

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 9, 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 JULY 9, 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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Andrew Warren; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Land Development Coordinator Devon Shields; Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Deputy Director of Finance Katie Miano; Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Engineering Director Mike Kelley; Chief of Fire and Rescue Billy Hanks; Deputy Rescue Chief Josh Settlage

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

No public hearings.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of June 25, 2024
- B. Approval of a new 2025 Freightliner M2 106 Plus cab and chassis solid waste truck outfitted with a HEIL 20 cubic yard rear loader for \$254,783.96
- C. Approval of two purchase orders for a new 2025 Single Axle Freightliner cab and chassis outfitted with new snowplow and salt application equipment. Both purchase orders together total \$266,912.26.

- D. Approval of two purchase orders for a new 2025 Tandem Axle Freightliner cab and chassis outfitted with new snowplow and salt application equipment. Both purchase orders together total \$293,077.60.
- E. Award construction contract to Superior Paving Corporation in the amount of \$791,237.50 for the construction of the Primary Extension Paving – Peppers Ferry Road
- F. Award construction contract to Pleasants Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$1,564,963.17 for the construction of the Arrowhead Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation project

Councilwoman Hicks asked that Item A. be voted on separately as she was absent for the June 25th Council meeting.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve items B. – F. of the consent agenda due to her absence at the previous Council meeting, seconded by Councilman Jenkins. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

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

Motion Approved

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

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

Chief Billy Hanks provided information on the history, fleet, and staff of the Fire Department. Chief Hanks shared that the department has ISO Class 4 and 10 ratings within the Town. He provided a breakdown of calls for services over Fiscal Year 2023-24. He explained that 62% of call responses are within Town limits; a greater share of calls was coming from the Town due to population increase.

Chief Hanks described some of the other responsibilities of the Fire Department including fire inspections for new and existing structures and food truck inspections. Chief Hanks spoke concerning the training firefighters must complete, totaling 257 hours of required training for a basic firefighter. He added there was a regional training center in Merrimac. Chief Hanks noted there was a 2021 Fire and EMS study completed that resulted in Montgomery County hiring for a Training Coordinator/Director of Training. He added that training on lithium batteries must be completed by 2025, mandated by the State. He also added that they have been instructed in training to let electric vehicles burn when there was an emergency including EV's.

Chief Hanks noted that the Fire Department had been working close to four years with their asset tracking and record keeping system (ESO Inspection module) a software that allows the department access to occupancy information and pre-plans in real time from the field. Chief Hanks included that the Fire Department was involved with or members of different types of organizations and associations and attended classes and trainings often. He added that he was appointed by Governor Youngkin in 2023 to serve on the Virginia Fire Services Board.

Chief Hanks shared possible sites for a new fire station in the Town and stated the ideal site would be approximately 5 acres to support a regional facility. Chief Hanks spoke about partnerships to provide events such as the annual VIN Etching and the monthly car seat installation classes for the community. He touched on the funding for the cancer pre-screening and noted the importance of early detection.

Councilwoman Bowman asked if the Montgomery County Director of Training would save the Town money. Chief Hanks explained it would not save the Town money but would supplement the current training they are receiving.

Councilwoman Hicks asked if damages to the road from burned electric vehicles (EV's) could be covered by insurance. Chief Hanks replied that it could cover damages such as pavement damage and guardrails. Mrs. Hicks questioned other risks concerning EV's. Chief Hanks described several challenges in responding to EV crashes and clarified that most issues with electric vehicles were the responsibility of the property owner noting issues with the vehicles that need to be repaired.

He explained that after the fifth system-related false alarm reported to the Fire Department, the property owner would be charged. Councilwoman Hicks also asked how Montgomery County supports the Town in reference to County calls the Town responds to. Chief Hanks noted there had been an increase in funds provided by the County in the last year.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, commented on the air dancer at Angle Florist that was discussed at previous meetings and noted that Mayor Barber was the complainant. Mayor Barber noted that he had received a complaint from a citizen. Councilman Wilson replied to Mr. Waltz stating he believed the premise that it is an abuse of power for a councilmember to ask for the name of the person who turned in a complaint.

Christine Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, commented that small businesses do not have the advertising budgets that larger businesses do. Mrs. Waltz used a recently opened barbecue restaurant as an example.

Joanne Price, Christiansburg business owner, spoke on removal of Council approval for lot line adjustments. Mrs. Price stated she was speaking on behalf of her husband as well as Roger Woody, both landowners and developers within the Town. She read an email from Roger Woody, which supported Council retaining the ability to make decisions regarding subdivision.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Hicks reported there would be a Central Business Committee meeting on July 11th at 6:00 p.m.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

A. Certification of Fire Officers

Mayor Barber provided a list of the following Fire Officers:

- Fire Chief Billy Hanks
- Assistant Fire Chief Danny Yopp
- Deputy Fire Chief Forest Redd
- Fire Captain Brandon Turner
- Fire Captain Pete Haislip
- 1st Lieutenant Jordan Fenton
- 2nd Lieutenant Mike Moore
- 3rd Lieutenant BJ Smith
- Training Lieutenant Doug Adkins

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

Motion Approved

B. Amendment to Sec. 40-2. Definitions. and Sec. 40-3. Administrator. of Article I. In General of Chapter 40 “Subdivisions” of the Christiansburg Town Code to provide for consistency with the Code of Virginia and additional administrative and planning commission reviews

Councilman Wilson proposed tabling item B. and discussing the issue at the upcoming work session. Councilwoman Hicks stated her position in support of keeping Council involved in the process. Councilwoman Hockett felt there was misinformation concerning the issue and agreed to discuss the topic at a later time. Councilwoman Hicks requested the Town Manager to provide information on any changes in bulleted format in order to be prepared. Councilwoman Bowman stated that she had spoken with local engineering companies who agree with what developers have shared. Mayor Barber noted that this process would not affect larger subdivisions but would target the smaller subdivisions.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to table the topic and discuss at the upcoming work session, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

C. Discussion of Animated Signs as defined in Sec. 42-701. Definitions and prohibited in Sec. 42-705. Prohibited signs (b)(1) of Article XXIV. Signs of Chapter 42 "Zoning" of the Christiansburg Town Code.

Councilwoman Bowman stated she has seen a number of air dancers in Town since the complaint was filed, and noted one was still up. Councilwoman Bowman stated that this shows a desire or demand for this type of advertisement, and a change to the Town Code should be considered. Mayor Barber clarified that the owners of the air dancer in question have been notified to remove the advertisement.

Councilwoman Hicks stated that the air dancer at her place of business, Angle Florist, was four feet tall and had been placed at her business to ward off birds, not as an advertisement. She stated the Town uses inflatables throughout the year and further added that inflatables used on lawns during the holidays could potentially be affected.

Councilman Wilson noted that this issue is in reference to all businesses, not just centered on one business. Councilman Jenkins clarified that the air dancer near the Chamber of Commerce belongs to a neighboring business, not the Chamber.

Councilwoman Hockett asked if the Town's application for signage was consistent with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Mr. Wingfield stated that Resident Administrator David Clarke had advised that in his opinion VDOT would regulate it although he was not the regulator, it would need to come from the Salem District regulator. Councilwoman Hockett asked if the Town had received feedback from owners who had received violations, to which Mr. Wingfield replied that some owners did express disappointment. Mrs. Hockett asked if it was a safety issue, to which Mr. Wingfield replied yes, because it involves motion that could be distracting. Councilwoman Hicks inquired if Mr. Wingfield had been in a vehicle accident due to air dancers in the past, to which Mr. Wingfield replied he had not.

Councilman Bishop stated that he would be acceptable to air dancers if it was on private property and the number of them were restricted. Councilman Wilson asked who would enforce the number of air dancers. Mr. Bishop noted Town Code Officers would enforce the number of animated signs on properties.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to not change the Code section in question, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Nay; Bowman – Nay; Hicks – Nay; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye. Due to a tie vote by Council Mayor Barber voted Aye.

Motion Approved

Mayor Barber stated that this item should be discussed with Police and Code Enforcement to enforce immediately.

D. Discussion of July 17, 2024 Work Session Topics

- Zoning Administrator review and approval of plats
- Façade Grant Program

Councilwoman Hockett shared topics that she desired for future work sessions, including tourism and the Main Street Program.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Town Manager Wingfield – no report.
- B. Town Attorney - no report.
- C. Other Staff

Amanda Hebert, Small Business Solutions Manager, spoke concerning the Façade Grant Program. Mrs. Hebert shared concerns regarding the conduct of specific councilmembers, as it relates to the Central Business District Committee and Façade Grant program. Mrs. Hebert requested Town Council to look into the issues brought forward.

Councilwomen Hicks and Councilwoman Bowman shared their thoughts on the roles of Council and staff.

Mayor Barber suggested to remove the Façade Grant program away from Central Business and have staff administer grants, which would therefore require Council action.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to discuss this issue at the July 17th work session, seconded by Councilman Wilson. Mayor Barber noted this item did not need a vote and requested the issue be added.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Barber shared that he had attended the annual Cal Ripken event at Harkrader Sports Complex, and that he received many compliments from attendees. Mayor Barber commended the Parks and Recreation Department for their efforts, as well as for the July 4th celebrations. Councilman Wilson agreed with the commendation for Parks and Recreation. Councilwoman Hicks asked about a drone that interrupted the fireworks display and if it was a Town drone, to which Mr. Wingfield replied no, the drone in question belonged to a private individual.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

No further business.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Tracy Heinline
Tracy Heinline, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber
D. Michael Barber, Mayor