

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JULY 26, 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 JULY 26, 2022, AT 7:00 P.M.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Andrew Warren; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Executive Assistant/Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Chief of Fire & Rescue Billy Hanks; Deputy Rescue Chief Dustin Williams; Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Public Works Director Jim Lianese; Assistant Director of Public Works, Streets Travis Moles; Chief of Police Mark Sisson

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

Town Manager Wingfield made a correction to the agenda under Discussion and Action by Mayor and Town Council, item B. and explained the dates should read July 23, 2022 to July 22, 2025.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Amendment of Sec. 6-1 of Chapter 6 Alcoholic Beverages of the *Christiansburg Town Code* in regards to provisions for playing pool where alcoholic beverages are sold or dispensed

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, expressed that the amendment should have been changed sooner.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of July 12, 2022
- B. Monthly Bill List
- C. Contract to purchase Caterpillar 920-14 AC Wheel Loader for \$194,624 from Carter Machinery

Councilwoman Hicks questioned the allowance for cleaning of Town vehicles and asked what vehicles were being cleaned. Finance Director Valerie Tweedie explained the vehicles in question were the Fire Department vehicles. Chief of Fire and Rescue Billy Hanks explained that his department does not wash their own emergency vehicles because of the amount of time it takes and that it was more cost efficient to have them washed professionally.

Councilwoman Hicks also questioned why there were cleaning service bills on the monthly bill list for the Aquatics and Parks and Recreation Departments. Finance Director Valerie Tweedie explained that the cleaning for both facilities had been contracted out due to staffing shortages.

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

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Montgomery Museum of Art and History representative to request for closure of E. Main Street (from Franklin Street to Pepper Street) and Marvin Jarrels Circle (from E. Main Street to N. Franklin Street) from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and alcohol sales on Town property (in Town Hall parking lot) from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in conjunction with the Heritage Day Festival on Saturday, August 20, 2022

Becky Novy, Special Projects Coordinator for the Montgomery Museum of Art and History asked if Council had any specific questions concerning the Heritage Day Festival request for the closure of streets and alcohol sales on Town property. Councilwoman Hicks questioned what the contributions were from the museum for this event. Ms. Novy explained that this had been a long-running event and that the Museum had coordinated arrangements for food, alcohol, and entertainment vendors, silent auctions, as well as community activities. She expressed that the festival was a free event for the community, and they had always received positive feedback every year. Mayor Barber explained that the Town had no cost involved in the Heritage Day Festival other than the community grant to the museum.

- B. Chief of Fire and Rescue Billy Hanks to present on Fire Department programs and operations

Chief of Fire and Rescue Billy Hanks came before Council and gave a brief presentation concerning operations within the department. Chief Hanks explained that funding for the Fire Department came from both the Town of Christiansburg and Montgomery County and added that the County supplies the Fire Department with several vehicles. He noted that along with several full time positions the department had 37 dedicated volunteer firefighters who continue to provide fire safety talks and station tours to the public. Chief Hanks also noted that the Christiansburg Fire Department had received an ISO (Insurance Services Office) rating of a Class 4 and was working towards a Class 3 which would mean reduced insurance rates for the citizens of Christiansburg.

Chief Hanks touched on the FY 2022 total calls for the Fire Department and noted that most of the calls were concerning rescue/medical calls within Town limits. He spoke about the Fire Department being active and playing a vital role with the New River Valley Public Health Task Force during and after Covid-19. He included that Fire Marshal Curtis Whitt continued to conduct routine fire, sprinkler, and fire alarm system inspections as well as food truck inspections. Chief Hanks also spoke about on-the-job training for new firefighters and the hours needed to become a firefighter.

He explained that the Fire Department had new software for records management and noted that the new web-based records management system allowed his department to see building occupancy information and commercial floor plans in real time from the field. Chief Hanks concluded with future goals for the Fire Department which included possible sites for an additional new fire station and additional volunteers and staffing.

C. Rescue Deputy Chief Dustin Williams to present on Rescue Squad programs and operations

Rescue Deputy Chief Dustin Williams presented to Council data for the Town's Rescue calls and explained that call numbers had dropped during Covid-19. Mr. Williams talked about call response times for the Rescue Department and how those calls were prioritized. He touched on the Rescue's goals which included a new Rescue station, 10 - minute average response call times, more provider coverage, and more volunteers and staffing.

Councilwoman Hicks inquired if there was anything Town Council could do to help with the call response times, especially across town in the Uptown area. Chief of Fire and Rescue Billy Hanks explained that another factor for response times was the traffic lights throughout Town and noted that a new facility in the area of Roanoke Street or Uptown would allow Rescue to respond more efficiently. Mr. Williams added that currently a new facility and additional staff and volunteers were the biggest need for Rescue. Mr. Williams and Mr. Hanks concluded that all surrounding areas were having difficulty recruiting for these positions.

Mayor Barber recognized Mr. Kevin Foutz who had been appointed by Town Council previously, to the 911 Regional Authority Board. Mr. Foutz thanked Council for the opportunity to serve.

## VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, expressed concern for the Heritage Day Festival application submitted by Councilman Jenkins that benefited his place of employment, the Montgomery Museum of Art and History. Mr. Waltz noted that the subject of COIA (Conflict of Interest) had been brought up at the previous Town Council meeting concerning façade grants and the museum. He asked that Council take a serious look at this for conflict and decide if Councilman Jenkins should be applying for a grant for the Town that would benefit the museum.

Mr. Waltz also mentioned that the agenda packet for the Council meeting had been replaced on Monday morning and the application from Mr. Jenkins had been removed. Mr. Wingfield clarified that he believed the information in agenda packet had not changed.

Paul Leichner, 160 Alexa Lane, expressed his appreciation for Town Council and Town staff but noted his concern for the traffic lights in Town. He asked if there was current technology that could help with the traffic lights concerning emergency responses. Mayor Barber and Mr. Hanks explained that currently all but two of the Town traffic lights were equipped with a system called Opticom that aides emergency vehicles and stops traffic at traffic lights, but unfortunately it was still a struggle to get through the build-up of traffic when there was an emergency.

Mr. Leichner also responded to Mr. Waltz's public comment and questioned the subject of conflict of interest. Town Attorney Reid Broughton explained that Councilman Jenkins signed a statement at the beginning of the year stating he would not vote or discuss matters concerning the Montgomery County Museum. Mr. Leichner also questioned the previous Town Council meeting and asked if Mr. Jenkins should be allowed to make the decision whether something was a conflict of interest or not. Mr. Broughton explained that it is a Council member's sole decision to decide if something is a conflict of interest. Councilwoman Hicks stated that it is a Council member's responsibility to decide and protect themselves and explained she had excused herself some Town projects due to potential conflicts of interest.

## VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Wilson reported that the Sustainability Committee had their first meeting on July 15th and noted there were several projects in progress by Town staff that the public was perhaps not aware of. He expressed that the public could donate plastic bags to the Farmers Market which would in turn support new park benches for the area. Mr. Wilson expressed that he would like to get information out to the public more efficiently in the future.

Councilwoman Hocket – no report

Councilman Bishop – no report

Councilwoman Hicks reported that the Water and Waste Committee would meet July 27th at 3:00 p.m. Mrs. Hicks also reported that the Central Business Committee would not meet this week due to a Council member not being able to attend. Mrs. Hicks announced that the Public Arts Advisory Board had approved a mural for the Cambria area and the mural would

soon be placed on the side of Electrical Supply. She noted that the Town had received 16 applicants and referred to the drawing on the screen.

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

- A. Request by Montgomery Museum of Art and History for closure of E. Main Street (from Franklin Street to Pepper Street) and Marvin Jarels Circle (from E. Main Street to N. Franklin Street) from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and alcohol sales on Town property (in Town Hall parking lot) from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in conjunction with the Heritage Day Festival on Saturday, August 20, 2022

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve the request by Montgomery Museum of Art and History for closure of the above-mentioned streets in conjunction with the Heritage Day Festival, seconded by Councilman Bishop.

Councilwoman Hicks agreed with the motion that was made but asked if Council could separate the closing of the streets from the alcohol sales.

Councilwoman Hockett retracted her previous motion and made a new motion to include both the closing of the streets for the Heritage Day Festival and the alcohol sales on Town property. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bishop.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned that in the future if there were alcohol sales on Town property could the organization pay for the additional police presence. Councilman Wilson expressed that the current grant application does allow for up to \$8,000 and anything extra is reimbursable to the Town by the organization. Councilwoman Hicks questioned the number of hours being spent for the Heritage Day Festival. Mr. Wingfield explained that he had sent Town Council cost estimates for equipment for the Heritage Day Festival based on Public Works time at a 2-hour rate or charging the rental rate for the equipment for the entire time of the event. Mr. Wingfield explained that previously the Town had charged for the full-time of the event but did not feel it was fair to charge the full equipment rental rate when the vehicle was not being operated but just sitting as a barricade. He explained that the total amount for a 2-hour rental would be \$7,420.28 for the Town. He noted that if the Town used an expanded footprint for the setup of the barricades the total would be \$8,420.28.

Council voted on the above motion as follows: Councilman Bishop – Aye; Councilwoman Hicks – Nay; Councilwoman Hockett – Aye; Councilman Wilson – Aye.

- B. Recommendation to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for reappointment of Mayor Barber to the Montgomery Regional Economic Development Commission (term of July 23, 2022 to July 22, 2025)

Mayor Barber expressed that he would suggest the term be changed to run through December 31, 2025, which would be the end of the current Mayor's term.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the recommendation to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for reappointment of Mayor Barber to the Montgomery Regional Economic Development Commission for the terms mentioned above, seconded by Councilwoman Hicks. Council voted as follows: Councilman Bishop – Aye; Councilwoman Hicks – Aye; Councilwoman Hockett – Aye; Councilman Wilson – Aye.

## IX. STAFF REPORTS

### A. Town Manager

Mr. Wingfield reported that the Citizens Academy would be held Wednesday evenings on September 7<sup>th</sup> through October 26<sup>th</sup> and the application could be found on the Town's website with a deadline of August 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Wingfield inquired if Council was comfortable with counting the hours of operation of the equipment for the upcoming festival towards the rental rates. Council agreed. Councilwoman Hockett noted that once the event was over Council would have a better understanding of the total cost and the organization would be responsible for anything above the \$8,000. Mr. Wingfield agreed and asked Council if they would like to increase the \$8,000 total amount for future special event grants. Councilwoman Hockett expressed that it was worth discussing. Council agreed. Mr. Wingfield noted that he would add that item to the next agenda.

Mr. Wingfield reported that a high grass complaint had been reported on S. Franklin Street and that a Council member disagreed with the assessment of a violation by Town staff. Mr. Wingfield noted that Town staff felt this was a clear violation and that if the Town was not enforcing this type of complaint, then the code section should be removed. Councilwoman Hockett expressed that people were interested in building those types of habitats and questioned how the Town could differentiate between weeds and wildflowers. Mr. Wingfield did note that a majority of the property was covered in high grass and weeds, while there were some flowers. He noted that he had expressed to the property owner they could create a clearly defined area for wildflower habitat, just not the entire yard (but that it would need to be wildflowers). Councilwoman Hicks stated that she felt the owner did define the habitat and that the higher grass could not be seen from the road. Mrs. Hicks expressed that the Town needed consistency and the Town facilities needed to follow the same code standard. Mrs. Hicks asked what the next step was for this complaint against the property owner. Mr. Wingfield explained that the Town would mow the property and send a bill to them if the area was not taken care of. Councilwoman Hockett noted she would like the Town Code to be very clearly stated due to more property owners growing wildflowers in their yards.

Mr. Wingfield also reported there had been several comments online regarding Aquatic Center hours. He explained that starting September 6<sup>th</sup> the Aquatic Center hours would be changing to Monday – Thursday: 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and closed on Sunday. Mr. Wingfield noted that there was still a lack of staff at the Aquatic Center which has caused closures on certain days.

Mr. Wingfield concluded that a work session would be held concerning Community Support Applications August 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

- B. Town Attorney – no report
- C. Other Staff – no report

Finance Director Valerie Tweedie asked if Council preferred the new bill list format that had been provided in the Council packet. Mrs. Tweedie explained the new format was due to the new finance software and that now the bills were separated out to show every purchase. Council all agreed they liked the new format.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilman Bishop – no report

Councilwoman Hicks reported there would be a Waste and Water Committee meeting July 27<sup>th</sup>.

Councilwoman Hockett – no report

Councilman Wilson reported that he toured the new park with Mr. Wingfield and expressed that everything was running smoothly and moving forward.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Tracy Heinlein  
Tracy Heinlein, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber  
D. Michael Barber, Mayor