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 June 19, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings, Bill Weaver, Larry Carter (arrived late) and Avery Cornett Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush, Assistant Town Manager Billy Hamm, Town Clerk Cindy Stanley, Town Attorney Mark Fenyk, Police Chief John Clair, Police Lieutenant Rusty Hamm, Fire Chief Richard Keesling, Economic Development Director Ken Heath and Director of IT Todd Long.

**ABSENT:** None.

**VISITORS:** Charles & Nancy Hayden, David Fulton, Janene Walker, Charles Wassum, Allen & Brenda Kelly, Manuel Street and Allen Gray.

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

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held June 5, 2023 were approved as written. Messrs Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver 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 Caring for the Community under Public Presentation, Closed Session A-7 Legal and the cancellation of Closed Session A-1 Personnel.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATION:** Allen Kelly, Caring for the Community representative, gave an update on the volunteer projects that were completed throughout town the last two Saturdays. There were 110 volunteers contributing 350 hours of work completing 20 projects. He thanked council for their support.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Dr. Charles Wassum, Wassona Circle, expressed his concerns that closed sessions need to be more detailed on the agenda.

**PUBLIC HEARING FISCAL 2023-2024 PROPOSED BUDGET:** Mr. Rush noted the draft budget is balanced and staff can address any questions. Mayor Helms opened the public hearing. Janene Walker, Strother Street, expressed her concerns regarding the Fire/EMS budget separation. Mr. Rush addressed. Larry Carter arrived. Dr. Charles Wassum, Wassona Circle, spoke about debt service. Dr. Gates addressed his concerns. Mr. Rush noted some debt service is on accelerated payment schedules. Mayor Helms noted he is proud of the town and its leadership. Mayor Helms closed the public hearing.

Mr. Barker expressed his congratulations for the tennis team winning the state championship. Mr. Heath has requested information from the High School so an appropriate sign can be displayed in town. The Wassona tree inventory will be done Thursday.

Ms. Spencer reported the Tourism Board has produced a new video of Marion and Smyth County.

Mrs. Jennings assisted with the Juneteenth Celebration Saturday and would like to reconsider that becoming a holiday for town employees. Mrs. Jennings made a motion, seconded by Mr. Barker, to add Juneteenth as a holiday next year. Discussion ensued, motion and second were rescinded. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, consideration for adding Juneteenth as a holiday next year will be sent to the Personnel Committee.

Mayor Helms read a thank you note from Raymond Jake Davis’ family. He reminded everyone of the invitation to the Collins House Inn on July 4 at 11:00 am for the flagpole dedication. There will be an EMS discussion Wednesday at 1:30 pm. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, a special called meeting will be held Friday, June 30, 2023 at 5:00 pm for fiscal year-end. Mayor Helms reviewed the July 4 holiday. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the council meeting for Monday, July 3, 2023 will be cancelled. Mayor Helms opened discussion for consideration of Monday, July 3, 2023 as a holiday this year. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, a one-time additional holiday will be given this year for Monday, July 3, 2023.

**ACCOUNTS:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the accounts were approved for payment in the amount of $1,928,912.62. Messrs Barker, Dr. Gates, Spencer, Jennings, Carter, Weaver and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Chief Clair reviewed some new technology initiatives noting roll out will begin tomorrow.

Lieutenant Hamm reviewed a new technology solution for community policing data collection. Data can now be entered by scanning a QR code.

Chief Keesling reported there were 202 calls last month. Also the department has reduced the number of calls rolled over to another agency.

Mr. Heath reported Charley’s Subs has re-opened under new management. WJHL TV Station will be in town Wednesday, August 30, 2023 live from Sister’s Café.

Mr. Long reported the elevator upgrade parts have been received. The IT room is now climate controlled. The elevator equipment room has been vented. The Public Hearing for the proposed ordinance changes will be July 17, 2023. Mr. Long reviewed a Special Use Permit request for 766 Chatham Hill Road. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, a Public Hearing for a Special Use Permit at 766 Chatham Hill Road will be held July 17, 2023.

Mr. Rush reported there will be a Marion EDA meeting Wednesday, July 5, 2023. An RFP has been advertised for engineering services for Callan Drive Rec Park. There will be a Public Hearing oh Phase VII Sewer June 30, 2023.

**CLOSED SESSION:** Pursuant to Code of Virginia, as amended, Section 2.2-3711 (A-7), upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Town Council entered into Closed Session for discussion of Legal, addressing accumulation of trash. Mrs. Jennings moved that Town Council return to Open Session and identified it be known that only those matters legally exempted from Open Session and identified in the motion were discussed during Closed Session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Weaver and carried by a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES. The Clerk polled the Council Members. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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Mayor Deputy Clerk