

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 2, 2019 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; Town Manager Bill Rush, Town Clerk Cindy Stanley; Town Attorney Mark Fenyk; Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Police Chief John Clair; Economic Development Director Ken Heath and Golf Course Manager Terry Jennings.

**ABSENT:** None.

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

**VISITORS:** Joe Naff, Kathy Smith, Andy Overbay, Bill Stamper and Lorrie Stamper.

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held November 18, 2019 were approved as written. Messrs Barker, Dr. Gates, Spencer, Jennings, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**AGENDA:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Spencer and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:** Mayor Helms presented an Extra Mile Certificate to Andy Overbay, Va Tech Extension Office Representative. Mr. Overbay noted it is his pleasure to serve the citizens of Smyth County.

Bill Stamper, 659 Spruce Street, expressed his concerns about drug presence/activity and children's safety in this area. Mr. Stamper noted he is interested in helping Spruce Street become a better place to live. Mr. Rush and Chief Clair addressed Mr. Stamper's concerns and offered to actively engage in helping alleviate his concerns.

Mrs. Jennings was approached by a master gardener about the pruning of the downtown trees. Mr. Barker noted the trees have been pruned incorrectly and will work to rectify this and make a recommendation to replace with smaller trees at an appropriate time.

Mr. Carter reported from the District III meeting last week, noting Mr. Richardson stepped down from the Director position due to health reasons. Rhiannon Powers has accepted the interim position on a temporary basis.

Mr. Cornett was appreciative of the Thank You Letter from the Emory & Henry College Blue and Gold Golf Tournament Committee. He noted the 2019 tournament held at Holston Hills Community Golf Course was a tremendous success.

Mayor Helms noted Danny Counts' and Dawn Archer's terms on the Marion EDA will expire soon and they are both willing to serve again. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Danny Counts was re-appointed to the Marion EDA. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, Dawn Archer was re-appointed to the Marion EDA. Mayor Helms reported a past employee, Joe Hutton, passed away. Harry Howe helped continue the Warren Family tradition of providing Thanksgiving dinners for those in need. Approximately 300 dinners were served Thursday. The Salvation Army Red Kettle drive has begun and bell ringer volunteers are needed for Walmart location. The Blue Ridge Job Corps luncheon will be December 17, 2019 at noon. Mayor Helms thanked Mary Fenyk for all his work with the Drug Court.

Mr. Fenyk thanked those that attended the Drug Court Graduation.

Ms. Stanley reminded everyone of the Conflict of Interest Act online training that must be completed by all elected officials before December 31, 2019.

Mr. Jennings noted there were minimal injuries with the football program this year and only one concussion. Helmets will be reconditioned and recertified in January. The bridge to hole # 10 on the Golf

Course needs repairs. Mr. Rush noted this is a 40 year old bridge, 135 feet long and 15 feet wide. A plan is being considered to replace with steel grading. This should be approximately \$15,000. During repairs there would only be 9 holes available for play. A proposal will be presented for consideration at the next meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the possibilities of upgrading to a flat car bridge.

Chief Clair reviewed the “Shop with a First Responder Program” which will be December 15, 2019 at 1:00 pm at Walmart. This is in partnership with the Smyth County Department of Social Services and will benefit 50 children. The Police Department will deliver \$500 Wednesday for the Santa’s Elves Program to the Smyth County Department of Social Services, that was generated through the “No Shave November Program”. There were two offers of employment made today. These are two local applicants from here in Marion. They will begin the Academy on January 13, 2020.

Mr. Heath noted Thursday night is Merry Main Street. The Christmas Market will begin at 3:00 pm on Friday and the Christmas Parade will be at 7:00 pm Friday night. A Concert Series for the Lincoln Theatre will be announced Thursday.

Mr. Rush gave the Engineering report. Water accountability continues to struggle at approximately 50%. Church Street Drainage Project is going well. There is no soil contamination and confirmation has been received on the financial details. The Park Boulevard Sidewalk/Drainage Project is being redesigned after the site visit with VDOT. The Top Soil Project is still going well and samples have been sent off to be tested for E.coli and salmonella which must be less than 1,000 parts per million. VML Legislative Day is Thursday, February 6, 2020.

Upon motion, duly seconded and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 6:28 pm.

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Mayor

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Clerk