

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 27, 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 AUGUST 27, 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; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Public Relations Director Christina Bolt; Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Deputy Finance Director Katie Miano; Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Engineering Director Mike Kelley

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Wilson.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

No adjustments to the agenda.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Council's intention to adopt a resolution or resolutions regarding the proposed financing of the development, renovation, equipping, and improvement of the Town's wastewater treatment facilities in part by the issuance of a general obligation bond to be issued in a principal amount not to exceed \$18,600,000.

Finance Director Valerie Tweedie explained the Town previously held a public hearing on March 12, 2024 for the loan amount to not exceed \$15.5 million but has since received approval for an increased general obligation bond to be issued not to exceed \$18.6 million. Mrs. Tweedie added that since this loan was designated as a "Principal Forgiveness Loan" the amount of forgiveness would be \$929,000.

There being no further public comments the public hearing closed.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of August 13, 2024 and August 21, 2024
- B. Monthly Bill List
- C. Resolution in Support of the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization's Virginia Department of Transportation Smart Scale Application for the Roanoke Street (US Route 11/460 Business) Improvements Project
- D. Set Town Council Public Hearing for October 8, 2024 for a rezoning request by Roger Woody, registered agent for RWW 34 LLC, applicant and property owner, to rezone property located on the southeast corner of Sherwood Drive, N.W. and Maid Marian Lane, N.E. and adjacent to the US Route 460 Bypass (approximately 2.31 acres of a 10.227-acre Tax Parcel 499 – ((A)) – 12; Parcel ID 018085) from R-1 Single-Family Residential to B-3 General Business. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.
- E. Set Town Council Public Hearing for October 8, 2024 for a Conditional Use Permit request by Roger Woody, registered agent for RWW 34 LLC, applicant and property owner, to allow a 90-unit townhome residential development in the B-3 General Business District on property located on the southeast corner of Sherwood Drive, N.E. and Maid Marian Lane, N.E. and adjacent to the US Route 460 Bypass (Tax Parcel 499-((A))-12; Parcel ID 018085) consisting of approximately 10.227 acres. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.
- F. Set public hearing for the disposition of property located on the western side of Silverlake Road, N.W. (0.05-acre Tax Parcel 525 – ((2)) – 63; Parcel ID 080323) for September 10, 2024

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

Motion Approved

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

No introductions or presentations.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, addressed Council and expressed concern the Town was continuing to fund Regional Tourism even though the agreement with them had expired. Mr. Waltz questioned the 15% of the 1.0% lodging tax collection and where it goes since it is for internal use for promotion of tourism. He further questioned Councilwoman Hockett and Councilman Jenkins vote to pull out of tourism previously but now wanting to partner with tourism again.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Hicks reported there would be a Central Business Committee meeting August 28th.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

A. Rezoning request by JTCI Electric LLC, property owner, and Joseph Iskandar, applicant, to rezone property located on the west side of Depot Street, NW, also adjacent to the south side of 401 Depot Street, NW (Tax Parcel 526 – ((A)) – 158; Parcel ID 070666 consisting of approximately 0.254 acres) from R-2 Two-Family Residential to B-3 General Business. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. The public hearing was held August 13, 2024.

Mayor Barber noted the Planning Commission voted 3-1 to recommend denial of the rezoning request at Depot Street.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to not approve the rezoning request above, seconded by Councilman Wilson. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Nay; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

B. Conditional Use Permit request by JTCI Electric LLC, property owner, and Joseph Iskandar, applicant, to allow one (1) residential dwelling unit (apartment) on the second floor of the proposed “General office” in the B-3 General Business District on property located on the west side of Depot Street, NW, also adjacent to the south side of 401 Depot Street, NW (Tax Parcel 526 – ((A)) – 158; Parcel ID 070666 consisting of approximately 0.254 acres). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. The public hearing was held August 13, 2024.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to not approve the conditional use permit request above, seconded by Councilman Wilson. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Nay; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

C. Reappointment of Randy Wingfield to the NRV Passenger Rail Passenger Station Authority Board of Directors for a term beginning September 1, 2024 and ending August 31, 2028

Councilwoman Hicks questioned the process if Mr. Wingfield retired during his time of serving on the authority. Councilman Wilson explained that ultimately Council has the authority to remove an appointed position even in the middle of serving. Town Attorney Broughton clarified that Mr. Wingfield was not locked into the position.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the reappointment of Randy Wingfield to the NRV Passenger Station Authority Board of Directors, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

D. Montgomery County – Blacksburg – Christiansburg Regional Tourism Office

Councilwoman Hicks expressed she would like to use the tourism funds for other purposes and questioned where the percentage of lodging tax collection the Town keeps is placed within the budget.

Councilman Jenkins read a disclosure statement concerning his personal interest pertaining to Council's discussion regarding the Tourism Office stating his employer is part of a group of three or more organizations that receive a promotional benefit from the Tourism Office.

Councilwoman Hockett expressed disappointment in seeing this item on the agenda since Council had discussed tourism at their previous work session and decided to have further discussion before voting.

Councilman Wilson noted that Council has been discussing this issue for over two years and had expressed concern that the Town of Christiansburg was not receiving what they had been promised out of Regional Tourism. Mr. Wilson expressed that he would like Council to have further discussion and decide what tourism that represents Christiansburg looks like. He added that whether the Town moves forward with a partnership or chooses to promote tourism internally, the decision of what tourism should look like for Christiansburg is still the question.

Councilwoman Hockett agreed with Mr. Wilson and expressed that Council has been reactionary to the management of tourism and wanted Council to take time to think about what they want out of tourism. Mrs. Hockett stated she did not want to react to Regional Tourism based on the management of just the last few years.

Councilwoman Hicks expressed that Regional Tourism had been an issue for some time and felt funds were being wasted with tourism since the Town was not being represented well. Mrs. Hicks added that hotels currently charge an additional tax for lodging and would like to see the lodging tax lowered to 7% instead and see the hotels help promote Christiansburg. Councilwoman Hockett noted that hotels have that option now to promote tourism, but hotels normally do not promote their towns. Mayor Barber noted that if the

Town drops the lodging tax rate to 7% or 8% then the Town would need to take non-resident taxes and apply it to real estate taxes in order to make up the difference.

Town Attorney Broughton clarified the Town could not un-allocate funds that have been allocated to Regional Tourism. Finance Director Tweedie explained 85% of 1% was in one budget line item and the other 15% in a different line item. She added the 15% was expendable at Council's discretion.

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to withdraw immediately and stop payment to the Montgomery County – Blacksburg – Christiansburg Regional Tourism Office, seconded by Councilwoman Bowman. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Nay; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Nay; Jenkins – Nay; Wilson – Nay.

Motion Denied

Councilwoman Hockett expressed she would like an additional work session with Council to discuss what tourism looks like for Christiansburg when it is successful. Councilwoman Bowman questioned what Regional Tourism would provide differently to the Town this time. Councilman Wilson explained that Council is now focusing on the subject and communication would be clear. Mayor Barber expressed that he felt tourism had run smoothly up until a few years ago and noted the Town relies on tourism greatly. He clarified that Town Council would like this subject placed on the next regular work session. Council agreed.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager

Town Manager Wingfield reported that both the Rockin' Main event and Food Truck Rodeo would come together on September 14th from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for the public to enjoy. Mr. Wingfield noted he would not bring the street vacation for the combined events to Council since it is a Town event. Councilwoman Hicks made Council aware of a potential conflict of interest because of her ownership of a Town business on Main Street. Mrs. Hicks expressed that she felt the Town should be transparent and the street closure should come before Council for public awareness. Mr. Wingfield reminded Council a policy had been written by staff to make business owners aware of events downtown and that it would be followed.

Mr. Wingfield also reported the Wilderness Trail Festival would be held on September 21st from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mr. Wingfield questioned Council regarding the September 18th work session and their preference to what items were on the agenda. Council clarified they wanted tourism on the agenda and would like to place the Emergency Services funding from the County on a closed session at an upcoming Town Council meeting. Mr. Wingfield asked about the Main Street Program and Outdoor Advertising as potential work session discussion. Council agreed that tourism should be the only item on the agenda for the September 18th work session and the Main Street Program and Outdoor Advertising could be pushed to the October work session.

- B. Town Attorney
- C. Other Staff

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Barber congratulated Councilman Jenkins and the Montgomery Museum of Art and History on their efforts for Heritage Days.

Councilwoman Hicks asked Council to discuss the Small Business Solutions Manager position that was currently open to receiving applications. Mrs. Hicks questioned if the position was needed and further asked if the position had brought in revenue or showed any positive results. She recommended that money for that position be applied elsewhere and leave the position closed for now. Mrs. Hicks asked for more information and expressed that emergency services should be more important than this position.

Councilman Wilson noted he felt the position was valuable to the Town and that data would show that it was beneficial. He added that programs were already in place such as Launch Christiansburg and thought the position should be filled.

Councilwoman Bowman expressed she would like to see metrics on how the Town decides on new positions. She further commented that she was not convinced the process works and added she would like to see a survey of the businesses that were aided by this position.

Councilman Jenkins noted the Launch Christiansburg program has fallen on the Public Relations and Planning Departments and felt there was an immediate need for the position to be filled.

Councilwoman Hockett felt the position needed to be filled especially due to the programs coming up and further noted that the newer businesses should be surveyed. She expressed that business satisfaction would show if the position was doing what it was intended to do.

Council agreed to leave the position open until filled.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Closed Meeting:
 1. Councilwoman Hockett 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 is being held for discussion of potential purchase of property located on the northern side of Roanoke Street for Public Works purposes. Councilman Bishop seconded the motion and Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye;

Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

2. Reconvene in Open Meeting
3. Councilwoman Hockett 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. Councilman Bishop seconded the motion and Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

4. Council action on the matters

Mayor Barber explained that Council has authorized Town Manager Wingfield to pursue information to further consider the purchased of the discussed land.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Tracy Heinline, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor