

DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes for July 7th, 2016 7:00pm
Regular Council Meeting

Council Members Present: Tim Williams, Mitchel Greer, Susan Seymore, Melissa Barrett, and Tom Hayes

Absent: Shirley Brand

Also Present: Jack McCrady, Mayor
Gavin Blevins, Town Manager
Kermit Turner, Interim Police Chief
Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk
Linda Rouse, Town Treasurer

7:00pm: Mayor McCrady called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation.

Mayor McCrady asked for approval of the June Minutes:

- Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the June 6, 2016 Regular Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented, 2nd by Mr. Greer. The motion passed (5-0).
- Mr. Hayes made a motion to approve the June 20, 2016 Special Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented, 2nd by Ms. Seymore. The motion passed (4-0-1 with Mr. Williams abstaining).
- Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the June 29, 2016 Special Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented, 2nd by Mr. Greer. The motion passed (5-0).

Mayor McCrady asked for approval of the agenda.

- Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, 2nd by Mr. Hayes. The motion passed (5-0).

Committee Reports

Budget, Finance and Administration:

Ms. Seymore deferred to the Town Treasurer, Linda Rouse, for the monthly Treasurer's report.

Ms. Rouse submitted the following report:

2016-2017 BUDGET: The final budget, included with my report, reflects the approved increased revenue for the new cigarette tax rate ordinance effective June 6, 2016 in the amount of \$8000, GL#10-334-11 from \$35,000 to \$43,000. The money was allocated as approved to Parks & Rec, Capital Outlay GL#10-580-43, 0 to \$8,000 for the proposed new Basketball Court. This changes our revenue & expenses from \$1,169,500 to \$1,177,500 which is .69% and is well under the 1% change as allowed without a public hearing.

Fiscal Year: We have compiled the list of reports, etc. requested by Albano & Associates to audit & close our fiscal year 2015-2016. The budget verses actual report will be updated when that is completed and fiscal year ending 6-30-2016 is closed out in Citi-pak.

Business Licenses/ Lodging: 70 of our 84 businesses have renewed their licenses. Notices have been sent to the remaining 14. To date, 35 of our businesses are transient lodging/vacation rentals.

Flood Insurance: Our new flood insurance policy for the Town Hall, which was underwritten at Lloyd's, London, became effective June 13, 2016. The annual premium paid was \$3,519.70 for \$650,000 coverage on the building and \$50,000 on the contents. This change decreased our annual flood expense by \$2,927.

Ms. Seymore reported the need to review and revamp the business ordinance in the Town Code, as it's quite outdated.

Mayor McCrady replied that the Council will need to schedule work sessions and then advertise for a public hearing on changing the context of the Town Code.

It was the consensus of the Council to hold a work session, followed by a Special Called Meeting on July 26th at 4pm.

Streets, Lights and Maintenance:

Mr. Greer referred to the following report on the department's operations for the month of May, which was submitted by the Public Works supervisor, Joe Fritts:

The Maintenance Dept. has recently upgraded and reinstalled the Shady Ave. storm grate below the medical center, and it should now hold up under greater pressure. The tractor and cycle should be back in use soon, and we will be again cutting right-of-ways, including the Creeper Trail below Town (as we did in the alley way between Shady Ave, and Brooke St.). Mowing and trimming continue. The Independence Day celebration in the park went well, except for several of the fence rail sections being destroyed. The pool is operating well and the pool vacuum has been repaired and is back in use. We are preparing to hang the C-TREC street light flag posts, as we do annually.

Mayor McCrady reminded the Maintenance and Police Departments to flag the street light poles that are defective so the power company can identify them quickly.

Parks and Recreation:

Mr. Williams reported that the Independence Day celebration on July 3rd was a great success, and drew a huge crowd into Town. He and the rest of the Council gave thanks to Manuel's fireworks for putting on a fantastic fireworks show.

Mr. Williams also reported that more complete figures are in on the outcome of this year's Trail Days festival, and the profits were just over \$30,000.

Mr. Williams asked for the Council's approval to expend up to \$3,000 for the purchase or construction of a storage building to hold all special events materials.

- Ms. Seymore made a motion to approve the expense of up to \$3,000 on creating a storage space, as requested. The motion was 2nd by Mr. Greer, and passed (5-0).

Planning Commission: Nothing to report at this time.

Police and Fire Advisory:

Mr. Hayes deferred to Interim Chief Kermit Turner, who delivered the following P.D. activity report for the month of June:

Operations: In June 2016, Damascus Officers handled 81 calls for service, issued 1 citation, made 4 criminal arrests and issued 4 written warnings.

Traffic Enforcement Activities: During June 2016, Officers responded to 5 motor vehicle accidents in Town, and notified 1 subject that they were suspended.

Speeding complaint areas include: South Shady Avenue, Douglas Drive, Damascus Drive, and Beaver Dam Ave., with special attention being placed on Crosswalk Areas. I also placed the Crosswalk sign up on Laurel Ave. near S. Shady Ave. (as requested at the previous meeting.)

Special Report: Damascus Police Department is working several investigations for shoplifting, trespassing and identity theft. We have also been working with the USFS on several different issues.

Special Notes: K9: K9 was deployed 1 time with a positive alert on the vehicle, resulting in 1 summons being issued.

VDOT Work Crew: VDOT is opening their office again in Abingdon and will be getting in touch with us in reference to working inmates again for trash pickup.

Police Vehicles: We have placed the new tires on both vehicles, as approved at the last meeting. I took one of our vehicles and got the speedometer calibrated, and will have the rest done by Officer Reid and myself.

Auxiliary: All Auxiliary officers are in full service and were a great asset for our department during The Independence Day Celebration.

WCC Grant:

We will be receiving grant money from the Washington County Coalition Group this month due to fact that the month of July is one of the two months that has the most DUI related crashes each year. Officer Reid and myself have worked this grant on July 2nd, 2016 and will be working it again on July 9th, 2016.

July 3rd, 2016:

We had a very large turnout for this event and had one complaint due to traffic not moving fast enough for them. I also had a gentleman from the Marion area that stopped by my location while directing traffic and he wanted to THANK the Police Department, Fire Department and the Town Government for this event and for what we do for the town.

Lt. Turner also requested the Council's approval for himself and Officer Reid to carry over an extra week of unused vacation time into the new fiscal year, due to the fact that the department has been shorthanded thus not allowing any time for either of them to use any vacation time in quite a while.

Manager's Report

Mr. Blevins submitted the following Town Manager's Report:

Beaverdam Creek Trail

- Hill Studio is completing appropriate corrections to the bid documents based on the updated Erosion & Sediment Control Plan and project plans and is completing approval with Washington County.

Regional Planning Grant/ Mount Rogers Regional Initiative

- *The Mount Rogers Economic Restructuring Framework and Branding materials have been completed, and the PDC is in the process of distributing and implementing roll-out of the new plans.*
- *All funds have been received from DHCD and expended to pay for services rendered.*

ARC Grant Application

- *Application approved for funding by DHCD, governor announced April 22, 2016, but no new information from ARC.*

CDBG Grant

- *The DHCD contract for our \$659,400 of CDBG funds was supposed to be issued on June 03, 2016; HOWEVER, David Adams has informed me that the contract was "lost" somewhere between Abingdon and Richmond – a new contract has been issued, and has been amended by DHCD.*
- *Four Proposals for A/E Services for the project were received by June 30 for review by the selection committee. The committee will meet next Tuesday for final interviews and selection.*
- *The Town needs to make a motion to appropriate these CDBG funds.*
 - *Mr. Greer made a motion to appropriate the funds from the VA Dept. of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), in the amount of \$659,400.00 to the 2017-18 fiscal year budgets, to be expended solely for downtown revitalization in the approved project area. Mr. Williams 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).*

Community Pathways Project

- *The next batch of bricks will be shipped from Brick Markers USA on July 29th.*

ARC POWER Initiative

- *The PDC is working closely with MySWVA to apply for ARC POWER Initiative funds to construct the Outdoor Recreation and Nature Center from the Master Plan. Tobacco Commission funds will also be applied for in order to leverage additional funding.*

Website/ Wireless Mesh

- *Basic updating and maintenance, no major issues or updates for June.*

Damascus Business Group

- *The DBG will be meeting at 6:00PM on July 28th.*

VTC Market Leverage Program

- *The 2016 VTC Market Leverage Program grant deadline is coming up this November; I will be working closely in the coming months with our partners, the DBG and Town of Abingdon to develop our marketing campaign for the 2017 calendar year.*

Mr. Blevins submitted a facade improvement design, a project management plan, and a program income plan, together as a management agreement between the Town of Damascus and the Mount Rogers PDC, for adoption.

- *Ms. Seymore made a motion to enter into the management agreement, as presented. Mr. Williams 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).*

Attorney Report

Nothing to report at this time.

Old Business

Nothing to report at this time.

New Business

Ms. Seymore requested the Council explore options for beautification of the property on S. Shady Ave. where the Maintenance building is located. Some residents have asked that the Town install a privacy fence or something to block the view of the equipment and supplies located there.

Council Members Reports

Mayor McCrady asked that everyone please keep Ms. Brand in their prayers, as her health condition in her fight against cancer has worsened.

Mr. Hayes stated the parking lot behind Town Hall needs to be cleaned up and cleared out more, and the vehicles that are not used need to be sold and/or removed from that lot.

Citizens Comments

Nothing to report at this time.

Announcements

- * July 29th – C-TREC kick-off at the Old Mill including dinner, a silent auction, concert, and fireworks.
- * July 30th – 7th annual Creeper Trail Ride to End Cancer

Consent Agenda

- Mr. Hayes made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$500, 2nd by Ms. Seymore; the motion passed (5-0).
- Mr. Williams made a motion to pay the bills, 2nd by Mr. Greer; the motion passed (5-0).
- Mr. Greer made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Mr. Hayes; the motion passed (5-0).

Jack McCrady, Mayor

Tuesday Pope, Clerk