

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 10, 2022 – 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 10, 2022, AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor Henry Showalter; Samuel M. Bishop; Johana Hicks; Tanya Hockett; Casey Jenkins; Tim Wilson.

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; Chief of Police Mark Sisson; Public Works Director Jim Lancianese; Assistant Director of Public Works, Streets Travis Moles; Director of Human Resources Alicia Dials; Human Resources Generalist Danette Poole.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Hicks.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget

Mary Ellen Campagna, 1180-A Brown Street, addressed Council on behalf of her son who is a resident of Christiansburg Bluff Apartments. Ms. Campagna expressed concern that the BT public transportation service in Christiansburg had been reduced and that there were several stops on the new routes that were not planned, which caused longer rides and delays. She also mentioned that several buses did not have air conditioning and are in disrepair. Ms. Campagna expressed that the Go Anywhere (GAR) Bus was inconsistent with pick-up times, and it takes several days ahead of time to schedule appointments. Ms. Campagna questioned why Covid relief funds were not being used to fix these issues

and expressed that Blacksburg is due to receive grants soon and wanted to know if those funds could be used for bus services.

#### IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of April 26, 2022
- B. Schedule Public Hearing on May 24, 2022, for the Town of Christiansburg 2022-2026 Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan and 2022 Annual Action Plan

Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Councilman Wilson. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

#### V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Goodwill Industries of the Valleys Chief Operating Officer Mindy Boyd to present on Goodwill programs and operations

Mindy Boyd addressed Council and spoke about the 90-year history of Goodwill Industries and the industries long-term plan to eliminate poverty. Ms. Boyd expressed that during Covid-19 they learned to deliver services in a hybrid model and that for several programs they continue to provide that virtual option to customers. She explained that throughout the last couple years Goodwill has benefited from community partners and partnerships. Ms. Boyd noted that in 2021 Goodwill served 38,446 people in the New River Valley and provided 670 job placements. She spoke about the mission of Goodwill Industries, explaining that empowering individuals, strengthening families, and inspiring communities were their top priorities. Ms. Boyd talked about team members of Goodwill Industries and how they have expressed value in community engagement, diversity, equity, and opportunities for growth within the organization. She spoke about the goals for Goodwill moving forward and explained that their focus was on opportunities for development and having a greater impact on the community. She noted that Goodwill Industries provided job training opportunities for their employees and that they concentrate on building employment readiness and placement. Ms. Boyd concluded that Goodwill has refreshed their website and can be found at [goodwillvalleys.com](http://goodwillvalleys.com).

Councilwoman Hicks inquired about the employee job training opportunities and the nursing program that was offered through Goodwill Industries. Ms. Boyd explained that this opportunity was a federal grant that was awarded to Goodwill 2 to 3 years ago and has been extremely successful since. She explained that Goodwill saw the need for healthcare workers and decided to self-fund so employees could apply for the program and be accepted at no cost to them. Ms. Boyd noted that the nursing program was accredited through both Radford University and Virginia Tech. Mrs. Hicks also asked about the re-entry program for people released from incarceration. Ms. Boyd explained that re-entry into the community was difficult for some and so Goodwill provides the

opportunity to be employed quickly, within the first thirty days to help them get back into the community.

B. Human Resources Director Alicia Dials to present on department work program and operations

Alicia Dials began her presentation by talking about the Human Resources Department's response to Covid-19 and the procedures that were developed during the pandemic. Mrs. Dials explained that the department had coordinated testing and vaccination clinics, reported required information to the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry, and provided mental health resources for employees and supervisors. She expressed that recruitment had been challenging the past couple years and spoke about how advertising dollars were strategically spent during that time. Mrs. Dials noted that advertisements had been placed within the Roanoke Times, on several social media websites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and radio ad placement based on the listening area. She continued to explain that Human Resources had participated in various job fairs including the first ever drive-thru job fair. Mrs. Dials expressed that during this advertisement process the department learned that applicants seek a simpler way to apply for employment. She noted that applications were revised and QR codes and wallet cards were created for easier navigation to the Town's website and benefits page.

Mrs. Dials talked about employee benefits and how the department works hard to maintain affordable health care options for employees. She noted that open enrollment for employees this year included benefit counselors on site to counsel employees through the benefit process. She spoke about the new Tyler Munis software that is scheduled to start in June and how it would be an asset to the department and would eliminate current spreadsheets currently being used. Mrs. Dials noted that the Human Resources Department had several upcoming projects which included updating job descriptions, ensuring that policies and procedures were consistent in all departments, and working with Information Technology to research options for records management software. She concluded her presentation by showing a draft video that Public Relations was currently working on that would be included with orientation for new employees.

Councilman Jenkins asked if the department had seen an increase in applications since the QR codes had been introduced. Mrs. Dials expressed that there had been a slight increase in applications. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she would like to see the Town cover health insurance for full-time employees at 100%. Finance Director Valerie Tweedie explained that Town employees contribute approximately \$300,000 a year to health insurance currently. Mrs. Dials noted that the current \$17 a month for health insurance was a respectable rate for health insurance compared to other plans. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she enjoyed the orientation video but would like to see employees' names and titles with their videos. Councilman Showalter questioned Mrs. Dials why she thought there was less of a potential workforce now. Mrs. Dials expressed that since Covid-19, people had received additional money from the government and now many people were enjoying working remote. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she would like to see a sign-on bonus for new Police Department

employees as well as Public Works employees. Mrs. Dials noted that the Town was currently discussing a potential sign-on bonus and a decision had not been made.

#### VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mary Ellen Campagna, 1180-A Brown Street, asked for a clear answer from Council in reference to her earlier complaint concerning reduced transportation. Town Manager Wingfield expressed that he would address the issue with Blacksburg Transit and move forward from there.

#### VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Hicks reported that the Agency on Aging would be hosting two upcoming events and asked if the advertisements for those events could be placed on the Town's website for the public. Mr. Wingfield expressed that if Council agreed to that then it could be advertised through social media.

#### VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. Reappointment of Randy Wingfield as Representative to the New River Valley Emergency Communication Regional Authority Board of Directors. The term would be May 10, 2022 to May 9, 2026.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the reappointment of Randy Wingfield to the New River Valley Emergency Communication Regional Authority Board of Directors, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Councilwoman Hicks questioned the process if the Town Manager retired or stepped down from his position unexpectedly. Mr. Wingfield explained that the bylaws do not specify that the replacement be a Town Manager or even a staff person. He added that the Montgomery County Administrator and the Blacksburg Town Manager are the current appointees from their respective localities. Councilwoman Hicks also questioned the process as far as the other committee members were concerned. Mr. Wingfield explained that a Vice President appointed by their Board of Visitors represents Virginia Tech on the Board and there is one additional at-large member that must be appointed by all.

Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

- B. Reappointment of Wayne Nelson as representative and Dr. William Knocke as At-Large Representative to the New River Valley Water Authority Board of Directors. The terms would be July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2026.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the reappointment of Wayne Nelson and Dr. William Knocke to the New River Valley Water Authority Board of Directors, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Councilwoman Hicks inquired how the process would continue if

Mr. Nelson stepped down. Mayor Barber explained that any vacancy within the NRV Water Authority would need to be replaced. Councilman Showalter asked Mr. Nelson if he could provide a monthly report and provide it to Mr. Wingfield to place in his weekly reports to Council. Councilman Showalter expressed concern that the improvement to the water authority was needed a long time ago and it would be helpful to receive updates. Mr. Nelson spoke on behalf of Dr. Knocke and explained he could not attend the Council meeting due to a scheduling conflict. He noted that he would be scheduling a time to present to Council soon. Councilman Showalter added that this may be a good opportunity for Dr. Knocke to attend also.

Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

C. Discussion of Potential Meeting Topics with Montgomery County Board of Supervisors

Mayor Barber reminded Town Council to send any agenda items for the potential meeting with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to Mr. Wingfield. Mr. Wingfield noted that he has received several discussion topics from Council members and would continue to compile them as provided.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager Wingfield

Mr. Wingfield reported that Blacksburg Transit was having staffing issues with drivers and mechanics and expressed that the issue could potentially be addressed with pay increases. Councilwoman Hicks asked how much the Town was contributing to transportation this year. Mrs. Tweedie explained it was over \$503,000. Mayor Barber explained that the amount provided was more than has been provided in the last few years. Mr. Wingfield noted that approximately half of the transit services are funded with grants. He also suggested that if anyone in the community was having trouble with one of the current bus routes at a particular time, the Go Anywhere bus was a potential service that could be utilized.

Mr. Wingfield suggested scheduling a Public Hearing on June 28th for the request of the boundary adjustment on Houchins Road of a 3.3acre parcel and inquired if Council agreed. Councilwoman Hicks disagreed with holding a public hearing on the boundary adjustment. Mayor Barber noted that it would not hurt to hear from the requester. Councilman Wilson agreed with Mayor Barber. Mr. Wingfield noted that the County would need to agree as well and stated that the June 28<sup>th</sup> public hearing would be a tentative date. Councilwoman Hicks questioned the request for boundary adjustments and asked if there was a charge for staff hours. Mr. Wingfield stated that currently there was no fee, but the Town has required survey quality drawings at the requestor's expense of what they would like to incorporate into the Town. Councilwoman Hicks asked if this allowance would open the door for others to request boundary line adjustments as well. Mr. Wingfield explained that typically it is incorporating land into town that is more common.

Mr. Wingfield noted that staff was considering the possibility of holding the Town Employee Picnic this year on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. He explained that in the past the Town has had limited participation of employees on Saturdays and this year would like to have the picnic during Town hours to increase participation. Mr. Wingfield noted that there could be a possibility of closing Town Hall for 2 to 3 hours and possibly the Recreation and Aquatic Centers to have the picnic and would like Council's thoughts on the idea. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she did not think the community would like the facilities to shut down. Mayor Barber expressed that if the event was properly advertised ahead of time, it would not be an issue. He added that Administration and Public Works, along with the Police Departments would need to stay open to the public in case of emergencies. Council suggested to continue the conversation at a later date. Mr. Wingfield reported that the next Council meeting would have an update to the Sunset Cemetery Master Plan and a presentation regarding the Wing public drone delivery zone.

B. Town Attorney – No report

C. Other Staff – No report

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Barber reported that the Rockin' Main Street event would be held Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Barber also noted there would be two Juneteenth celebrations this year, those locations being at Rosa Peters Playground and Christiansburg Institute.

Councilman Showalter – No report

Councilman Bishop – No report

Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she would like to see a bathroom facility for the Downtown Park reflected in the budget. Mayor Barber explained that a bathroom for the park would need to come out of capital from the Recreation Department and explained it could be a large project. He noted that if a decision was made to install a bathroom, it could be added as a budget amendment. Councilman Showalter suggested that the Town get an estimated cost first and then Council could move forward if needed with an amendment. Mr. Wingfield explained that the Town had an issue with the previous bathroom, purchased with Cares Act money, that was going to be placed there and expressed that the workers would have needed a crane to install it and did not think a crane could get up the hill. He noted that the bathroom facility would need to be stick built instead and would require water line and sewer line extensions.

Councilwoman Hockett – No report

Councilman Wilson – No report

Councilman Jenkins – No report

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Councilman Showalter expressed that he would like to discuss with the Board of Supervisors a consistent rate of pay across the board for all Montgomery County and Christiansburg EMT workers. He continued that he did not want the Town and County to go back and forth on who could offer a higher incentive for essential service workers.

Mayor Barber questioned if Town Council would like to have another budget work session. Councilwoman Hicks stated that she would like to have another work session. Councilman Wilson expressed that he was indifferent. Councilwoman Hockett stated that she was not against a work session but felt comfortable with the budget at this point. Councilman Bishop, Councilman Showalter, and Councilman Jenkins expressed they saw no need for an additional work session. Councilwoman Hicks questioned if the County paid towards Blacksburg Transit services and if not then she would like that added to the agenda for the potential County meeting. Councilman Showalter questioned Mr. Wingfield if the Town had any comprehensive sustainability plans for the Town concerning solar farms. Mr. Wingfield explained there was no formal plan at this time. Councilman Showalter expressed that he would like a formal coordinated plan and asked if Mr. Wingfield could gather options to send to Council in the next couple weeks. Councilman Wilson and Councilwoman Hicks agreed. Mr. Wingfield stated that Virginia Tech has a contract themselves for solar installation and there were several solar providers in the area he would be speaking to.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

  
Tracy Heintz, Clerk of Council

  
D. Michael Barber, Mayor