

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 February 1, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Larry Carter, Bill Weaver, Avery Cornett, Tricia Spencer and Suzanne Jennings Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush; Deputy Clerk Mona Barr; Town Attorney Mark Fenyk; Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Smyth County News Representative Linda Burchette, Assistant Town Manager/Town Engineer Cecil Hicks; Public Works Director Jackie Perry; Police Chief Rex Anders; Economic Development Director Ken Heath and Golf Course Manager Terry Jennings.

ABSENT: None.

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

VISITORS: Jeff Spickard, Charlie Harrington, Bill Huber, Tina Hamm, Roger Cress, Brenda Cress, Chelsy Hamm, Randy Hamm, Randall Hamm Jr., Nita Hamm, Lisa Widner, Steve Widner, Uriah Farris, Adam Bolling, Letita Hendricks, W. Eugene Hendricks, Alice Freeman, Dr. Doug Armbrister, Robert Lincoln, Michael Edwards, and Manual Street .

MINUTES: Upon motion of Ms. Spencer, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held January 19, 2016 were approved as written. Messrs Weaver, Barker, Carter, Jennings, Spencer, Cornett and Dr. Gates voted affirmatively.

AGENDA: Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mrs. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the Agenda was approved as distributed.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION: Mayor Helms recognized Patrolman Daniel Hamm as the recipient of the 2015 Award for Lifesaving honored by the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation. This award recognizes an officer's actions that put that officer in harm's way in an attempt to save the life of another.

Mrs. Jennings recognized W. Eugene Hendricks as an Extra Mile recipient. Mr. Hendricks served on Town of Marion, Town Council from 1992-2008 with 4 years serving as Vice-Mayor.

Bill Huber requests that the Snider Street building between Gill and South Street owned by Dr. Armbrister be rezoned from MA to R3 to make 8 apartments. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, this request was referred to The Planning Commission.

Robert Lincoln stated he has just returned from the Cleveland Ohio Program Motorcycle Show. At this event, approximately 10,000 pieces of information regarding Town of Marion Lodging, Restaurants, Events, etc. were distributed. He requests more help on Advertising, Brochures, Printing, Booth Costs, and Costs involved in a trip be kept in mind for next budget year. He has already received 10 e-mails from groups with 10-20 people wanting to stay at the General Francis Hotel and requesting information on Restaurants. He suggests packets be made by Olivia and Ken to check out for distribution of items and then refill them when they return. Mr. Thomason was a huge help in distributing information at this event.

Michael Edwards spoke regarding the Airport. Mr. Rush apologized for Mr. Edwards not being on the agenda due to already printing the agenda. Mr. Edwards supports Mr. Lincoln's request for help on events. He had a booth for 3 days for Smyth County Tourism with a great response. Fly Fishing and Motorcycles were of great interest. Two groups from UK have already contacted Mr. Edwards. He would also like to meet with the Tourism Committee regarding help with the Airport. At this time they only sell gas and tie downs and would like to make the Airport a tourism destination. Delta Commission offers a \$60,000 Grant with a Town Match of \$15,000. He requests the town to remember these items in the new budget. Because there will be roadway construction at the airport in September, there will no revenues in or out. The Mayor stated the Tourism Committee meeting is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month if he would like to attend.

PUBLIC HEARING REZONING REQUEST: Mayor Helms turned the public hearing over to Cecil Hicks to review this request. Mr. Hicks stated a rezoning request for the Old Smyth Co. Physicians Building located at 1040 Terrace Drive from (MA) Medical Arts to (R3) Residential for apartments. The top level of this building was formerly used for a physician office. The lower level is still in use as a billing office. This office is considered "Non-Conforming Use." Article 8 in the Zoning Ordinance was reviewed. The

process was sped thru due to the time period to be done by August for students that may be interested in apartments. The adjacent property owners were notified and the required advertisements were put in the paper. There is a sign on-site informing the public that a Public Hearing is set for 02/01/2016. The Marion Housing Authority and subsidiary Crown Development intends to put 4 apartments on the upper level. Mr. Hicks stated they could rezone the entire building because the office on the lower level is grandfathered in until they move out. The sale is contingent upon rezoning. Mr. Barker asked if any other calls had been made to the town regarding the property. Mr. Hicks states only calls regarding size of apartments and number of occupants. Dr. Gates expressed concern over size of pipes and sewer handling renters versus physician's office. He doesn't want the Town responsible later. Mr. Rush noted that normally projects with no issues or problems can be referred to Town Council for approval. Planning Commission is a second opinion or advisor. Charlie Harrington clarifies that this purchase is thru the Marion Housing Authority and not Crown Development. Upon motion of Mr. Barker, seconded by Ms. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, approval was given to rezone the Old Smyth Co. Physicians Building located at 1040 Terrace Drive from (MA) Medical Arts to (R3) Residential. Mr. Rush states to make the record reflect that Zoning does not go in effect until closing is completed.

Mr. Carter states VML had good results and appreciates the opportunity to go. Mr. Weaver agreed that VML was very useful. They met with many Delegates including Bill Carrico.

Mrs. Jennings gave an update on The Lincoln Theatre. Kristen Untiedt-Barnett started a Grant process for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Golf Tournament for The Lincoln Theatre. Brian Tibbs, the new Box Office Manager for the theatre has been a great asset. People can now get tickets and choose their seats online. The Lincoln Theatre will participate in the Town of Marion boot camp in March.

Mr. Barker would like to thank Jackie Perry and the Town Crew for the great job during the last snow storm. He also reminds us of Song of the Mountain this Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Mayor Helms also thanked Jackie Perry and the Town Crew. He stated VML attendance was down due to the weather this year. He was pleased to have met with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor regarding goals for the town. They wish to visit all state parks including the Hungry Mother State Park. He also reminded that the deadline for filing the Intent to run for Town Council and Mayor is March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

Terry Jennings reviewed the upcoming programs at the Recreation Department. Boy's basketball ends February 23, 2016. They have 5 teams for the Men's league thru February 25, 2016. Women's Volleyball signup deadline is February 5, 2016. They will start a Coed Program February 29, 2016. They are in need of Volunteer Coaches. Advertisement for a Grill Manager has taken place. Deadline for applications is February 29, 2016. Requirements for Grill Manager are 2 years experience in Restaurant Management and Cooking.

Jackie Perry stated there were few breakdowns and no complaints. They had a hydro hose issue and replaced a brake booster. Dr. Gates commended staff on the good job of not over salting but yet maintaining safety of roads. Mr. Rush states that 1/3 of allocation for salt was spent on the last snow storm. Salt is a mix now. No complaints with Town cleaning main routes first. There was a 6 inch line break at the corner of Fowler and Leslie Street.

Chief Mr. Anders would like to thank the town for the opportunity to attend VML. A lot of good contacts were made. He and Ken spoke with the Lieutenant Governor regarding the Gun Laws. He commended Jackie Perry and the town crew on a job well done during the last snow. He thanked Bill Rush for the loan of his town 4-wheel drive vehicle during the snow storm. The Henry Street issue is coming up in Court. Mayor Helms would like to thank the officers who took their own time to come in to support their fellow co-worker Daniel Hamm.

Mr. Heath gave Kudos to the snow crew during the storm and acknowledged they worked nights and week-ends. Business owners were happy with snow removal. Approval has been received from the Tobacco Commission for two travel show kits. One kit is to be left at the town and the other for check-out use. \$12,000 remaining fund from Wayne Henderson Appalachian School of Arts grant for kitchen improvements has been reallocated to the Vintage Letter Press Shop. The Tourism Cooperation has chosen the General Francis Hotel for their stay in Marion and will be joining in paint classes 02/17 & 02/18/2016 at Wayne Henderson Appalachian School of Arts. Pop-Up classes will be every Tuesday at 6 pm the month of March. For those who qualify, up to \$80,000 in awards will be given in up to \$20,000 increments to new businesses or existing businesses that are expanding in Marion. Businesses must attend all 5 classes. Letters were mailed today for VDOT to proceed with Streetscape Project. Virginia Tourism will have applications soon for 2.5 million dollar grant.

Mr. Hicks is making applications to VPDES for a permit to use the river for sewer plant. This renews every 5 years. He wants to thank the water and sewer staff for the great job they are doing. The CIRP Zone Meter Project has not started due to not receiving all the parts. There is a Zoning request letter from Dr. Armbrister for rezoning the Snider Street property from (MA) Medical Arts to (R3) Residential. He also received a letter from Dr. Louise “Lou” Fincher, Dean of Emory and Henry College School of Health Sciences, stating support for Bill Huber’s request for 8 apartments to be built. This will help meet the needs of college students with housing. Only 17 of 32 students currently live in Marion, but some have an interest in living closer to the campus. We anticipate 57 additional students in August 2016, 87 in 2017, and 210 across the board in 2018 for the college. The Snider Street Economic Development project will have a positive effect for growing students obtaining housing. VDOT has a Primary Extension Paving Program for \$5.2 million. North Main may meet the criteria. We have to submit an application and VDOT will grade it. Deadline is March 8, 2016.

Mr. Rush requested a public hearing be set for the requested rezoning of the Snider Street property. He would like to advertise on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> for the public hearing to be February 16, 2016. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the Joint Public Hearing with Planning Commission was set as requested. He stated the VML trip was productive. They worked with a lot of high quality people i.e. The Governor, Tobacco Commission Staff, etc. The application has been submitted to VDH for the CIRP Plan, deadline is the end of March, 2016. The Army Reserve who is supplying the labor for the River Walk Bridge, went to Va Tech and obtained ideas for improvement. They hope to begin this week-end. He hopes this project will fix the erosion problem. They will rope off and put up signage that people can still walk but not cross the bridge section. February 6, 2016 is the planned start date. VHCC Funds requests are for informational purposes only. The Budget process will begin soon. Ms. Stanley is on medical leave, but will be telecommuting with him regarding the Budget.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Ms. Jennings and a vote of 7 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned.

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Mayor

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Deputy Clerk