commissions to study matters and to present recommendations for consideration, and she asked Mrs. Fenton if anyone from Town Council had asked her to write the letter, or if Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley had written the letter for her to sign. Mrs. Fenton stated that no one had directed the Recreation Advisory Commission or the Recreation Department to write a letter of support, and that Mr. Epperley had worked with her to draft a letter that reflected the opinion and recommendation of the advisory commission. Mrs. Fenton further stated that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission worked as a team

for the community and expressed her disappointment that all members were not working well together. Councilman Stipes commended Mrs. Fenton's efforts in working diligently for the community as a member of the advisory commission, and Councilman Huppert expressed appreciation for some of the points made by Mrs. Fenton regarding the need to accommodate projected population growth, and noted that the Recreation Advisory Commission had worked diligently on the proposed park plans, with public input, over a seven-year period.

Kathy Meadows, member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, read a letter of support for the proposed Town Park signed by Diane Fenton, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, on behalf of the advisory commission. A copy of the letter was provided to Council and is attached herewith for reference in the minutes book.

John Neel, 60 Marquise Drive, addressed Council in support of the proposed Town park as a citizen, business owner, and father of child involved in Christiansburg sports. Mr. Neel noted that he worked with previous Town administration and Council to develop the initial plan for the proposed park; however, the perspective of his comments was from his role as a Christiansburg youth athletic coach of more than nine years. Mr. Neel talked about the tremendous youth sports presence in Christiansburg and the shortage of ball fields, especially practice fields for sports such as soccer. Mr. Neel offered information on comparable sized localities and the comparison with the number of outdoor open space facilities available for youth sports activities. Councilwoman Hicks asked if Mr. Neel had a signed contract with the Town for construction of the park, and Mr. Neel replied that his only business contract with the Town related to the park was for development of the master plan, and he stressed that his company, Gay and Neel, Inc., expected to receive no funding from the Town for construction of the park. At Councilwoman Sachs request, Mr. Neel talked about his experience regarding the personal financial costs of sports tourism that often involved travel over multiple days.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS (no comments presented)

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Stipes and Bishop – Street Committee Report/Recommendation on:

1. Boundary Line Adjustment for Lots 29 thru 35, Reagan's Pointe and Resubdivision of Lot 34, Reagan's Pointe situated along Giles Drive, S.E. & Glade Drive, S.E.

Councilman Stipes reported that Street Committee items 1 and 2 relate to an error by the developer in locating houses on lots previously approved by Council. Mr. Stipes noted that current property owners had expressed support for the adjustments, as the adjustments would evenly divide property lines between built homes. The plat has been reviewed by Town staff and the Street Committee, and Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve Items 1 and 2, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

2. Boundary Line Adjustment for Lot 36 & Lot 37, Reagan's Pointe situated along Glade Drive, S.E. (See Council action above)
3. Boundary Line Adjustment for Lot 52 & Lot 53, Reagan's Pointe situated along Glade Drive, S.E.

Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve item 3, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

4. Boundary Line Adjustment between Lot 46 and Part of Tax Parcel 530(18)-A-E (Park Area #2) & Lots 47 thru 49 of Reagan's Pointe.

Councilman Stipes explained that a previous adjustment to the PHD for Reagan's Pointe was approved by Town Council. The adjustment included a revision to the proposed open space, combined with the addition of two building lots based on the acquisition of additional acreage from VDOT. The current revision reflects the two additional building lots and a relocated, larger proposed open space. The boundary line adjustment has been reviewed by Town staff and the Street Committee and was found to be consistent with the subdivision ordinance. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. Conditional Use Permit request by applicant Colin Huff for a towing service at property owned by L & R Burch Properties LLC located at 3295 North Franklin Street (tax map no. 406-A-13E) in the I-2, General Industrial District. The property is designated as Business/Commercial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the CUP request as recommended by the Planning Commission, seconded by Councilwoman Hicks. Referring to comments made by Tullio O'Reilly during the Public Hearing, Mayor Barber clarified that limited Town of Christiansburg trucks used the right-of-way access through the Dwelling Place property, and that was a pick-up type utility truck, and access was typically only once per day. Assistant Town Manager Warren noted that he had spoken with the Public Works Department and that a meeting would be held with property owners to address the concerns regarding right-of-way maintenance. Mr. Warren further noted that staff had visited the site and that no immediate roadway repairs appeared needed. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

- B. Cares Act funding.

Town Manager Wingfield noted that an outline of the proposed CARES Act funding distribution was included in the agenda packet in preparation for the work session scheduled for October 29, and he provided a brief overview of the items included in the document. Council discussed including a third outdoor bathroom in the fund distribution list, with Town Manager Wingfield explaining the obstacles with placing an outdoor bathroom at the Downtown Park due to limited space. Mr. Wingfield offered to meet with Town staff to discuss the options in this matter. Councilwoman Hicks asked Council to consider ways to address water bill nonpayment and suggested the Town send less money to the Montgomery County Tourism Development Council and more to places like MCEAP that offer community assistance with bills. Mayor Barber noted that CARES Act funding could not be used to recover loss from utility bills, and Councilman

Showalter asked if the Treasurer's Office was actively referring residents unable to pay their utility bills to MCEAP or other assistance organizations. Finance Director Val Tweedie said that residents unable to pay were referred to assistance agencies, but that most of those agencies, such as MCEAP, only fund families a certain number of times. Councilwoman Hicks mentioned she had called MCEAP and was told that they had run out of assistance funds.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager:

- Reminder of the 2021 Budget Amendment #1 work session scheduled for October 29, 6:00 P.M. Council was provided a copy of the document for preparation of the work session.
- Council was asked to consider cancelling the regular meetings of Council the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Council expressed no opposition to the request.
- Council was informed that Montgomery County has recently approved a 3% COLA for employees, retroactive to July 1.
- Council was informed that Mr. Wingfield and County Administrator Craig Meadows had been trying to schedule a collaborative meeting with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for discussion of various topics, and it looked like it would be early 2021.

B. Town Attorney: No report.

C. Other Staff: No report.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

A. Councilman Stipes, no report.

B. Councilman Showalter, no report.

C. Councilman Huppert reminded everyone of the Halloween Trick or Treat drive-through event scheduled for Saturday at the Recreation Center.

D. Councilman Bishop reported that a virtual Central Business District Committee meeting was scheduled for October 28, 12:00 P.M., and all were invited to attend.

E. Councilwoman Sachs, no report.

F. Councilwoman Hicks expressed support for the upcoming Halloween Trick or Treat drive-through event at the Recreation Center, and thanked Building Official Jerry Heinline for his support of the community in addressing blighted structures. Mrs. Hicks then referred to the letters of support for the proposed Town Park and asked if corporate sponsorships had been solicited. Mayor Barber explained that it would be premature to seek sponsorships, or host fundraisers, for the park since it had not yet been approved by Council.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

XII. ADJOURN

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:33 P.M.

Michele Stipes, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor