

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 6, 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 DECEMBER 6, 2011 AT 7:30 P.M.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION PRESENT: Chairman Craig Moore; Barry Akers; Ann H. Carter; Meghan Dorsett; Joe Powers. ABSENT: Mark Caldwell; Jennifer Sowers.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Barry D. Helms; Town Clerk Michele M. Stipes; Town Attorney Kai Memmer; Assistant to the Town Manager Adam Carpenetti; Finance Director/Treasurer Valerie Tweedie; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell; Director of Engineering and Public Works Wayne Nelson; Planning Director Randy Wingfield.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

**JOINT PUBLIC HEARINGS**

1. Conditional Use Permit request by Crimper's Climbing Gym (agent for property owner Epperly Elite Training Center, LLC) for a private recreational facility at 100 Central Avenue (tax parcel 467-((18))-1) in the B-3 General Business District. Video presentation. Applicants John Johnson and Nate Glatkowski presented Council with a video presentation demonstrating their plans for a climbing gym at 100 Central Avenue. Mr. Johnson reviewed their plans that included hours of operation, anticipated customer usage, membership, training opportunities, and events such as competitions and birthday rentals. Mr. Johnson reported that climbing competitions have the potential to bring in one hundred fifty or so participants and observers to the area. The closest commercial climbing gym is in Lynchburg. Mr. Glatkowski explained the climbing wall structures and equipment to be used, with a climbing wall height of sixteen to twenty-four feet tall, with a small portion of the wall reaching thirty feet. Both men said they have been involved in this sport for many years and have found the benefits to include increased confidence and coordination, and physical exercise. If approved, Crimper's Climbing Gym would lease the ground floor of the existing building at 100 Central Drive. Mr. Johnson explained that small workout equipment will be available in addition to the climbing wall, and that there would be no unsupervised access to the facility. Mr. Johnson reported that the facility is already designed for recreational use and they anticipate a grand opening in March, if approved. Planning Commissioner Dorsett noted that several Montgomery County Public Schools have installed small climbing wall in the gyms in response to climbing wall popularity and a need for increased physical activity among school children. Ms. Ann Hess of Christiansburg said she has known John Johnson for many years and she vouched for his character and expressed her support for the request. Ms. Hess said she believes this type of facility will complement the other recreational facilities in Christiansburg. Ms. Carol Lindstrom, Depot Street, said wall climbing is a fun, safe sport when conducted properly and she expressed her support of the request.
2. Increase of fees for separate Public Hearings. Town Manager Helms reported that the Planning Commission has recently begun holding Public Hearings separate from those held during Town Council meetings. Because of this recent change, the Planning Commission is recommending that Town Council reestablish the fees for separate public hearings as follows: Properties of less than 5 acres – \$500.00; Properties of 5 – 20 acres – \$750.00; Properties greater than 20 acres – \$1,000.00; Plus an additional \$6.00 per letter for requests with 50 or more adjoining owners. Planning Director Wingfield said the new fee schedule would bring the fees in line with neighboring locations, with slight variations.

MAYOR BALLENGEE called the Regular Meeting of Council to order and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes of November 15, 2011. Councilman Barber made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Councilman Huppert. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

CITIZEN HEARINGS:

1. Jim Politis to address Council on industrial hemp farming. Mayor Ballengee reported that Mr. Politis was unable to attend tonight's meeting because of his attendance at a meeting in Washington D.C. on the matter of hemp farming. Mr. Politis will address Council at a future meeting to ask for a Resolution in support of industrial hemp farming. Mayor Ballengee stated that Blacksburg and Montgomery County have both adopted a Resolution in support of industrial hemp farming as requested by Mr. Politis. Mr. Politis is seeking support from one hundred localities.
2. CITIZENS' COMMENTS.
  - a. No one to speak.

III. DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. THE PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT AND REAPPOINTMENT OF AQUATIC ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS WHOSE TERMS ARE EXPIRING ON DECEMBER 31, 2011. Mayor Ballengee reported that three members of the Aquatic Advisory Board are up for reappointment, one is moving out of Christiansburg, creating a vacancy on the Board. Mayor Ballengee asked Council how it wanted to fill the vacancy. Councilman Huppert asked for a recommendation from Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell. Ms. Caldwell recommended advertising the vacancy allowing the application/resume process which provides for detailed information from those seeking appointment. Council expressed its support of this recommendation and Councilman Stipes suggested posting the advertisement at the aquatic center. Councilman Showalter requested that all individuals appointed and those seeking appointment to the Board attend a Council meeting to introduce themselves to Council. Council also expressed support for this recommendation. Mayor Ballengee asked Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell to arrange for members seeking reappointment to attend the December 20, 2011 Town Council meeting.
2. Tax relief for the elderly. This ordinance will update the annual income limits for exemption from or deferral of taxation of real estate, and manufactured homes as defined in Code of Virginia, § 36-85.3, or any portion thereof, owned by and occupied as the sole dwelling of a person not less than sixty-five (65) years of age, and providing the same exemption for such property of a person who is determined to be permanently and totally disabled. This ordinance will also make our limits the same as Montgomery County. Town Manager Helms recommended Town Council adopt the limits recently approved by Montgomery County. Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the recommended ordinance for tax relief for the elderly, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.
3. MR. STIPES AND MR. VANHOOZIER – STREET COMMITTEE REPORT/RECOMMENDATION ON:
  - a. Division of Land of Terry and Susan C. Young; creating 2 lots; located on Glade Drive, S.E. Councilman Stipes reported that this division of land is for property located off Tower Road. One-third of the property is in Christiansburg Town limits, with the remaining two-thirds located in Montgomery County. Councilman Stipes stated that approval by Town Council is contingent on approval by Montgomery County for the same division of land request. All is in order with the request and Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Councilman Barber stated he will abstain from voting because one of the applicants is his cousin. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None. ABSTENTION: Barber.
  - b. Update on parking situation in Oak Tree Subdivision. Councilman Stipes reported on this matter that was turned over to the Street Committee in November 2011. The Street Committee met with Wayne Nelson, Director of Engineering and Public Works, to discuss this situation. Mr. Nelson has recommended engaging the Oak Tree Homeowner's Association to further discuss the concerns and ideas with the Engineering Department. Mr. Nelson would then bring a recommendation to the Street Committee for discussion and recommendation to Council.
  - c. Mayor Ballengee reported on the future of the Phlegar Building, previously discussed by Council. Montgomery County has considered tearing down the Phlegar Building to provide for additional parking for the new courthouse. Mayor Ballengee sent a letter to the County requesting that the Phlegar Building remain intact, at the request of

Town Council. Mayor Ballengee said he understands the courthouse has parking needs and he believes the Town can work with the County to accommodate those needs. Mayor Ballengee proposed designating the on-street parking near the courthouse as courthouse parking only, but several Council members stated they would not support that proposal; however, Council is supportive of preserving the two hundred year old Phlegar Building and working with the County to find an alternative solution to the parking shortage. Mayor Ballengee reported that this matter will be further discussed at a future Town Council meeting.

**TOWN MANAGER REPORTS:**

**MONTHLY BILLS** – On motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier, Council voted to approve the monthly bills to be paid on December 10, 2011, in the amount of \$1,337,670.07. Council voted on the motion as follows: **AYES:** Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. **NAYS:** None. At Councilman Huppert's request, Town Manager Helms said he would provide detailed information regarding the five thousand dollar expenditure for Parks and Recreation for the Dixie World Series. Councilman Hall questioned the actual expenditures associated with hosting a Dixie World Series tournament, inquiring if there is a form used in accounting for the expenditures. Town Manager Helms commented that a cost analysis, much like a budget, is the method used in budgeting for the previous and upcoming Dixie World Series tournament. Town Manager Helms said he would provide Council with a copy of the budget for the upcoming event. Mr. Chuck Muncy of the Parks and Recreation Department plans to provide much of this information to Council at an upcoming Council meeting. Councilman Huppert stated that Town Council isn't against supporting these types of events, but only wants to ensure they are cost effective.

**ADAM CARPENETTI, ASSISTANT TO THE TOWN MANAGER AND RANDY WINGFIELD, PLANNING DIRECTOR**, presented to Council two different options for posting Conditional Use Permits on the Town's webpage in a searchable manner. Mr. Carpenetti and Randy Wingfield, Planning Director, researched this matter at the request of Town Council. After discussing the practicality of the two options and the time involvement for both, Town Council determined that the google map option was preferable to the spreadsheet option in user ease and appeal. Both options would provide searchers with a link to the actual CUP which lists conditions and proffers set for that particular permit. Planning Director Wingfield estimated that it would take twenty-nine weeks to enter all active Conditional Use Permits, which includes a site visit for each permit. Mr. Wingfield is confident that the present Planning Department staff will be able to devote the time necessary to this project, but will consider the use of an intern if necessary. Councilman Hall asked if a plan is in place to continue monitoring properties for CUP compliance. Mr. Wingfield said that a monthly maintenance program could be a part of this project at approximately fifteen to twenty minutes per site visit. There are more than four hundred active Conditional Use Permits in Christiansburg. Town Council thanked Mr. Carpenetti and Mr. Wingfield for the time they put into providing this information to Council.

**TOWN MANAGER HELMS** provided an update to Council on the installation of the production equipment for the salt brine used during winter weather. The equipment is to be installed this week and should be operational by January 2012.

**PUBLIC HEARING REQUEST(S)** – Town Manager Helms presented the following requests and recommended setting the Public Hearings for February 7, 2012.

1. Code amendment to allow private recreation facilities in the I1, Limited Industrial District with a CUP.
2. Contingent on the above, a Conditional Use Permit request for a private recreation facility at 195 Sullivan Street in the I1, Limited Industrial District.

On motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Showalter, Council voted to set the Public Hearings for February 7, 2012. Council voted on the motion as follows: **AYES:** Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. **NAYS:** None.

**MAYOR BALLENGEE** reported that on December 21 and 22, employee Christmas gift certificates will be distributed to employees. Mayor Ballengee said he will visit each department to distribute the certificates and he invited Town Council members to join him beginning at 1:00 P.M. each day.

**MAYOR BALLENGEE** reported that he received a package today for a special election in November 2012 for the allowance of the sale of alcohol by the drink in Montgomery County. Petitions are available for the collection of signatures for

interested registered voters.

COUNCILMAN HALL expressed his regrets at missing Rescue Squad Captain Coyle's update during the November 15, 2011 Town Council meeting. Councilman Hall said he has met individually with Mr. Coyle and expressed his confidence in his abilities as Rescue Squad Captain. Councilman Hall then thanked everyone for their prayers and well wishes during his recent family emergency.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 P.M.

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Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

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Richard G. Ballengee, Mayor