

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2010 AT 7:30 P.M.**

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA, ON JANUARY 19, 2010 AT 7:30 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Richard G. Ballengee; Vice-Mayor Ann H. Carter; D. Michael Barber; Bradford J. Stipes; D. Henry Showalter; James H. Vanhoozier; H. Earnest Wade. ABSENT: None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager R. Lance Terpenny; Town Clerk Michele M. Stipes; Assistant Town Manager Helms; Town Attorney Kai Memmer. ABSENT: None.

MAYOR BALLENGEE stated there was a quorum present of Council Members.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

REGULAR MEETING

MAYOR BALLENGEE called the Regular Meeting of Council to order and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes of January 5, 2010. Councilman Barber made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Councilman Wade. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier, Wade. NAYS: None.

COUNCILWOMAN CARTER made a motion to amend the agenda to include a discussion by Council regarding downtown parking time limits. Councilman Stipes seconded the motion and Council voted as follows: AYES: Barber, Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier, Wade. NAYS: None.

CITIZEN HEARINGS:

1. GLEN REYNOLDS AND SAM LIONBERGER, III – AQUATIC CENTER UPDATE. Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Lionberger gave a detailed update on the aquatic center construction, including delays resulting from poor weather. Despite the construction delays, Mr. Lionberger said he remains optimistic that the pool level will be completed by the end of next month. Mr. Reynolds added that they are hoping for partial occupancy by the middle of next month in order to allow the aquatic staff members time to work on site before the center is completed. The severe winter weather has posed a challenge completing the exterior of the building with continual snow, mud, and freezing temperatures. The outside deck, entranceway canopy, and outside signage will need to be completed once the site dries out. Wiring is in place for the computer systems. The end of February continues to be the anticipated completion date. Mr. Reynolds commented on the misnomer that the project completion date was to be December 2008. The December 2008 date was offered before Virginia Tech's involvement. Prior to Virginia Tech's involvement, the plans did not include many of the unique features such as the diving tower and spectator seating; the building size was increased almost twenty feet and is designed on a much larger scale than originally intended, which was only a 25-meter pool. With the changes, a new completion date was set for January 2010. The changes were made through negotiations, and there were no additional costs to the Town with the additions to the building. To date this has been a four year project. Mr. Reynolds said he is hoping to have water in two of the pools within the next two weeks. Councilwoman Carter asked if the Town planned to place a sidewalk from nearby Kroger to the aquatic center along N. Franklin Street; Town Manager Terpenny replied that there are currently no plans for that sidewalk placement.
2. JEREMY HART – UPDATE ON CURBSIDE RECYCLING. Mr. Hart, co-founder of Valley Curbside Recycling, reported to Council on the success of the business during its first year of service. The company, which began with twenty customers, recycled fifteen tons of material in 2009 and now offers curbside service three days per week, with plans to expand to five. The business is in the process of hiring a second employee. Interest continues to grow and the recycling benchmark for 2010 is forty tons of material. Town Council expressed its appreciation of Mr. Hart and his dedication to providing a convenient recycling program for Christiansburg residents; Town Council asked what it can do to help support Valley Curbside Recycling. Mr. Hart commented that his recycling service is not governed by Town Code, and he asked that the Town examine and modify the Code to include curbside recycling.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS.

- a. Mr. Lenny Session addressed Council on behalf of Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church, requesting financial support for the church. Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church, which is listed on the National Historic Structures registry, is in urgent need of repair to maintain the integrity of the roof. The Church has applied for grants through the Historical Society, but they have been seeking resolution to this problem for two years. Noting that many of the church members are elderly, retired, and/or on fixed incomes, Mr. Sessions asked for any assistance available including advice on an engineering strategy that can be used in the short-term until the roof can be replaced. The Church has unsuccessfully sought bank lending for this repair. Councilman Vanhoozier asked if a professional assessment has been done on the damaged roof, and Mr. Sessions replied that had not been done. Councilman Vanhoozier suggested seeking gratis assistance from the Virginia Tech Engineering department. Mayor Ballengee suggested that Mr. Session put his request in writing and submit it to the Town for budget review.
- b. Mr. Bob Poff addressed Council, on behalf of the Lewis Miller Museum, regarding the annual application for the Local Government Challenge Grant for the Lewis Miller Museum. The Virginia Commission of Arts will match the funds contributed by the Town. Mr. Poff asked Council to approve filing of the grant application, which must be received by the Virginia Commission of Arts by April 1, 2010. Manager Terpenny explained that the Town allocates \$5,000.00 in the budget each year for this grant and Virginia only requires that the Town commit to its intent to contribute the funds at this time. Funds will be allocated in the 2010 – 2011 budget year. Mr. Poff thanked Council for its past and continued support of the Lewis Miller Museum and introduced Sue Farrar, Executive Director of the Lewis Miller Museum, and Nancy Miller, both present on behalf of the Lewis Miller Museum.
- c. Mrs. Nancy Showalter notified Council of an unused sign support-pole sticking up several inches from the sidewalk on Main Street. Mrs. Showalter is concerned about the hazard this presents for pedestrians and asked that Town crews remove it immediately. Mayor Ballengee thanked Mrs. Showalter and directed the Town Manager to notify the Street Department of this concern.
- d. Carol Lindstrom of Depot Street asked Town Council to direct Town employees to use parking spaces further away from Town Hall, leaving close parking spaces for customers.
- e. Mr. Gary Cope spoke in support of Valley Curbside Recycling, adding that he hopes the Town will extend assistance to the recycling business in any manner possible.

DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. PROPOSED FEES FOR CREDIT CARD AND DEBIT CARD TRANSACTIONS. Council has previously discussed this matter on several occasions and has been presented with a proposed ordinance that would allow the Town to charge a three percent fee for acceptance of credit cards and debit cards for payment of utilities, taxes, fees, surcharges, penalties, and interest. Councilman Wade began the discussion by noting that Montgomery County charged credit card transaction fees for years and only recently did away with the practice because of a special arrangement it has with its bank. Councilman Wade wondered if this was an arrangement that would be practical for the Town. Finance Director Tweedie explained that Montgomery County agreed to place all of its business with one bank in exchange for the bank covering the County's credit card transaction fees. Unfortunately, the Town doesn't have as much to invest and, therefore, it would not be an attractive negotiation for a bank. Also, most of the Town's cash is invested in CD's, and this practice is directed by Town Charter. Finance Director Tweedie said she is willing to look into this if Council so desires. Councilman Wade said he is supportive of offering this service to residents, free of charge, until further research has been done on this matter. Councilman Vanhoozier commented that he supports offering the service free of charge, but that the Finance Director needs to explore negotiation options to lower the fee rates. Councilman Stipes asked if this would impact current offsets; Finance Director Tweedie replied that it would have no real impact on offsets. During the discussion Councilman Wade noted that the service provided in the Treasurer's Office is separate from the service that will be provided by the Recreation Center and the Aquatic Center. Councilman Stipes said he believes residents expect this service to be offered by the Town, and it will be especially valuable to residents when purchasing memberships to the Recreation Center and the Aquatic Center. Councilmen Barber and Showalter, concerned with the large cost to the Town if a fee is not imposed, expressed their support of the proposed ordinance allowing the Town to charge a three-percent fee for credit card/debit card transactions. Councilman Showalter suggested passing the ordinance as presented with a one-year review to determine feasibility. After further discussion, Councilman Stipes made a motion to accept credit card/debit card transactions for payments of taxes, fees, utilities, and all other payments to the Town, without charging a transaction fee, and with a twelve-month review in January 2011 to determine feasibility. Councilman Vanhoozier seconded the motion and Town Clerk Stipes polled Council as follows: Barber – Nay; Carter – Nay; Showalter – Nay; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye; Wade – Aye. Hearing a tie vote, Mayor Ballengee voted Aye on the motion. The motion is carried and the proposed ordinance is denied.

2. STIPES AND VANHOOZIER – Street Committee report/recommendation on:
 - a. Subdivision Plat from Records for Good Samaritan Hospice, Moose Drive, S.W., creating 1 lot. Councilman Vanhoozier explained this simple subdivision request for property located in front of the Christiansburg Middle School. The property, zoned B-3 General Business and A Agricultural is in compliance with zoning and subdivision guidelines and Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier, Wade. NAYS: None. ABSTAIN: Barber.
 - b. Downtown Parking. Many concerns have been voiced over parking in the downtown area since the commencement of the construction of the new courthouse. The Street Committee is prepared to accept Montgomery County's offer to provide assistance with the matter and will meet with County Administrator, Craig Meadows, to create a solution that will last the duration of the construction, estimated to be no less than two years. Councilman Barber emphasized that in the meantime the Town must rescind the three hour parking limit waiver and diligently enforce the three hour parking limit along East Main Street. Councilwoman Carter agreed commenting that unlimited parking is unfair to the business located along Main Street. Mayor Ballengee expressed his appreciation for the Street Committee's diligence in this matter. Councilman Barber made a motion to reinstate the three hour parking limit along East Main Street effective February 1, 2010, seconded by Councilwoman Carter. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier, Wade. NAYS: None. Mayor Ballengee and Town Manager Terpenny will take responsibility for notifying the public of this change.

TOWN MANAGER REPORTS:

PUBLIC HEARING REQUEST(S) – Town Manager Terpenny presented the following request(s) and recommended setting the Public Hearing(s) as indicated:

February 16, 2010

1. Zoning Permit request for a body shop in the I-2 General Industrial Zoning District, Park Street.
2. Rezoning request, 3301 Roanoke Street, A Agricultural and R-1 Single-Family Residential to B-3 General Business.
3. Conditional Use Permit request for construction equipment storage in the B-3 General Business District, 3301 Roanoke Street.

On motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Wade, Council voted to set the Public Hearing(s) as indicated. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier, Wade. NAYS: None.

RESOLUTION TO VDOT REQUESTING ANNUAL STREET MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS FOR NEW STREETS - Town Manager Terpenny presented Council with a resolution requesting VDOT add nine additional streets to the Town's Collector/Local Streets system for annual maintenance payments in accordance with Section 33.1-41.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1987 Amendment. The streets total 4.7626 lane miles. A copy of the resolution is attached and made a part of these minutes. On motion by Councilman Wade, seconded by Councilman Barber, Council voted to approve the resolution to VDOT requesting annual street maintenance payments for new streets as follows: AYES: Barber, Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Wade. NAYS: None.

TOWN MANAGER TERPENNY reported that construction on the Huckleberry Trail extension began today at the New River Valley Mall spur. Plans are to have the trail graded and ready for paving by the spring paving season. Town forces will build the trail as part of the in-kind grant match.

COUNCIL ACTION on Mr. Bob Poff's request on behalf of the Lewis Miller Museum regarding the annual application for the Local Government Challenge Grant. Councilman Barber made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted as follows: AYES: Barber, Carter, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier, Wade. NAYS: None.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to bring before Council the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

