

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – 6:00 P.M.
OCTOBER 29, 2020**

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA, ON OCTOBER 29, 2020 AT 6:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Samuel M. Bishop; Johana Hicks; Steve Huppert; Vice-Mayor Merissa Sachs; 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; Police Chief Mark Sisson; Human Resources Director Alicia Dials; Public Works Director Jim Lancianese; Assistant Director of Public Works Travis Moles; Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson; Assistant Director of Engineering, Capital Projects & Utilities Justin St. Clair; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell; Director of Finance Valerie Tweedie; Assistant Director of Engineering, Land Development & Operations Mike Kelley.

SPECIAL MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. DISCUSSION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. Proposed Budget Amendment for FY 20-21 that includes CARES Act funding, consideration of the proposed park, employee benefits and capital projects.

Town Manager Randy Wingfield and Director of Finance Valerie Tweedie provided Council with a PowerPoint presentation referencing employee compensation, CARES Act funding, other capital funding, the proposed park, along with long-term obligations and fiscal responsibility. Mr. Wingfield expressed to Council the high turnover rate in the Public Works department, noting staff leaving for higher compensation elsewhere. Mr. Wingfield also provided information for the compensation study showing the distribution of pay to employees and the recommendation of employee compensation. Mrs. Tweedie presented to Council the approved FY 2020-21 budget and the removed capital items and operational items after the impact of Covid-19. She noted the impact the current restrictions on full openings of restaurants, entertainment, recreation and travel has had on revenue. Mrs. Tweedie presented to Council the actual meals, lodging and sales tax revenue for 2019-20 and the projected tax revenue for 2020-21. She also explained the rollover of capital project funds that were not fully expended in FY 2019-20 and the capital projects postponed due to Covid-19.

Mrs. Tweedie touched on the CARES Act funding and how the funds must only be for Covid-19 related response and for items that were not budgeted prior to March 1, 2020 and that expenditure items must be received before December 30, 2020 in order to be eligible for CARES

Act funding. Mr. Wingfield spoke about the other capital projects that were new non-CARES Act projects, noting the potential new park, office remodels and trail lighting. Mr. Wingfield provided history on the proposed park, including the purchase of the Truman Wilson land in 2013, the initial design of the park and the selection of Faulconer Construction Company through the PPEA process. Mr. Wingfield noted many of the design elements and future elements for the park and potential park funding sources, including potential sponsorship avenues.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned if the potential park were to be postponed could it possibly be placed on a ballot for the next election. Mr. Wingfield explained that would be a Council decision for vote if that was the direction Council would like to go in.

Greg Krystyniak Project Manager with Faulconer Construction Company and Brian Connolly with Victus Advisors provided Town Council with a presentation on the potential new outdoor sports field park. Mr. Connolly presented to Council a brief analysis of market demand for a new park, estimated annual usages and expenses, including long-term funding options for capital and operations. He explained the Town of Christiansburg's metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is comprised of counties Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Floyd and has a current population of 186,750 people and the potential for facility use. Mr. Connolly pointed out several groups were interviewed and interested in using a new sports field park in Christiansburg. Some of these groups included NRUSA Soccer, Valley Select and Blacksburg Rugby Football Club. Mr. Connolly expressed to Council the potential increase in meals and lodging tax revenue for the Town with a potential new park. And, also an overview of potential funding options for the Town.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned if this presentation reflected numbers during the pandemic because she noted the parks in Christiansburg were currently not being used. Mr. Connolly explained that the hope was to open the facility after the pandemic and after construction was completed. He also mentioned that outdoor parks facilities, unlike indoor parks have not seen a significant decrease in use due to the pandemic. Mrs. Hicks commented on the Abingdon park that had been mentioned previously and expressed concern that the park was having a hard time financially. Councilman Huppert mentioned having concerns about the radius of people coming to the park but believed the park could be just as successful as the Aquatic Center. Councilwoman Sachs questioned if home stays had been included in the analysis study since there was reported information on people visiting the Town and staying in hotels. Mr. Connolly expressed that home stays were factored in as well. Councilman Huppert questioned the potential schedule of the park's opening. Mr. Krystyniak noted that depending on the November 10, 2020 Town Council meeting there would be a new contract worked out with Town staff and plans would be completed at 100 percent so construction could begin.

Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern for the CARES Act funding being used for tourism and the Montgomery County Tourism Development Council and questioned the need for tourism in the Town of Christiansburg. Mr. Wingfield informed Council that the Montgomery County Tourism Development Council's revenue had decreased due to the pandemic and the fact that hotels are not being used which affects Town and County lodging taxes and the CARES Act funding would help be used for marketing in order to support local tourism due to the Covid-19 impacts. Councilwoman Sachs questioned the CARES Act funding being used for the Aquatic Center thermal imaging and the LED signage stating that the amount quoted seemed high. Mr. Wingfield explained the LED signage will be for the Town Hall, Fire and Rescue, and the Recreation Center. Also, the thermal imaging will scan for temperatures for anyone entering the Aquatic and

Recreation Centers. Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern for the bathroom addition to the downtown park and questioned if it could be ordered before the December 30, 2020 deadline for CARES Act funding. Mr. Wingfield explained there may be difficulty in finding a place for the bathroom at the park due to the only flat space there being the basketball courts. Mayor Barber mentioned and agreed the bathroom for the downtown park would be a good addition whether that could be purchased and installed before the end of December or sometime in the next year. Councilwoman Hicks questioned CARES Act funding and salary and wages for employees that worked overtime. Mrs. Tweedie explained the salary and wages that are charged to the CARES Act are reimbursement of cost that the Town already would have paid for employees whose work was strictly related to Covid-19 or that were granted additional leave from the CARES Act itself. Councilwoman Sachs mentioned the Town of Blacksburg was currently working on a new program where any gift card purchased in Blacksburg could be matched with CARES Act money and would like to see the Town of Christiansburg go in that direction. Mr. Wingfield expressed that the Town of Blacksburg is now reevaluating this program due to uncertainty in whether this is allowed under CARES Act funding. He added that by the November 10, 2020 Town Council meeting, he should have a definite answer if the Town of Blacksburg would use a portion of their CARES Act funding for the gift card program.

III. Adjournment

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 7:15 P.M.

Tracy Heinline, Deputy Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor