

DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes for July 5, 2022
7:00pm Regular Council Meeting

Council Members Present: Beaty Jackson, Tom Hayes, Tony Doss, Susan Coleman, and Charles Fields

Absent: Mitchel Greer

Also Present: Katie Lamb, Mayor
Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk
Kermit Turner, Police Chief & Fire Chief
Gavin Blevins, Town Manager
Trent Crewe, 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 June 6, 2022, Regular Called Council Meeting Minutes.

- Mr. Hayes 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 June 28, 2022, Special Called Council Meeting Minutes.

- Ms. Coleman 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, with two additions: 1) add an item for Closed Session under Legal Matters; and 2) add discussion pertaining to the Virginia Creeper Trail Conservancy under New Business.

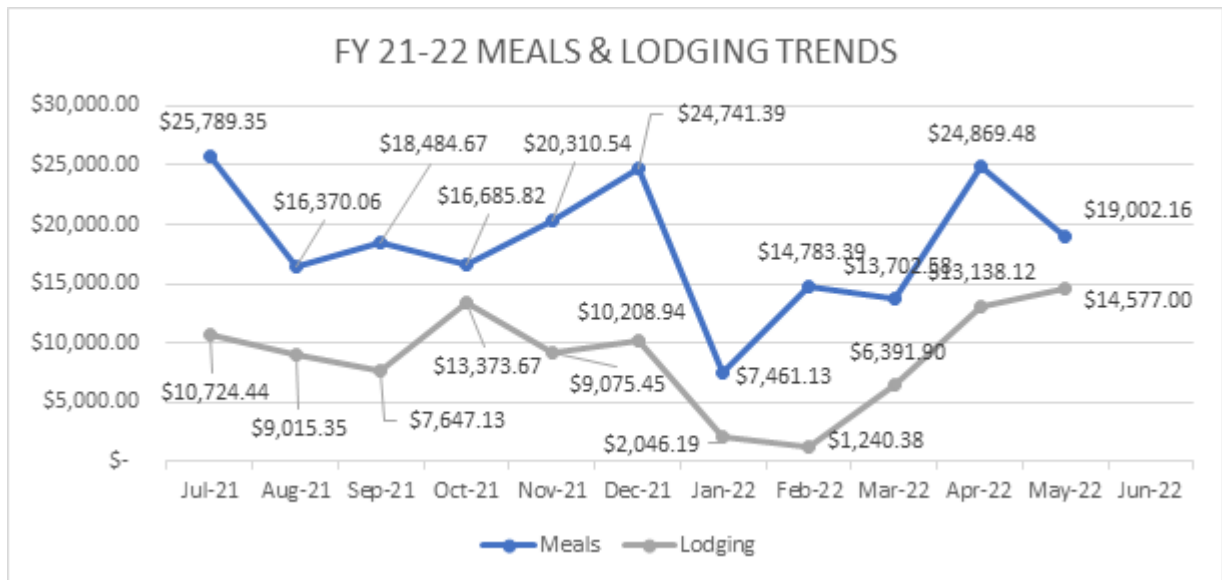
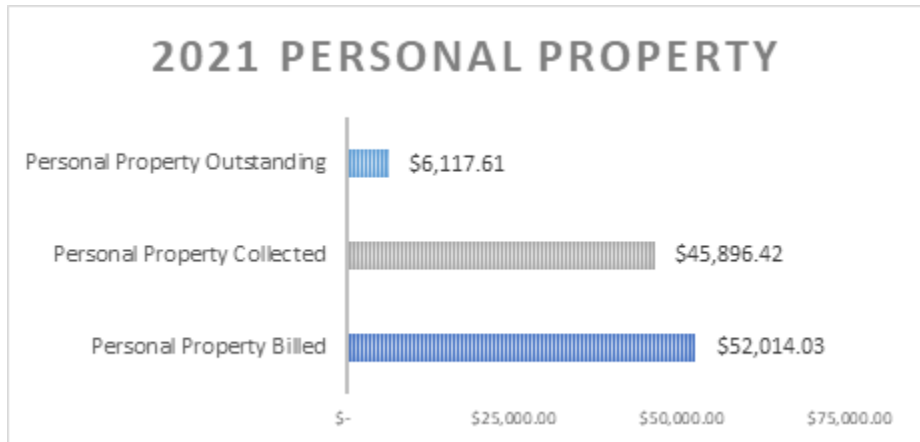
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Committee Reports

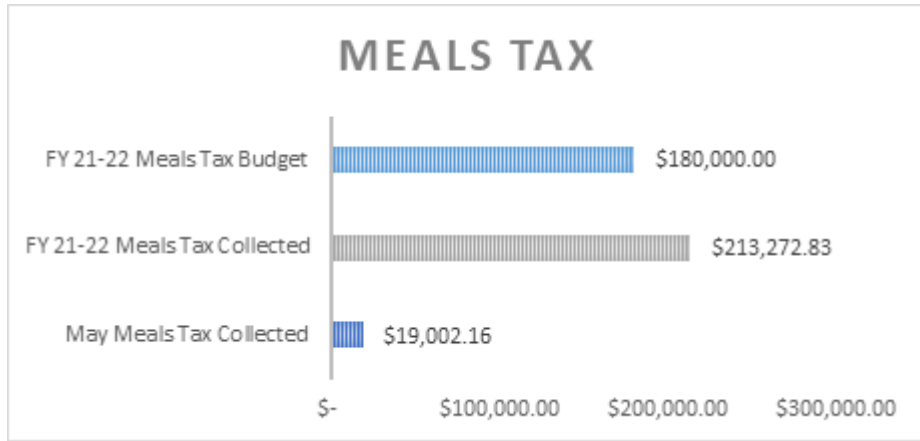
Budget, Finance, and Administration:

Town Treasurer, Elena Smith, submitted the following report for the previous month, which was read by Mr. Blevins:

Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes: The collection rate for 2022 Real Estate taxes is at 90.74% and the collection rate for 2021 Personal Property is at 88.24%.



Meals & Lodging Tax: We collected \$19,002.16 in Meals Tax and \$14,577.00 in Lodging Tax during June, reflecting sales for May. These numbers do not include Meals and Lodging Tax not yet paid.



Town of Damascus Virginia Investment Pool (VIP)		
	Account Balance	FYTD Income
VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool	\$551,707.83	\$511.29
Subaccounts		
RESERVE FUND	\$54,013.37	\$50.09
EARMARK POLICE VEHICLE	\$15,283.75	\$14.17
SEWER FUND CD	\$26,256.62	\$24.32
ANTHEM RECOVERY	\$43,882.91	\$40.62
ADDITIONAL WORKING CAPITAL	\$1,717.44	\$1.58
TRAIL DAYS RESERVE	\$7,445.23	\$6.93
TOD ARPA 2021	\$403,107.51	\$373.58

Announcement:

The due date for Meals and Lodging Taxes will be adjusted from the last day of the month to the 20th of the month, in accordance with the Town ordinance. A new Meals and Lodging Tax Form will be produced and distributed this month.

Streets, Lights and Maintenance:

Nothing to report at this time.

Parks and Recreation:

Ms. Coleman reported on the following:

- * Christmas tree sales will begin at Laurel Creek Park on November 26 and continue until sold out. Sales will kick off with a 25ft tree lighting ceremony on the evening of the 26th, plus wreath and food vendors, Santa, hot chocolate, apple cider, cookies, and live music. Tree sales and the tree lighting are coordinated by Tom Foltz.
- * The Christmas parade is scheduled for Friday, December 2nd at 7pm, and will include the annual parade float contest and the 'Damascus Loves Dogs Holiday Costume Contest', plus Santa, hot chocolate, apple cider, and cookies at the Fire Hall after the parade.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve December 2, 2022, as the date for the parade. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

- * Donna Foltz is hosting a 'Shop Til You Drop' holiday shopping event at the Old Mill on the weekend of December 2nd.
- * We are working to add more events throughout the month of December so that we can make 'A Trail Town Christmas' into a month-long destination for the region. We encourage the community to participate by hosting events, decorating throughout town, and extending business hours. Contact Susan or Julie to add your event to 'A Trail Town Christmas'.
- * With the exception of a couple of bills, we have the figures in from our 2022 Appalachian Trail Days festival, and after expenses we made around \$55,000, which is fantastic.

Planning Commission:

Nothing to report at this time.

Police and Fire Advisory:

Chief Turner presented the following P.D. activity report for the previous month:

Operations: June 2022, Damascus Officers had 158 calls for service. We have taken 14 investigative reports and made 4 arrests. We work 2 reportable accidents.

Traffic Enforcement Activities: We issued 14 citations along with 12 warnings.

Speeding complaint areas include: S Shady Ave & N Beaver Dam Ave

Special Report: The Damascus Officer has started doing business checks throughout town.

Special Notes: We have received the LOLE Grant FY 18 payment of \$4,153.00. We have completed the LOLE Grant FY 19 and the paperwork will be submitted for payment soon.

Police Vehicles: The 2013 Ford Explorer will be fixed and back in service this week.

Auxiliary: Nothing new currently.

* Ms. Coleman thanked Chief Turner for having his Officers do business checks.

Damascus Volunteer Fire Department

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

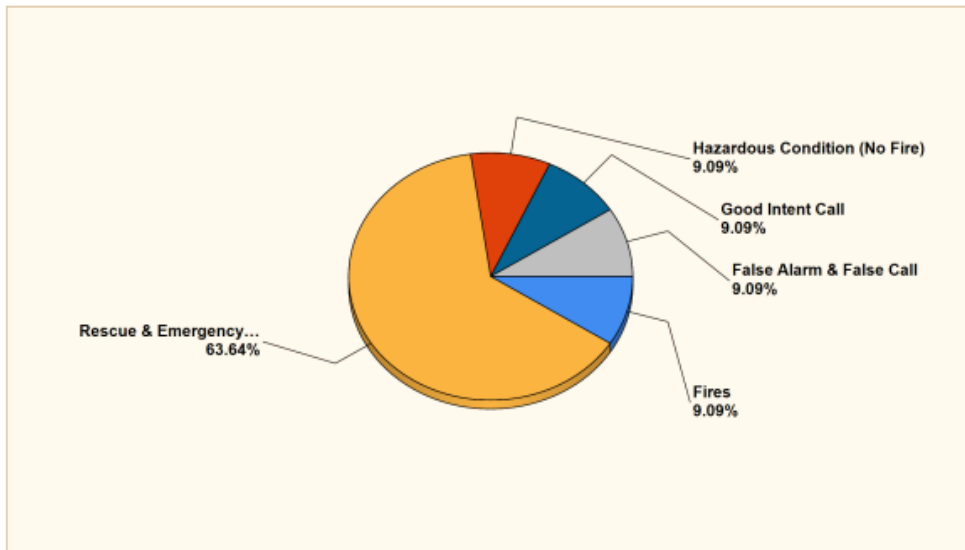
Damascus Fire Department ✖

Damascus, VA

This report was generated on 7/1/2022 3:37:00 PM

Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 06/01/2022 | End Date: 06/30/2022

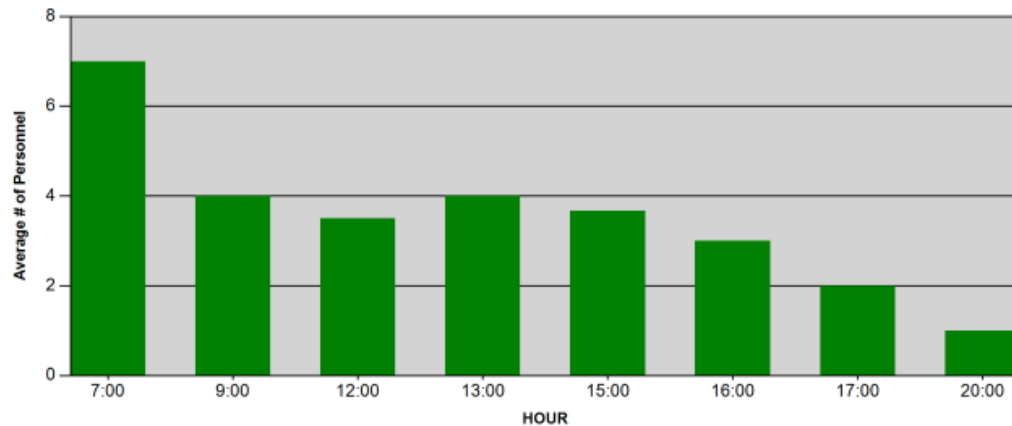


MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	1	9.09%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	7	63.64%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	1	9.09%
Good Intent Call	1	9.09%
False Alarm & False Call	1	9.09%
TOTAL	11	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
138 - Off-road vehicle or heavy equipment fire	1	9.09%
300 - Rescue, EMS incident, other	1	9.09%
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	3	27.27%
322 - Motor vehicle accident with injuries	1	9.09%
324 - Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	2	18.18%
445 - Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	1	9.09%
611 - Dispatched & cancelled en route	1	9.09%
735 - Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	1	9.09%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	11	100%

Average Number of Responding Personnel per Hour for Date Range

Start Date: 06/01/2022 | End Date: 06/30/2022



HOUR	AVG. # PERSONNEL
07:00 - 07:59	7.00
09:00 - 09:59	4.00
12:00 - 12:59	3.50
13:00 - 13:59	4.00
15:00 - 15:59	3.67
16:00 - 16:59	3.00
17:00 - 17:59	2.00
20:00 - 20:59	1.00

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

Start Date: 06/01/2022 | End Date: 06/30/2022

PERSONNEL	TIME SPENT ON INCIDENTS (Hours:Minutes Dispatched to Cleared Scene)
Berry, Austin	0:20
Blackburn, Douglas	2:08
Burnett, Michael	0:20
Campbell, Dalton	5:45
Felciano, Yamil	0:55
Johnson, Michael	10:12
Jones, Dave	2:08
Justice, Jason	6:23
Minton, Jared	1:09
Phipps, Michael	4:59
Reid, Michael D	1:09
Turner, Kermit	9:22
Turner, Walter B	9:14
Total:	54:03

Incident Statistics

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 06/01/2022 | End Date: 06/30/2022

INCIDENT COUNT			
INCIDENT TYPE		# INCIDENTS	
EMS		7	
FIRE		4	
TOTAL		11	
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	
OVERLAPPING CALLS			
# OVERLAPPING		% OVERLAPPING	
0		0	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (Dispatch to Arrival)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:11:08	0:15:08	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS		0:12:39	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE TURNOUT TIME (Dispatch to Enroute)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:05:17	0:06:05	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS		0:05:33	
AGENCY		AVERAGE TIME ON SCENE (MM:SS)	
Damascus Fire Department		58:06	

Response Percentage per Station per Personnel for Incident Types for Personnel

Personnel: All Personnel | Incident Type(s): All Incident Types | Start Date: 06/01/2022 | End Date: 06/30/2022

Personnel	Calls Attended	% of Calls for Selected Incident Types
Station: Station 1400		
Berry, Austin	2	18.2%
Blackburn, Douglas	1	9.1%
Burnett, Michael	2	18.2%
Campbell, Dalton	4	36.4%
Feliciano, Yamir	1	9.1%
Fletcher, James R	3	27.3%
Johnson, Michael	8	72.7%
Jones, Andrew	4	36.4%
Jones, Dave	3	27.3%
Justice, Jason	7	63.6%
Minton, Jared	1	9.1%
Phipps, Jennifer N	1	9.1%
Phipps, Michael	7	63.6%
Reid, Michael D	2	18.2%
Turner, Kermit	7	63.6%
Turner, Walter B	7	63.6%
Widener, Anthony	2	18.2%
Widener, Jacob	1	9.1%
Total Incidents for Station Station 1400	11	

Total Incidents for all Stations 11

* Mayor Lamb thanked the Police Dept. and Fire Dept. for their services.

Special Committees

Nothing at this time.

Manager's Report

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

Downtown + Laurel Creek Park & Trail

- * All of the landscaping around the park has been taken care of for the season, but we will be coordinating the completion of the dry riverbed feature in the landscaping along N Shady Ave trail section later in the summer.
- * We will also be coordinating sealing/staining of the structures later in the year.
- * The bathroom exterior and interior are nearly finished - final touches will continue with ongoing installation of storage shelves, etc. in the back room.

TRRC – Trail Center

- * Landscaping efforts continue as we await final plans for the rain garden.
- * The garage interior should be completed this month with installation of the new ceiling and electrical.
- * Exterior work should be completed late July-early August pending receipt of the new doors and windows.

Scattered Site Housing Rehab Project

- * I am still coordinating with MRPDC and the Rehab Specialist to get all of the applications finalized and get documents ready to bid the first houses for reconstruction. DHCD requires that we address the substantial reconstructions before the rehabilitations.
- * The town is seeking prequalification of contractors to aid in procurement of the contractors for the rehabilitations, reconstructions, and demolitions throughout the project.

Miscellaneous

- * Julie and I are coordinating the projects submitted as part of the \$10,000 VTC Drive 2.0 grant award – following a community planning process – and we are hoping to move forward with those small projects soon.
- * The planning for expenditure of the ARPA funds is still ongoing following a general approach toward infrastructure, much of these funds is expected to need to be appropriated toward A/E for the

Creeper Trail, trestle repairs, and streambank stabilization measures along Beaverdam Creek – estimation for costs is ongoing.

- * Jason and I are still coordinating design and permitting for streambank restoration projects along Beaverdam Creek – these will be extensive, but we are planning to use a natural rock vane design.
- * I'm waiting on further contact from Mr. Craig and the timber company regarding use of the former IDA property and will be working out those details in the coming future.
- * Julie and I are still coordinating with a local stump carver for the Laurel Creek Park to get the design draft but are hopeful for completion prior to the grand opening of the Damascus Trail Center.
- * Jason and I are still coordinating with the Virginia Creeper Trail Conservancy to do repairs to the historic red caboose in the Town Park – interior repairs are underway, as well as exterior painting.
- * The new street striping has nearly been completed, but some corrections need to be made still, and some lines need to be corrected – we are coordinating the new parking signs that need to be installed accordingly.
- * The VCTC, USFS and I have been working with engineering and coordinating with the county for various necessary trestle repairs and hope to be able to move forward with final plans for repair soon.

Old Business

Nothing at this time.

New Business

1. Request from HHS Athletic Boosters, selling ads in their 2022 football program.
 - Ms. Coleman made a motion to purchase a quarter page ad space from the boosters. Mr. Fields 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
2. Lisa Quigley, Executive Director of the Virginia Creeper Trail Conservancy, gave the Mayor and Council an update on the state of the Creeper Trail based on inspections done by USFS engineers as well as additional studies done by a private engineering firm. The Creeper Trail is significant and important both economically and as a way of life for Damascus as well as the region. There are 47 wooden trestles on the trail, most of which are original structures from the railroad, and they were built well to last 125 years (so far) having significant use and exposure to the elements, and all have years of delayed maintenance needed. Trestles 30 and 31 (near Taylor's Valley) need substantial reconstruction first and because they are located away from nearby roads, they will need to be repaired at the same time to avoid the additional expense that would be incurred if the equipment and machinery had to be brought in twice. Also because of the location, that section of the trail will have to be closed during repairs, and there are no feasible detour routes, so this will need to be scheduled

during the slowest traffic months. Repairing trestle 31 will cost \$487,000, and trestle 30 will cost \$362,000. The Washington County Board of Supervisors have been informed of these repair needs and costs, and they will vote later this month to determine if they will use some of the County's ARPA funds to cover the expenses for trestle 31. Expenses for trestle 30 repairs will need to be covered by the USFS and the Town of Damascus. The only money available to the USFS for this would be through their Great American Outdoors Act grant funds, and they have approved some portion of this grant to go towards Creeper Trail trestle repairs, which we would like to schedule for this December through March of 2023.

Mr. Blevins stated that the Town of Damascus needs to appropriate a certain amount of funding towards these repairs so that the County Board of Supervisors will see the partnership effort and will then hopefully agree to cover trestle 31 repairs.

- Mr. Jackson made a motion to appropriate up to \$262,000 of the Town's ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds for the repairs and/or reconstruction of trestle 30 on the Virginia Creeper Trail. 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 pertaining to the Parks & Recreation and Administration Departments, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1).

Mayor & Council Members Reports

Mayor Lamb stated that we need to make sure the Beaverdam Friday Jam events are being marketed well; she would like the Citizens Comments part of the Council Meetings to be moved to the beginning; and that the Town's elected officials need to make themselves available monthly to meet with citizens and discuss ideas.

Mr. Jackson stated that he will be inviting 8-10 citizens at a time for conversation, and that we need to keep an open dialogue between our citizens and elected officials.

Ms. Coleman reported that the beautification committee is meeting weekly and are phasing out the whiskey barrel flower planters along the main street.

Citizens Comments

None at this time.

Announcements

UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- July 15 – Mountain Movers Karaoke and Movie in the Park
- July 22 – Beaverdam Friday Jam with the Dave Eggar Trio, sponsored by BZ Builders
- July 24 – First Baptist and One Way Ministries' Fire by Night in the Town Park
- July 29 – CTREC Kick-off and Silent Auction at the Black Horse Resort
- July 30 – Creeper Trail Ride to End Cancer Opening Ceremonies in Town Park

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

Consent Agenda

- Mr. Hayes made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$500, 2nd by Ms. Coleman. The motion passed (5-0).
- Mr. Jackson 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. Ms. Coleman 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Mr. Jackson made a motion to Recess into Closed Session for items previously identified under Legal Matters. Ms. Coleman 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Mr. Jackson made a motion to return to Open Session, 2nd by Ms. Coleman. The motion passed (5-0).
- 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.
 - Tom Hayes – Yea
 - Beaty Jackson - Yea
 - Charles Fields - Yea
 - Tony Doss - Yea
 - Susan Coleman - Yea
- Mr. Jackson made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Ms. Coleman. The motion passed (5-0).

Katie Lamb, Mayor

Tuesday Pope, Clerk