

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 29, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.**

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA, ON APRIL 29, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Assistant Town Manager Scot Shippee; Clerk of Council Tracy Heinline; Public Relations Director Christina Bolt; Fire and EMS Chief Billy Hanks; Police Chief Chris Ramsey; Public Works Director Jim Lancianese; Assistant Public Works Director, Streets Travis Moles; Director of Aquatics Terry Caldwell

WORK SESSION

I. Call To Order

Mayor Barber called the work session to order.

II. Adjustment of the Agenda

No adjustment to the agenda.

III. Discussion and Action by Mayor and Council

A. Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget

Assistant Town Manager Scot Shippee referenced a list of expenditure considerations and explained that several events have affected the Town's budget including inflation, Hurricane Helene, and the Boil Water Notice. Mr. Shippee touched on several long-term large capital expenditures as well as proposed revenue for the Town. He spoke about the potential revenue from taxes and fees and noted the anticipated water rate increase of 4.5% (\$0.19/1,000 gallons) as well as future increases for water rates.

Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern for raising water rates and noted that citizens were struggling to pay their water bills currently. Councilwoman Bowman suggested not raising the water rates since the Town was in solid shape and felt other areas of spending could and should be cut.

Mr. Shippee spoke about the request for a discussion with Montgomery County to discuss Fire and EMS funding. He explained a letter to the County had been sent asking for a meeting with the Board of Supervisors and noted that although their budget had been approved there was allowance for an amendment. Mr. Shippee added that the County would be performing a study concerning emergency equipment in which the Town has requested a financial analysis as well. Mr. Shippee questioned Council if they would like to wait for the final study to be completed before asking for funds from the County. Council agreed.

Councilwoman Hicks expressed concern for EMS and Fire positions and felt Council should push for 2 new positions for both. Mrs. Hicks noted the community keeps growing and was concerned the amount of work was placing too much stress on volunteers and full-time staff. Councilman Bishop stated he would like to leave funds where they are and felt strongly that administration had made a good decision not including the positions in the budget.

Councilwoman Hicks questioned funding Montgomery County Tourism and the Small Business Solutions Manager position, stating she felt the emergency positions should be a higher priority. Mayor Barber expressed confidence in Tourism stating there had not been a great deal of marketing efforts up to this point, but with a new director the outlook was positive. He added that the Small Business Solutions Manager was a valued position that encourages business growth.

Chief Hanks commented that he would prefer to wait for the County's study before asking for funds. He noted the study would give the Town all the information needed to make a logical ask to the County.

Mr. Shippee referenced the large capital projects in the proposed budget and explained the cost estimates for the NRV Passenger Rail Station and NRV Emergency Communications projects. He noted that other localities/members of the two authorities would share in the cost of the large capital projects.

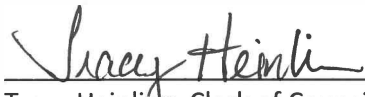
Mr. Shippee presented the proposed cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) and merit increases for Town staff. Mayor Barber expressed the importance of remaining competitive with other surrounding areas and providing the best service to the citizens of Christiansburg. Councilwoman Hicks noted concern for the lower salary positions and expressed the need for further positions in Public Works. Public Works Director Jim Lancianese explained that although there were vacant positions in Public Works, that over time the work is distributed out among current employees and controlled. He made Council aware that the Town had just lost two employees to the Town of Blacksburg and expressed the importance of COLA and merit increases to remain competitive with surrounding localities. Mr. Lancianese added that the Town has provided competitive wages to the Town employees and felt the need was to maintain that.

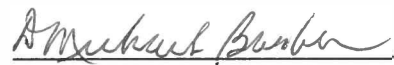
Council discussed the Kenneth B. Gibson Memorial Park-and-Ride sign and suggested that instead of spending \$25,000 for a new sign, VDOT could be asked to install the sign or the Town's Public Works department could provide a sign.

Mr. Shippee concluded that the Public Hearing for the proposed budget would take place on May 13th. Mayor Barber suggested a possible work session after the Public Hearing to discuss any public comment.

IV. Adjournment

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.


Tracy Heinlin, Clerk of Council


D. Michael Barber, Mayor