

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
MINUTES OF MAY 3, 2011 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 MAY 3, 2011 AT 7:30 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Richard G. Ballengee; Vice-Mayor Michael D. Barber; R. Cord Hall; Steve Huppert; Henry D. Showalter; Bradford J. Stipes; James W. Vanhoozier. ABSENT: None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Interim Town Manager Barry Helms; Town Clerk Michele M. Stipes; Town Attorney Jim Guynn; Assistant to the Town Manager Adam Carpenetti; Engineering Director Wayne Nelson; Public Information Officer Becky Wilburn.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Craig Moore; Barry Akers; Mark Caldwell, Ann H. Carter; Kevin Conner; Meghan Dorsett; Joe Powers. ABSENT: Jennifer Sowers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

1. Council's intention to adopt an ordinance in regards to a request by Diane Dern to amend Chapter 30 "Zoning" of the *Christiansburg Town Code* in regards to provisions for antique stores in Residential Districts. Ms. Sue Kaiser Breeding, a neighbor of Ms. Dern's for thirteen years, spoke in strong opposition to the request. Ms. Breeding said Ms. Dern's property is in messy disrepair with rubbish, overgrown trees, and a tarped wood pile. Ms. Breeding said Ms. Dern has recently cleaned some of the property, but she encouraged Council to do a site visit before voting on the request. Ms. Breeding said she is also concerned with the volume of traffic through the neighborhood, much of which exceeds the speed limit. Ms. Breeding said this residential neighborhood is not a good location for an antique store and she doesn't want to live next to a business. Mr. Tom Beeken of Park Street voiced his concern with additional traffic and inadequate parking that could result from a business on Park Street. Mr. Beeken said he is opposed to this request. Mr. Michael Wright of Edmond Street spoke in opposition of the request out of concern for his children. Mr. Wright said he is concerned that the added traffic and need for parking for a business will pose a safety hazard for the children in the neighborhood. Mr. Wright said a residential neighborhood is not the appropriate location for a business. Applicant Diane Dern of Park Street said she doesn't agree that her property is a mess, especially when compared to many of the homes along Park Street. Ms. Dern said she has had trees trimmed and cut down, and is trying to maintain the property. Regarding the antique store, Ms. Dern said she doesn't expect heavy traffic and can accommodate parking for one vehicle. Ms. Dern said she will do light advertising, and may operate by appointment only selling antique sewing machines, looms, and other small items. Ms. Dern said the property was once the site of her father's law office many years ago.
2. Contingent on Item 1, a Conditional Use Permit request by Diane Dern for an antique store at 201 Park Street (tax parcel 527 – ((A)) – 145A) in the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District. There was no one to speak for or against this request.
3. Rezoning request by Teddy Enterprises LLC for property at 735 Peppers Ferry Road, N.W. (a .22 acre portion of the total .368 acre tax parcel 435 – ((A)) – 7) from R-2 Two-Family Residential to B-3 General Business. The property is scheduled as Mixed Use – Residential/Limited Business in the Future Land Use Map of the Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. This request was withdrawn by the applicant.
4. Rezoning request by Good Shepherd Baptist Church Trustees for property located at 155 Dunlap Drive (approximately 4.62 acres of the total 11.43 acre tax parcels 501 – ((7)) – 1 and 2) from B-3 General Business to R-1 Single-Family Residential. The property is scheduled as Mixed Use – Residential/Limited Business in the Future Land Use Map of the Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Clay Hodges addressed Council as a representative of Good Shepherd

Baptist Church. Mr. Hodges explained that the church is currently in the process of a site plan review for a soccer field and improvements. Part of project, he explained, was to vacate a property line, creating a single tract. The two lots to be combined, one zoned R-1 Single-Family Residential and the other zoned B-3 General Business, have different development requirements. The majority of the two combined lots is currently zoned R-1 Single-Family Residential and the Trustees are requesting that the property zoned B-3 General Business be rezoned to R-1 Single-Family Residential. Mr. Matthew Kirkland, Pastor of Good Shepherd Baptist Church, said he spoke with residents of Dunlap Drive regarding this request and all were in favor of the request and wrote letters of support, which Mr. Kirkland submitted to Council.

5. A Conditional Use Permit request by Verizon Wireless (acting as agent for property owner PR Financing Limited Partnership) for a 94-foot tall telecommunications monopole at 100 New River Road (tax parcel 435 – ((A)) – 41) in the B-3 General Business District. Mr. Jim Cowan, on behalf of Verizon Wireless, presented a slide show indicating changes to the Conditional Use Permit request in response to community concerns, including visibility of the monopole from various angles. Mr. Cowan explained the elevation changes proposed, and the coverage area before and after placement of the monopole. Mr. Cowan explained that the Conditional Use Permit request is for a ninety foot monopole, which is lower than the previously requested monopole, but will meet the main objective in providing or increasing cell coverage in the mall building. The monopole will accommodate the Town's emergency medical technician service. Landscaping and shrubbery has been designed to hide the monopole. Mr. Cowan again reviewed the reasons for choosing the New River Valley Mall site and why other potential sites were not suitable. Mr. _____, engineer for Verizon Wireless was present to provide details and answer questions. Mr. Cowan said he provided notice of the Conditional Use Permit request to residents of Villas of Peppers Ferry, and tried to address concerns voiced by Council and residents. Mr. Cowan has also met with several area property owners to address concerns. Mr. Cowan submitted letters of support from New River Valley Mall store owners and New River Community College. Councilman Hall reviewed previous discussions justifying the New River Valley Mall site and how it will provide the desired coverage. Councilman Hall then compared this discussion to the current application for a flush mount 90 foot monopole. Mr. Jim Gorman, security director at New River Valley Mall, said he hopes the monopole will eliminate the cell service dead zones that affect emergency care in the mall. Mr. Gorman said the monopole will also help provide service coverage on the Huckleberry Trail. Mr. Willie Joshwagon, GMC employee in the mall, said cell service is lacking in the mall, which poses a concern with emergency situations. Mr. Joshwagon said he supports placement of the monopole at the mall site.

REGULAR MEETING

MAYOR BALLENGEE called the Regular Meeting of Council to order and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2011. Mayor Ballengee asked that the Minutes be corrected to show his intent to take Council's concerns regarding the park and ride located near Falling Branch School to the Metropolitan Planning Organization, not the Montgomery County School Board. Councilman Barber made a motion to approve the Minutes as amended, seconded by Councilman Hall. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

CITIZEN HEARINGS:

1. Citizens' Comments.
 - a. Mr. Daniel Burton, a resident of Blacksburg and a member of the Christiansburg Rescue Squad, said he hopes Council understands the gravity of the situation in hiring a new Rescue Squad Captain. Mr. Burton said he joined the squad in 2007 and it has been "hobbling along" since that time because of ineffective leadership. Mr. Burton said the decision before Council will choose the future direction of the squad. Mr. Burton said localities are not mandated by the State to provide EMT services to the community, but community values this service. Mr. Burton voiced his concern with what he views as fairly poor flow of information from Council to members of the squad, and was deeply concerned with the employment application for Rescue Squad Captain that was briefly posted on the Town's website. Mr. Burton expressed dismay that the job description did not require emergency medical technician certifications, or even a high school diploma. Mr. Burton said he firmly believes that the Captain of the Rescue Squad should be qualified to perform all duties of the squad. Mr. Burton asked Council to stay focused and look out for the best interest of the community in this important appointment.
 - b. Mr. Wayne Muhammad of Christiansburg Institute thanked Council for last year's appropriation that helped them meet their objectives in focusing on cultural sight and identity. Mr. Muhammad reported on

the progress of Christiansburg Institute that included a thorough review of the Institute's strategic plan, a three month process that received the full support and participation of the Institute's board. Mr. Muhammad reported that the Institute hosted three international groups that were interested in the preservation of models of African history. Mr. Mohammad reported that the Institute has begun engaging other organizations, such as the Planning District Commission, subcontracting with them to reach out to a broader community. The Institute is also working with New River Community Action in addressing infant mortality, which is higher in the African American community. Mr. Muhammad reported that the Institute is working with the Virginia Tech history department and Christiansburg schools to integrate African history into student curriculum. Mr. Bob Leonard of Christiansburg Institute reported on the redevelopment of the Institute's strategic plan, the focus of which is to consider Christiansburg Institute's future as an economic resource; it's legacy as a gathering place of multicultural dialogue. Mr. Leonard reiterated the Institute's involvement with other community organizations in an effort to expand the role of cultural awareness in the community. Mr. Leonard explained the plans to renovate the Edgar A. Long building as a museum and community meeting place, and an archive storage center. Mr. Leonard also offered the Christiansburg Institute property as an expansion site for the newly established farmer's market. Mr. Leonard asked Council to consider supporting Christiansburg Institute in the amount equal to last year's contribution, but also through assistance in organizing multicultural festivals, and by expanding low to moderate _____, so that the Institute would be eligible for Community Development Block Grants. Mr. Muhammad and Mr. Leonard thanked Council for the opportunity to speak.

- c. Mr. Charles Bricken, Country Meadow Drive, an associate member of the Christiansburg Rescue Squad, voiced his concerns with the job description for Captain of the Rescue Squad. Mr. Bricken said he concurs with Daniel Burton's comments, and he too believes the Captain should have more qualifications than emergency medical technician status, and should be someone with paramedic certification who can provide prehospital care. Mr. Bricken said he hopes the standard will be raised for the future of the squad through strong leadership. Mr. Bricken stressed that the person chosen for this position will affect the services provided to the community, and the Town should consider the type of crew needed to meet the needs of Christiansburg.
- d. Carol Lindstrom, Depot Street, said from her experience the Rescue Squad Captain must be the most qualified person available to avoid possible litigation.
- e. Ms. Connie Turner, Alleghany Street, reported on the success of the first annual Depot Days festival held last Saturday. Ms. Turner then invited Mr. Muhammad and Mr. Leonard of Christiansburg Institute to attend the Christiansburg Alumni Return meeting this Monday at Amelia's in Cambria. Ms. Turner said the Christiansburg Institute building will be featured on the commemorative magnet for this year's Alumni Return. Ms. Turner thanked Town Council and staff for the ongoing sewer line upgrade along Alleghany Street.
- f. Ms. Britney Cochran, an active member of the Christiansburg Rescue Squad for four years, addressed Council regarding the job description for Rescue Squad Captain. Ms. Cochran said she concurs with comments made by Mr. Burton and Mr. Bricken. Ms. Cochran added that she believes the Captain should be currently active in emergency services and should have strong leadership and interpersonal skills. The Captain needs to enforce rules and regulations in a successful manner, with a focus on healthcare education.

DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. An ordinance to amend Section 23-2 Officers, of Chapter 23 Rescue and Lifesaving, of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to provide for appointment of the Rescue Squad Captain by the Town Manager. Councilman Hall said after reviewing the proposed amendment, and considering comments heard tonight, his concern is with giving the Town Manager autonomy in appointing a Rescue Squad Captain and he wants to see a committee approach, suggesting a committee of three to include the Town Manager, a Council liaison, and the chief medical officer of the squad. Mayor Ballengee said he likes the committee approach, but is opposed to having Town Council involved since it is not a Town Council appointment. Councilman Hall suggested that the two members of the Executive Committee be involved with the process. Interim Town Manager Helms said his intent was to conduct the search, interviews

and selection through a committee. Councilman Stipes said the state of the Rescue Squad has been allowed to occur under the present system as provided by Town Code and he supports Councilman Hall's suggestion to do things differently by appointing a committee to oversee the hiring process. Councilman Hall said there are notable fractions within the squad and a lack of leadership, with lost grant funding due to lack of continuing education by squad members. Councilman Showalter stated that he supports the committee approach that would include the members mentioned by Councilman Hall, and is ready to act on the matter. Councilman Vanhoozier said he concurs with Council comments, recognizing this is a great opportunity to move forward in the right direction. Councilman Vanhoozier supports appointment of a committee and suggested approving the proposed Town Code amendment in order to move forward in this matter. Councilman Vanhoozier stated that the job description for Rescue Squad Captain needs improvement and he asked that the squad and Town staff keep Council informed and updated on the progress of the appointment process. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to amend Section 23-2 Officers, of Chapter 23 Rescue and Lifesaving, of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to provide for appointment of the Rescue Squad Captain by the Town Manager, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Town Clerk Stipes polled Council as follows: Barber – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier - Aye.

2. An ordinance to amend Section 23-3 Election and Certification of Officers; Roster of Members, of Chapter 23 Rescue and Lifesaving of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to conform with other sections of *Town Code* regarding appointment of the Captain of the Rescue Squad by the Town Manager. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to amend Section 23-3 Election and Certification of Officers; Roster of Members, Chapter 23, accordingly, seconded by Councilman Hall. Attorney Guynn noted that this amendment is a consistency matter. Town Clerk Stipes polled Council as follows: Barber – Aye, Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.
3. Job description for the Captain of the Rescue Squad (Councilman Hall). Councilman Hall said he has reviewed the job description for Rescue Squad Captain and has concerns with the job context, stating that certifications must be consistent with the care to be provided. Councilman Hall said believes it is important to require ALS certification as a qualification. Squad member, Daniel Burton, clarified that transfer of care can be made to a qualified member in cases of ALS response, and incident management can be done by five other members other than the Captain. Councilman Hall stated that ALS certification denotes a level of commitment and achievement, as does a Bachelor's or Master's Degree, either of which he wants as a job requirement. Councilman Hall also believes the Captain should have more than general computer skills since he/she will be utilizing reporting programs and eventually soft billing programs. Mayor Ballengee asked Councilman Hall to give Interim Town Manager Helms a list of his concerns. Councilman Barber recommended including the cities of Salem and Roanoke in job requirement comparisons since both localities are larger departments that oversee numerous buildings. Councilman Barber suggested that the comparisons be forwarded to Council for review and discussion at the next regular Council meeting. Mayor Ballengee asked for comments from Planning Commissioner Barry Akers, who is a long member of the Christiansburg Rescue Squad. Mr. Akers said he agrees with Councilman Hall's comments that the ALS certification is important, and that qualifications required to reach intermediate level are quite stringent and take commitment and dedication. Mr. Akers believes paramedic status is not quite as important. Councilman Showalter reviewed Councilman Hall's comments as noted above, and asked that the defined hours and days in the job description be stricken. Interim Town Manager Helms noted the comments voiced by Council and said he will amend the job description and will email a copy to Council for review. Planning Commissioner, and former Council member, Ann Carter said she noted dysfunction within the Rescue Squad during her years of service as liaison to the Rescue Squad, and she applauded those who came forward to speak of their concerns.
4. Consideration of Resolutions for Christiansburg High School athletic teams. Mayor Ballengee presented Resolutions for the Christiansburg High School Wrestling team, Diving championship, Basketball team, and Scholastic Bowl champions, for Council's consideration. Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the Resolutions, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYE: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.
5. Resolution for Commonwealth Transportation Board. Mayor Ballengee asked Councilman Stipes to compose a resolution expressing appreciation for funding for Route 114. Councilman Stipes agreed to prepare a Resolution of Appreciation for each Council member to sign.

MONTHLY BILLS – On motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Hall, Council voted to approve the monthly bills to be paid on May 10, 2011, in the amount of \$1,681,890.20. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

PUBLIC HEARING REQUEST(S) – Interim Town Manager Helms presented the following request and recommended setting the Public Hearing for June 7, 2011.

1. Rezoning request, B-3 General Business District to R-2 Two-Family Residential, Walters Drive.

On motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Huppert, Council voted to set the Public Hearing for June 7, 2011. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

MAYOR BALLENGEE reminded Council that the May 17, 2011 Regular Town Council meeting will be held at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center to accommodate the Christiansburg High School students receiving Resolutions of Recognition.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

Richard G. Ballengee, Mayor