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 July 18, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings, Larry Carter and Avery Cornett Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush, Assistant Town Manager Billy Hamm, Town Clerk Cindy Y Stanley, Town Attorney Mark Fenyk, Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Police Chief John Clair, Police Officer John Blevins, Police Officer Michael Lester and Economic Development Director Ken Heath.

**ABSENT:** Bill Weaver.

**VISITORS:** Thomas Ray Blevins, Jr., Yana Blevins, Harry Lee Frye, Betty Frye, Beverley Hubble, Jeanna Hubble, Larry Cook, Jack Duffy, Austin Emert, Ted Hayes, Cole Maggard, Paige Assaid, Amanda Livingston, Mia Young, Kiley Bowen, Blake Spencer, Joe Nuckolls, Ashley Misischia, Samantha Crittenden, Adam Simpkins, Jeannie Sutphin, Shaun Sle, Debbie Selecma, Braylon Robinson, and Kimberly, Isaac and Owen Lester.

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

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held June 20, 2022 were approved as written. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held June 30, 2022 were approved as written. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**AGENDA:** Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with three additions; staff reappointments, swearing in new police officers, and an ARPA request.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATION:** Amanda Livingston, Smyth County Tourism Director, gave an update on tourism and distributed a flyer. She reviewed social media outlets and the number of visitors to each category. She also reviewed how the tax dollars are being spent on tourism and grants that have been submitted.

**APPOINTMENT OF VICE-MAYOR:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 5 AYES, 0 NOES, and 1 ABSTENTION, Dr. Jim Gates was reappointed as Vice-Mayor. Messrs Carter, Barker, Cornett, Jennings and Spencer voted affirmatively.

**APPOINTMENT OF TOWN ATTORNEY:** Upon motion of Ms. Spencer, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Mark Fenyk was reappointed as Town Attorney. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Cornett, Jennings, Spencer and Carter voted affirmatively.

**APPOINTMENT OF TOWN MANAGER:** Upon motion of Mr. Cornett, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Bill Rush was reappointed as Town Manager. Messrs Dr. Gates, Carter, Barker, Cornett, Jennings and Spencer voted affirmatively.

**APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Billy Hamm was reappointed as Assistant Town Manager. Messrs Dr. Gates, Carter, Barker, Cornett, Jennings and Spencer voted affirmatively.

**APPOINTMENT OF TOWN CLERK/DIRECTOR OF FINANCE:** Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Cindy Stanley was reappointed as Town Clerk/Director of Finance. Messrs Dr. Gates, Carter, Barker, Cornett, Jennings and Spencer voted affirmatively.

**APPOINTMENT OF POLICE CHIEF:** Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, John Clair was reappointed as Police Chief. Messrs Dr. Gates, Carter, Barker, Cornett, Jennings and Spencer voted affirmatively.

**APPOINTMENT OF FIRE CHIEF:** Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Richard Keesling was reappointed as Fire Chief. Messrs Dr. Gates, Carter, Barker, Cornett, Jennings and Spencer voted affirmatively.

In recognition of Ted Hayes’ retirement, Mayor Helms read and presented the resolution. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the Resolution in Honor of Ted Hayes on the Occasion of his Retirement was adopted.

Chief Clair introduced two new Policer Officers, John Blevins and Michael Lester. Mayor Helms swore in the two new officers. They will begin the Police Academy July 27 which will last for 20 weeks.

Mrs. Jennings reported the Lincoln Theatre will be holding two different camps over the next couple weeks.

Mayor Helms noted Ballad Health System had donated small Virginia and American flags for the downtown flag poles. The Boys Scouts held a flag retirement ceremony, respectfully retiring 287 flags. The recent downtown celebration was a great event.

Mr. Fenyk thanked council for allowing the Smyth County Recovery Courts members to participate with placing the flags on the courthouse lawn. Mr. Fenyk continues work on the deeds of gift to the Marion EDA.

**ACCOUNTS:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the accounts were approved for payment in the amount of $611,334.49. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Chief Clair reminded council the final accreditation process begins tomorrow. National Night Out will be held at the Town Pool August 2, 2022. Chief Clair left.

Mr. Heath thanked all staff for their help with this past weekend’s downtown event. Mr. Heath reviewed an RBEG Loan from David Smith, Appalachian Dry Ice, for $15,000.00. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the RBEG loan application was approved for $15,000.00 for David Smith for Appalachian Dry Ice, contingent on Mr. Smith providing a DUNS number.

Mr. Rush reminded council of the VML Conference in October. The variance request for 742 Chatham Hill Road that was presented to the Board of Zoning Appeals did not meet the guidelines and was denied. Mr. Rush reviewed properties acquired by the Marion EDA. Mr. Rush reviewed the next ARPA request which is for repairs to a collapsed drainage area on Chatham Hill Road between Louise Avenue and the railroad. Mr. Hamm noted the water is undermining the sidewalk and pavement and needs to be repaired before it compromises the water and sewer lines. Mr. Rush recommends up to $100,000 from ARPA Funds for this repair project. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, up to $100,000 from ARPA funds is approved for storm drain repairs on Chatham Hill Road between Louise Avenue and the railroad tracks. Mr. Rush noted the next ARPA request could be for radio read water meter program. Staff met with a vendor last week and a proposal has been received. It is anticipated this project could be approximately $900,000. Mike Sage has received his Operator 1 License for the Sewer Treatment Plant in only 2 ½ years, which is a huge accomplishment. He wants to begin water certification program now. Mr. Rush gave an update on the property maintenance program.

Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

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Mayor Clerk