

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 January 20, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor David Helms, Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Jim Owens, Larry Carter, Suzanne Jennings and Bill Weaver Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush; Town Clerk/Director of Finance Cindy Stanley; Town Attorney Mark Fenyk; Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Assistant Town Manager/Town Engineer Cecil Hicks; Police Chief Rex Anders; Purchasing Agent Billy Hamm; Economic Development Director Ken Heath; Marion Downtown Director Olivia Hall McDonald and Wayne Henderson Appalachian School of Arts Director Catherine Poole.

ABSENT: Tricia Spencer.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Mr. Hicks rendered the invocation. Mayor Helms led the Pledge to the Flag.

VISITORS: Bob Lincoln, Jeff Spickard, Brian Reed, Conner Poole, Greg Armstrong, Ryan Boone, Michael Wright, Karen Fouts, Ed Fouts and Marcus Gray.

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 January 5, 2015 were approved as written. Messrs Weaver, Barker, Carter, Owens, Dr. Gates and Jennings voted affirmatively.

AGENDA: Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Owens and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the Agenda was approved as distributed with the addition of one closed session for (A-7) Legal.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION: Mr. Marcus Gray presented a proposal for pet waste receptacles that can be funded by the New River Highlands RC&D Council. They will provide several stations that the Town can install near trash cans.

Mr. Bob Lincoln, General Francis Marion Hotel, is helping to promote downtown businesses by distributing brochures at tourism events.

PUBLIC HEARING COMMUNITY BLOCK DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION: Mr. Brian Reed, representative for Mt Rogers Planning District Commission, reviewed the grant application. Mayor Helms opened the Public Hearing. One citizen spoke about blight abatement on Spruce Street. With no additional comments, Mayor Helms closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Jennings announced that the Red Head Express will be coming to the Song of the Mountains. She noted a schedule of events has been distributed.

Mr. Carter attended the District III meeting and reported no findings on the audit.

Mayor Helms noted a thank you letter had been received from the United Way for the volunteers that helped bag groceries. The Salvation Army Red Kettle drive collected \$53,000. Mayor reminded everyone of the VML event next week in Richmond.

Mr. Fenyk reported the pawn shop ordinance draft had been submitted to the Town Manager. The Boundary Adjustment has been presented to the Judge and a letter has been prepared by the judge for submission before the three judge panel. The letter also informed the court that the Town staff would be willing to travel if necessary for the review.

ACCOUNTS: Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the accounts were approved for payment in the amount of \$772,808.51.

Mr. Hamm gave a Fire/EMS update. He also explained the fruit basket project that has been in place since roughly 1961. A fruit basket is delivered each Christmas to widows of past Fire Department Members. He noted that the contract for the Ambulance Billing Software company has been signed and we are moving forward with obtaining a medicare provider number.

Chief Anders reported that December was a very busy month. He also noted newly promoted Lieutenant Hamm, Sergeant Morgan, Officer Dillow and Farris have completed their probationary periods.

Mrs. McDonald introduced a new downtown business owner, Mr. Michael Wright. Mr. Wright is the owner of Kohi Cafe and provided coffee for everyone. Mrs. McDonald will be attending a VA Main Street Managers Retreat in Manassas. The Marion Downtown Revitalization Association will be holding strategic planning meetings. The 4th Annual Wedding Showcase will be held February 21, 2015. The Packed Suitcase author named Marion her favorite small town in America.

Mr. Heath noted the Virginia Commission of the Arts workshop will be held January 28, 2015 here at the Town Hall. The Summitt Center at the Wayne Henderson Appalachian School of Arts is moving forward.

Ms. Poole gave an update on the Wayne Henderson Appalachian School of Arts. Programming began tonight with the first six students taking an art class at the Herb House. The grant opportunity with the USDA for equipment is still in review.

Mr. Hicks reported that the Sewer Treatment Plant passed an unannounced inspection from the Department of Environmental Quality.

Mr. Rush noted the mid year committee meetings have not been scheduled yet.

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 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Town Council entered into Closed Session for the purpose of 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 6 AYES and 0 NOES. The Town Clerk polled the Council Members. Messrs Gates, Weaver, Jennings, Carter, Barker and Owens voted affirmatively.

Upon motion, duly seconded and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor

Clerk