

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 16, 2013 AT 7:30 P.M.

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA, ON JULY 16, 2013 AT 7:30 P.M.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Barry Helms; Town Clerk Michele Stipes; Town Attorney Theresa Fontana; Assistant Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Director of Engineering and Special Projects Wayne Nelson; Finance Director/Treasurer Val Tweedie; Director of Human Resources and Public Relations Becky Wilburn; Public Information Specialist Allison Long; Police Chief Mark Sisson.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC HEARING

1. The Christiansburg Town Council will conduct a public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, as required under applicable law, in accordance with Section 15.2-2606 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, with respect to the adoption by the Council of a resolution or resolutions, as may be necessary or convenient, regarding the proposed refunding of the Town's General Obligation Public Improvement Bond, Series 2004 (the "Bond") and the financing of certain infrastructure improvements, including completion of renovations and improved access to the police department building and to replace the gymnasium and track floor at the Christiansburg Recreation Center, together with related administrative and financing costs (collectively, "the Project"). The Town proposes to finance the Project through its general obligation public improvement bond to be issued in a principal amount not to exceed \$10,000,000. The purpose of the financing is to refund the Bond and fund the renovations and improvements described above. Mayor Ballengee explained the loan refinancing for the aquatic center, and the additional monies to be used for renovation of the third floor of the Police Department and replacement of the gym and track flooring at the recreation center. Police Chief Sisson added that the third floor of the Police Department would be used for evidence storage, which is currently in the basement, and for office space.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER:

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 July 2, 2013. Councilman Vanhoozier 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.

II. CITIZEN'S HEARING:

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS.

- a. Lisa Lucas Gardner, of Phlegar Street, proposed to Council that the Town consider organizing a Citizen's Police Review Board, comprised of citizens of Christiansburg and a Police Department representative, to review allegations of police misconduct within the Christiansburg Police Department. Mrs. Gardner offered to research the steps necessary to organize a review board, which she said is common nationwide. Mrs. Gardner's background is in law and law enforcement and she expressed her concern that the Christiansburg Police Department has lost touch with the community, and that the community fears the department and views it as unapproachable. Mrs. Gardner's concerns with the Police Department began several years ago over take-home police cars, and she believes subtle retaliation has been directed at her since that time, stating that her constitutional rights have been violated and her privacy invaded by members of the Police Department.

Because of her experiences and observations, Mrs. Gardner stated that a Citizen's Police Review Board is crucial in holding the Police Department accountable and for restoring the public's trust in the department. Mrs. Gardner encouraged Council to consider her request.

- b. Connie Turner, of Alleghany Street, reminded Council of the Christiansburg Alumni Return event to be held on August 10, 2013 at the recreation center. This year, Mayor Ballengee and two former educators will be honored at the event. Ms. Turner thanked Council for the additional police patrol on Alleghany Street, and she commented favorably on the banners and flowers in the downtown area.
- c. Lynn Wells, a Christiansburg resident, spoke in support of Lisa Lucas Gardner's request to establish a Citizen's Police Review Board. Ms. Wells, a mental health advocate, said most federal and state agencies have outside review boards and she believes this would benefit Christiansburg.
- d. Leslie Sheppard, a Christiansburg resident, spoke in support of Lisa Lucas Gardner's request to establish a Citizen's Police Review Board. Ms. Sheppard said conduct reviews within the Police Department would benefit the community.
- e. Ray Lucas, son of Lisa Lucas Gardner, spoke in support of his mother's request to establish a Citizen's Police Review Board. Mr. Lucas said he believes he is judged by the Police Department because of his past, and the accountability brought on by a review board would benefit the Police Department and the Christiansburg community.
- f. Scott Claybaugh, a Christiansburg resident, spoke in support of Lisa Lucas Gardner's request to establish a Citizen's Police Review Board. Mr. Claybaugh said his constitutional rights have been violated by members of the Christiansburg Police Department, and that a citizen review board would provide the accountability needed within the department. Mr. Claybaugh offered to answer questions of Council.

III. DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

1. TOWN COUNCIL ACTION ON:

- a. The adoption of a resolution or resolutions regarding the proposed refunding of the Town's General Obligation Public Improvement Bond, Series 2004 (the "Bond") and the financing of certain infrastructure improvements as presented and discussed during the Public Hearing. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to adopt the proposed resolution to refund and finance the Series 2004 Bond that was used for the Aquatic Center, and to finance certain infrastructure improvements, including renovations to the police department building and replacement of the gymnasium and track flooring at the recreation center, together with related administrative and financing costs. Councilman Barber seconded the motion. Councilman Vanhoozier noted that refinancing the bond would reduce the interest payment by approximately eighty thousand dollars per year. That savings would then be applied towards financing other identified capital improvements, including the police department renovations and recreation center flooring, and other specific improvements identified by Council in the current capital improvement plan. The terms of the bond would remain unchanged. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Barber – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING LAND EXCHANGE AT THE NATIONAL GUARD

ARMORY. Mayor Ballengee

reported that the Town has received a letter from the National Guard Armory requesting that the Town consider a land trade around the armory facility for the development of an additional parking lot. Currently, the armory owns the property on which the Town's playground is placed, and the Town owns the property behind and to the right of the armory building. The topography of the land owned by the armory prevents it from being developed for parking space. The armory has also requested the use of the Fire Department parking lot to access the property if a land trade is agreed upon. Both Fire Chief Hanks and Director of Parks and Recreation, Brad Epperley, support the request. Council discussed the request and agreed that Mayor Ballengee would notify the Virginia National Guard of its interest in participating in a land trade, pending a public hearing, and authorized Town Manager Helms to proceed with negotiations.

3. APPOINTMENT /REAPPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO THE VIRGINIA TECH – MONTGOMERY

EXECUTIVE AIRPORT AUTHORITY. Ann Carter's term expires on August 1, 2013. Councilman Hall made a motion to reappoint Ann Carter to serve another term on the Virginia Tech – Montgomery Executive Airport Authority, seconded by Councilman Barber. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert,

Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to recommend the reappointment of Al Bowman to serve another term as the at-large member on the Virginia Tech – Montgomery Executive Airport Authority, seconded by Councilman Barber. Council voted as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

4. A RESOLUTION FOR AN INDIVIDUAL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP AND TWO CERTIFICATES FOR PAST ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS. Mayor Ballengee recommended Town Council adopt a resolution recognizing Christiansburg High School student, Maggie Ellington, for her outstanding athletic accomplishments, and a certificate for Carmen Graves recognizing her outstanding athletic accomplishments. Mayor Ballengee will prepare the resolutions to be presented at a future Council meeting. Councilman Barber made a motion to adopt the recommended resolution and certificate, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.
5. MR. STIPES AND MR. VANHOOZIER – STREET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION On:
 - a. Relocation/Vacation of Parcel Lines Creating Parcel IA and Parcel IIIA; creating 2 lots; located on East Main Street. Councilman Stipes reported that this request is to vacate an internal lot line creating two lots from three. The plat conforms with the subdivision ordinance and Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the plat as presented, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.
 - b. Request to reduce the speed limit on Route 114 (Carryover item from June 18, 2013). The Street Committee met and discussed speed/traffic data provided by the Police Department at its last two meetings. Based on those meetings, the Street Committee recommended reducing the speed limit to 35 mph from Stafford Drive to the west corporate limits, in an attempt to reduce the number and severity of accidents through that corridor. Lowering the speed limit should also ease entrance from connecting streets. Councilman Stipes made a motion to reduce the speed limit on Route 114 to 35 mph from Stafford Drive to the west corporate limits, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

IV. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORTS:

1. PUBLIC HEARING REQUEST: Town Manager Helms presented the following request and recommended setting the Public Hearing for August 20, 2013:

1. Proposed land trade with the National Guard Armory.

On motion by Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Showalter, Council voted to set the Public Hearing for August 20, 2013. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozier. NAYS: None.

2. PROGRESS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- A Huckleberry Trail progress report was provided to Council.
- A work session is scheduled for August 6, 2013 at 6:00 P.M. to discuss site plan review and construction processes, meth lab policy updates, and the proposed Bikeway/Walkway Committee, among other various matters. Councilman Stipes requested that Wayne Nelson, Director of Engineering and Special Projects, attend the work session to discuss with Council street/pavement concerns in developing subdivisions. Councilman Hall requested Council be provided information before the work session regarding the engineering concerns to be discussed.
- Town Manager Helms reported that the Town is in need of opening a bank account for revenue recovery funds for rescue services. The “lock box” account, named Town of Christiansburg EMS Recovery, would be opened through a StellarOne interest bearing checking account and funds would be transferred to the StellarOne general fund checking account for expenditure. The Town is required to sign a Certificate of Resolutions for Treasury Management Services in order to open the account. Councilman Barber made a motion to authorize the signing of the required document to open the account, seconded by Councilman Hall. Council voted on the motion as follows: AYES: Barber, Hall, Huppert, Showalter, Stipes, Vanhoozer. NAYS: None.
- VDOT and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation are continuing to seek funding and land for relocation of the park and ride located near Falling Branch Elementary School (FBE). Town Manager Helms

reported that both departments have taken the safety concerns at FBE seriously and are committed to resolving the issue. Councilman Huppert reported the school superintendent, Brenda Blackburn, is considering the installation of a buzzer system and swipe cards at FBE for added security.

- Council discussed the one year school resource officer grant applied for and received by Montgomery County. Montgomery County, its sheriff's department, and the Christiansburg Police Department will discuss ways to utilize the funding to address some of the school security needs within the county.
- Council discussed the ongoing paving along Main Street, and the sidewalk repair/replacement under the CDBG grant.
- Town Manager Helms reported that Denny's restaurant recently closed.
- On May 28, 2013, the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District was entered into the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.
- Councilman Barber reported on the recent USSSA World Series event held at Harkrader Sports Complex, where he gave the opening address. Many complements were given to the hospitality of Christiansburg, the professionalism of the recreation staff, and the Harkrader Sports Complex facilities. Mayor Ballengee will invite the recreation staff to bring a report to Council on this event.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

Richard G. Ballengee, Mayor