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 18, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

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

**ABSENT:** Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates.

**VISITORS:** Charles Hayden, Charles Wassum, Jamie Jackson, Jeff Jackson, Irene Jackson, Steven Jackson, Jay & Colton Ferland, & family, Laura & Hope Robinson, Edwina Richardson, Kristen Byrd, William Greer and Jenny Alley.

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

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held April 4, 2022 were approved as written. Messrs Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**AGENDA:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed, with the addition of an update on the Chatham Hill request under Town Manager.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATION:** Mayor Helms reviewed a VML program encouraging student government involvement, which Marion Middle School 7th graders participated. Mayor Helms thanked Mr. Heath and Mrs. Jennings for reviewing the “If I were Mayor” contest essays. There were approximately 145 participants with 11 presented of which 5 were chosen. Mayor Helms recognized the 5 winners and presented them with a season pass to the town Waterpark. Honorable Mention Certificates were presented to Jenny Alley, Irene Jackson and Hope Robinson. Also recognized but not present is Layla Russell. Mayor Helms presented a plaque, gift card and season pass to the town Waterpark to the winner Colton Ferland. A Saltville student was the VML Region 1 winner.

Mr. Barker invited everyone to the Arbor Day event Friday, April 22, 2022 on River Street.

Ms. Spencer reported the Tourism Board met and reminded everyone the Staley Overlook Dedication will be Friday, May 6, 2022 at 2:30 pm.

Mrs. Jennings distributed a Lincoln Theatre event flyer. She noted there will be an Elected Officials Recognition at the theatre on May 7, 2022.

Mr. Cornett reported the Caring for the Community group will be providing a First Responder Dinner at station 2 on May 3, 2022 between 4:30 pm and 7:30 pm. Mr. Cornett reported the Waterpark renovations are going strong. The Waterpark will host Family Night on Thursdays from 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm with hot dogs, drinks and bingo games. The Library and Summit Beverage will be helping sponsor Family Night.

Mayor Helms noted work continues on the Memorial Day event. This year Rolling Thunder will move to Sunday, May 29, 2022 inside the Lincoln Theatre. Student Government Day will be April 28, 2022.

**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 $1,340,263.07. Messrs Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Carter, Weaver and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Chief Clair reminded everyone of the youth fishing event hosted by DWR at Riverbend Park on May 7, 2022 from 9:00 am until noon. Officer of the Year Award will be presented on May 12, 2022 at the VFW Post at 5:30 pm. The Police Academy Graduation will be May 19, 2022. Chief Clair also noted the accreditation will be extended until June or July.

Mr. Rush noted Mr. Heath will present BAUD on a National level in May. The town is still in the running for a National Park Service grant for Callen Drive Park. Marion EDA met to discuss strategic investments, to be announced at a later meeting. Mr. Rush reviewed the Right of Way purchase request at 542 Chatham Hill Road, noting a letter will be sent to adjacent land owners. A grant will be submitted to the DCR to extend the Riverwalk Trail, to be referred to as Lincoln Park. The grant deadline is May 23, 2022. Mrs. Jennings would like to have a Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting to discuss renovations of Town Hall.

**CLOSED SESSION:** Pursuant to Code of Virginia, as amended, Section 2.2-3711 (A-1 and 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 personnel and 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 Mr. Weaver and carried by a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES. The Clerk polled the Council Members. Messrs Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, council authorizes Mr. Barker and Mr. Rush to pursue 2 properties listed on the tax sale.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Mr. Rush is to ask Billy Buchanan if he is willing to serve on the Marion EDA.

Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, council appoints Billy Hamm as Assistant Town Manager effective immediately with a pay increase of $5,000.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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Mayor Clerk