Minutes of a regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Marion, Virginia held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on August 2, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings, Bill Weaver, Avery Cornett, and Larry Carter Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush, Deputy Clerk Samantha White; Town Attorney Mark Fenyk; Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Police Chief John Clair; Economic Development Director Ken Heath; Fire Chief Richard Keesling.

**ABSENT:** Jim Barker.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Chief Clair rendered the invocation. Mayor Helms led the Pledge to the Flag.

**VISITORS:** Joe Naff, Charles Wassum, Joe Ellis, Danny Parks, Ralph Price; Rex Anders, Marion Downtown Revitalization Association; Sandy Bryant, Logan Nester, Kathy Cressel, Patty Belcher, Jeff Repass, KJ Holbrook Mount Rogers Community Services.

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held July 19, 2021 were approved as written. Messrs Dr. Gates, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter, and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**AGENDA:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with the addition of two RBEG Small Business Loan Pool requests under Mr. Heath.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:** Sandy Bryant, Mount Rogers Community Services, presented a rezoning request for properties at 404 East Main Street, 106 Cedar Street, and 110 Cedar Street to be zoned as Medical Arts. They are currently zoned Residential. Ms. Bryant noted this would allow staff offices to be moved out of current buildings and services expanded. Ms. Bryant reviewed Mount Rogers Community Services’ previous rezoning request at their Culbert Drive property. Discussion regarding intended use of the property ensued. Dr. Gates noted this rezoning request had been referred to Planning Commission. Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the rezoning request for 404 East Main Street, 106 Cedar Street, and 110 Cedar Street was referred to Planning Commission. Ms. Bryant reviewed current services provided by Mount Rogers Community Services along with some of the services they hope to provide in the near future.

Charles Wassum commented that Culbert Drive is a residential area and mostly zoned as that. He expressed concern at granting the rezoning request at that location.

Ralph Price stated that both public and council comments were difficult to hear. He agreed with Dr. Wassum regarding the rezoning request on Culbert Drive.

Joe Ellis stated that in a recent meeting with the president of Emory & Henry College the need for additional housing for students in Marion was addressed. He also had concern about the Culbert Drive rezoning request since it would be granted with only speculative use rather than with a known end use.

Danny Parks stated that he feels he is being harassed over his property at 633 Henry Street. He noted he has paid the court fines but continues to be charged with noncompliance. Discussion ensued. Mr. Fenyk noted that he is expected to comply with town ordinances or can continue to be charged.

Mrs. Jennings noted The Lincoln Theatre hosted the Missoula Children’s production of Alice in Wonderland the previous weekend with 224 attendees. They also hosted a bus tour and are now advertising on cable channels.

Mr. Weaver noted there were many vendors and shoppers at the Farmer’s Market on Saturday.

Mayor Helms reminded everyone of the VDOT Public Hearing on August 17th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Spirit of ’45 ceremony will be held August 8th at 3:00 p.m. at The Lincoln Theatre.

Mr. Fenyk noted the change for Town elections from May to November will require a public hearing. The change in the due date for annual business license renewals will also require a public hearing.

Mrs. White reviewed the balance of the Garbage Truck Fund. Council discussed the best time to purchase the next garbage truck and use of the existing fleet.

Chief Clair noted the Police Department hosted a School Supply Drive and received a large amount of donations. The National Night Out event will be held at the town pool from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 3rd.

Mr. Heath presented two applications for RBEG Small Business Loan Pool loans. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Dr. Gates and with a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, a $15,000 RBEG loan to Jacob Jackson with Origin Escape Room was approved. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Dr. Gates and with a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, a $15,000 RBEG loan to James Engersoll with Coffee A LA Cart was approved. Pop-Up classes will be held at the Henderson School beginning on October 7th. Smyth County Household Hazardous Waste Day is August 14th.

Mr. Rush noted he has received requests from department heads on use of ARPA funds. He will compile, review with staff, and then distribute to Council. Lead Detection program has resumed. CIRP Phase V Water is about 35% complete. Callen Drive Recreation Park passed final inspection. Mr. Rush noted that there is a grant for the build-out that the Town can now apply for. Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the Resolution to obtain financial assistance from Rural Development for an ambulance purchase was approved.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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Mayor Deputy Clerk