

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 October 2, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Suzanne Jennings, and Larry Carter (arrived late) Council 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 Chief John Clair, Fire Chief Richard Keesling, Economic Development Director Ken Heath, and Director of IT Todd Long.

ABSENT: Bill Weaver and Avery Cornett.

VISITORS: David Fulton, Delphia Little, Janene Walker, Charles Wassum, Tim Cline, Dale Clark, John Clark, Mike Johnson and Caleb Brewster.

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 4 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held September 18, 2023 were approved as written. Messrs Gates, Barker, Spencer and Jennings voted affirmatively.

AGENDA: Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 4 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with two additions; Extra Mile Resolution and a TA Application Resolution.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION: Dale Clark, Smyth County Community Hospital Representative, gave an update on the operations of the hospital. There has been some progress with staffing issues. Physician recruiting has been successful with Bristol Surgical Associates. Larry Carter arrived.

Mayor Helms reminded everyone of the VML Conference October 8-10 in Norfolk. He also reminded everyone of the Town & Country Dinner Thursday evening in Chilhowie. He thanked Mr. Heath for organizing the Fallen Firefighter Memorial. Mayor Helms read a Resolution for Extra Mile Day. Upon motion of Carter, seconded by Mr. Barker and a vote of 5 AYES and 0 NOES, a Resolution of Support for Extra Mile Day was adopted. Mayor Helms noted a tribute to the Veteran's in our area will be held Friday, November 3, 2023 at the Lifetime Wellness Center. Discussion will continue with multiple agencies regarding animal control. The Water Treatment Plant received another excellent award. Discussion ensued regarding employee recognition. Mrs. Jennings made a motion to reinstate employee picnic during the summer months, Ms. Spencer seconded. Discussion ensued. Previous motion and second was rescinded. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 5 AYES and 0 NOES, an employee picnic will be held October 20, 2023 at noon at RiverBend Park. The Attorney General will visit the Appalachian Center of Hope at the State Hospital October 13, 2023 at 11:00 am.

Chief Clair will attend an event at Marion Middle School tomorrow. He will present awards to officers at the Pulaski Council meeting tomorrow night. The Police Department will be participating in Mental Health Crisis Intervention Training the week of October 16, 2023.

Chief Keesling reported there were 204 calls in August. The department is working on a Narcan Grant.

Mr. Heath noted there will be a ribbon cutting for Kidtopia Thursday at noon. There will be a ribbon cutting October 12, 2023 for the Mel Leaman Free Clinic Mobile Unit.

Mr. Long noted the second zoning draft will update setbacks. Mr. Davis is one test away from becoming a certified building inspector. Mr. Long will take the certified zoning administrator exam in December.

Mr. Rush noted there will be an EDA meeting October 4, 2023. Mr. Rush reviewed a resolution for a VDOT application to connect areas with walkability/sidewalks. Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 5 AYES and 0 NOES, a Resolution in Support of Town of Marion TA Application #10483 was adopted. Mr. Rush noted the Park Blvd entrance to Regency Shopping Center will be closed for a couple weeks in October. Mr. Rush reviewed a Church Street Planning Grant administered by Mt Rogers PDC.

Upon motion of Mrs. Jennings, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 5 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Mayor

Clerk