

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 June 5, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings, Bill Weaver, Larry Carter and Avery Cornett Council Members; Cameron Wolfe, Bob Ramsey and Ben Reedy Planning Commission Members; Town Manager Bill Rush, Assistant Town Manager Billy Hamm, Town Clerk Cindy Stanley, Town Attorney Mark Fenyk, Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Police Lieutenant Rusty Hamm, Fire Chief Richard Keesling and Director of IT Todd Long.

ABSENT: None.

VISITORS: Dr. Charles Wassum, Charles Hayden, David Fulton, Phillip McElraft, Janene Walker, Delphia Little, Jerry Harmon, Brian Walker, Rose Likins, Jeff & Anna Leigh DeBord, Jim Talley, Diane Hayes, Kevin McCready, Jane Hale, Betty Russell, Colton & Tawney Smith, Wanda Mitchell and Debra Hayes.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Mrs. Jennings 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 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held May 15, 2023 were approved as written. Messrs Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

AGENDA: Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with one change for the date on Public Hearing for Phase VII Sewer from June 19 to June 30.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION: Rose Likins, Smyth County Public Library Representative, gave an update on the summer programs happening at the library. Book donations are now being accepted. The library will be closed June 26 & 27, 2023.

Brian Walker, Democratic Candidate for the Commissioner of Revenue, introduced himself with a short biography and if elected hopes to have collaborative relationships with Marion.

Anna Leigh DeBord, 343 College Street, distributed Smyth County Museum newsletters. She thanked council for support through funding and the loan of technology equipment.

Diane Hayes, Mount Pleasant Museum Representative, reviewed the upcoming Iron Street Juneteenth Celebration. She reviewed some history and displayed pictures. She also thanked council for support through funding and the AV Equipment loan.

Mr. Wassum would like to submit suggestions for the draft ordinance before the July 17, 2023 public hearing.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING REZONING REQUEST 225 PARK BLVD: Mayor Helms turned the public hearing over to Planning Commission Chairman Wolfe. Chairman Wolfe asked Mr. Long to review the request. Mr. Long noted the property owner has requested 225 Park Blvd be rezoned from Commercial General

to R-1. Mr. Long noted this has been advertised appropriately. Mr. McCready, property owner, thanked council for consideration of this request. Upon motion of Mr. Wolfe, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 4 AYES and 0 NOES, the recommendation is for rezoning and referred to council for action. Mayor Helms opened the Public Hearing. With no public comments, Mayor Helms closed the Public Hearing. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, 225 Park Blvd rezoning request from Commercial General to R-1 was accepted.

PUBLIC HEARING 411 ½ COLLEGE STREET SPECIAL USE PERMIT: Mr. Long reviewed the Special Use Permit Request for a home occupation for a beauty salon. He noted off street parking shouldn't be a problem. The notice was advertised appropriately. Adjacent owners were notified. Mayor Helms opened the Public Hearing. With no public comments, Mayor Helms closed the Public Hearing. Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the Special Use Permit for 411 ½ College Street for Home Occupation Beauty Salon was approved.

Mr. Barker reported the Ordinance Committee met today. A Public Hearing on the draft ordinance will be July 17, 2023. The Tree Board met today and reported some of the Silver Maples in Wassona Circle are dying and becoming dangerous and need to be removed. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the proposal for a tree inventory to guide removal and replacement of trees on Wassona Circle was accepted. Mr. Barker also noted the Tree Ordinance needs to be updated. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, updates on the Tree Ordinance will be submitted when available.

Ms. Spencer requested Richard Keesling, Fire Chief be added to the town letterhead. Upon motion of Ms. Spencer, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Richard Keesling, Fire Chief shall be added to the town letterhead.

Mayor Helms attended a productive EMS meeting with the Smyth County Board of Supervisors. There was good participation from the town Fire/EMS staff. Mayor Helms read a Resolution protesting the removal of WDBJ channel from Comcast Cable Package. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the Resolution Protesting the Removal of WDBJ Roanoke, Virginia from Comcast's Cable Package and Petition to put it back on from the Towns of Chilhowie, Marion, Saltville and the County of Smyth was adopted.

Mr. Fenyk on behalf of the Smyth County Recovery Court thanked the VFW for allowing Community Service Workers to assist with placing the flags on the Courthouse lawn.

Lieutenant Hamm reported the Police Department continues with preparation for summer events.

Chief Keesling noted the fire hydrant at the intersection of Staley Street and Duke Street is not working. Mr. Talley will submit an updated repair list of hydrants to Mr. Rush. The responsible agency for fire investigations was discussed. May call volume was 198. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, work will begin to repair or replace non-working fire hydrants.

Mr. Rush reviewed a request for a matching grant of \$2,500 for a Juneteenth Celebration. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, a match of up to \$2,500 was approved for the Juneteenth Celebration. Mr. Rush reviewed a resolution in support of EV Chargers. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the Resolution in Support of Local Participation in Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Application.

Mr. Long noted A/C has been installed in the IT computer room. He reported work continues on zoning updates.

Mr. Rush reported the EDA will meet June 7, 2023. Engineering Services will need to be procured for Callen Drive Rec Park. Phase VII Sewer Public Hearing will be moved to June 30, 2023. Mount Rogers Planning District Commission has requested an appointment for someone to serve on the Transportation Committee. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Jamie Hall was appointed to the Mount Rogers PDC Transportation Committee.

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 7 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 Mr. Weaver and carried by a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES. The Clerk polled the Council Members. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Mayor

Clerk