

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 September 8, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, 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 and Senior Police Officer Amber Eades; Economic Development Director Ken Heath and Economic Development Deputy Director Alexandra Veatch.

ABSENT: None.

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

VISITORS: Joe Naff, Margaret Linford, Tom Copenhaver, Eliu Sierra, Tracey Reed.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held August 17, 2020 were approved as written. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Cornett, and Carter voted affirmatively.

AGENDA: Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with an addition of Closed Session for Real Estate – 2.2-3711- A3.

PUBLIC HEARING VDH FUNDING PHASE V WATER: Mr. Rush reviewed the Authorizing Resolution for VDH. Phase V Water total is \$431,015 at 2.5% interest for 35 years. Mayor Helms opened the Public Hearing. With no public comments, Mayor Helms closed the Public Hearing. Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 8 AYES and 0 NOES, the Resolution Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a General Obligation and Water and Sewer Revenue Bond of the Town of Marion in an amount not to exceed \$431,015 and providing for the form, details and payment of the Bond was adopted.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Helms	AYE
Mr. Barker	AYE
Mr. Carter	AYE
Mr. Weaver	AYE
Mrs. Jennings	AYE
Ms. Spencer	AYE
Dr. Gates	AYE
Mr. Cornett	AYE

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS: Margaret Linford, Smyth County Library Board Member, provided an update on Smyth County Library operations. Mrs. Linford stated that the newly appointed board members represent each of the districts in Smyth County and have a diverse skill set. They are committed to making the best decisions for the institution and the community. They are especially interested in

developing community partnerships with other organizations in the county. The board has begun the search for a new director.

Tracey Reed, Interim Director of Smyth County Library, explained that while the building is not open to the public, Smyth County Library is open. They provide curbside service and offer many services electronically. Ms. Reed is working closely with the school system to insure students have access to library materials and services.

Mr. Barker asked Mr. Rush to review a special use permit request from Emmaus Medical and a rezoning request from Mt. Rogers Counseling Services. Mr. Rush reviewed both. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings, and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Emmaus Medical Special Use request and Mt. Rogers Counseling Services rezoning request were referred to the Planning Commission.

Mrs. Jennings reported that Interim Director Tracey Thompson is addressing maintenance issues and other areas of operation at the Lincoln Theatre. The theatre is now open to visitors.

Mr. Cornett noted there has been much more activity at the Lincoln Theatre recently.

Mayor Helms reminded everyone that Constitution Week is September 17 – September 23 this year; however, the Town will not host any activities due to Covid-19. The VML Conference will be held virtually this year on October 7 and 8. The 2021 VML Conference will be held in Leesburg. AEP will be doing aerial tree trimming in town this week, September 8 – 12.

Chief Clair will attend the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police Conference on September 13 -15, 2020. Chief Clair has reviewed and granted a permit for a Jeep Convention to be held at Riverbend Park. Chief Clair introduced Senior Police Officer Amber Eades who is now full-time Accreditation and Community Relations.

Officer Amber Eades explained the accreditation process and stated Marion Police Department hopes to become fully accredited by the fall of 2021. (Mr. Carter left).

Mr. Heath reviewed the Covid-19 business grants application and guidelines funded by the Town through the Cares Act. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Joshua Young, owner of Waterlily restaurant, was approved for a \$15,000 RBEG small business loan. Marion Pop-up classes will begin September 24, 2020 at the Henderson School.

Mrs. Veatch stated the Economic Development department continues to discuss upcoming events, including Halloween Madness and the Christmas Market, and will make a recommendation to Council at the next meeting. They have spoken with vendors and community members concerning holding the events this year due to Covid-19. Mrs. Veatch continues to work on updating the Town website and hopes updates will be complete by the end of the year.

Mr. Rush provided an update on Cares Act funding and purchases. The recent leak study found two large leaks and has already increased water accountability. Prater Pump Station upgrades continue. A new

sketch has been provided on the SmartScale Pendleton Street project. Atmos is working throughout town on identifying gas lines. Jeff Spickard is working with them to prepare for upcoming CIRP projects.

CLOSED SESSION: Pursuant to Code of Virginia, as amended, Section 2.2-3711 (A-3) upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Town Council entered into Closed Session for discussion of Real Estate. 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 Dr. Gates and carried by a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES. The Deputy Clerk polled the Council Members. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Mr. Rush and Mr. Barker are authorized to negotiate the purchase of a Real Estate parcel.

Upon motion, duly seconded and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Mayor

Deputy Clerk