

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 11, 2021 – 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 MAY 11, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Andrew Warren; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Executive Assistant/Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson; Assistant Engineering Director Mike Kelley; Chief of Police Mark Sisson; Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley; Assistant Director of Public Works for Streets Travis Moles; Assistant Director of Public Works for Utilities Don Cole.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

None.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Dedication of a private drainage easement over four (4) recreation areas identified as Tax Map 465 – 27A that in whole total 0.546 acres from the Town of Christiansburg to Oaktree Townhomes, Phase II Homeowners Association.

The public hearing was opened. With no speakers on the item, the public hearing was closed.

- B. Conditional Use Permit request by New River Soccer Association (applicant) on behalf of Marjorie Ann Rhudy for a private recreational facility in the Agriculture (A) zoning district at 1200 Buffalo Drive, (Tax Parcel 556 – ((A)) – 84). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Leslie Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of the New River United Soccer Association, gave a brief overview of the plans for the property on Buffalo Drive and introduced a more localized area for children to become involved in the soccer club. Mr. Fitzpatrick explained that they are currently using Virginia Tech's facilities and have been looking at land in and around Christiansburg and Blacksburg. Mr. Fitzpatrick expressed hope that with this new facility and

organizing regional tournaments it would help boost the economy and bring more people to Christiansburg and surrounding areas.

- C. Rezoning request by JBC Properties, LLC, for approximately 4.82 acres of a 5.311-acre parcel from A Agriculture to R-1 Single Family Residential. The subject property is located at 345 John Lemley Lane, S.E. and is identified as Tax Map Number 502 – ((17)) - 23 (Parcel ID 120239). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan (Case #RZN-2021-04).

Tim Conner, JBC Properties, explained to Council he had previously purchased the land on John Lemley Lane due to owning land to the southeast of this property. Mr. Conner explained he would like to divide the lot and make a smaller portion to match the rest of the lots at the end of John Lemley Lane. He expressed he does not want a public street but a recreational entrance outlet instead. Councilman Bishop questioned why there was a need for a rezoning if the property owner was not constructing homes. Town Manager Wingfield explained that since Mr. Conner wished to reshape the single-family lot and this would cause a portion to remain Agricultural and that the Subdivision Ordinance states if subdividing then there is a need for a petition to rezone to a more intensive zoning district if that is the intended use.

- D. Water rates proposed for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned if a comment from a citizen sent in concerning the proposed water rate increase could be read to the public. Mayor Barber explained that Council had received the email and that email would be attached to the final minutes and the time for Council discussion would be at the next meeting.

The public hearing was opened. With no speakers on the item, the public hearing was closed.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of April 27, 2021.
- B. Schedule a public hearing for June 22, 2021 for an amendment of proffers for conditional zoned property for The Reserve at Round Meadows by Shah Development LLC (applicant/property owner). The change of proffers would allow an increase of five (5) additional lots for a total of no more than 56 single-family detached dwellings. The development is adjacent to Round Meadow Drive on Tax Map 494 – ((A)) – 62 and 63, Tax Map 495 – ((A)) – 64, and Tax Map 494 – ((A)) – 55E1 – 55E3.
- C. Schedule a public hearing for June 22, 2021 for a Conditional Use Permit request by Shah Development LLC (applicant/property owner) for a revision to The Reserve at Round Meadows subdivision previously approved 51 single family detached dwelling Planned Housing Development to add five (5) additional single-family dwellings on property located adjacent to Round Meadow Drive on Tax Map 494 – ((A)) – 62 and 63, Tax map 495 – ((A)) – 64, and Tax Map 494 – ((A)) – 55E1 – 55E3.
- D. Resolution recognizing May 16 – 22, 2021 as National Public Works Week.

E. Resolution recognizing May 16 – 22, 2021 as National Emergency Medical Services Week.

Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sachs. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Chief of Police Mark Sisson to present on Axon Body Cameras.

Police Chief Mark Sisson noted his uniform and explained the Police Department wore the specific uniforms to honor the men and women that served before them. Mr. Sisson recognized former Chief of Police Gary Brumfield and Councilman Bishop (former Captain of the Blacksburg Police Department) for their years of service to the community. Mr. Sisson began his presentation by informing Council that over the years law enforcement has changed drastically and believed that after researching body cameras for the last five years it was time for a change for the police department. He noted that over 150,000 body cameras from Axon were now on the streets of the country. Mr. Sisson touched on the background of in-car cameras and explained that they are currently installed in every police vehicle in Christiansburg but did not provide adequate service or quality that is expected in today's climate. He explained the Town of Christiansburg has 62 sworn police officers and currently none of those police officers have body cameras. He expressed that with Axon body cameras there would be live footage for the Town and the police officer would be held accountable for their actions. Chief Sisson also expressed that there is typically less time spent in court for officers due to having video evidence of the body cameras

Also included in the Axon package are new tasers that are needed at the Police Department as well. He explained that tasers are a less lethal option for the police and the Police Department's current tasers are at least five years old. Mr. Sisson went on to explain the importance of de-escalation in a crisis and explained that over 225,000 lives had been saved due to tasers and that fewer officers and suspects were injured during a crisis. Chief Sisson introduced representatives Amber Stanton and Stephanie Sapp from the Axon team. Ms. Sapp explained how the body cameras and Taser 7's functioned and touched on the iCloud-based system that would be used to store body camera video. She explained this system would aid in transferring the videos to the courts system when needed. Ms. Sapp also touched on the Taser 7 and explained that currently the Town's police officers must stand back eight feet from a perpetrator and with the new Taser 7, it could be used at four feet. She also expressed that the new Taser 7 had a warning sound for perpetrators before it expels. She explained that Axon would provide all training to officers and a maximum number of replacement cartridges were included in the package for the tasers. Chief Sisson explained that the first year of payments for the Axon equipment would come from grant funding from the Department of Criminal Justice Services grant match funds. Councilman Showalter questioned Town Attorney Reid Broughton if this new program would aid in litigation. Mr. Broughton explained that yes it would be helpful and could be an insurance benefit. Town Manager Wingfield informed Council this item would be placed on the next Council agenda.

B. Director of Parks and Recreation Brad Epperley and Assistant Events Coordinator Marty Gordon to update on the 2021 Farmers Market.

Director of Parks and Recreation Brad Epperley gave a brief update on the 2021 Farmers Market and spoke about past vendors on Hickok Street and despite the pandemic, 2020 was a good year for the Market. Mr. Epperley explained that this year, the Farmers Market would be held at the Parks and Recreation parking lot every Thursday beginning May 20th. Mr. Epperley spoke about a sustainability project that collects plastic bags and receives benches for the Town in return. He explained that this project would continue throughout at the Farmers Market this season. Mr. Epperley touched on the Farmers Market set up and safety aspects for the vendors and customers. Assistant Event Coordinator Marty Gordon spoke about the theme weeks planned for the Farmers Market and some of the 2021 vendors. He explained that market applications were still coming in and that there would be an average of 20-29 vendors per week. Mr. Gordon explained there would be specialty days like Touch-a-Tractor, BBQ Day, Christmas in July, Operation Teddy Bear, Dr. Pepper Day, among others. He touched on social media and how the Farmers Market encouraged citizens to take selfies or pictures of their purchases and place on the Hangin' at The Market's Facebook page. Mr. Gordon concluded that the Farmers Market is more important than ever since the pandemic and encouraged everyone to attend.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ken Baker, 1320 Flint Drive, expressed that he had lived at Craig Mountain for 46 years and was concerned about the home daycare on Flint Drive that had been introduced before Council. He explained the Flint Drive and Hunters Path intersection had a history of being dangerous for drivers and expressed that adding a home daycare in that area would add to the traffic and possibly more accidents. He explained he was not totally objecting to the daycare but was concerned for this specific location because of the sight distance problem.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

1. Plat Showing Boundary Line Adjustment Between Tax Parcel 528 – ((A)) – 96 & Tax Parcel 528 – ((A)) – 97 and Dedication of Public Utility Easements situated on Flint Drive, S.E. Councilman Stipes explained the intent for the line adjustment was to reconfigure the existing lots and create a new lot line so there would be no increase in buildable lots. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the plat. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

2. Plat Showing New, Relocated and Vacated Public Utility Easements on the Christiansburg Primary and Elementary School Campus situated on Betty Drive, N.W. and Wades Lane, N.W. Councilman Stipes explained that with the renovation of the Christiansburg schools that there was a need to upgrade water service as well. He explained there was a 6-inch line located on Betty Drive now and an 8-inch line was needed for water lines for fire and water service for both schools. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the plat. The

motion was 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. A request from Sareh Ostadhosseinkhayyat for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a Family Day Home serving up to 12 children in the R-1, Single-Family Residential zoning district. The property is located at 1265 Flint Drive, S.E. and is identified as Tax Map 529 – ((21)) – 9. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.
Councilman Stipes expressed that he understood the concern of the neighbors in the Flint Drive area and explained that Council could limit the childcare to a 7-child maximum. He expressed that this permit could be revokable and was not necessarily a permanent permit. Councilwoman Hicks expressed gratitude for Mr. Ken Potter's email and how the community had communicated to Council their concerns. Mrs. Hicks also expressed thanks to Ms. Ostadhosseinkhayyat for coming before Council and presenting her request.
Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the request for the Conditional Use Permit at 1265 Flint Drive. The motion was seconded by Councilman Huppert. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Nay; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.
- B. A request from Gay and Neel, Inc. to rezone an approximately 43.4-acre property owned by the Montgomery County School Board from I-2, General Industrial and B-3, General Business, to B-3, General Business with proffers. The property consists of three parcels located at 100 Independence Boulevard, N.W. and 1180 N. Franklin Street, identified as Tax Map 466 – ((2)) – 11 and 11A and Tax Map 466 – ((A)) – 14.
Councilwoman Sachs made a motion to approve the requested rezoning located at 100 Independence Boulevard, N.W. and 1180 N. Franklin Street. The motion was seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.
- C. A request from Trinity Community Church Trustees to rezone an approximately 5.44-acre property from A, Agricultural, to B-3, General Business. The property is located at 1505 N. Franklin Street and is identified as Tax Map 466 – ((A)) – 20A.
Councilman Showalter made a motion to approve the request from Trinity Community Church Trustees for rezoning. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.
- D. Community Development Block Grant 2019 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).
Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the CAPER Report. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sachs. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Sachs – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.
- E. Discussion of Regional Cigarette Tax Board.

Town Manager Wingfield informed Council of the relatively new allowance for the regional cigarette tax board and explained this would bring regions together for distribution. He explained that the NRV Regional Commission had requested the Town gauge interest in a regional tax board. Mr. Wingfield touched on the current cigarette tax rate of \$0.40 per pack and explained that this is the rate the localities are targeting with the regional board. Mr. Wingfield inquired as to what direction Council would like to take. Council agreed they would not support the Town joining the regional cigarette tax board but supported the 40% tax from other localities. Councilman Stipes noted that small business owners' concerns with equity and competitive advantage would go away if County taxed at the same rate.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager

Town Manager Wingfield reminded Council of the signature park ground-breaking for Saturday, May 15th at 2:30 pm. He explained that the Axon contract would be placed on the next Council agenda. Councilman Showalter questioned Town Attorney Broughton if he could investigate cost savings for the Axon program.

B. Town Attorney

None.

C. Other Staff

None.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilman Stipes

None.

Councilman Showalter

None.

Councilman Huppert reported that both the Parks and Recreation and the Aquatic Center Advisory Boards had their monthly meetings. Mr. Huppert reported that Recreation Program Supervisor Chuck Muncy would be retiring after 30 years of service at the end of June this year. He noted that the stage has been rented by Midway Productions for high school graduation. He reported that the new e-bikes will be green instead of current orange bikes and the roll-out will be soon. He noted that there will be the usual Lions Club craft fair this fall at the Rec Center but there will also be a YMCA sponsored craft fair at a different time during the fall. He reported there had been a shred-a-thon in the last month and what was shredded had filled up two trucks. He reminded everyone that Covid vaccines were still available every Friday at the Recreation Center and last Friday they had 1,000 people sign up. Mr. Huppert also reported that Bill Ellenbogen, who started the Huckleberry Trail had retired from the Friends of the Huckleberry Trail and hoped that the Town would recognize him with a plaque. He reported that Aquatic Director Terry Caldwell would be retiring on June 30 of this year and what a great service she had provided. Mr. Huppert also expressed there was a shortage of lifeguards at the Aquatic Center for this summer and urged people to apply. He concluded that Councilwoman Hicks spoke at the Aquatic Advisory Board meeting about raising

rates at the Aquatic Center for out of town visitors and that a yearly increase of \$5,000 would be the benefit.

Councilman Bishop
None.

Councilwoman Sachs
None.

Councilwoman Hicks reported that since lifeguards are needed at the Aquatic Center that maybe wages could be raised. She expressed that there was an abundance of training for these lifeguards and maybe a wage increase would help. Mrs. Hicks encouraged a study be completed so Council could support wage increases. Mrs. Hicks also reported that last Wednesday Governor Ralph Northam was in Christiansburg speaking about the rail coming to the New River Valley and wanted to clarify for citizens that the rail would not be by the Aquatic Center. She explained the Amtrak service would be located on the Virginia line which runs along the northern boundary of the Town.

Mayor Barber reported that he would like Council's thoughts on working with the New River Valley Regional Commission and the Planning Commission to upgrade the Comprehensive Plan. Councilman Stipes agreed this needed attention. Town Manager Wingfield expressed he would compile figures together and report back to Council. Councilwoman Hicks stated the need for planning department to grow and will help build a better community. Mayor stated it is short staffed now, but the Planning Department has always been great and that partnering with Regional Commission is always a plus.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:47pm.

Tracy Heinline, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor