

DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes for October 2, 2023
7:00pm Regular Called Council Meeting

Council Members Present: Susan Coleman, Beaty Jackson, Jesse Kokotek, and Jack McCrady, and Tom Hayes

Absent: Charles Fields

Also Present: Katie Lamb, Mayor Shawna Cook, Town Treasurer
 Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk Trent Crewe, Legal Counsel
 Kermit Turner, Police Chief

7:00pm: Mayor Lamb called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance; Ms. Coleman gave the invocation.

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the September 12, 2023, Regular Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

- Mr. McCrady made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the agenda, as presented.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Kokotek 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Committee Reports

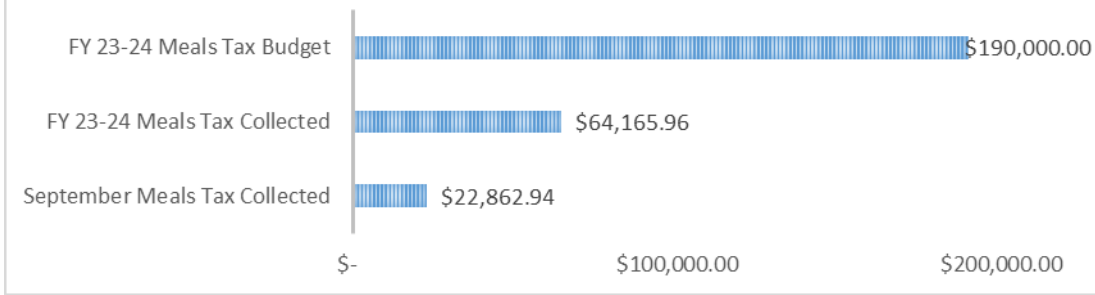
Budget, Finance, and Administration:

Town Treasurer, Shawna Cook, submitted the following report for the previous month:

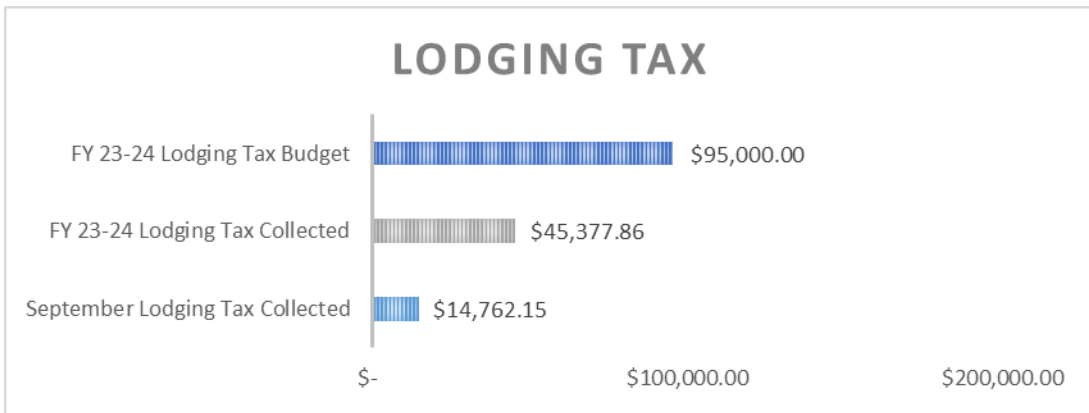
***Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes:** The collection rate for 2023 Real Estate taxes is at 93.12%, 2022 Real Estate collection rate is at 95.74% and the collection rate for 2022 Personal Property is at 83.03%.*

***Meals & Lodging Tax:** \$22,862.94 in Meal Taxes and \$14,762.15 in Lodging Taxes were collected for September 2023.*

MEALS TAX



LODGING TAX



Town of Damascus Virginia Investment Pool (VIP)	Account Balance	FYTD Income	Inception Date
RESERVE FUND	\$56,923.06	\$757.41	08/11/2017
EARMARK POLICE VEHICLE	\$19,092.51	\$224.26	04/04/2018
SEWER FUND CD	\$27,671.14	\$368.19	11/26/2018
ANTHEM RECOVERY	\$46,246.94	\$615.40	12/21/2018
ADDITIONAL WORKING CAPITAL	\$1,809.97	\$24.06	08/08/2019
TRAIL DAYS RESERVE	\$7,847.36	\$104.39	05/14/2020
TOD ARPA 2021	\$653,662.69	\$8,796.04	06/29/2021
VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool	\$813,253.67	\$10,889.75	

Due to software issues, the complete report for all account balances shown below will be available at a later date:

Cash Balance Report		TOWN OF DAMASCUS		Period Ending: 09/29/2023	
Bank:	GENERAL FUND CHECKING				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-01			81,544.71
		30-101-01			0.00
		50-101-01			0.00
Total For:	GENERAL FUND CHECKING				81,544.71
Bank:	CLOSED-BBANDT FACILITY CO				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-10			0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-BBANDT FACILITY CO				0.00
Bank:	PD RAFFLE CHECKING ACCT				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-11			0.00
Total For:	PD RAFFLE CHECKING ACCT				0.00
Bank:	CLOSED-ANTHEM RECOVERY AC				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-12			0.00
		50-101-12			0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-ANTHEM RECOVERY AC				0.00
Bank:	CDBG-ARC-DOWNTOWN CHECKIN				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-14			0.00
Total For:	CDBG-ARC-DOWNTOWN CHECKIN				0.00
Bank:	CLOSED-Cares Act Acct, BB				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-09			0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-Cares Act Acct, BB				0.00
Bank:	ARPA Fund Checking				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-21			100.00
Total For:	ARPA Fund Checking				100.00
Bank:	The Bank Of Damascus				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-22			275,238.76
Total For:	The Bank Of Damascus				275,238.76
Bank:	BOM CDBG ARC Downtown				
		Account		Account Balance	
		10-101-23			478.70
Total For:	BOM CDBG ARC Downtown				478.70
	Total Cash Balance:				357,362.17

Announcements:

No new announcements.

Mr. McCrady asked Ms. Cook to elaborate on issues that may be present with the tax tickets that will be going out soon because it is important to have on public record that we have certified tax data from the County, but an ad went out in the paper stating that the info may not be accurate.

Ms. Cook stated that she has received the tax roll for the Town of Damascus from the County, which is certified, and she has turned that over to AccuFund to facilitate the printing of the bills using the data received. There was an ad that came out in the Bristol Herald Courier from the Commissioner of the Revenue, Mark Matney, that advised there may be some issue with the personal property bills. The Town is unable to correct tax bills, as the data comes directly from

Washington County, so if there are issues with bills received, taxpayers will need to seek out assistance from the Commissioner of the Revenue's office for corrections to their tax bills.

Streets, Lights and Maintenance:

Mr. McCrady reported that Hall's Electric can rewire the Town Park gazebo, with the addition of a 50amp socket in the near future. The department has been busy with mowing, trash pick-up, and repairing a water leak as well as adding a sink, water heater, etc, at the Trail Center garage. He also noted that people have been putting bags of their household trash in the trash can at the dog park.

Parks and Recreation:

Mr. Jackson reported on the following: The new cover has been installed on the pool, and we will probably need a new one for the kiddie pool next year; need to hire a pool manager for 2024; there are more trees that need to be trimmed back around the pool facility; and we still need volunteers for the beautification committee.

Planning Commission:

Nothing at this time.

Police and Fire Advisory:

Chief Turner presented the following report for the previous month:

Operations:

September 2023, Damascus Officers had 97 calls for service. We have taken 13 investigative reports and made 6 arrests. We had 0 reportable accidents.

Arrests are as follows: Warrant Service 2, IIP 1, Resist Arrest 1, DUI 1, Shoplift 1.

Traffic Enforcement Activities:

We issued 6 citations along with 13 warnings.

Speeding complaint areas include:

Douglas Dr. & Laurel Ave

Special Report:

Damascus Middle School had their annual bike ride to school last week and we had 20-30 people that rode to school that morning. The Resource Officer assisted, and I worked traffic to get the kids across the road from the town park to the Creeper Trail and then met them near Government Rd and stopped traffic and followed them up to the school. I also took each child's backpack and hauled them in my vehicle.

Special Notes:

Adam Hargrove started September 25, 2023, and has got his first week completed. We got his paperwork completed and will be starting his Field Training this week. (Closed Session Item)

We will be having the HHS Homecoming Parade Sunday October 8, 2023 @ 2pm

Police Vehicles: I have checked with Sheehy Ford and the vehicle that we have ordered has a VIN assigned to it and is scheduled for delivery around November 6, 2023.

Auxiliary: Nothing new currently.

Incident Case Status Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(09/01/2023 - 09/30/2023)

Offense:	Active:	Active TOT O/A:	Inactive:	Inactive WOF:	Closed Service:	Closed Except.:	Closed Arrest:	Adult Arrest:	Juvenile Arrest:	Adu./Juv. Arrest:	Unfld.:	Rpted.:	Actual:
18.2-479.1 - Resisting Arrest	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
23C - Shoplifting	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	4
23D - Theft From Building	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
23H - All Other Larceny	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
90D - Driving Under the Influence	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
90E - Drunkenness	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	3	3
Totals:	6	0	0	0	1	1	5	3	0	0	0	13	13

Citation Totals by Charge

Damascus Police Department

(09/01/2023 - 09/30/2023)

Charge:	Number of Charges:
18.2-103 - Petit Larceny	1
46.2-802 - FAIL TO DRIVE RIGHT OF HIGHWAY	1
46.2-874 - SPEEDING 25 MPH ZONE	4
Total:	6

Arrest Race/Sex Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(09/01/2023 - 09/30/2023)

Primary Offense:	White Male:	Black Male:	Indian Male:	Asian/Pac. Isl. Male:	White Female:	Black Female:	Indian Female:	Asian/Pac. Isl. Female:	Juven.:	Adult:	Resd.:	NonRes.:	Arrests:
23C - Shoplifting	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
90D - Driving Under the Influence	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
90E - Drunkenness	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
18.2-479.1 - Resisting Arrest	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Totals:	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	3	3	6

Damascus Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Turner presented the following report for the previous month's activities:

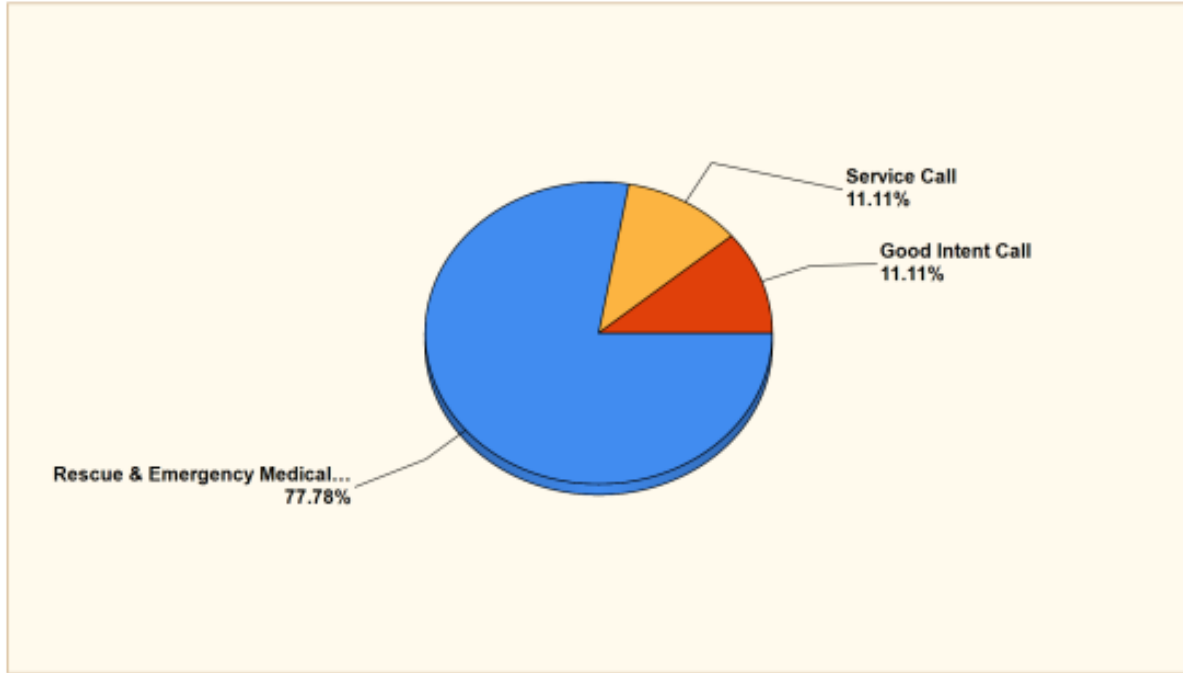
Damascus Fire Department

Damascus, VA

This report was generated on 10/1/2023 6:07:28 PM

Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 09/01/2023 | End Date: 09/30/2023

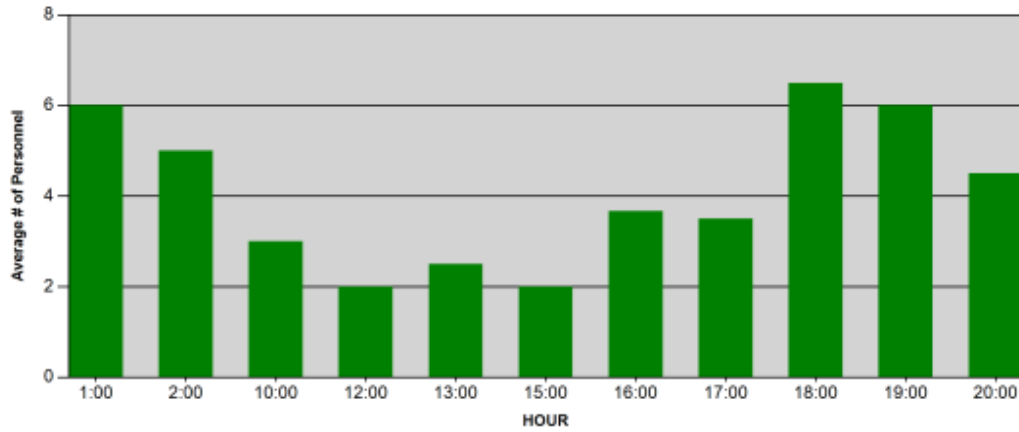


MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	14	77.78%
Service Call	2	11.11%
Good Intent Call	2	11.11%
TOTAL	18	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	3	16.67%
321 - EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	1	5.56%
322 - Motor vehicle accident with injuries	1	5.56%
324 - Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	7	38.89%
341 - Search for person on land	2	11.11%
520 - Water problem, other	1	5.56%
551 - Assist police or other governmental agency	1	5.56%
622 - No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	2	11.11%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	18	100%

Average Number of Responding Personnel per Hour for Date Range

Start Date: 09/01/2023 | End Date: 09/30/2023



HOUR	AVG. # PERSONNEL
01:00 - 01:59	6.00
02:00 - 02:59	5.00
10:00 - 10:59	3.00
12:00 - 12:59	2.00
13:00 - 13:59	2.50
15:00 - 15:59	2.00
16:00 - 16:59	3.67
17:00 - 17:59	3.50
18:00 - 18:59	6.50
19:00 - 19:59	6.00
20:00 - 20:59	4.50

Incident Statistics

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 09/01/2023 | End Date: 09/30/2023

INCIDENT COUNT			
INCIDENT TYPE		# INCIDENTS	
EMS		14	
FIRE		4	
TOTAL		18	
TOTAL TRANSPORTS (N2 and N3)			
APPARATUS	# of APPARATUS TRANSPORTS	# of PATIENT TRANSPORTS	TOTAL # of PATIENT CONTACTS
TOTAL			
PRE-INCIDENT VALUE		LOSSES	
\$0.00		\$0.00	
CO CHECKS			
TOTAL			
MUTUAL AID			
Aid Type		Total	
Aid Received		1	
OVERLAPPING CALLS			
# OVERLAPPING		% OVERLAPPING	
2		11.11	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (Dispatch to Arrival)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:15:15	0:17:58	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS		0:16:04	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE TURNOUT TIME (Dispatch to Enroute)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:04:45	0:04:58	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS		0:04:54	
AGENCY		AVERAGE TIME ON SCENE (MM:SS)	
Damascus Fire Department		50:55	

Personnel Hours for Incidents for Date Range (Not Payroll Related)

Start Date: 09/01/2023 | End Date: 09/30/2023

PERSONNEL	TIME SPENT ON INCIDENTS (Hours:Minutes Dispatched to Cleared Scene)
Belcher, Emalee	3:23
Campbell, Candace	14:16
Campbell, Dalton	4:24
Campbell, Wendy	4:24
Doss, Brady	3:13
Hicks, Noah	1:55
Johnson, Michael	17:24
Jones, Dave	4:46
Justice, Jason	4:56
Richey, Jordan	8:59
Turner, Kermit	17:31
Turner, Walter B	9:02
Widener, Alex	10:52
Total:	105:04

Response Percentage per Station per Personnel for Incident Types for Personnel

Personnel: All Personnel | Incident Type(s): All Incident Types | Start Date: 09/01/2023 | End Date: 09/30/2023

Personnel	Calls Attended	% of Calls for Selected Incident Types
Station: Station 1400		
Belcher, Emalee	3	16.7%
Campbell, Candace	11	61.1%
Campbell, Dalton	7	38.9%
Campbell, Wendy	4	22.2%
Doss, Brady	4	22.2%
Hicks, Emilee	2	11.1%
Hicks, Noah	7	38.9%
Johnson, Michael	17	94.4%
Jones, Andrew	3	16.7%
Jones, Dave	13	72.2%
Justice, Jason	4	22.2%
Richey, Jordan	4	22.2%
Turner, Kermit	16	88.9%
Turner, Walter B	7	38.9%
Widener, Alex	9	50.0%
Widener, Anthony	3	16.7%
Total Incidents for Station Station 1400	18	

Total Incidents for all Stations 18

Chief Turner asked if the Council would be willing to go in half with the Fire Department to rent a small lockable dumpster which would be placed behind Town Hall.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the Town paying half of the expense to share a rental dumpster with the Fire Department, as requested. Mr. McCrady 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Special Committees

Roy Wright Park & Josie's Nature Playground – Mayor Lamb reported that the grand opening was a wonderful event with a great turnout for a very special little girl. She also thanked all of those involved in making this wonderful project happen.

Citizens Comments

None at this time.

Manager's Report

Mr. Blevins submitted the following report for the previous month:

Scattered Site Housing Rehab Project

- *Blight Remediation: 649 Damascus Dr, 306 Damascus Dr, and 611 Rambo St demolitions complete.*
- *Substantial Reconstructions: 611 Rambo St substantial reconstruction complete and 605 Rambo Street demolition complete. 302 Damascus Drive substantial reconstruction complete and 302 Damascus Dr demolition complete. 233 Douglas Dr substantial reconstruction in progress.*
- *Rehabs: 317 Rutledge St rehabilitation complete. 717 Fifth St rehabilitation in progress.*
- *Hybrid: 123 S Railroad Ave contract executed.*
- *The town is intending and preparing to apply for Phase II this coming April 2024.*

Creeper Trail

- *The 11 hazard trees at the lower end of trestle 16 have been removed and ATC plans to immediately remove two additional hazard ash trees on the upper end of trestle 16.*
- *ATC recently completed an assessment of trees around trestles 16 and 17; as a result, partners (TOD, VCTD, USFS, ATC) are coordinating to remove an additional 15+ trees from around trestles 16 and 17 in the coming months through various funding sources.*
- *The Conservancy is finalizing commitments/agreement for the approximately \$186,000 in funds through USFS to cover the budget shortfall for trestles 30 and 31. The issue has been related to showing match by VCTC for the GAOA (Great American Outdoors Act) funding.*
- *Comments were received from USFS on the proposed bid documents, so we are working on making revisions for approval prior to construction bidding.*

Damascus Trail Center

- *We are completing the water heater, sink, and line upgrades, including an exterior water spigot, as well as getting ready to rework the downspouts and do some painting to the garage building.*

Miscellaneous

- *The third zip-code survey for the 2023 Market Study is scheduled for October 6-12th. NOTE: 27 businesses participated in the July survey.*
- *The VTC DRIVE Outdoor grant workshop is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 6th from 1-4:00 PM at the Damascus Trail Center. Residents, partners, and stakeholders are encouraged to attend. Upon completion of the program, Damascus will be eligible for \$20,000 in implementation funds.*

Mr. McCrady said that when the Town retained Gregors Tree Services to remove 11 dead trees, the understanding was that the ATC would pay 20% of the bill.

Mr. Blevins replied that we ended up having to take 13 trees down, so the Town will pay for the initial 11, and the ATC will pay for the additional two.

Mr. Blevins also reported that the main commercial printer that services all of the Town Hall offices has kicked the bucket and is so outdated that it is beyond repair. He would like to replace that one with 3 smaller printers, one for each of the Clerk, Treasurer, and Police offices, and with 4-year warranties on them. This will cost around \$2,400 total and could be paid for out of the ARPA Fund account.

- Mr. McCrady made a motion to approve the purchase of three new office printers, as requested. Ms. Coleman 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Legal Matters

At the appropriate time, motion to Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Personnel Matters regarding the Public Works Department (specifically cleaning/custodial services), and the Police Department, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1).

Old Business

Nothing at this time.

New Business

Personnel Manual updates, see excerpts below:

“Department Head” means the individual with highest authority over one of **four** departments: Administration and Finance, Police **and Fire, Parks and Recreation, and** Public Works. A Department Head supervises all employees within the department; however, there may also be other supervisors within a department responsible for specific employees. The Town Manager shall be the Department Head of Administration and Finance. **The Parks and Recreation Director shall be the Department Head of the Parks and Recreation Department.** The Chief of Police shall be the Department Head of the Police Department. **The Council-appointed supervisor of the Public Works Department shall function as the Department Head of Public Works; however, in his/her absence or failure to act, the Town Manager shall be authorized to act as the de facto Department Head.** All Department Heads are still subject to the authority of appropriate standing or advisory committees, Town Manager, Town Council, and the Mayor.

The Mayor shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town.

It is the policy of the Town that the work of all employees is to be assigned, directed and reviewed by supervisory personnel. Employees ordinarily will have only one supervisor to whom they report. A primary role of each supervisor is to provide a link between management and non-management employees. **Employees will not be permitted to supervise or manage other employees who may be immediate family.** Supervisors must be able to lead and motivate employees.

PERSONAL TIME

It is the policy of the Town to grant personal time with pay to full-time employees according to the guidelines established below. This time is intended for use as a “mental health day” or other similar situation where sick time or vacation time might otherwise not be appropriate or available.

The established year is the calendar year, January 1st through December 31st each year.

Personal time is granted to each full-time employee in the amount of four (4) days per year. Personal time accrued each year may not be accumulated, traded, or carried over. Half days utilized will count as full days.

When using personal time, employees must notify the Town Manager as soon as possible. Personal time may only be used with permission and may not be chained for multiple days, contiguous or otherwise.

When employment is terminated, employees terminated shall not receive pay for unused personal time accrued during employment.

- Mr. Kokotek made a motion to adopt the Personnel Manual as amended, including changes and additions. Mr. McCrady 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Consent Agenda

- Mr. Jackson made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$2,500, 2nd by Mr. Kokotek. The motion passed (5-0).
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to pay the bills presented as well as the standard and/or recurring bills that will come in before the next Council meeting. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Mayor & Council Members Reports

Mayor Lamb stated that she will be attending the VML Conference and Mayor’s Institute this weekend. Also, she has received complaints that people’s water and power bills have been higher than usual.

Mr. McCrady stated that when people have issues like those at the County level, they should be referred to the County offices.

Announcements

UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- * Damascus Farmers Market – Saturdays from 9am-noon at the Laurel Creek Park
- * October 8th – Holston High School’s Homecoming Parade & Pep-Rally, Town Park
- * October 9th – Town Hall CLOSED in observance of Columbus Day & Yorktown Victory Day
- * October 13-15th – Between the Trails Music & Culture Festival, Town Park
- * October 29th – One Way Ministries’ Fire By Night event, Town Park
- * October 31st – Halloween observed (crosswalks monitored from 5-7pm for trick-or-treating)
- * November 6th – VTC ‘DRIVE Outdoor’ Grant workshop at the Damascus Trail Center

For upcoming events, go to our website visitdamascus.org and check out the **Events Calendar**. For citizen info go to damascus.org, and don't forget our social media presence on **Facebook** and **Instagram**!

- Mr. Kokotek made a motion to Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Personnel Matters regarding the Public Works Department (specifically cleaning/custodial services), and the Police Department, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Mr. McCrady 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to return to Open Session, 2nd by Mr. Jackson. The motion passed (5-0).
- *CERTIFY (individually): We Certify that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such matters identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.*

Susan Coleman - Yea

Tom Hayes - Yea

Beaty Jackson – Yea

Jesse Kokotek - Yea

Jack McCrady - Yea

- Mr. McCrady made a motion to advertise for a full-time Officer for the Damascus Police Department. Ms. Coleman 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to create a stipend for the Treasurer to cover custodial duties at Town Hall. Ms. Coleman 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Mr. Jackson. The motion passed (5-0).