

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 12, 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 NOVEMBER 12, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Samuel M. Bishop; Kim Bowman; Johana Hicks; Tanya Hockett; Casey Jenkins; Tim Wilson.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Public Relations Director Christina Bolt; Director of Finance Valerie Tweedie; Deputy Director of Finance Katie Miano; Engineering Director Mike Kelley; Planning Director Retta Jackson; Associate Planner Jillian Layton; Human Resources Director Alicia Dials; Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Small Business Solutions Manager Miles Campbell

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Moment of Reflection

Mayor Barber asked everyone to remember Gratton Thompson, a 62-year member of the Christiansburg Volunteer Fire Department and retired Public Works employee, and Alfred Heslep, retired Public Works employee for the Town, who both passed away during the week.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Jenkins.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

Councilwoman Hicks referenced item A. under Public Hearings and asked for a separation of the items for Council to vote individually referencing Town Code Sec. 2-61. Mayor Barber explained the budget amendment could be separated at the next Council meeting during which time Council would be voting but this meeting was a public hearing, and no action would be taken.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Amendment #2

Finance Director Valerie Tweedie explained to Council that at the previous Council meeting she had presented budget amendment #2. Mrs. Tweedie noted an ad was placed to run for two weeks prior to today's public hearing as well as a notification on the Town's website.

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, referenced the New River Valley Regional Commission's new building location and expressed that according to their Charter, the Commission's building should be in Pulaski, unless the Board has voted otherwise. Mr. Waltz also expressed concern for the \$1.6 million for property acquisition for land for a Public Works facility that is valued at \$381,000. Mayor Barber explained that when the Town had the property appraised it was considered zoned I-2. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she felt it was disrespectful to move forward with voting for the property at this time and felt the community should be heard before Council decided to buy the property. She noted this was one reason she wanted the separation of the budget amendment. Mayor Barber clarified this was a public hearing and there would be no vote at this meeting.

Hearing no further public comment the public hearing closed.

- B. Rezoning request by, David L. Dove and Hattie P. Dove, property owners, and the Town of Christiansburg, applicant, to rezone property located at 255 Simmons Road, N.E. (approximately 14.1-acre Tax Parcel 500 – ((A)) – 1A; Parcel ID 019656 and approximately 0.46-acre Tax Parcels 499 – ((14)) – A and B; Parcel ID 019655) from A Agricultural to I-2 General Industrial. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Town Manager Wingfield addressed Council on behalf of the Town of Christiansburg explaining this item was for purchase of property for the future Public Works Complex. Mr. Wingfield noted the Town's growth throughout the years and the existing facility on Scattergood Drive was also within a 100-year flood plain. He clarified that the potential plans for development would take place in at least approximately three years if approved.

Mr. Wingfield noted the property was currently zoned Agricultural and it is scheduled as Residential in the Future Land Use Map, which Mr. Wingfield asked Council and Planning Commission to review. He added the property had been chosen based on the acreage necessary for development of the Public Works facility. Mr. Wingfield explained the adjoining uses surrounding the property and noted the advantage of the proximity of the location to Roanoke Street which allows Public Works staff to quickly respond to most areas of downtown.

Mr. Wingfield spoke about the signed proffers presented in association with the request and noted the surrounding fence and rows of evergreen trees to be used as buffers for the neighboring properties. He spoke concerning the reduction of the existing peak rate of flow in the channel between Simmons Road, N.E. and Teel Street, N.E. for storms less than or equal to the ten-year storm event to a level less than the current flow rate. Mr. Wingfield added that Simmons Road, N.E. would be widened from Roanoke Street to the northern entrance to a minimum of 24 feet in width.

Mr. Wingfield stated the noise from the complex could consist of equipment during snow removal operations or emergency response for water breaks, etc.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned if there were other areas the Town could look at for the complex, expressing she did not recall other properties being discussed amongst Council. Mayor Barber explained the properties were discussed in a closed Council meeting and they were not considered due to not meeting the requirements for a Public Works facility. Councilman Bishop questioned concerns about wells on the property. Mr. Wingfield explained an adjoining property owner expressed concern about his well and the fuel storage at the proposed facility. He added that the Town had identified two wells in the area and clarified the Town was meeting all the necessary setbacks.

Mayor Barber noted that three petitions had been presented at the prior Planning Commission meeting and he explained he would disburse those petitions to Council for review.

Robert Mitchell, Teel Street property owner, expressed opposition to the above rezoning request and noted the purpose of rezoning was to keep gross injustices being placed poorly in areas that affect the neighboring property owners and their properties. Mr. Mitchell noted the difference in purchasing property in an industrial area rather than a residential area and felt that heavy trucks should not be placed in residential neighborhoods. Mr. Mitchell urged Council to make their decision based on what is best for the current residents in the area.

Joyce Radford, 510 Ellett Road, questioned the Town purchasing the property on Simmons Road for \$1.6 million when the appraisal for the property was \$381,000. Mayor Barber explained that Council had authorized Town Manager Wingfield to have the property appraised as R-2 and I-2.

Rick Fleming, Teel Street, expressed concern for unwanted lighting that he would have in his back yard at night from the proposed complex. Mr. Fleming also questioned the control of water runoff as well as spillage on his property from diesel and gasoline vehicles used at the complex. Mr. Fleming asked that a barrier be placed to avoid spillage on his property.

Russell Crockett, 350 Teel Street, addressed Council and explained he lived at the lowest point in the neighborhood and questioned water runoff from the proposed property. Mr. Crockett noted the current ditch line runs full and was concerned with overflow. He also expressed concern for the odor from the trucks and possibly insects or rodents coming from the facility and noted this could affect his property value poorly.

Hearing no further public comment the public hearing closed.

- C. Conditional Use Permit request by David L. Dove and Hattie P. Dove, property owners, and the Town of Christiansburg, applicant, to allow a Public Works Facility and operations including a mechanical garage and sanitation vehicle storage in the I-2 General Industrial District on the property located at 255 Simmons Road, N.E. (approximately 14.1-acre Tax Parcel 500 – ((A)) – 1A; Parcel ID 019656 and

approximately 0.46-acre Tax Parcels 499 – ((14)) – A and B; Parcel 019655). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Councilwoman Hicks noted that two property owners in the area, Joe Coyle and John Sharlow were unable to be present at the Council meeting due to work but were in opposition concerning the Simmons Road property. Mayor Barber expressed he had received Mr. Sharlow's petition.

Hearing no further public comment the public hearing closed.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of October 22, 2024
- B. Monthly Bill List
- C. Resolution recognizing November 30 – December 7, 2024 as Small Business Days
- D. Approve Deputy Finance Director Marc Evans as an additional Town check signer
- E. Award construction contract to Premier Group Limited in the amount of \$775,440 for the construction of the Walters Lift Station Replacement project.
- F. Schedule a public hearing for the Town of Christiansburg Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2023 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for December 10, 2024

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Councilman Wilson.

Councilman Wilson referenced the Small Business Days resolution and explained that typically the resolution was for Small Business Saturday but after working with the Chamber of Commerce he realized the Saturday after Black Friday and college football events was a difficult day to shop and helped extend it a full week.

Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Scott Wickham of Robinson, Farmer, Cox to present Fiscal Year 2023-24 Audit Report

Scott Wickham addressed Town Council and explained the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate

remaining fund information of the Town of Christiansburg present fairly with the Town being in good financial standing. Councilwoman Hicks asked what the overall assessed value increase totaled. Finance Director Valerie Tweedie explained the normalized tax rate would have been 13.09 cents, and the Town increased the taxes and rounded up to 14. cents, which was less than a penny increase on real estate taxes. Mrs. Tweedie explained the assessed values increased substantially however because the Town calculated what would be a normalized rate the numbers stayed even.

Public Relations Director Christina Bolt introduced Miles Campbell as the new Small Business Solutions Manager to Council.

Mr. Campbell expressed the importance of small businesses and their impact in the community. He conveyed appreciation for the opportunity to make a lasting impact in Christiansburg and noted the desire to meet small business owners in the area soon to help with growth and prosperity.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Christine Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, referenced a packet she had sent to Council concerning Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. (DCI) and the Mobilizing Main Street program. Mrs. Waltz expressed her disappointment with the Town deciding to move forward with Mobilizing Main Street and noted that DCI was not complying with Virginia state law regarding charitable organizations. Mrs. Waltz added that they have had their state Corporation Commission license revoked four times as well as their IRS 501(c)3 nonprofit revoked between 2015 and 2018. Mrs. Waltz expressed that she believed in partnerships but felt they needed to be strategic when spending taxpayer money.

Winn Phillips, Operations Manager of R.P. Fralin, Inc., addressed Council concerning item A. and B. under Discussion and Action by Council. Ms. Phillips referenced a previous Town Council meeting and the concern from a stakeholder of the parcel presented for rezoning. She explained that Fralin staff had met with the stakeholder, Pastor Jamie Hutton of Victory Restoration Church, which resulted in a letter of support for the project moving forward. Ms. Phillips noted that Fralin staff was excited to work closely with the church.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

No committee reports.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. Rezoning request by Robert P. Fralin, registered agent for F & B Land, L.P., applicant, and property owner, to rezone property located between Moose Drive, N.W. and Bishops Gate Road, N.W. (approximately 16.33-acre Tax Parcel 556 – ((A)) – 9; Parcel ID 008095) from A Agricultural and B-3 General Business to R-3 Multi-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 October 8, 2024.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the rezoning request to rezone property located between Moose Drive, N.W. and Bishops Gate Road, N.W., seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

B. Conditional Use Permit request by Robert P. Fralin, registered agent for F & B Land, L.P., applicant and property owner, to allow a planned housing development for a multi-family project of a maximum of 162 apartments in the proposed R-3 Multi-Family Residential District zoning district on property located between Moose Dive, N.W. and Bishops Gate Road, N.W. (approximately 16.33-acre Tax Parcel 556 – ((A)) – 9; Parcel ID 008095). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. The public hearing was held October 8, 2024.

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the conditional use permit request to allow a planned housing development located between Moose Drive, N.W. as recommended by the Planning Commission and Bishops Gate Road, N.W., seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager

Town Manager Wingfield reported the November 26th Town Council meeting had been canceled per Town Council due to the holiday and questioned how they would like to proceed with the regular work session on November 20th. Council agreed to cancel the November 20th regular work session. Mr. Wingfield reported that Town Hall would be closed November 27th – November 29th due to the Thanksgiving holiday. He reported the Christmas parade and Christmas at the Market events would take place on December 13th. Mr. Wingfield reported the Chamber Awards Dinner would take place on December 5th and a table had been reserved for ten Council members and their guests. Council agreed that Council's spouses would be responsible for their tickets to the dinner, and it would not be the Town's responsibility.

B. Town Attorney – no report.

C. Other Staff – no report.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilwoman Hicks reported the new Agency on Aging Director would start soon.

Councilman Bishop reported good feedback for the Downtown Trick-or-Treating event and noted it was nice to see activity downtown.

Councilman Wilson thanked Christiansburg High School and the American Legion for a great Veterans Day parade.

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)(1), for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bishop. The Closed Meeting is being held for discussion of the Treasurer/Finance Director and Town Manager positions compensation. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Nay; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

Councilwoman Hicks questioned the positions that would be discussed in the closed meeting. Mayor Barber explained the Town has a current Director of Finance, Valerie Tweedie until December 31, 2024. He explained Mrs. Tweedie had turned in her letter of retirement to Council for consideration concerning compensation and that would be discussed. Mayor Barber added that the Town Manager's compensation would be discussed as well. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that she would have liked Mrs. Tweedie to turn in the letter of request sooner for Council to discuss compensation.

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 Wilson 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 noted a future change in the Employee Handbook with a vote from Council at the next Council meeting. Mayor Barber added that Council discussed a 6.75% increase for Town Manager Wingfield to be made effective on the next pay period. Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern for the increase and noted she would not vote for the increase at this time.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve a 6.75% increase for Town Manager Wingfield to be made effective on the next pay period, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Abstain; Hicks – Nay; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Tracy Heinline
Tracy Heinline, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber
D. Michael Barber, Mayor