

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 11, 2025 – 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 FEBRUARY 11, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Samuel M. Bishop; Kim Bowman (via phone); Johana Hicks (via phone); Tanya Hockett; Casey Jenkins; Vice-Mayor Tim Wilson.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Scot Shippee; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Director of Public Relations Christina Bolt; Engineering Director Mike Kelley; Engineering Coordinator Wayne Nelson; Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Finance Director Katie Miano; Deputy EMS Director Josh Settlege

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barber noted that both Councilwoman Bowman and Councilwoman Hicks would like to join the meeting via phone due to inclement weather.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to allow Councilwoman Bowman and Councilwoman Hicks to the meeting via phone, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett.

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

Motion Approved

A. Moment of Reflection

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Barber.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

Town Manager Wingfield asked to postpone item V. under Introductions and Presentations to a later date.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to postpone item V. under Introductions and Presentations to a later date, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of January 28, 2025
- B. Bill List
- C. Contract Amendment #2 with A. Morton Thomas and Associates, Inc., d/b/a AMT for Professional Engineering Services for the College Street Drainage Improvements Phase 2 project for \$197,754.00
- D. Resolution Recognizing Town Employees Joe Oley, Ryan Hubble, Pete Haislip, and Brandon Turner and Dr. Larry Cox who assisted Town Employees for their Response to a Cardiac Arrest at the Christiansburg Recreation Center

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

Motion Approved

V. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- A. Mayor Michael Barber to Present Resolution Recognizing Town Employees Joe Oley, Ryan Hubble, Pete Haislip, and Brandon Turner and Dr. Larry Cox who assisted Town Employees for their Response to a Cardiac Arrest at the Christiansburg Recreation Center (*rescheduled for a later date*)

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, expressed concern that the draft letter to Montgomery County regarding assistance with funding for an emergency services did not reflect what was discussed in the latest work session. Mr. Waltz also felt this was a vanity project and expressed that

citizens were more concerned with emergency services getting to emergencies and having the right staff to save lives.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Jenkins reported the first Central Business Committee meeting of the year would be held on February 12th.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

A. First Amendment to Solar Power Purchase Agreements

Engineering Coordinator Wayne Nelson addressed Council concerning the timeline of the solar power project and steps being taken to move into the project execution phase. Mr. Nelson explained that prior to entering the construction phase of the project, Madison Energy Infrastructure (MEI) was allowed to revisit the rates included in the solar agreement. Mr. Nelson noted that AEP rates along with installation costs have increased, and additional project costs at the Parks and Recreation Center have increased as well. He added that along with the rate increases, the HVAC project at the Aquatic Center adds complexity to construction.

Mr. Nelson explained the changes in the solar agreement starting with heating of pool water at facilities. He explained that according to the Federal Infrastructure Act, tax credits were prohibited from being applied to projects that use electricity to heat pools. Mr. Nelson explained the Aquatic Center heats their pool with natural gas, and this would not apply to the Town. Mr. Nelson added there was a renewal period modification within the agreement due to concern the federal government could view two renewal periods verses one as the Town owns the system and not MEI, which may prevent or limit federal tax credits. He explained the renewal period was modified to a one 5-year extension after 25 years which would total 30 years. Mr. Nelson reiterated the change of the initial price of electricity and lastly the termination fee modification, due to project cost change.

Mr. Nelson further explained the projected savings to the Town and asked Council to approve the presented amendment.

Councilman Bishop questioned the cost if the Town pulled out of the agreement. Mr. Nelson explained the cost was explained in the PPA schedule and the number was very high. Mr. Nelson also explained the solar agreement states "rapidly changing market decisions, reserves right to work in good faith to negotiate terms prior to project execution/construction." Councilman Wilson added that in the original agreement the Town knew from that statement in the schedule that there would be a side assessment, and the Town had the potential to renegotiate. Mr. Wilson added that when the Town goes into the construction phase the contract cannot change without the Town's agreement from that point forward.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the first amendment to the Solar Power Purchase Agreements, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

B. Emergency Services Funding Requests for Montgomery County

Town Manager Wingfield stated the work session held on January 15th included discussion among Council concerning a potential letter to Montgomery County to ask for funding for emergency services. Mr. Wingfield noted that staff was instructed to look at the percentage of calls for the County over a three-year period and share that total with the Emergency Services Committee. He explained the numbers had been shared and staff had prepared a draft letter for Council's approval. Mr. Wingfield added that once the letter is sent, the County can suggest changes and approve or disapprove.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned if the Town had completed a study. Mr. Wingfield explained the Town did not have a location study for emergency services.

Councilwoman Bowman expressed that money should not be spent for a new property and facility since the County was discussing a potential emergency services building in the County.

Councilman Wilson explained the draft letter to the County does not state anything about using the land at the Christiansburg Huckleberry Park. Mayor Barber added that the Town has not committed the land for the new facility and explained the land is still on the market and the Town could still sell it. Councilman Wilson also explained the numbers that were included in the draft letter equate to a percentage of emergency calls and it takes into consideration the County's assessment of properties for emergency services.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the drafted letter for emergency services funding requests for Montgomery County, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Abstain; Bowman – Nay; Hicks – Nay; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

C. Resolution for Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Amendment #3

Finance Director Katie Miano explained to Council the information for the budget amendment #3 had been divided into two sections. Mrs. Miano explained that the first section of the amendment was increasing the budget by \$30,000 for the Town's match of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Planning grant for the Passenger Rail Station agreement. She added the funds were rolled into the unassigned fund balance at the end of the year and now the \$30,000 can be used to cover the expenditure. Mrs. Miano further requested that transfer of funds between capital projects take place for several projects to be completed. The first project was to transfer remaining funds from the Silver Lake project to the Arrowhead Sewer Shed project. The second project was to

transfer the unobligated funds for the N. Franklin Bridge Deck project to the Aquatic Center's HVAC replacement project.

Councilman Jenkins questioned the precedence of the N. Franklin Bridge project in the budget moving forward. Engineering Director Mike Kelley explained the N. Franklin Bridge project had been in the budget for some time and added it had taken almost two years to get approval from the railroad to work over the tracks. Mr. Kelley explained that since it was not as a pressing project as the HVAC project it was placed at a lower level of priority in the budget. He added that since the approval took longer than expected, the Town would need to ask for additional funds from VDOT to start the project. Mr. Kelley explained further that since VDOT has changed their funding process the N. Franklin Bridge project was eligible for additional funding through them. Councilwoman Hicks questioned where the Town was with the HVAC project at the Aquatic Center. Mr. Kelley explained that the Town advertised for the project on February 7th and no bids have been received yet.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the resolution for fiscal year 2024-25 budget amendment #3 as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

D. Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Amendment #3

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve the appropriations for fiscal year 2024-25 budget amendment #3 as presented, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Bowman – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

Motion Approved

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Town Manager

Mr. Wingfield reported the Community Support applications had been received and directed Council that they could be viewed under T:\Council on the Town server. Mr. Wingfield reported that Town Hall would be closed for the George Washington Day holiday on February 17th. He reported a standing Council work session would take place on February 19th at 6:30 p.m. and asked Council what they would like to see on the agenda for discussion. Councilwoman Hicks asked that façade grants be added for discussion. Council agreed.

Mr. Wingfield added that a Town inclement weather policy was being looked into by staff and wanted to make Council aware.

B. Town Attorney – no report.

C. Other Staff – no report.

X. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilwoman Bowman reported that Councilman Wilson and herself had saved taxpayers approximately \$42,000 by not pursuing on-line monitoring of water bills. She explained that customers could call in if they had questions concerning their bill or usage. Mrs. Bowman also asked for an update on the installation of new audio equipment in Council Chambers. Public Relations Director Christina Bolt explained that the Town had received two quotes for services but is now waiting on a third. She added that once a quote was approved by staff Council would be made aware.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Closed Meeting:

1. Councilman Wilson made a motion to request a Closed Meeting under Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711(A)(3), for the discussion or consideration of the acquisition or 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 for Parks and Recreation. Councilman Jenkins seconded the motion.

Councilwoman Hicks stated she had received a message from an investor that had questions concerning the Parks and Recreation property, but she forwarded the investor to someone else. Mrs. Hicks noted that she should be able to join the closed session with no conflict on the subject.

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

Motion Approved

2. Reconvene in Open Meeting
3. Councilman Wilson 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. Councilwoman Hockett 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 Council has asked Town Manager Wingfield to negotiate further for the piece of property discussed in closed session.

Councilman Bishop inquired if the Town had set aside funds for the retaining wall reserve. Mr. Wingfield explained that yes, the Town had set aside funds.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting 8:06 p.m.


Tracy Heinline, Clerk of Council


D. Michael Barber, Mayor