

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 26, 2024 – 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 MARCH 26, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor Tanya Hockett; Samuel M. Bishop; Kim Bowman; Johana Hicks; Casey Jenkins; 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; Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Public Works Director Jim Lancianese; Assistant Public Works Director, Streets Travis Moles; Small Business Solutions Manager Amanda Hebert; Special Projects Coordinator Wayne Nelson; Planning Director Retta Jackson; Engineering Director Mike Kelley

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barber announced that Councilman Wilson would like to join the meeting via phone due to traveling for business.

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

*Motion Approved*

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Bishop.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Barber clarified that item E. under Discussion and Action by Council was struck from the agenda for further research and consideration.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Solar Franchise Power Purchase Agreement

Wayne Nelson, Special Projects Coordinator, spoke to Council concerning the steps taken leading up to the solar purchase agreement. Mr. Nelson explained that that Town had received two proposals: DE Solutions and Sun Tribe Solar. He added that the proposal committee reviewed both the proposals and chose Sun Tribe Solar. He expressed that Sun Tribe Solar had included their entire team to work on this project. Mr. Nelson explained the proposed PPA rates for both the Recreation and Aquatic Centers and further clarified there was no cost or maintenance to the Town. He included that the two proposed solar projects would deliver over 1.4 MWdc of solar to the Town while generating up to \$1.7 million in savings. Mr. Nelson explained that a potential start date of May 2024 had been proposed. Councilman Bishop questioned if the structures of the buildings would hold the extra weight of the panels. Mr. Nelson explained that Sun Tribe Solar would inspect the roofs at both facilities before moving forward. Councilwoman Hicks asked if there would need to be insurance on the panels. Mr. Nelson explained Sun Tribe Solar would carry their own insurance with no cost to the Town.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of March 12, 2024 and March 20, 2024
- B. Monthly Bill List
- C. Award contract to E.C. Pace Company, Inc. in the amount of \$4,400,298.50 for construction of the Hickok Street Drainage Improvements project
- D. Resolution recognizing April as Autism Awareness Month
- E. Resolution recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month
- F. Resolution recognizing April 1 -7, 2024 as National Public Health Week

Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern that the cost for the Hickok Street Drainage Improvements project had almost doubled and questioned how much the Town had to pay for the additional easements. Town Manager Wingfield answered that Town staff does have all the easements for this project and he would get back with her with the cost numbers. Mrs. Hicks expressed further concern whether there had been discussions with the Alcorn family concerning easement consent, as well as other issues rising from the closing of Hickok Street. Mr. Wingfield explained he could not guarantee a property owner would not sue or have an issue moving forward and added that all owners gave easements willingly. Town Attorney Broughton agreed with Mr. Wingfield.

Councilwoman Hockett asked if there was an update on additional grant funding for this project. Engineering Director Mike Kelley noted there was not an update at this point and that he should have an answer in April or May from VDOT.

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

*Motion Approved*

Mr. Wingfield introduced Retta Jackson as the new Planning Director for the Town.

#### V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority Executive Director Alan Cummins to present on Authority operations

Alan Cummins, Executive Director of the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority, gave a brief history of MRSWA. Mr. Cummins explained to Council the items the plant recycles and touched on the Pay Back Program for cardboard recycling, noting the Authority bundles and sells the cardboard to a regional business. He touched on additional items recycled including tires and wood. Mr. Cummins recognized the Household Hazardous Waste Days (HHWD) event held twice a year and explained that household chemicals, paints, compact and fluorescent bulbs were collected at that time.

Mr. Cummins talked about the Authority's Transfer Station that housed household and commercial trash, sludge, construction debris as well as industrial waste and dead animals. He spoke about the fees associated with recycling and explained the current household trash disposal fee was \$72/ton. Mr. Cummins added that the FY 24/25 draft budget reflected both household trash and single stream recycling would increase to \$2/ton.

Mr. Cummins spoke about the 55-acre closed landfill on site and the maintenance required for the area, noting groundwater testing efforts. He explained that staff also screens the landfill quarterly to test the methane gas to make sure it is utilized in the one area and then destroyed. Mr. Cummins added that the water that goes to the landfill is collected and tested in order to be pumped to the Christiansburg Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Mr. Cummins expressed that MRSWA had just signed an agreement in February 2024 with Sun Trible Solar for a solar farm hoping to make revenue to offset fees associated with the landfill.

Mr. Cummins explained the closed landfill, tire facility, and the transfer station were all permitted facilities and Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) inspected. He recognized the authority for zero "notice of violations" from DEQ for the past 20 years.

Councilman Bishop questioned the advertisement process for the hazardous material collection events and how they're advertised. Mr. Cummins explained the information is

sent to all jurisdictions as well as advertisement on MRSWA's website. Councilwoman Hicks asked about the timeline for monitoring the closed landfill. Mr. Cummins explained that per DEQ, monitoring must continue for 30 years post closure and that MRSWA has eight years left to monitor the area. Councilwoman Hockett noted the MRSWA facility was well taken care of and appreciated the information. Councilwoman Bowman expressed that she was looking forward to her tour of the site next week.

- B. Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. (DCI) to provide an organizational update, introduce advancing Main Street, and discuss the added value of having a paid staff person

Mrs. Elli Travis, President of DCI, spoke briefly concerning DCI's background and its organizational values. She noted there were nine board members, and that DCI was a volunteer-led organization. Mrs. Travis touched on DCI's adoption of the Main Street Approach stating that this focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses in the downtown area. She explained this enhances the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart from downtown. She also noted DCI's interest in a paid staff person to help bring Main Street to the next level. Mrs. Travis noted the different committees within DCI and their contributions to several projects and events as well as business development and community awareness of downtown assets. She talked about the signature Food Truck Rodeo event held annually and announced there would be a joint DCI and Parks and Recreation Rockin' Main Street/Food Truck Rodeo event held on September 14, 2024.

Mrs. Travis spoke about the Virginia Main Street Program explaining the next steps to further develop downtown. She talked about upcoming grants DCI could apply for and how those grants could enhance downtown development. Mrs. Travis added that beyond the grants from the state's Department of Housing and Community Development, being an official Main Street community is a signal to the state and the federal government that they can invest in downtown Christiansburg as well. She noted that DCI is in close contact with downtown Wytheville which is one of the Virginia Main Street communities that has received grants totaling over \$2 million since 2014.

Mrs. Travis spoke to Council concerning a Main Street Director position that could be co-developed by DCI and the Town to help with the development of downtown. She explained this position could seek and prepare local, state, and national grants to fund projects downtown, develop ongoing awareness and education campaigns, and assist property owners with enhancing their buildings to improve visual appeal of downtown.

Councilman Wilson thanked Mrs. Travis and the supporters for DCI stating he backed the program and was excited to see it move forward. Councilman Bishop questioned how DCI would get business owners onboard to update their buildings. Mrs. Travis explained that DCI would work with business owners to help them understand the value of their buildings and discuss grants that are available to make their business pedestrian friendly. Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern for the cost of the new Main Street position noting other important budgetary items. Councilman Jenkins expressed his confidence in DCI and added he had witnessed other localities across the Commonwealth make programs like this work. Councilwoman Hockett expressed that she felt this was a smart and strategic approach to downtown and felt it would reward

and benefit citizens in the end. Councilwoman Bowman thanked DCI for the information and expressed she would like more information since she was new to Council. She noted the importance of support for assisting small businesses but also noted the importance of focusing on the current budget. Mrs. Bowman questioned if there were statistics from other localities that showed the economic impact to small businesses. Mrs. Travis expressed that Wytheville was a great resource and example of a great downtown program. Councilwoman Hicks expressed she would like to see DCI connect with Montgomery County as well.

C. Treasurer/Finance Director Valerie Tweedie to present FY 2024 -25 Budget

Finance Director Valerie Tweedie presented to Council the proposed FY 2024 – 25 Budget. Mrs. Tweedie gave a brief description of the Town's six distinct funds and what they include. She talked about the Town's meals tax as well as sales and lodging taxes and noted a potential small increase in real estate taxes from increased property values and development occurring within the Town. Mrs. Tweedie noted there were no proposed increases in water, sewer, or garbage fees for 2025. She talked about the difference between revenues and expenditures noting the reappropriation of funds from projects not completed in prior years and use of assigned and unassigned fund balances. She explained that operating expense increases were primarily from salary and wages, added personnel, and increased cost of materials and services. Mrs. Tweedie also noted that operating revenues were up due to inflation.

Mrs. Tweedie explained there were four new positions included in the proposed budget including one full-time Fire Fighter, two EMS positions for Rescue, and one new Police Officer position. She added that the budget proposed a 3% cost of living increase (COLA) and a 2% merit increase for Town employees. Mrs. Tweedie noted that under capital projects there were funds set aside for renovations at the Recreation Center, a new HVAC system for the Aquatic Center, two new solid waste trucks, and a fire station design, footprint. She pointed out that several of the capital projects had been reduced due to commitments to several very large projects over the next couple years. Mrs. Tweedie noted other capital projects that would be funded by the Water and Sewer fund such as the Buffalo Tank and Pump Station upgrades and the Storm Water Fund that would include projects such as Hickock Street improvements and the College Street drainage project. Mrs. Tweedie spoke about the Community Support Applications and asked for Council to submit their surveys soon in order to move forward.

Mrs. Tweedie noted that following any upcoming work sessions concerning the budget a public hearing would be held, adjustments would be made if necessary, and a final budget approval would be needed by June 30, 2024.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned the Blue Leaf Restoration Project. Engineering Director Mike Kelley explained that several years ago the Town completed a stream restoration project and part of that project was continual maintenance that needed to be performed by a firm hired by the Town.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, referenced DCI's presentation and spoke about downtown Wytheville's figures for new businesses. Mr. Waltz noted that 76 businesses had been created, retained, or expanded in downtown Wytheville as well as 237 jobs. He expressed concern that it was a waste of money for Christiansburg and noted the difference between the community of Wytheville and Christiansburg. Mr. Waltz questioned the salary for the new downtown position and suggested that money go towards new staff needed for Christiansburg Fire and Rescue. Mr. Waltz noted the Great Little Park on Main was currently for sale and felt it had been a waste of taxpayer money.

Laurel Scarry, Christiansburg resident, expressed her love for downtown as well as her appreciation for Town employees. Mrs. Scarry noted the great facilities and events and added she would like to see downtown revitalized and thriving. She noted the good foundation downtown and the potential of more businesses for the citizens and tourists when visiting. Mrs. Scarry urged Council to consider the new position for downtown.

Crystal Priddy, Christiansburg resident, spoke to Council concerning support of DCI and the new position to elevate downtown. Mrs. Pretty acknowledged Covid-19 and how it has affected citizens and she felt a revitalized downtown could bring people out.

Astleigh Hill, Christiansburg resident and downtown business owner of The Chandlerie, addressed Council and asked for their support for DCI and a new Main Street Director position. Mrs. Hill noted that she had intentionally picked downtown Christiansburg for her business because she believes downtown is the heart of a community. She expressed that the new position could oversee growth of downtown and encouraged Council consideration.

Chris Chittenden, downtown business owner of Sweetgrass Yoga, said she has also intentionally placed her business downtown because she enjoys visiting other downtown areas and supporting their small businesses. Ms. Chittenden expressed that downtown could be a place where individuals come to have lunch or shop instead of just for downtown events. She expressed the need for progress in downtown and felt the new Main Street Director position would only enhance the area. Ms. Chittenden urged Council to consider the position for discussion at the next Town Council meeting or Town Work Session.

Mike Scarry, 11 Pepper Street, NE, expressed love for the community and the downtown area and noted his support of the new director position for DCI. Mr. Scarry acknowledged the potential investment for downtown and the ability to apply for grants. He added that he would like to see numbers from Wytheville concerning economic impact and tax revenue numbers.

## VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Street Committee Report – Bishop, Hockett

1. Subdivision Plat of Tax Map No. 558-((A))-24 in the Falling Branch Corporate Park with dedication of Parkway Drive SE right-of-way (2 lots)

Councilwoman Hockett explained that currently the property was one parcel, and the owner would like to divide it into two parcels. Mrs. Hockett added that the dedication of Parkway Drive S.E. had been discussed at the Street Committee meeting as well.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve the Street Committee's recommendation to subdivide the lot located in the Falling Branch Corporate Park, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

*Motion Approved*

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

- A. Reappointment of Dr. Sharon Scott to the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority Board of Directors for a 4-year term beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2028

Dr. Sharon Scott expressed that she was the At-Large member and vice-chair of the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority Board of Directors and would like to be reappointed. Dr. Scott noted that she enjoyed the team and wanted to focus on local haulers being treated fairly and expressed she enjoyed the innovation that takes place as well as the culture of the team.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to reappoint Dr. Sharon Scott to the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority Board of Directors for a 4-year term, seconded by Councilman Wilson. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

*Motion Approved*

- B. Request by Cambria Storage Partners, LLC for an ordinance amending Chapter 34 "Traffic and Motor Vehicles" of the Christiansburg Town Code by adding Sec. 34-27 Operation of Golf Carts on Public Streets regarding provisions for the limited operation of golf carts on Town public streets

Mr. Wingfield explained this ordinance amendment request came directly from Varsity Storage. He added that the business was developing additional units and desired use of golf carts to cross the street between the two facilities. Mr. Wingfield explained that Council would need to adopt the ordinance to allow this business to have a crossing location for golf carts. Councilwoman Hicks questioned how the Town could specify this change in ordinance for one business but no other businesses. Mr. Wingfield noted this was drafted for this specific location.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve the ordinance amendment to allow operation of golf carts on public streets by Cambria Storage Partners, LLC, seconded by Councilman Jenkins. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

*Motion Approved*

C. Rezoning request by Radford Development of Virginia, LLC, property owner, and Hy-Tek Collision, LLC, applicant, to rezone approximately 2.265 acres of property located on the east side of the intersection of Badger Street, N.W. and Elk Drive, N.W. (Tax Parcel 525-((A)) – 44A; Parcel ID 026060) from B-3 General Business District to I-1 Limited Industrial. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. The Public Hearing was held on March 12, 2024

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the rezoning request located on the east side of the intersection of Badger Street, N.W., seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

*Motion Approved*

D. Conditional Use Permit request by Radford Development of Virginia, LLC, property owner, and Hy-Tek Collision, LLC, applicant, to allow for automobile and truck or recreation vehicle assembling, painting, upholstering, repairing, rebuilding or reconditioning, body or fender work, including a commercial garage, towing service, or automobile body shop on approximately 2.265-acres of property located on the east side of the intersection of Badger Street, N.W. and Elk Drive, N.W. (Tax Parcel 525 – ((A)) – 44A; Parcel ID 026060) in I-1 Limited Industrial. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. The Public Hearing was held on March 12, 2024.

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the conditional use permit request for an automobile body shop located on the east side of the intersection of Badger Street, N.W. and Elk Drive, N.W. as recommended by the Planning Commission, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

*Motion Approved*

E. Ordinance Amending Sec. 12-29 Permit required; method of obtaining permit; no convictions of certain crimes; approval of weighing devices; renewal permanent location required of Article II. Precious Metal Dealers of Chapter 12 “Business Regulations” of the Christiansburg Town Code to require criminal history inquiry rather than fingerprints  
*\*Removed for further research and consideration\**

F. Issuance of Virginia Resource Authority (VRA) bond for improvement projects at the Wastewater Treatment Plant

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the issuance of a VRA bond for improvement projects at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

*Motion Approved*

G. Set Standing Town Council Work Sessions date and time

Mayor Barber noted these work sessions would be an appropriate time to further discuss items pertaining to Town Council meetings. Mayor Barber asked if a standing Town Council Work Session on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month would work for all Council. Council agreed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month beginning at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Barber noted an end time of 8:00 p.m.

**H. Discussion of potential Code Amendment to the Christiansburg Town Code Chapter 42, Section 42-664 Homestay, to permit a homestay use to operate from an accessory structure (Bowman, Hicks)**

Councilwoman Hicks suggested the Planning Commission discuss this potential code amendment. Mrs. Hicks noted that she would like for Council to consider a homestay without the homeowner being a permanent resident. Mr. Wingfield explained this amendment was requested only for accessory units on the same property as the homeowner's property. Mayor Barber expressed concern that a homeowner could encroach on their neighbor's property. Council agreed to turn this matter over to the Planning Commission for further discussion and guidance.

**I. Clarification for the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for commercial broker services for sale of an approximately 5-acre property located at the southeastern intersection of Peppers Ferry Road, N.W. and Booker T. Washington Parkway, N.W.**

Mr. Wingfield asked for further clarification for the agreement to sell the 5-acre property located at the intersection of Peppers Ferry Road and Booker T. Washington Parkway.

Councilman Wilson suggested further discussion of the additional parcels at the park as well as parking issues at the next scheduled work session. Councilwoman Hockett agreed.

## IX. STAFF REPORTS

**A. Town Manager**

Mr. Wingfield reported that Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> the Huckleberry Park Extreme Easter Egg Hunt will be held at the Christiansburg Huckleberry Park at 7:00 p.m. for adults only. He added that Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup> the Great Easter Egg Hunt would take place at Kiwanis Park at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Wingfield reported that the Town's Leaf Give-Away event would take place on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup> from noon to 4:00 p.m. and Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to noon at 250 Scattergood Drive, N.W. He added that the Parks and Recreation Center would be having a Spring into Summer Kickoff event at the Huckleberry Park on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at noon. Mr. Wingfield asked Council if they would want a budget work session and stated the RFP for a commercial broker service would be a topic for the April 17<sup>th</sup> work session. Council agreed to an April 30<sup>th</sup> budget work session at 6:30 p.m.

**B. Town Attorney**

C. Other Staff

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Barber reported the League of Women Voters would host a dinner on May 14<sup>th</sup> and would like to invite members of Council.

Councilwoman Hicks reported that the Central Business Committee would meet on April 10<sup>th</sup>, and she would like to see DCI attend.

Mayor Barber thanked the DCI supporters that came out stating he appreciated everyone's input.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Tracy Heinrich  
Tracy Heinrich, Clerk of Council

Michael Barber  
D. Michael Barber, Mayor