

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 25, 2023 – 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 APRIL 25, 2023, AT 7:00 P.M.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Andrew Warren; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Clerk of Council/Executive Assistant Tracy Heinline; Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Engineering Director Mike Kelley; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell; Chief of Police Mark Sisson; Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley

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

Mayor Barber presented Town Manager Randy Wingfield with a framed letter of appreciation for his 25 years of service to the Town.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Christiansburg Huckleberry Park Diamond Sponsorship Naming Rights

Shelor Motor Mile presented a bid for the Christiansburg Huckleberry Park Diamond Sponsorship Naming Rights. Mayor Barber summarized that Shelor Motor Mile bid an amount of \$500,000 and added there would be Council discussion of the sponsorship later in the Council meeting. Mr. Wingfield clarified that the bid would allow the opportunity for sponsorship naming to be included in the current name of the park.

There being no further bids the public hearing closed.

- B. Vacation of unbuilt rights-of-way on Angle Drive, SW (from W. Main Street to First Street, SW); on First Street, SW (from Angle Drive, SW to Chrisman Street, SW); and a remnant piece of right-of-way located off an unbuilt portion of First Street, SW

Darius Slaughter, 101 Chrisman Street, questioned the vacation of the unbuilt rights-of-way. Mr. Wingfield explained there were unbuilt Town public streets that the Town had been requested to vacate and that the right-of-way is typically divided between adjoining property owners if vacated. Mr. Slaughter expressed concern that in the past the Town had not maintained this area and questioned if this would cut off access to the rear of his yard. Mr. Wingfield explained the Town would need to discuss that with the proposed developer requesting the vacation and noted that a portion of property could be dedicated, or an access easement could be provided for any portion dedicated to the property owners. Mr. Slaughter specified there was currently a utility pole on the property. Mr. Wingfield explained that Town staff could speak to the developer concerning potential relocation of the pole or otherwise providing the property owner access. Mayor Barber asked Mr. Wingfield to follow up with Council, after speaking with the developer, prior to the next Council meeting.

- C. Rezoning request by Jerry L. Beasley and L.R. Ferolino-Beasley, property owners, to rezone an approximately 0.802-acre portion of the property located at 2475 Glade Drive SE (Tax Parcel 530 – ((A)) – 6; Parcel ID 027238) from A Agricultural to R-1 Single Family Residential. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Jerry Beasley, 2475 Glade Drive, addressed Council and explained he had previously purchased the portion of the property to share with his extended family and would like the property rezoned from A Agricultural to R-1 Single Family Residential.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of April 11, 2023
- B. Monthly Bill List
- C. Resolution recognizing May 7 – 13, 2023 as National Travel and Tourism Week
- D. Resolution recognizing May 6 – 12, 2023 as National Nurses Week
- E. Contract renewal #2 with Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc. d/b/a WSSI for Stormwater Engineering On-Call Services in the amount not to exceed \$150,000 per task order, and with work completed per contract year not to exceed \$500,000
- F. Contract renewal #2 with Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP d/b/a RK&K for Signal Structure Evaluations and Traffic Engineering On-Call Services in an amount not to exceed \$150,000 per task order, and with work completed per contract year not to exceed \$500,000

G. Task Order with Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP., for design of the East Main Street Sidewalk Project in the amount of \$107,761.00

Councilman Showalter referenced the monthly bill list pertaining to the pocket brochure from the Virginia Tourism Authority in the amount of \$240. Mr. Showalter inquired if the Parks and Recreation Department had received funding from the Authority and if the Authority had reached out to the Recreation Department. Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley explained that a certain amount of money was funded by Virginia Tourism for special events and the Town matched those funds. Director of Aquatics Terry Caldwell added that the Tourism Authority had reached out to the Aquatic Center concerning funding as well.

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

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

No introductions and presentations

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Carrie Bradshaw, 475 Summit Ridge Road, addressed Council concerning the School Resource Officers (SROs) and Falling Branch Elementary (FBE) School. Ms. Bradshaw relayed that she was speaking as an administrator for FBE School and was in favor of Town officers being in the elementary school. She expressed that the Police Department's Resource Officer routinely comes to the school to assist with lock down drills, walk-throughs of the school, K-9 presentations, and helping facilitate traffic in the mornings and afternoons. Ms. Bradshaw added that since the school is so close to Interstate 81 the SRO is an asset to the school. She explained that trust has been built between their SRO and the students as well as staff. She expressed that as a citizen of Christiansburg she believes it is the primary function of Town government to provide safety to students in the town. Ms. Bradshaw urged Council to continue funding for School Resource Officers.

Dustin Robins, 1720 Old Farm Village Rd., Apt. 22, addressed Council concerning general housing fees. He expressed that rent is high for this area and asked Council to bring in affordable housing. Mr. Robins expressed that he would like to meet with Town Council individually and start a discussion about affordable housing and believed it was a long-term project that needed to begin now.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Hockett reported that the Emergency Services Committee had previously met with Fire Chief Billy Hanks and discussed revenue recovery for the Fire Department. Mrs.

Hockett explained that after speaking with Fire Recovery (Fire Billing Solutions) and calculating numbers based on the previous year's calls, the Town could recover approximately \$102,000 in revenue for the Fire Department. She added that the Emergency Services Committee was in support of this and asked that staff move forward accordingly. Councilman Showalter pointed out that according to call reports for the Christiansburg Fire Department, the Town had responded to over 30% of calls for Montgomery County, and over 20% of County calls for Rescue.

Councilwoman Hicks reported that the Agency on Aging Committee has provided special programs online for caregivers of the elderly as well as important financial stability information for the community. Mrs. Hicks also added that NRV Agency on Aging provides a program called the Christiansburg Friendship Café that provides a community outing to share a meal and enjoy the company of others.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. Request by Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. for street closures of W. Main Street (from Franklin Street to Dunkley Street) and Hickok Street (from First Street to Commerce Street) on Saturday, May 6th from 12:00 noon to 11:00 p.m. for the DCI Food Truck Rodeo

Mayor Barber explained that he had spoken with Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. earlier in the day concerning incomplete documents for several Food Trucks for the event. Mr. Barber added that a temporary approval of the street closure could be considered tentative, subject to receiving documentation for the Food Trucks by Thursday, April 27th at 5:00 p.m.

Chris Chittenden, Board Member of Downtown Christiansburg Inc., and Co-Chair of the Food Truck Rodeo addressed Council and expressed that this was the Food Truck Rodeo's 10th year, and they were anticipating close to 10,000 individuals downtown. She noted there were fifteen food truck vendors that would be participating this year and explained they were currently waiting for proper documents from five of those food trucks. Ms. Chittenden explained that several of the food trucks had expired licenses but hoped that could be remedied before the event. Elli Travis, DCI President, assured Council that if the documentation for the trucks was not completed before the event, they would not be allowed to participate. Councilwoman Hicks expressed appreciation to DCI for their hard work with the rodeo.

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the request by Downtown Christiansburg Inc. for street closures on Saturday, May 6th from 12:00 noon to 11:00 p.m. for the DCI Food Truck Rodeo, seconded by Councilman Jenkins. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

- B. Appointment of Beth Umberger to the Sustainability Committee

Mayor Barber introduced and welcomed Ms. Umberger as the proposed newest member of the Sustainability Committee.

Councilman Showalter made a motion to approve the appointment of Beth Umberger to the Sustainability Committee, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

C. Discussion of Christiansburg Huckleberry Park Diamond Sponsorship Naming Rights

Mayor Barber explained that the naming rights bid from Shelor Motor Mile was a large document, and it was possible that Town staff may need an extended amount of time to review the information before making a decision.

Councilman Showalter made a motion to table the discussion of Christiansburg Huckleberry Park Diamond Sponsorship Naming Rights until further review of the received bid, Councilman Bishop seconded the motion. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

D. Process for the appointment of Police Chief

Mayor Barber explained that the Police Chief position currently has not been advertised and in the past Council has involved a headhunter to facilitate a nationwide search for some senior appointments. Mr. Barber added that the Town's Human Resource Director has given parameters for when and how to advertise the position. He noted that Police Chief Mark Sisson has been with the Town for 15 years in that role and respected his input on the matter. Mr. Wingfield asked Council how they would like to move forward with the process of hiring. Councilman Bishop expressed that he did not feel a need for a headhunter but would like to advertise the position and see who is interested.

Councilman Wilson agreed and expressed that an internal candidate could be suitable but still felt the advertisement needed to go out to the public. Mr. Wilson added that a committee could be formed to go over applications and chosen applications could be brought before Council. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she would like to see an internal employee in the position that is familiar with the department and knows the community well. Councilman Jenkins was unsure of bringing in a headhunter for the process but felt advertisement was a necessity to comply with the process. Mr. Jenkins added that he would like to have Chief Sisson's advisement on the committee or at least be part of the process. Councilwoman Hockett agreed with Mr. Jenkins and asked if a work session was needed. She also added that she would like to see an internal hire. Mayor Barber noted that the position is required to be advertised and the Town Manager and Human Resources Director would prepare the advertisement. Councilman Showalter agreed with Mr. Barber and expressed that he did not think a headhunter was needed. Mr. Showalter expressed that he would like to see a Chief advisory role and two Council members be involved in the review committee. Mayor Barber suggested reaching out to the surrounding Police Chiefs. Mayor Barber suggested Councilwoman Hockett and Councilman Showalter be part of the review committee. Council agreed.

E. School Resource Officers (SROs)

Mayor Barber noted that Montgomery County had not reached out to the Town recently concerning SROs but expressed that a decision needed to be made. Councilman Wilson suggested Council table the SRO discussion until the County reached out to Town Council. Councilwoman Hockett expressed that she would like to meet with the County to discuss SROs. Councilman Showalter expressed that he would like all Council members and all Board members to be present at the potential meeting and added there were more items than just the SRO item. Mr. Showalter added that a moderator was needed and suggested a neutral location. Councilman Wilson added that a list of items to discuss had been provided to the County previously and questioned what the County would like to discuss. Mayor Barber noted that he would speak with the County Administrator and the Board Supervisor for dates for a potential meeting. Councilwoman Hockett expressed concern that SROs would not be in schools beginning June 1st and that although students would not be there, adults would still be working in the schools. Police Chief Sisson explained that officers would still be there to protect staff during that time.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to table the discussion of School Resource Officer until there was further communication between the Town and Montgomery County, Councilman Showalter seconded the motion. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager

Mr. Wingfield stated Council may want to consider an independent moderator of the potential meeting between the Town and the County. Mr. Wingfield also added that the Cambria mural presentation would be May 10th at 11:30 a.m. and explained that the Town would close Cambria Street in that area for approximately thirty minutes.

B. Town Attorney – no report

C. Other Staff – no report

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilwoman Hicks reported that the previously mentioned Christiansburg Friendship Café program meets every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Center. She added that the program is currently accepting new clients.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Closed Meeting:

1. Councilman Bishop made a motion to enter into a Closed Meeting under Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711(A)(3), for the discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. The Closed Meeting was held for discussion of disposition of approximately 5 acres located at Peppers Ferry Road, NW and Booker T. Washington Parkway, NW (under construction). Councilwoman Hockett seconded the motion and Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

2. Reconvene in Open Meeting

3. Certification

Councilman Bishop made a motion to certify that the Town Council of the Town of Christiansburg meeting in Closed Meeting, to the best of each member's knowledge, discussed only the matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law and only such matters as are identified in the Resolution to enter into Closed Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

4. Council action on the matters

No action was taken by Council.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.


Tracy Heinline, Clerk of Council


D. Michael Barber, Mayor