

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 April 1, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings, Bill Weaver, Larry Carter and Avery Cornett Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush, Assistant Town Manager Billy Hamm, Town Clerk Cindy Stanley, Town Attorney Mark Fenyk, Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols, Police Chief John Clair, Fire Chief Rusty Hamm, Community & Economic Development Director Ken Heath, and Director of IT Todd Long.

ABSENT: None.

VISITORS: David Fulton, Delphia Little, Janene Walker, Mark Chaney, Tabbetha Haynes, Shawn Barr and Anna Leigh DeBord.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Mr. Heath rendered the invocation. Vice-Mayor Gates led the Pledge to the Flag.

Mr. Heath spoke about Mayor Helms passing on March 21, 2024.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held March 18, 2024 were approved as written. Messrs Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

AGENDA: Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with the addition of closed session for possible litigation/legal counsel.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION: Mark Chaney, Commander of the American Legion Post #18, gave an update on the activities and programs offered there. He noted members would like to help put up the flags on the Courthouse lawn for Memorial Day.

Anna Leigh DeBord, Smyth County Historical & Museum Society President, invited council and staff to a reception at the museum on Thursday, April 18, 2024 from 3:30 until 5:30 pm. She noted the Civil War officer's uniform of Captain John Montgomery Preston II is back at the museum after an extensive restoration.

Mr. Cornett spoke of fond memories of Mayor Helms.

Mr. Carter noted District III met last Thursday.

Mrs. Jennings noted Thursday will be Tracy Thompson's last day as the Director of the Lincoln Theatre. The new director will begin April 5, 2024.

Mr. Barker noted the VFW has requested to place a flag at Town Hall for Memorial Day in Memory of Mayor Helms. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the

request for the VFW to place a flag at Town Hall for Memorial Day in Memory of Mayor Helms was approved.

Dr. Gates noted the Smyth County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day April 27, 2024 from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm at the Smyth Career & Technology Center.

Chief Clair reported the mock accreditation will be next Tuesday and Wednesday. Officer Hayes has received the Top Shot Award at the academy. The Officer of the Year awards will be held at the VFW on May 2, 2024.

Chief Hamm noted the department remains extremely busy and maintenance to the building and vehicles continues. Employee Dillan Powers passed his National Registry written paramedic test. The new fire engine is expected in October 2025.

Mr. Heath reviewed an RBEG loan application for Dr. Casey Guthrie/Guthrie Psychiatry. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the RBEG loan for Dr. Casey Guthrie/Guthrie Psychiatry for \$15,000 at 2% interest for 60 months was approved.

Mr. Long noted the EDA modular homes will begin setup Wednesday. A request for apartments on Market Street may need to be rezoned. There are two individuals willing to serve on the Planning Commission, Brian Walker and Mark Firestone. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Mark Firestone was appointed to Planning Commission to fill the unexpired term of Trey White. Mr. Long reviewed the need for a public hearing for the flood plain zoning update and to add verbiage for campground regulations. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, a Joint Public Hearing will be set for April 15, 2024.

Mr. Rush noted the Water Treatment Plant received the VDH Water Performance Award for 2023. Dave Matney was nominated for the Wastewater Operator of the year award and he received a higher award for Person of the Year. He will be traveling to accept the award. The town has unofficially been released by VDOT for obligations to the East Chilhowie Street Bridge.

CLOSED SESSION: Pursuant to Code of Virginia, as amended, Section 2.2-3711 (A-1 and A-8), upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Town Council entered into Closed Session for personnel and legal counsel. 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 Deputy Clerk polled the Council Members. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Vice-Mayor

Clerk