

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 – 7:00 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, VIRGINIA, ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor Henry Showalter; Samuel M. Bishop; Harry Collins; R. Cord Hall; Steve Huppert; Bradford J. Stipes. ABSENT: None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Steve Biggs; Assistant Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Clerk of Council Michele Stipes; Town Attorney Theresa Fontana; Planning Director Andrew Warren; Director of Engineering Wayne Nelson; Public Relations Director Melissa Powell; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell; Farmer's Market Manager Sarah Belcher.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Moment of Reflection

B. Pledge of Allegiance

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Conditional Use Permit request for a commercial garage in the B-3 General Business District at 30 Bower Street, NW [Tax Parcel No. 526 – ((A)) – 46] by George Gray. Gary Gray provided Council with a copy of a sketch indicating the property in the request, while noting that the Planning Commission had recommended approval of the request with fourteen conditions. Mr. Gray said he fully intended to comply with the set conditions. Councilman Stipes referred to the Board of Zoning Appeals review and recommendation regarding Mr. Gray's request, and asked if Mr. Gray had removed the vehicles and RV as recommended in the BZA review. Mr. Gray replied that one of the vehicles on the property was a personal vehicle, stored under a car cover as recommended, and one was an RV that he was having difficulty titling in Virginia because of its status as a salvage/refurbish vehicle. The other vehicles have not yet been moved. Councilman Collins commented that Mr. Gray said during the Planning Commission public hearing that he would move the vehicles stored on the lot into the existing shop, out of view, but that had not happened as of this date. Mr. Gray replied that he was working to move the vehicles, and would have them completely moved, including the RV, by the end of September.

Bruce Moses, owner of five properties on Bower Street, brought attention to the fact that Bower Street was a narrow, partially paved street that dead-ended, with no cul-de-sac. He questioned how that type of street could accommodate business traffic and asked if the Town intended to upgrade the street, if the CUP request was approved. He expressed concern that the business sounded like a salvage/repair vehicle shop, rather than a commercial garage. Mr. Gray responded that the business would be an internet based, high-end race shop, with cars housed inside the shop. No car trailers would be stored on the property.

Jack Trump, owner of adjoining property, expressed concern that he had been told during the Planning Commission public hearing that a privacy fence would be constructed around the property, but, to date, no fence had been built. Mr. Trump informed that there was much debris on the property. Mr. Gray replied that there was currently a five to six-foot privacy hedge along the property and it did not make sense to him to build a fence, too.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2016

B. Resolution in Recognition of Help Save the Next Girl

Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

Mayor Barber called attention to a fruit basket that was addressed to Mayor Barber, Town Council and Town staff, from Nannie Hairston and the late John P. Hairston, in appreciation of the Town's financial support of the Christiansburg Community Center that allowed for replacement of the roof.

V. CITIZEN COMMENTS

a. No comments

VI. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Director of Public Relations Melissa Powell to report on the Public Relations Department. Ms. Powell provided Council with an update on the Public Relations Department, beginning with an introduction of staff that included Allison Long and herself, and provided a brief history of the department. Ms. Powell explained that the purpose of the department was to keep residents informed about their community, and to use information to create an identity for Christiansburg for those outside the community. She reviewed with Council the numerous ways the department distributed material and information to the community and addressed questions and concerns of citizens. Ms. Powell spoke about the importance of establishing relationships with area journalists in effectively reporting town information and stories, noting that media outlets were key methods in relaying important information to the public. She then provided information on the town's social media activity, and gave examples of various social media posts and community responses. New programs introduced included Communications A-Team, intranet for staff use, FOIA training, and Citizens Alert. Ms. Powell explained the department's commitment to establishing Christiansburg as a regional resource through increased branding, a revamped website, and building on social media avenues. In closing, she offered to answer questions of Council. Council expressed appreciation for Ms. Powell's and Ms. Long's commitment to providing timely, detailed information to Council through email updates, and to the public through various communication outlets.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Appointment to the Tourism Development Council. Lisa Bleakley, Montgomery County Tourism Director, recommended Town Council appoint Ashish Malothra, manager of Blackstone Grill, to replace Marie March on the Tourism Development Council. Mrs. March had requested to not be reappointed. Councilman Hall made a motion to appoint Ashish Malothra, seconded by Councilman Showalter. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye. Mr. Malothra was present and expressed appreciation for the appointment.

B. Follow-up discussion regarding the NRV Regional Water Authority and capital improvements plan. Town Manager Biggs reported that the RFP for solid waste consulting services had been submitted, with a deadline of September 22, 2016. Consulting services are being sought for assessments on plan improvements, line extensions, and maintenance and repairs, as outlined by the NRV Regional Water Authority. The NRV Regional Water Authority has requested that Christiansburg specify a preference for rate increases related to the increased cost of raw water by November, however, Town Manager Biggs noted that the results from the anticipated consultant study, including a rate study, would not be ready by the November deadline, but were expected within a January timeframe. Council determined that a work

session should be held prior to November to review the information provided at the joint water authority meeting held in August, and to discuss the Town's options regarding the capital improvements needed for the water treatment facility. Town Manager Biggs said he would get possible work session dates together for Council consideration. Councilman Showalter requested that Town Manager Biggs gather information from the water authority regarding project phasing and the firmness of the November deadline.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion regarding decision to potentially lease existing off-premises sign at the recreation center, or have it removed. Town Manager Biggs reported that the Town had been approached about leasing the old Farm House Restaurant sign located next to the recreation center. Town Attorney Fontana reviewed the request and recommended a lease of less than five years, for legal purposes. According to Town Manager Biggs, the pre-existing sign is nonconforming and cannot be changed in structure or size, although the face can be changed. Council expressed support for leasing the sign to the Farm House Restaurant for less than five years. Town Attorney Fontana will prepare a lease for Council consideration.
- B. Discussion to schedule a Council and staff strategy planning work session. Council scheduled its annual retreat for November 10 and 11. Town Manager Biggs said he would provide Council with venue details once finalized.
- C. Consideration of a policy to schedule public hearings through adoption of the consent agenda. Council was provided information on this matter in the agenda packet. Currently, public hearings are set by Council during the Town Manager's Reports, and Town Manager Biggs proposed that the scheduling of public hearings be placed under the Consent Agenda, which would expedite meetings and provide written detail of public hearing matters. It was the consensus of Council to proceed with scheduling public hearings under the Consent Agenda as recommended by Town Manager Biggs.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Resolution Supporting Addition of Projects and Reprioritization of Projects within Virginia Department of Transportation Project Programming. Mayor Barber explained that the changes to the original resolution were the result of a recent MPO meeting, and Assistant Town Manager Wingfield reviewed the new projects added to the resolution. Councilman Collins made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye. A copy of the resolution is attached.

X. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Town Manager Biggs reported that a public information meeting on the VDOT I-81 Exit 114 realignment was scheduled for September 15 at Christiansburg Middle School, and he reviewed the Town's prior position on the project with regards to design and accommodations for future Town planning and growth.
- B. Public Hearing Request: Town Manager Biggs presented the following requests and recommended setting the Public Hearings as indicated:

September 27, 2016

1. Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan.
2. Lease of public facilities for communications equipment.

October 25, 2016

1. Vacation of a public utility easement related to the Kroger store expansion at 555 North Franklin Street.
2. Vacation of a portion of Stone Street related to the Kroger expansion at 555 North Franklin Street.
3. Conditional Use Permit request for exterminating services at 516 Roanoke Street in the B-3 General Business District.

November 8, 2016

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment related to the Urban Development Areas.

On motion by Councilman Hall, seconded by Councilman Collins, Council voted to set the Public Hearings as indicated: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

C. Town Manager Biggs reported that the Safe Zone effort presented by Councilman Hall in August has been gaining momentum, and planning efforts are moving forward.

XI. COUNCIL REPORTS

A. Councilman Collins reported that he recently visited the Public Works facility located on Scattergood Drive and realized that the road was in bad disrepair. The disrepair was significant enough that he believes it could damage town equipment and employee vehicles.

B. Councilman Bishop expressed concern with an apparent decrease in vendors and attendance at the farmers' market, and he recommended a work session with the Farmers' Market Committee to discuss these concerns.

C. Councilman Hall expressed appreciation for the presence of Mayor Barber, Town Council, and Town Manager Biggs at the recent NRV Regional Water Authority meeting and the Montgomery County School Board meeting. He also expressed appreciation for the flags displayed along Main Street. He then reported on the recent Recreation Advisory Commission meeting, during which the commission voted on a specific location for placement of the free playground equipment. Details on this matter will be presented at a future meeting. In closing he reported on the recent Touch-a-Truck, Heritage Day, and Gospel Sing events.

D. Councilman Stipes reported that he and Councilman Showalter recently attended a meeting with representatives of Christiansburg Institute and Christiansburg Community Center to discuss the future of both properties. The focus of the meeting was to unify the two groups to work together in meeting their individual revitalization goals. Councilman Stipes said he believed there was a new energy among the group that he thought would be beneficial in moving both projects forward.

E. Councilman Showalter reported that he attended the recent Recreation Advisory Commission meeting and was impressed with the way the citizens who were present interacted on the issue of placement of the new playground equipment, even when discussing concerns. He then welcomed Councilman Collins to the NRV Regional Commission, and spoke encouragingly about Christiansburg representation on the commission. He then spoke about Christiansburg Institute and Christiansburg Community Center as important cultural heritages, and expressed his support for a partnership between the two groups in moving forward with preserving both properties.

F. Councilman Huppert complimented the completed sidewalk project in the downtown area. He then reported on various events and activities at the aquatic center, including a program designed to provide swimming lessons to every second grader in Montgomery County, paid for by the Christiansburg Lion's Club.

G. Mayor Barber reported that the annual Chamber of Commerce dinner was scheduled for December 1, 2016, and he encouraged Council to become more involved in chamber activities. He then announced that a Farmers' Market Committee meeting was scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on September 14, 2016 at Town Hall.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Cancellation of the first regular council meeting in October due to the annual VML conference.

Councilman Hall made a motion to cancel the October 11, 2016 regular meeting of Council, seconded by Councilman Collins. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Collins – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:22 P.M.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor