

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
MINUTES OF JANUARY 17, 2012 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 17, 2012 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.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Barry D. Helms; Town Clerk Michele M. Stipes; Town Attorney Jim Guynn ; Assistant to the Town Manager Adam Carpenetti; Finance Director/Treasurer Valerie Tweedie; Planning Director Randy Wingfield.

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 3, 2012. Councilman Barber made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

II. CITIZEN HEARINGS:

1. Ms. Helen Young, Electoral Board Vice-Chairman, to present certificates to the newly re-elected Council members. Ms. Helen Young presented Certificates of Election to Councilman Barber, Councilman Showalter, and Councilman Vanhoozier, in recognition of their re-election on November 8, 2011 to service a four-year term on Christiansburg Town Council. Mayor Ballengee thanked Ms. Young on behalf of Town Council.
  
2. Mr. Jim Politis to address Council regarding industrial hemp farming. Mr. Politis provided Council with document prepared by Virginia Tech Business Technology Center for Montgomery County, Virginia, dated May 2011, titled *Need to Reassess the U.S. Market Opportunity for Industrial Hemp*, which explains the industrial hemp market, and a document prepared by Mr. Politis explaining the background of industrial hemp farming and the industrial hemp market. A copy of Mr. Politis' presentation is attached herewith. After presenting to Council, Mr. Politis requested that the Town of Christiansburg pass a Resolution urging the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress to adopt the Industrial Hemp Farming Act, and granting States' authority to license and regulate the production of hemp as an industrial and agricultural commodity. Currently, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration regulates hemp farming. Mr. Politis stated that Representative Morgan Griffith is in support of this proposal, and that no state or federal funding would be sought for hemp farming. Mr. Politis stated that his motivation in seeking to change laws to allow industrial hemp farming is the economic opportunities it would offer across the United States. Mayor Ballengee noted that he has met with Mr. Politis several times regarding this matter and that he invited Mr. Politis to bring his presentation to Council. Mayor Ballengee presented to Council a sample Resolution, prepared by the Board of Supervisors, in support of Mr. Politis' request. Councilman Stipes stated he would have no reservations about supporting this request because industrial hemp farming can be well regulated. Councilman Stipes said industrial hemp farming is a good job/agricultural opportunity and he made a motion to adopt the Resolution as requested by Mr. Politis. Councilman Barber seconded the motion. Councilman Vanhoozier noted that, per Mr. Politis, hemp is already heavily used, but not grown, by the United States, and he is in support of the motion. Councilman Hall stated that he has researched this matter on the internet and understands that the Federal government has had information on industrial hemp farming for many years, and that serious matters are associated with permitting hemp farming. Councilman Hall said one of his concerns is that criminals would find a way to purify industrial hemp to manufacture a hallucinogenic substance. Councilman Hall stated that for these concerns, and others, he is unable to support the motion. Mayor Ballengee suggested that the motion, second, and further discussion, be held until the Discussions by Mayor and Council portion of the meeting.

3. Blacksburg Transit update by Ms. Becky Martin. Ms. Becky Martin provided Council with a Blacksburg Transit update dated January 17, 2012 that included a review of the Capital and Operating Funding process, Capital Funding, and an overview of the Blacksburg Capital Improvement Program that includes bus shelters (existing and proposed) and two new buses. Ms. Martin also provided Council with favorable ridership totals for all routes, comparing fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2011 from June through November. Ms. Martin thanked the Working Group, comprised of Mayor Ballengee, Dan Brugh, Nichole Hair, Barry Helms, Rebecca Martin, and Councilman Vanhoozier, for working with Blacksburg Transit to develop the bus system into a service that meets the needs of Christiansburg. Ms. Martin provided Council with a letter of explanation regarding a previous request of Council for an accounting of different riders that are using the Explorer and Go Anywhere routes. Ms. Martin explained that privacy laws prevent her from providing this type of specific information; however, Ms. Martin provided Council with four methods Blacksburg Transit can use to gather information that may be helpful to Council in determining ridership demographics: Peer Analysis; System Self Analysis; Customer Surveys; and New Rider Numbers. Councilman Stipes asked Ms. Martin about the possibility of changing the logo on the Christiansburg buses in order to make them more regional. Ms. Martin asked that Council provide a formal request in writing for this change. Council thanked Ms. Martin for the information provided in her update.
4. Update on the 2012 Dixie Jr, Boys World Series by Mr. Chuck Muncy, Supervisor of Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks. Mr. Chuck Muncy provided Council with a brief update on the status of the plans for the 2012 Dixie Jr. World Series that will be held in Christiansburg from August 3, 2012 through August 8, 2012. Mr. Muncy reported that the Recreation Department is currently working to obtain business sponsorships for the event program, and working with local hotels in anticipation of the visitors to Christiansburg for the event. Councilman Showalter and his wife are working on an updated map for inclusion in event program. Councilman Barber suggested providing the program and map to contact individuals for other teams. Mr. Muncy briefly mentioned plans for parking and transportation, which will be assisted by Blacksburg Transit buses.
5. Mr. Wayne Nelson to provide information on pavement management system. Mr. Wayne Nelson, Director of Engineering and Public Works, thanked Council for opportunity to brief them on a new initiative involving the Engineering and Public Works Pavement Management System. Mr. Nelson reviewed the previous annual plant mix program process, which required close monitoring due to significant costs impacting the budget. Mr. Nelson reported that two years ago, the annual paving program received zero funding, and at that time, the department recognized the need to find a new program to cost-effectively meet the paving needs in Christiansburg. The Pavement Management System will be a new approach to managing the Town's pavement infrastructure, which includes streets, trails, and parking lots. Mr. Nelson explained that the Pavement Management System is a set of defined procedures for collecting, analyzing, maintaining, and reporting pavement data to assist in finding optimum strategies for maintaining pavements in serviceable condition over a given period in a cost-effective manner. The focus of Mr. Nelson's report is on collecting, analyzing, and reporting pavement data through a software program called Micropaver. The software program would evaluate the current condition of the pavement, determine rates of deterioration, and project future conditions to determine current and future maintenance needs and predict future repair costs. Mr. Nelson provided Council with a copy of a letter he sent to Virginia Tech inviting it to partner with the Town in this effort. Virginia Tech and VTTI offer a graduate level pavement management class through which the field portion of this class would be in partnership with the Town. Mr. Nelson explained that this would be a cooperative training effort between the Town and VTTI, and there would be no direct costs to the Town. Mr. Nelson reported that he is meeting with VTTI tomorrow to initiate the program, and he will keep Council updated on the progress of program development through status reports and future Council meeting presentations.
6. Citizens' Comments.
  - a. No one to speak.

### III. DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. Review of a Zoning Permit request by Rick Howell (acting as agent for property owners Phillip M., Donna F. and John R. Hambrick) for a commercial garage and towing service at 850 Park Street (tax parcel 498 – ((6)) – 3A) in the I-2 General Industrial District. The Public Hearing was held November 16, 2010 and approval given on December 7, 2010. The Christiansburg Planning Department has reported that the applicant is compliant and no complaints have been received regarding this zoning permit. Councilman Vanhoozier noted that the Zoning Permit condition requiring tonight's action is strictly a one year review for complaints and compliance. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to

extend the annual review of this Zoning Permit for another year, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Councilman Hall commented that this action may not be necessary since the Planning Department has begun a review of all active Conditional Use Permits. Councilman Stipes noted that some permits have specific stipulations as to review out of existing concerns, and it may be important to keep this annual review in place. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: Hall.

2. Update on the Business Technology Center by Councilman Vanhoozier. Councilman Vanhoozier reported on changes being made to the Business Technology Center Board out of concerns expressed with the effectiveness of the Board. Through the findings of a task force set up to determine the future of the Business Technology Center Board, Councilman Vanhoozier reported that the Board will begin transitioning to meet less frequently and to move towards meeting on an as-needed basis, without the role of an advisory board. The purpose of the Board would be to provide business updates for investors, and funding would still be requested from localities. The Business Technology Center provides marketing research for local entrepreneurs and learning opportunities for Virginia Tech students. The Business Technology Center is closely tied with the Montgomery County Industrial Development Authority, and the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance. Mayor Ballengee asked Councilman Vanhoozier to continue to represent the Town in this capacity, to which he agreed.
3. Consideration of the proposed Youth Sports Handbook. Council was provided a draft copy of the proposed Youth Sports Handbook at the January 3, 2012 Council meeting for review and consideration. Council suggested several minor changes to the wording and appearance of the document. Council commended the Recreation Center staff for crafting this needed document and stressed the importance of consistent enforcement of the guidelines. Mr. Muncy stated that once the document is approved by Council, it will be condensed, printed, and distribution will begin. Every parent who registers a child for recreation league sports will receive a copy of the handbook, and those who have already registered will be mailed a copy. Mr. Charleton McCoy stated that the objective of the handbook is to turn the parents into allies for the coaches through team meetings. Coaches, parents, and athletes, will be required to sign a signature page committing to honor the established guidelines. No athlete will participate without parental signatures, and the signature pages will be renewed with each new playing season. Mr. Muncy said the handbook and signature pages will be made available online for convenience. Councilman Hall made a motion to adopt the Youth Sports Handbook, as written with the minor changes made by Council, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.
4. Council Assigned Task and Follow-up Master List (Councilman Showalter). Councilman Showalter requested that the Clerk of Council prepare a spreadsheet form master list of initiative and tasks as an efficient way to document matters that require follow-up attention by Council and Town Staff, including review of Conditional Use Permits. Council indicated its support of this request and Mayor Ballengee directed the Clerk of Council to prepare a spreadsheet that will provide the requested information for Council's, and Town staff's, reference.
5. Consideration of appointment to the Planning Commission (Mayor Ballengee). Mayor Ballengee reported that three applications have been received by individuals seeking to fill the vacancy on the Planning Commission. Council agreed to hold a Special Meeting of Council on January 24, 2012 at 7:00 PM, to interview the applicants in a Closed Meeting.
6. Mr. Stipes and Mr. Vanhoozier – Street Committee recommendation on:
  - a. Plat Showing Relocation/Vacation of Lot Lines between Lots 84, 84B, 84AA, and 85 for Margie A. Conner, JBC Properties, LLC and Albert's Five, LLC; creating 4 lots; located on Fairview Street SE. Councilman Stipes reported that this request is to adjust several lot lines within an existing trailer park and vacating lot lines in the newly created lots. This action will tidy up the property lines. Councilman Stipes noted that this is family-owned property. The Street Committee has reviewed the request and Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

#### TOWN MANAGER REPORTS:

TOWN MANAGER HELMS reported that the Aquatics Advisory Board vacancy has been re-advertized in an attempt to garner

more interest in this position from the community. One application was received in response to the first advertisement.

**TOWN MANAGER HELMS** reported that the Huckleberry Trail extension, at grade railroad crossing, near Home Depot, has been approved, and as a result, a bridge will not be necessary. Norfolk and Southern has quoted a cost of \$2,400. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to approve proceeding with this project, seconded by Councilman Huppert. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

**TOWN MANAGER HELMS** noted that the most recent Virginia Town and City magazine featured an article on the successes of the Aquatic Center.

**TOWN MANAGER HELMS** informed Council that a letter has been received from Kroger in response the Council's inquiry about obtaining an easement to help in the development of a municipal park on property located between Kroger and the Aquatic Center. Town Manager Helms reported that, although the store anticipates future expansion, it is willing to work with the Town on the needed easement. Town Manager Helms reported that he has met with Kroger's engineers and he will bring more information to Council at a future date.

**TOWN MANAGER HELMS** reported that the Town received a letter today from Rorrer Well Drilling regarding land the company recently purchased near Scattergood Drive. Rorrer Well Drilling has offered to sell the Town a small portion of the land, which could be used for parking for Public Works Department Station B. The land was offered to the Town at a purchase price of \$29,380 per acre at 1.152 acres. This is the actual cost Rorrer Well Drilling paid per acre. This property is in the in flood plain and is limited in use. Town Manager Helms asked Council for authorization to pursue negotiations with Rorrer Well Drilling. Councilman Vanhoozier suggested having an appraiser look at the property to determine its value. Councilman Stipes made a motion to authorize Town Manager Helms to pursue negotiations at a price not to exceed \$29,380 per acre, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

**MAYOR BALLENGEE** reported that the Town received a letter from HUD stating that the Town's annual CDBG grant request has been approved in the amount of approximately \$107,000 for the Town's sidewalk project.

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION REGARDING THE REQUEST FOR INDUSTRIAL HEMP FARMING.** Councilman Showalter stated that further discussion is needed on this matter, including other perspectives besides presentation tonight. Councilman Hall agreed, stating his concern is that this type of industry was outlawed for reasons supported by research. Councilman Hall further stated that this type of industry is not endorsed by the order of police, and the fact that the law against it hasn't been overturned in eighty-years. The only information Council has on the matter is what was presented tonight by Mr. Politis and Councilman Hall said his perspective is from an enforcement and task force position, and intends no disrespect to Mr. Politis who is very knowledgeable. Councilman Barber asked Councilman Hall if he could provide written information to Council of his research findings. Mayor Ballengee said he would meet with Police Chief Sisson to get his perspective on this matter. Council decided to table this discussion and action until the next regular Town Council meeting.

**COUNCILMAN HUPPERT** urged Council to consider inviting Mr. Jim Politis, and other members of the Board of Supervisors, to address Council regarding concerns with the deterioration and capacity inadequacies of the public school facilities in Christiansburg. Councilman Hall and Councilman Showalter agreed that this would help in answering questions within the community.

**COUNCILMAN SHOWALTER** asked that the Recreation Advisory Commission re-visit the parental supervision limit at the Recreation Center. The age limit is currently eight and Councilman Showalter suggested an age limit of twelve may be more appropriate. Mayor Ballengee said he would present this request to the Recreation Advisory Commission for review and recommendation.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 P.M.