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 December 19, 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; 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 Officers John Blevins and Michael Lester, and Fire Chief Richard Keesling.

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

**VISITORS:** Charles Hayden, Bob Ramsey, Cameron Wolfe, Amy Hall, Charles Wassum and John Graham Clerk of the Court.

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

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held December 5, 2022 were approved as written. Messrs Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**AGENDA:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with one change under Mayor’s report, the special use permit public hearing date needs to be changed from January 19 to January 17.

**SWEARING IN OF TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS:** John Graham, Smyth County Clerk of the Circuit Court, administered the oath of office to the newly re-elected council members Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings and Avery Cornett.

**PUBLIC HEARING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:** This is a second Public Hearing on the Comprehensive Plan adoption to allow citizen remarks. Mayor Helms opened the Public Hearing. With no public comments, Mayor Helms closed the Public Hearing. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 5 AYES and 1 NO, the Comprehensive Plan draft was adopted with the understanding typographical and grammatical errors may be corrected without changing the content.

Chief Clair recognized Officers John Blevins and Michael Lester as recently graduated from the Police Academy.

Mr. Barker reported the Police Committee met last week and reviewed Chief Clair’s request for some new firearms and ammunition. Chief Clair noted this equipment and supplies can be procured on the state contract for approximately $39,000 and this purchase will bring the vehicles up to date on long guns and all officers will then have standardized smaller caliber hand gun. This should allow ammunition to be more readily available and at a better cost. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, this purchase to upgrade firearms for the Police Department was approved.

Mayor Helms noted the presentation for Mower Medic, 202 Severt Street, for a Special Use Permit will be moved to January 17, 2023 as a Public Hearing.

Charles Wassum expressed his concerns about the elections and would prefer they be held in the spring.

Mrs. Jennings would like council to consider cancelling the January 3, 2022 council meeting. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the January 3, 2023 council meeting will be cancelled.

Mr. Cornett would like for the Street Committee to consider extending the Christmas lights to cover the entire town, not just Downtown.

Mayor Helms requested a Public Hearing to consider Special Use Permit for Mower Medic. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, a Public Hearing will be held January 17, 2023 to consider a Special Use Permit for Mower Medic at 202 Severt Street. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, a Public Hearing will be held on January 17, 2023 to consider Special Use Permits for gaming machines. Mayor Helms announced the holiday closures, half day on Thursday, December 22, all day Friday, December 23, all day Monday December 26, 2022 and all day Monday, January 3, 2023.

**ACCOUNTS:** Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the accounts were approved for payment in the amount of $1,303,799.40. Messrs Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Chief Clair thanked council for the Employee luncheon.

Chief Keesling noted there were 234 calls in November. Mr. Barker reported there will be a meeting with Smyth County tomorrow regarding Auto Aid.

Mr. Hamm reviewed ongoing special projects. Discussion ensued regarding diesel verses gas generators that are to be purchased for the Fire Station and Town Hall.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

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Mayor Clerk