# DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL Minutes for December 4, 2023 <u>7:00pm Regular Called Council Meeting</u>

Council Members Present: Susan Coleman, Charles Fields, Tom Hayes, and Jack McCrady

Absent: Beaty Jackson

<u>Also Present</u>: Katie Lamb, Mayor Gavin Blevins, Town Manager Kermit Turner, Police Chief Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk Lucy Phillips, Legal Counsel

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 November 6, 2023, Regular Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

• Mr. McCrady made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the November 17, 2023, Special Called Council Meeting Minutes, with an amendment to show herself as being absent for when the meeting reconvened at 3pm.

Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the Minutes with the recommended amendment.
 Mr. Hayes 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

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

• Mr. McCrady made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

# **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 93.75%, 2022 Real Estate collection rate is at 95.82% and the collection rate for 2022 Personal Property is at 83.00%.

*Meals & Lodging Tax:* \$24,440.00 in Meal Taxes and \$18,976.59 in Lodging Taxes were collected for November 2023.

Town of Damascus Virginia Investment Pool	Account		
(VIP)	Balance	FYTD Income	Inception Date
RESERVE FUND	\$57,461.52	\$1,295.87	08/11/2017
EARMARK POLICE VEHICLE	\$19,273.11	\$404.86	04/04/2018
SEWER FUND CD	\$27,932.86	\$629.91	11/26/2018
ANTHEM RECOVERY	\$46,684.42	\$1,052.88	12/21/2018
ADDITIONAL WORKING CAPITAL	\$1,827.08	\$41.17	08/08/2019
TRAIL DAYS RESERVE	\$7,921.57	\$178.60	05/14/2020
TOD ARPA 2021	\$650,857.78	\$14,943.09	06/29/2021
VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool	\$811,958.34	\$18,546.38	

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

			Cash Balance Report
			Period Ending: 11/30/2023
Bank:	GENERAL FUND CHECKING	Account	Account Balance
		10-101-01	13.146.60
		30-101-01	0.00
		50-101-01	0.00
Total For:	GENERAL FUND CHE		13,146.63
Bank:	CLOSED-BBANDT FACILITY CO	JKING	13,140.0
Bank:	CLOSED-BBANDT FACILITY CO	Account	Account Balance
		10-101-10	0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-BBANDT FAC		0.00
Bank:	CLOSED-PD RAFFLE CHECKING		
		Account	Account Balance
		10-101-11	0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-PD RAFFLE		0.00
	CHECKING		
Bank:	CLOSED-ANTHEM RECOVERY AC	;	
		Account	Account Balance
		10-101-12	0.00
		50-101-12	0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-ANTHEM		0.00
	RECOVERY AC		
Bank:	CLOSED-CDBG ARC DOWNTOWN		
		Account	Account Balance
		10-101-14	0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-CDBG ARC		0.00
	DOWNTOWN		
Bank:	CLOSED-Cares Act Acct, BB		
		Account	Account Balance
		10-101-09	0.00
Total For:	CLOSED-Cares Act Ac	ct, BB	0.00
Bank:	ARPA Fund Checking		
	J. J	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	296,551.77
Total For:	The Bank Of Damascus	3	296,551.77
Bank:	BOM CDBG ARC Downtown		
		Account	Account Balance
		10-101-23	478.70
Total For:	BOM CDBG ARC Dowr	ntown	478.70
Bank:	BOM CDBG PROGRAM INCOME		
		Account	Account Balance
		50-101-24	13,548.82
Total For:	BOM CDBG PROGRAM	Л	13,548.82
	INCOME		
	Total Cash	Balance:	323,825.92

#### Announcements:

Our software vendor is still working on getting the 2023 bills to us. The due date was initially moved to December 20, 2023 for the 2023 second half real estate and personal property bills. Due to the holidays and time required by the printing company, I am requesting the payment due date be moved to a later date.

 Mr. Fields made a motion to extend the tax due date to January 20, 2024. Mr. McCrady 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

## Streets, Lights and Maintenance:

Mr. McCrady reported that the department has been busy with leaf pick-up, brush pick-up, filling in potholes, putting up Christmas decorations, etc. Also, the department is down to two people because one is out on medical leave for a bit.

## Parks and Recreation:

Ms. Coleman reported that the Christmas Parade was amazing, and it was great to have the Clydesdales again. Two participants were throwing candy again this year, which needs to be stopped for future parades.

## Planning Commission:

Seat Vacancy (Resignation; term ending 12/31/2024) – Mr. McCrady, who is also a member of the Planning Commission, reported the Planning Commission is recommending the Council appoint Brian Schmidt to fill the vacant seat for its remaining term.

• Mr. McCrady made a motion to appoint Brian Schmidt to the Damascus Planning Commission to fill the vacant seat with term ending 12/31/2024. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (3-1, with Mr. Fields opposed).

## Police and Fire Advisory:

Chief Turner presented the following report for the previous month:

#### **Operations:**

November 2023, Damascus Officers had 76 calls for service. We have taken 8 investigative reports and made 23 arrests. We had 2 reportable accidents and by DMV standards one was classified as a fatality. Arrests are as follows: Warrant Service 20, Vandalism 1, IIP 1 and Resist Arrest 1.

#### Traffic Enforcement Activities:

We issued 6 citations along with 10 warnings.

#### Speeding complaint areas include:

No new complaints.

#### Special Report:

Officer Thurston has started and I have his uniforms ordered and waiting on them to get here, he is doing really

well at this time and should be out on his own in the next week or so.

#### Special Notes:

Nothing at this time.

#### Police Vehicles:

Good morning, Chief,

We have seen production pick up a bit since the end of the strike. It looks like the anticipated ETA is 01/01

NT235625	DAMASCUS PD	ΥZ	K8A			
YES	W/FULL WHL CVRS	96	UTILITY	1FM5K8AB5PGB84038	SCHEDULED	01/01

Auxiliary: Nothing new currently.

# Accidents Successfully Exported To TREDS

**Damascus Police Department** 

(11/01/2023 - 11/30/2023)

Submission Date:	Accident Number:	TREDS Number:	Resubmission?
11/29/2023 - 16:06	23-00013	233335324	No
11/28/2023 - 18:20	23-00012	233325316	No

Total Successful Exports: 2

Total Accidents Successfully Exported: 2

#### Arrest Race/Sex Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(11/01/2023 - 11/30/2023)

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:
290 - Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
90E - Drunkenness	0	0	0	0	1	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	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	0	20
Totals:	21	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	23	23	0	23

## **Citation Totals by Charge**

Damascus Police Department

(11/01/2023 - 11/30/2023)

Charge:	Num	ber of Charges:
46.2-874 - SPEEDING 25 MPH ZONE		4
46.2-875 - SPEEDING 35 MPH ZONE		2
	Total:	6

### Incident Case Status Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(11/01/2023 - 11/30/2023)

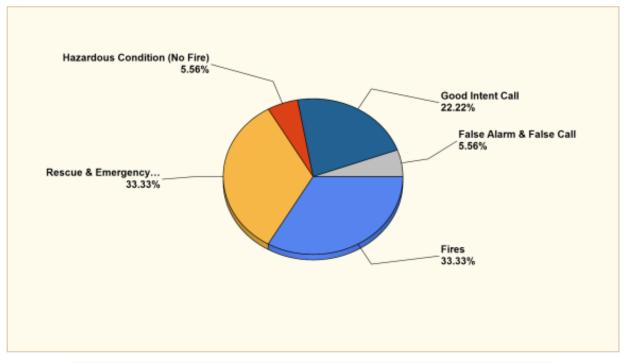
Offense:	Active:	Active TOT O/A:	Inactive:	Inactive WOF:	Closed Service:	Closed Except.:	Closed Arrest:	Adult Arrest:	Juvenile Arrest:	Adu./Juv. Arrest:	Unfnd.:	Rpted.:	Actual:
18.2-479.1 - Resisting Arrest	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
290 - Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
90E - Drunkenness	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
90Z - All Other Offenses	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	4	4
Totals:	0	0	2	0	1	1	4	2	0	0	0	8	8

## **Damascus Volunteer Fire Department**

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



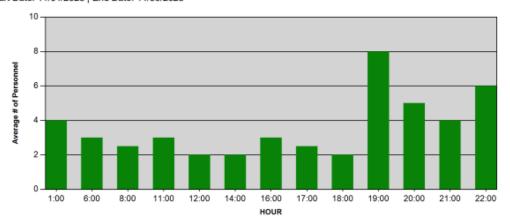
Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 11/01/2023 | End Date: 11/30/2023



MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	6	33.33%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	6	33.33%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	1	5.56%
Good Intent Call	4	22.22%
False Alarm & False Call	1	5.56%
TOTAL	18	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type						
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL				
100 - Fire, other	1	5.56%				
141 - Forest, woods or wildland fire	1	5.56%				
142 - Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	1	5.56%				
151 - Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	3	16.67%				
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	3	16.67%				
322 - Motor vehicle accident with injuries	2	11.11%				
324 - Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	1	5.56%				
400 - Hazardous condition, other	1	5.56%				
622 - No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	1	5.56%				
651 - Smoke scare, odor of smoke	3	16.67%				
700 - False alarm or false call, other	1	5.56%				
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	18	100%				

Average Number of Responding Personnel per Hour for Date Range Start Date: 11/01/2023 | End Date: 11/30/2023



HOUR	AVG. # PERSONNEL
01:00 - 01:59	4.00
06:00 - 06:59	3.00
08:00 - 08:59	2.50
11:00 - 11:59	3.00
12:00 - 12:59	2.00
14:00 - 14:59	2.00
16:00 - 16:59	3.00
17:00 - 17:59	2.50
18:00 - 18:59	2.00
19:00 - 19:59	8.00
20:00 - 20:59	5.00
21:00 - 21:59	4.00
22:00 - 22:59	6.00

Personnel Hours for Incidents for Date Range (Not Payroll Related) Start Date: 11/01/2023 | End Date: 11/30/2023

PERSONNEL	TIME SPENT ON INCIDENTS (Hours:Minutes Dispatched to Cleared Scene)
Belcher, Emalee	0:25
Campbell, Candace	2:42
Campbell, Dalton	0:25
Campbell, Wendy	4:22
Hicks, Emilee	1:51
Hicks, Noah	1:51
Johnson, Michael	24:46
Jones, Dave	3:09
Justice, Jason	2:13
Richey, Jordan	9:44
Turner, Kermit	9:17
Turner, Walter B	17:45
Widener, Alex	2:42
Widener, Anthony	3:23
Total:	84:35

#### Incident Statistics

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 11/01/2023 | End Date: 11/30/2023

INCIDENT COUNT							
INCIDENT	TYPE	# INCIDENTS					
EMS		6					
FIRE			12				
TOTA	L		18				
	TOTAL TRANSPO	ORTS (N2 and N3)					
APPARATUS	# of APPARATUS TRANSPORTS	# of PATIENT TRANS	SPORTS	TOTAL # of PATIENT CONTACTS			
TOTAL							
PRE-INCIDEN	IT VALUE		LOSS	ES			
\$0.00	)		\$0.0	0			
	CO CH	IECKS					
TOTAL	L						
	MUTUAL AID						
Aid Typ		Total					
Aid Give		1					
Aid Recei		1					
	OVERLAPP						
# OVERLAR	PPING	% OVERLAPPING					
0		0					
LIGHTS	AND SIREN - AVERAGE RE	SPONSE TIME (Dispa	tch to Arri	ival)			
Station	E	AS		FIRE			
Station 1400	0:12	2:01		0:22:54			
	AVERA	GE FOR ALL CALLS		0:16:44			
LIGHTS	AND SIREN - AVERAGE TU	RNOUT TIME (Dispate	ch to Enro	ute)			
Station	EM	IS	FIRE				
Station 1400	0:08	3:17		0:05:42			
	AVERA	GE FOR ALL CALLS 0:06:17					
AGENO	CY	AVERAGE TIME ON SCENE (MM:SS)					
Damascus Fire D	Department	60:38					

Incident Type and Street Name for Date Range Incident Status: Reviewed | Start Date: 11/01/2023 | End Date: 11/30/2023

Incident Date	Address	Incident Type	
11/04/2023	Chestnut Mountain RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Smoke scare, odor of smoke	
11/06/2023	20208 Klondyke RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with injuries	
11/08/2023	Blevins RD, Glade Spring, VA 24340	Smoke scare, odor of smoke	
11/08/2023	Monroe RD, Meadowview (RR name Meadow View), VA 24361	Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	
11/09/2023	S Shady AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew	
11/09/2023	Tread Nock PL, Damascus, VA 24236	Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	
11/11/2023	Widener Valley RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	
11/12/2023	Appalachian Trail, Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew	
11/13/2023	Government RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew	
11/14/2023	Rhea Valley RD, Meadowview (RR name Meadow View), VA 24361	Motor vehicle accident with injuries	
11/16/2023	McCann RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Forest, woods or wildland fire	
11/16/2023	Douglas DR, Damascus, VA 24236	Hazardous condition, other	
11/17/2023	Sawmill RD, Damascus, VA 24236	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	
11/18/2023	N Beaver Dam AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Fire, other	
11/20/2023	Mock AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	False alarm or false call, other	
11/24/2023	Plymouth CT, Damascus, VA 24236	Smoke scare, odor of smoke	
11/27/2023	E Third ST, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	
11/28/2023	Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	
		Total incidents: 18	

#### Response Percentage per Station per Personnel for Incident Types for Personnel

Personnel: All Personnel | Incident Type(s): All Incident Types | Start Date: 11/01/2023 | End Date: 11/30/2023

Personnel	Calls Attended	% of Calls for Selected Incident Types	
Station: Station 1400			
Belcher, Emalee	5	27.8%	
Campbell, Candace	9	50.0%	
Campbell, Dalton	2	11.1%	
Campbell, Wendy	6	33.3%	
Doss, Brady	1	5.6%	
Hicks, Emilee	6	33.3%	
Hicks, Noah	6	33.3%	
Johnson, Michael	16	88.9%	
Jones, Andrew	6	33.3%	
Jones, Dave	11	61.1%	
Justice, Jason	8	44.4%	
Norris, Ralph	1	5.6%	
Reedy, Tony Mitchell	1	5.6%	
Richey, Jordan	9	50.0%	
Turner, Kermit	12	66.7%	
Turner, Walter B	10	55.6%	
Widener, Alex	9	50.0%	
Widener, Anthony	7	38.9%	
Total Incidents for Station Station 1400	18		

**Total Incidents for all Stations** 

18

# **Special Committees**

Nothing at this time.

# **Citizens Comments**

Melissa Londry, Galax VA, asked the Council's permission to speak even though she is not a resident of the Town. It was the consensus of the Council to approve this request. Ms. Londry reported that former Council member, Jesse Kokotek, has not responded to two different FOIA requests that she had sent him. An injunction has been filed with Washington County, but Mr. Kokotek could not be located to be served with notice of the hearing which was set, so another hearing has been set for February, and it will be advertised in the Bristol Herald Courier. Ms. Londry also asked that the video taken by Mayor Lamb at the last meeting be published to the Town's website.

(The official recording of the previous Council Meeting is available on the Town's site, so the secondary video Ms. Londry referred to will not be published to the Town's website, but can be made available to the public upon request.)

Janet Gibbons, Backer Lane, stated that she appreciates what the recreation department is doing in Damascus, and would like to see more of a focus on young people, specifically teenagers. Also, she expressed safety concerns for the intersection of E. Laurel Ave. and Damascus Dr.

# Manager's Report

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

- o 123 S Railroad Ave is underway with the initial demolition complete.
- The substantial reconstruction at 233 Douglas Drive is significantly complete, and once the owner moves in, the old house will be demolished.
- The desk review component of the final project compliance review is complete; DHCD will visit the houses at a later TBD date to complete the on-site review.
- The town is intending and preparing to apply for Phase II this coming April 2024.

## Creeper Trail

- <u>Trestles 30 & 31</u>: The Conservancy is still finalizing commitments/agreement for the approx.
  \$186,000 in funds through USFS to cover the budget shortfall for trestles 30 and 31 for GAOA funding.
  - Bid documents are still being reviewed by USFS and Prosim.

## Miscellaneous

• <u>Market Assessment</u>: The 2023 Market Study was completed in October, and we have received the final report.

Mr. Blevins also read the following Code Enforcement report for November, which was submitted by Marty Berry:

Visits: 10

Meals and Lodging Tax Visit: 6

Zoning/Development Permit visits: 4

- a) Orchard Hill Rd. 2 visits reference to fence construction.
- b) Shady Ave. 2 visits reference to fence construction.

# Legal Matters

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

# Old Business

Nothing at this time.

# **New Business**

1. Accept resignation of Councilman Kokotek, and consideration of appointment to fill the vacant seat.

I am writing to inform you of my decision to resign from my position on the Town Council, effective November 13, 2023. It has been an honor to serve on the council and represent our community for the past year.

Thank you for your understanding, and I wish the entire council continued success in their efforts to better serve our community.

The key and entry FOB will be delivered to the Town Clerk via USPS.

Sincerely,

∂esse Kokotek

Jesse Kokotek PO Box 441 Damascus, VA 24236

• Mr. McCrady made a motion to accept the resignation of Mr. Kokotek from the Town Council. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

Mayor Lamb recommended that Robbie Kemmerlin be appointed to the vacant seat until a Special Election can be held to elect someone for the remainder of the term.

 Mr. McCrady made a motion to appoint Robbie Kemmerlin to the Town Council beginning 12/04/2023 until 12/31/2024, after which time a Nov. 2024 Special Election will determine who will fill the remainder of the term (1/1/2025 – 12/31/2026). Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

Mayor Lamb stated that Mr. Kemmerlin will also be assigned to the committees that Mr. Kokotek had been assigned to.

2. Reschedule January 2024 meeting date due to January 1<sup>st</sup> holiday.

• Mr. McCrady made a motion to reschedule the January Council Meeting for Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 7pm. Mr. Hayes 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

Mr. McCrady welcomed and introduced Lucy Phillips as the Town's Legal Counsel.

# Consent Agenda

Ms. Coleman made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$2,500, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr.
 McCrady. The motion passed (4-0).

 Ms. Coleman 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. Fields 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

# Mayor & Council Members Reports

Mayor Lamb thanked the Fire Department(s) for dealing with the wildfire behind the old McBee building recently. She also reported that Lawrence "The Legend" (Virginia Creeper Trail moniker) Dye has passed away, and her thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Mr. McCrady stated that the Public Works Department has quite a few vehicles and pieces of equipment that need to be replaced, and he has found a 1995 Mazda Scrum truck, with dump bed, for sale for \$12,999, and would like Council authorization to negotiate.

• Ms. Coleman made a motion to authorize Mr. McCrady to enter into negotiations for the truck referenced, and report back. Mr. Fields 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).

# Announcements

UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 3. December 15<sup>th</sup> Trail Town Twirl Contra Dance at the Rock School Auditorium at 8 pm
- 4. December 22<sup>nd</sup> Town Hall closed half day in observance of Christmas Eve
- December 25<sup>th</sup> January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Town Hall closed in observance of Christmas and New Year's Day

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. McCrady made a motion to Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Personnel Matters regarding the Public Works Departments, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1).
   Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to return to Open Session, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Fields. The motion passed (4-0).
- 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 Charles Fields - Yea Tom Hayes - Yea Jack McCrady - Yea

- Mr. McCrady made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to advertise hiring a part-time, temporary employee in the Public Works Department. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-0).
- Mr. Fields made a motion to adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. McCrady. The motion passed (4-0).