Ordinance 1951

AN ORDINANCE ADDING SECTION 14-114 TO CHAPTER 14 OF THE TOWN CODE TO PROHIBIT THE POSSESSION OF FIREARMS IN TOWN BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND CERTAIN RIGHTS OF WAY

WHEREAS, in 2020 the General Assembly authorized local governments, through amendments to Virginia Code § 15.2-915, to prohibit firearms in public buildings, facilities and certain rights of way; and,

WHEREAS, the Blacksburg Town Council has considered the matter and determined that utilizing this grant of authority advances public safety and is otherwise in the best interests of the Town and its citizens.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Town of Blacksburg:

1. That Chapter 14 of the Code of the Town of Blacksburg is amended as follows to add new section 14-114:

Sec. 14-114. – Prohibition of firearms on town property.

(a.) As authorized by Virginia Code § 15.2-915, the possession, carrying or transportation of firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof is prohibited (i) in any buildings, or parts thereof, owned or used, by the town, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the town, for governmental purposes; or (ii) in parks owned or operated by the town, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the town; or (iii) in any recreational or community center facility operated by the town, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the town; or (iv) in any public street, road, alley, sidewalk, public right-of-way, or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public and is being used as part of or that is adjacent to a permitted event or event that would otherwise require a permit.

(b.) The possession, carrying, storage or transportation of firearms by town employees, agents or volunteers in workplaces owned, operated or managed by the town is prohibited unless expressly authorized by the town manager in writing for a specific purpose.

(c.) Pursuant to this section, the town may implement security measures that are designed to reasonably prevent the unauthorized access of such buildings, parks, recreation or community center facilities, or public streets, roads, alleys, or sidewalks or public rights-of-way or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public and is being used by or is adjacent to a permitted event or an event that would otherwise require a permit by a

person with any firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof, such as the use of metal detectors and increased use of security personnel.

(d.) This section shall not apply to (i) military personnel when acting within the scope of their official duties; or (ii) sworn law enforcement officers engaged in the performance of their public duties or providing security to a special event pursuant to a permit issued by the Blacksburg Town Manager for the duration of the permitted special event; or (iii) an armed security officer licensed by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services providing security to a special event pursuant to a permit issued by the Blacksburg Town Manager for the duration of the permitted special event;

(e.) Furthermore, this section shall not be applicable to (i) historical re-enactors and any other persons who possess firearms that are inoperative or otherwise incapable of discharging a projectile, and are not loaded with operable ammunition, when such persons are participating in, or traveling to or from, special events that involve display or demonstration of such firearms and activities of (1) a Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program operated at a public or private institution of higher education in accordance with the provisions of 10 U.S.C. § 2101 et seq. or (2) any intercollegiate athletics program operated by a public or private institution of higher education and governed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association or any club sports team recognized by a public or private institution of higher education where the sport engaged in by such program or team involves the use of a firearm.

(f.) Notice of the restrictions imposed by this ordinance shall be posted (i) at all entrances of any building, or part thereof, owned or used by the town, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the town; (ii) at all entrances of any public park owned or operated by the town, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the town; (iii) at all entrances of any recreation or community center facilities operated by the town, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the town; and (iv) at all entrances or other appropriate places of ingress and egress to any public street, road, alley, or sidewalk or public right-of-way or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public and is being used by or is adjacent to a permitted event or an event that would otherwise require a permit.

(g.) For purposes of this section, the term "firearm" means any handgun, shotgun, or rifle that will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material. The term "permitted event" includes, but is not limited to, the events described in Town Code §§ 15-101, 21-611 and 21-612.

(h.) Any violation of this section is unlawful and shall be punished as a Class 1 misdemeanor.

2. That this ordinance shall be effective on March 1, 2021.

L. Haper-Smith
Mayor

ATTEST:

Donna Boone-Caldwell
Town Clerk

Introduction: December 8, 2020

Public Hearing & Action: January 12, 2021

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Town Manager

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

Town Attorney