

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 9, 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 MAY 9, 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 (via phone)

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; Director of Public Works Jim Lancianese; Superintendent of Public Works, Streets Travis Moles; Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell; Assistant Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Public Relations Director Christina Edney

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to allow Councilman Wilson to join the Council meeting via phone, seconded by Councilman Jenkins. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye.

A. Moment of Reflection

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Jenkins.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

No adjustments to the agenda

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Rezoning request by Jones Real Estate Investment & Recycling Company, Inc., property owner, to rezone an approximately 1.1 acre portion of a 2.002 acre parcel located between the south side of Scott Street, NE and the north side of Roanoke Street (Tax Parcel 499 – ((A)) – 10, Parcel ID 008134); and approximately 1.21 acres located at 1413 Scott Street, NE (Tax Parcel 529 – ((7)) – A, Parcel ID 008135); and approximately 0.26

acres located adjacent to the east side of 1413 Scott Street, NE (Tax Parcel 529 – ((7)) – 76, Parcel ID 008136) from B-3 General Business to R-3 Multiple-Family Residential. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Paul Henegar, Lumsden Associates, addressed Council and referenced a map of the proposed development explaining that rezoning was required for the current split-zoned property for a 47-unit townhome project. Mr. Henegar explained that if this rezoning was approved, they would want to vacate all the existing interior lot lines.

- B. Conditional Use Permit request by Jones Real Estate Investment & Recycling Company, Inc., property owner, to allow a planned housing development for 47 townhouses on the property located at 1413 Scott Street, NE (Tax Parcels 499 – ((A)) – 10; 499 – ((17)) – 48 through 56; 529 – ((7)) – A; 529 – ((7)) – 44 through 47, 75 and 76; Parcel IDs 008134, 008135, 008136, and 210197) currently zoned B-3 General Business and proposed for rezoning to R-3 Multiple-Family Residential. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Paul Henegar spoke again to Council and expressed that he believed both the Planning Commission and the public's concerns for the planned housing development had been addressed. Mr. Henegar explained that several units had been removed from the proposal and setbacks had been adjusted. He noted that amenities had been added as well as a reduction in lot sizes. Mr. Henegar talked about the addition of the 5-foot pedestrian walking/bike lane and explained there would be an entrance from Scott Street into the development and an exit onto Scott Street with a round-about in the middle of the parking lot. He addressed the concerns the Planning Commission had voiced concerning the large amount of runoff onto area landowners' properties. Mr. Henegar explained that 24.2 acres drained onto the neighboring property and the intersection at Roanoke Street and that the development would divert over 6 acres of that drainage into a management facility. He explained this was a 28% reduction in stormwater runoff.

Mayor Barber questioned if emergency vehicles could maneuver through the proposed area. Mr. Henninger explained that he had met with Town Engineering staff but not with the Fire Department but added that he would like to utilize a software that would demonstrate if emergency vehicles could fit in those areas. He added there would be two dumpsters at the development as well as a mail kiosk.

Councilman Showalter noted that recently there had been concerns in reference to townhome projects having solid waste and recycling locations at the townhomes. He added that the Planning Commission was currently working on an ordinance that would require a location for up to two cans against each unit if there were no dumpsters proposed in a development.

Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she would like to see sidewalks on Scott Street. Mr. Wingfield reminded Council that rezoning was not subject to conditions, but that Council could add whatever conditions they saw fit to the Conditional Use Permit, if approved.

Councilman Showalter questioned input on the ordinance requirements for pedestrian accommodations. Mr. Wingfield explained that R-3 District requires either sidewalks or trails and explained that those sidewalks or trails had to connect to each lot and be tied into properties on either side of a development. Mr. Wingfield stated that the planned housing development request essentially allows developers to write their own zoning requirements, subject to Town Council approval.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned Planning Commission's vote for this rezoning and asked what the concerns were. Assistant Town Manager Warren explained that the Planning Commission had spent three meetings discussing this subject.

Bryan Bush, 165 Hungate Road, expressed his concern for the stormwater runoff on his property. Mr. Bush expressed that there should be a more detailed plan of development. He explained there were three or four townhouse developments in the area that have lesser densities and believes the proposal is too dense for the area. Mr. Bush added that Scott Street is currently very narrow, and the townhomes did not have front yardage in the plans and expressed concern for children riding bicycles there. Mr. Bush felt that the units should be limited to 40 units instead.

Mr. Henegar addressed Mr. Bush's drainage concerns and explained that the stormwater runoff could flow towards a low spot in the center of the road and into an underground detention instead of through Mr. Bush's yard.

C. Real property tax rate increase for FY 2023-2024

Town Manager Wingfield explained that the Town was proposing a \$.14 tax rate, which would be a decrease from the current \$.16 tax rate. He noted that the Montgomery County reassessment caused an effective increase, so the tax rate was advertised as an increase.

D. Water and sewer rates increase for FY 2023-2024

Mr. Wingfield explained the Water and Sewer Committee had recommended a \$1.00 water rate increase per one thousand gallons as well as a recommendation to increase out-of-Town rates for water and sewer. Mr. Wingfield noted that the water and sewer rates outside of Town would need to be advertised.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of April 25, 2023
- B. Resolution recognizing the month of May 2023 as GBS and CIDP Awareness Month
- C. Resolution recognizing the month of May 2023 as National Building Safety Month
- D. Resolution recognizing the month of May 2023 as National Water Safety Month

- E. Resolution recognizing the month of May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month
- F. Resolution recognizing May 14 – 20, 2023 as National Police Week
- G. Resolution recognizing May 15 – 19, 2023 as National Infrastructure Week
- H. Resolution recognizing May 21 – 27, 2023 as National Public Works Week
- I. Resolution recognizing May 21 – 27, 2023 as National EMS Week
- J. Resolution recognizing Christiansburg – Blacksburg Rotary 100th Anniversary

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

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Montgomery – Floyd Regional Library Director Karim Kahn to present on library programs and operations

Karim Kahn, addressed Council and introduced Salena Sullivan, Branch Manager of the Christiansburg site. Mr. Kahn reported that visits to the library had increased from last year as well as the number of books checked out of the library. He spoke about the numerous events and community resources and expressed that on July 1, 2022, the library went fine free for overdue books. He added that revenue did not drop because of the fine free event, mainly due to increases in passport and copier revenue.

Mr. Kahn talked about the Mobile Library serving over 1,000 patrons and 197 stops in Christiansburg and had joined events such as the Christmas Parade, Heritage Day, Wilderness Trail Festival, and Touch-a-Truck events. Mr. Kahn spoke about community partners and the library working with the school's day care and after-school care programs and partnering with Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and distributing Covid testing kits to the public.

Mr. Kahn reported that the Christiansburg Library site would include a major renovation and expansion beginning FY 2025 which would include an increase in square footage for the Christiansburg site. He spoke about grants and awards provided to the library and expressed the few challenges the library has faced including state aid and cybersecurity, noting a new software that had been introduced. Mr. Kahn noted the challenge of staffing at the library as well and explained that despite the growth in programming and visitors, that staffing at the Christiansburg site has decreased by one full-time position. Councilwoman Hockett asked for more information concerning Standards of Excellence for the library. Mr. Kahn explained that the Library of Virginia has a document named the Standards for Library Excellence. He explained that a library's square footage is compared to the population in the area and the highest class they have recommends

one square foot of library space per each person in the service area. Mr. Kahn added that the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library serves the surrounding areas and is considered an undersized library for this area's population.

Councilwoman Hicks inquired if any of the library volunteers were students from the ACCE program. Mr. Kahn expressed that they many volunteers but was unaware if they were affiliated with the ACCE program and explained their application did not ask questions about scholarships. Councilwoman Hicks suggested contacting Angie Covey that works with the ACCE program through New River Community College.

B. Bob Poff, Ernie Wade and Sharon Scott to present an update on Montgomery Museum of Art and History

Sharon Scott addressed Council and expressed that she had been invited by several non-profits to work with their boards and chose the Montgomery County Museum because of its leadership. Ms. Scott talked about the increase in visitors to the museum from 2021 to 2022 and the economic impact of the museum to the Christiansburg community. Ms. Scott spoke about how past grants have aided in bringing the museum up to Building Code, helped with the HVAC System, elevator maintenance, and flooring and paint for the museum. She added that grant support helps with the many programs the museum provides such as the Children's Corner, continuing and expanding the outreach program to the senior population, and continuing support utilizing the arts for mental health and well-being in the community. Ms. Scott thanked Town Council for their past support of the museum and urged Council to continue that support.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

John Tuttle, 40 Sapphire Avenue, addressed Council in support of Town funding for the Montgomery Museum. Mr. Tuttle spoke about the progress the museum has made over the years and expressed that the museum was an asset to downtown Christiansburg.

Alan Waters, 211 Patriot Way, explained to Council that he was a small business owner and had recently taken over operations for Great Road Coffee on W. Main Street. Mr. Waters noted the cultural aspect of the Montgomery Museum and talked about increased foot traffic and sales in the downtown area businesses. Mr. Waters urged Council to help support the Montgomery Museum.

Mary Hughes, 890 Mountain View Drive, spoke about downtown events and the increases in visitors to the Montgomery Museum and surrounding businesses. Mrs. Hughes expressed that her family stays involved with the Montgomery Museum by attending museum events as well as serving on the committees. She expressed that the museum is a treasure, and the Town needs to provide support.

Clifford Hughes, 890 Mountain View Drive, requested the Town continue the \$10,000 funding for the Montgomery Museum. Mr. Clifford expressed concern that if the museum did not receive funding from the Town, then other municipalities may withdraw their funding as well.

Beth Umberger, 915 College Street, spoke about the garden she maintained at the previous Montgomery Museum location and that it requires many volunteers and a large amount of cost to maintain. She noted that several of the plants from that location have been sent to several Town parks, plant sales, and to the current museum location.

Leo Priddy, 305 Chinquapin Trail, addressed Council and explained he had moved to the area three years ago and did not visit downtown often until the museum relocated there. Mr. Priddy noted that the museum involves young adults and their talents and passions. He talked about how the museum contributes to Christiansburg and is an economic driver and plays a role in the sense of community engaging in history and art. Mr. Priddy asked Council to help support the Montgomery Museum.

Bob Poff, 440 Arrowhead Trail, asked for Council's support in funding the museum. Mr. Poff expressed excitement for the new location of the museum and noted the sales and meals tax revenue being provided to Christiansburg. He spoke about grants and expressed that the request from the museum was not a large amount.

Ernie Wade, talked about the history of the bank and urged Council to reconsider funding the museum. Mr. Wade expressed that the museum collects money from donations, grants and fundraising and noted that obtaining grants could be a challenge for the museum.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Bishop reported that in honor of Water Safety Month the Aquatic Center was promoting water safety all month for adults, children, and non-swimmers in the community.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. 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. The Public Hearing was held on April 25, 2023.

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the rezoning request located at 2475 Glade Drive, SE, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

- 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

Mayor Barber explained this was the subject of the Street Committee meeting prior to the Council meeting. Councilwoman Hockett expressed that the committee would like to continue this discussion item until a decision could be made. Councilman Bishop

explained that two of the three parties had met with the Street Committee, and the committee would still like to discuss this subject with the third party involved.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to continue the discussion of the vacation of unbuilt rights-of-way at Angle Drive, SW, First Street, and a remnant piece of right-of-way located off an unbuilt portion of First Street, SW, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

C. Town of Christiansburg Policy regarding Use of Town Square Property

Mr. Wingfield explained to Council that an ordinance had been drafted for the policy regarding the use of Town Square property. He added that this could be handles as a policy or Council could codify this as an ordinance. After discussion with the Town Attorney, it was decided that it would be better to codify to remain more publicly accessible.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to continue the discussion of the Town of Christiansburg Policy regarding Use of Town Square Property to a later date, seconded by Councilwoman Hicks. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

D. Discussion of meeting with Montgomery County Board of Supervisors

Mr. Wingfield shared an email from County Administrator Craig Meadows and explained that the County did not have a proposal for the Town concerning school resource officers at this time but would agree to meet with the Town. He added that the email stated the County had budgeted to place three additional officers in the Town Elementary Schools if the Town continues to supply SROs in the Middle School and the High School within the Town. Mr. Meadows requested that the Town prepare for a joint meeting. Councilwoman Hicks suggested meeting with the County on Monday, May 15th. Councilman Showalter expressed concern that all Board of Supervisors would not be in attendance. Mr. Wingfield noted that both bodies would need three full business days for advertisement for the meeting, meaning a posting by Thursday at 8:00 a.m. for a Monday evening meeting. Council agreed to suggest the date of May 15th at 6:00 p.m. to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors.

E. Discussion of solid waste rates

Mr. Wingfield explained that Town staff was recommending a \$1.00 increase due to a significant increase in tipping fees from the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority. Mr. Wingfield clarified that the Town was required to haul solid waste to the Authority per agreement and added there was an approximately \$.70 loss per month, per account without the increase.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager

Mr. Wingfield reported that May 9th was the 20th anniversary of the passing of Town Officer Scott Hylton who died in the line of duty.

Mr. Wingfield reported that the dedication of the new mural for the Cambria area would be May 10th at 11:30 a.m. The mural is located on the side of the Electrical Supply building on Depot Street in Cambria.

Mr. Wingfield announced that the Rockin' Main event would be this Saturday, May 13th in Downtown Christiansburg from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. He added that the Aquatic Center would host their Beach Bash event on Thursday, May 25th from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Wingfield also reported that County Administrator Craig Meadows has announced his retirement being planned for November 3, 2023.

Mr. Wingfield asked Council if they would like to have a work session to discuss the proposed budget. Council agreed to a work session on May 16th at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Barber expressed to Council that any questions concerning the budget should be sent to Finance Director Valerie Tweedie before the work session.

B. Town Attorney – no report.

C. Other Staff – no report.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

No Council reports

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)(29), for the discussion of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. The Closed Meeting is being held for discussion of the Diamond Sponsorship/Naming Rights Agreement for Christiansburg Huckleberry Park. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Hockett and Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Councilman Showalter inquired if this closed meeting was pertaining to park signage, park naming, or financials. Mr. Wingfield explained the meeting was concerning both signage and naming. Councilwoman Hicks questioned why a closed meeting was needed. Mr. Wingfield stated that Town Council is not obligated to have a closed meeting but had the right to do so. Mayor Barber explained that the Town and the bidder had met to discuss the bid terms and felt that Council needed to discuss those terms.

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 Jenkins and Council voted as follows: Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

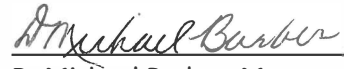
4. Council action on the matters

Mayor Barber thanked Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. for a great Food Truck Rodeo event over the weekend and expressed that the public had requested to have this event monthly.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 9:31 p.m.


Tracy Heintz, Clerk of Council


D. Michael Barber, Mayor