

DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes for January 5, 2026
6:00pm Regular Called Council Meeting

Council Members Present: Buddy Albro, Jeff Buckley, Sammy Campbell, Derwin Creech and Hunter Faust

Absent: Charles Fields

Also Present: Katie Lamb, Mayor Chris Bell, Town Manager
 Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk Kermit Turner, Police & Fire Chief
 K.T. Martin, Community Events & Economic Engagement Coordinator

Mayor Lamb called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance and Wayne Baker, Laurel Ave. Church of Christ, gave the invocation.

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the December 1, 2025, Regular Council Meeting, including December 9th Joint Public Hearing of the Damascus Town Council and Damascus Planning Commission, and Reconvened Council Meeting from December 1st, as presented.

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

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

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

Updated Town Organization, Appointments, and Reappointments:

Mayor Lamb suggested reappointing Hunter Faust as Vice-Mayor.

- Mr. Campbell made a motion to reappoint Mr. Faust as Vice-Mayor, as suggested. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (4-0-1, with Mr. Faust abstaining).

Mayor Lamb made the following committee recommendations, which were acted upon by the Council.

<u>Finance, Budget and Administration Committee</u>	Jeff Buckley
(3 Council Members, Appointed	Derwin Creech
by the Mayor Each Year)	Hunter Faust

- Mr. Albro made a motion to accept those recommendations. Mr. Faust 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Public Works Committee
(3 Council Members, Appointed
by the Mayor Each Year)

Derwin Creech
Hunter Faust
Charlie Fields

- Mr. Campbell made a motion to accept those recommendations. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

There are two vacancies on the Parks, Recreation, and Trail Days Committee. Rebekah Byrd and Carolyn Henderson are willing to serve.

- Mr. Albro made a motion to appoint Ms. Byrd and Ms. Henderson to the committee. Mr. Campbell 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Police & Fire Advisory Committee
(3 Council Members and Department Head,
Appointed by the Mayor Each Year)

Sammy Campbell
Hunter Faust
Charles Fields

- Mr. Buckley made a motion to accept those recommendations. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Officials

Zoning Administrator	Chris Bell, Town Manager
Legal Counsel	Gwynn Waddell, P.C.
Auditor	Owens CPA & Associates PC
Accountant	Lawhorn CPA Group
Mt. Rogers Planning District	Katie Lamb, Mayor
Shawna Cook	Town Treasurer
Tuesday Pope	Town Clerk
Kermit Turner	Police Chief

- Mr. Faust made a motion to reappoint the Town officials, as recommended. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Committee Reports

Budget, Finance, and Administration:

Mr. Buckley gave the following report for the previous month, which was submitted by Town Treasurer, Shawna Cook:

Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes: The collection rate for 2025 Real Estate is 91.74%, and 2025 Personal Property is 72.69%.

Meals & Lodging Tax: \$9,509.89 in Meals Taxes and \$4,788.66 in Lodging Taxes were collected for December 2025.

Account balances below are as of December 23, 2025:

<i>Town of Damascus Virginia Investment Pool (VIP)</i>	<i>Account Balance</i>	<i>FYTD Income</i>	<i>Inception Date</i>
<i>RESERVE FUND</i>	<i>\$63,526.06</i>	<i>\$1,286.73</i>	<i>08/11/2017</i>
<i>EARMARK POLICE VEHICLE</i>	<i>\$538.02</i>	<i>\$10.66</i>	<i>04/04/2018</i>
<i>SEWER FUND CD</i>	<i>\$30,880.92</i>	<i>\$625.52</i>	<i>11/26/2018</i>
<i>ANTHEM RECOVERY</i>	<i>\$51,611.62</i>	<i>\$1,045.44</i>	<i>12/21/2018</i>
<i>ADDITIONAL WORKING CAPITAL</i>	<i>\$622,981.15</i>	<i>\$8,991.72</i>	<i>08/08/2019</i>
<i>TRAIL DAYS RESERVE</i>	<i>\$8,757.72</i>	<i>\$177.38</i>	<i>05/14/2020</i>
<i>TOD ARPA 2021</i>	<i>\$191,974.55</i>	<i>\$4,914.54</i>	<i>06/29/2021</i>
<i>Damascus Endowment Fund</i>	<i>\$216,872.51</i>	<i>\$4,439.62</i>	<i>11/7/2024</i>
<i>FLOOD DISASTER RESERVE</i>	<i>\$15,350.76</i>	<i>\$310.93</i>	<i>06/06/25</i>
<i>VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool</i>	<i>\$1,202,493.31</i>	<i>\$21,802.54</i>	

The balances shown below are from online banking:

Bank of Damascus:

General Fund: \$181,599.68

CDBG ARC Downtown: \$478.70

CDBG Program Income: \$13,548.82

ARPA: \$76.00

Damascus Endowment Fund: \$6,523.48

Police Asset Forfeiture: \$3,461.42

Total: \$205,688.10

Announcements:

- o The current Town accounts at the Bank of Damascus do not yield interest. The Town Manager has suggested we change our General Fund account to interest bearing. The Bank of Damascus offers 0.05% APY for accounts with a balance over \$50,000 and 0.01% APY for accounts with a minimum balance of \$500. My understanding is that there are no fees associated with this change, and we would keep the same account numbers. The Council may wish to change all the accounts to interest bearing. A vote would be required to change the accounts to interest bearing, as well as list of which accounts are to be changed.

- Mr. Buckley made a motion to authorize moving all accounts into interest-bearing accounts, as suggested. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- *Council approval is needed to refund a taxpayer overpayment totaling \$2,603.17, as this exceeds the previous threshold I am allowed by Council, which was \$2,500.*
- Mr. Buckley made a motion to authorize refunding the additional amounts needed this month. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- *Trail Days and Independence Day food vendors have used meals tax forms in the past that did not include a line for discount, interest, or penalty calculations. Some vendors did use the correct form in 2025. In the interest of clearing up the difference in the meals tax forms, I am requesting that the Council consider a vote to waive unpaid penalties for 2022-2025, estimated to be \$376.92, as well as any interest that would have accrued. Further, I request that the Council consider a vote to refund discounts with interest from 2022-2025 at an estimated total of \$349.98 to the vendors who should have received discounts but did not.*
- Mr. Buckley made a motion to authorize waive unpaid penalties for 2022-2025, estimated to be \$376.92, as well as any interest that would have accrued, as well as to refund discounts with interest from 2022-2025 at an estimated total of \$349.98 to the vendors who should have received discounts but did not. Mr. Campbell 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Streets, Lights and Maintenance:

Mr. Creech reported that Public Works has been busy with trash, leaf, and brush pick-up, removing trestle 17 bollards, dead trees overhanging the Creeper Trail, and a street banner, preparing the park for the groundbreaking event, winterizing bathroom facilities, installing vent holes at the Tent City bathhouse, filling potholes, pool facility maintenance, and more.

Parks and Recreation:

Nothing at this time.

Planning Commission:

The next meeting will be on Jan. 13th, at 6pm.

Police and Fire Advisory:

Chief Turner presented the following reports for the previous month:

Operations:

December 2025, Damascus Officers had 85 calls for service. We have taken 5 investigative reports and made 3 arrests. We had 1 reportable accident.

Arrests are as follows: Simple Assault 1 and Warrant Service 2.

Traffic Enforcement Activities:

We issued 9 citations along with 17 warnings. The Speeding violations were 25 MPH Zone 8 and Fail to Stop at Stop Sign 1.

Speeding complaint areas include: Nothing New Currently.

Special Report:

I have recovered 1 sign and 2 bases from the crosswalk signs; I am still working on the other two signs.

Special Notes:

Year End stats for 2025.

Investigative Report 101, Citation 236 and Arrest 66.

Police Vehicles: Nothing new currently.

Auxiliary: Nothing new currently.

Accidents Successfully Exported To TREDS

Damascus Police Department

(12/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

Submission Date:	Accident Number:	TREDS Number:	Resubmission?
12/11/2025 - 14:28	25-00005	253455051	No

Total Successful Exports: 1

Arrest Race/Sex Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(12/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

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:
13B - Simple Assault	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2
Totals:	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	3

Citation Totals by Charge

Damascus Police Department

(12/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

Charge:	Number of Charges:
46.2-821 - FAILURE TO STOP AT A STOP SIGN	1
46.2-874 - SPEEDING 25 MPH ZONE	8
Total:	9

Incident Case Status Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(12/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

Offense:	Active:	Active TOT O/A:	Inactive:	Inactive WOF:	Closed Service:	Closed Except.:	Closed Arrest:	Adult Arrest:	Juvenile Arrest:	Adu./Juv. Arrest:	Unfld.:	Rptd.:	Actual:
13B - Simple Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
23F - Theft From Motor Vehicle	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	3
Totals:	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	5	5

2025 Year End Stats

Arrest Race/Sex Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(01/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

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:
13B - Simple Assault	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5
23C - Shoplifting	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	4	1	3	4
23H - All Other Larceny	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2
26A - False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
290 - Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
520 - Weapon Law Violations	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
90D - Driving Under the Influence	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	2
90G - Liquor Law Violations	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
90J - Trespass of Real Property	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	3	1	4
46.2-301 - Drive Suspended or Revoked	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	30	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	44	19	25	44
Totals:	45	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	66	33	33	66

Citation Totals by Charge

Damascus Police Department

(01/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

Charge:	Number of Charges:
<No Statute Specified>	1
18.2-103 - Petit Larceny	1
18.2-119 - Trespassing	2
46.2-1003 - defective equipment	1
46.2-1049 - DEFECTIVE EXHAUST	2
46.2-1157 - FAILURE TO HAVE VEHICLE INSPECTED	5
46.2-1158 - EXPIRED STATE STATE INSPECTION	1
46.2-300 - NO DRIVERS LICENSE	10
46.2-301 - REVOKED/SUSPENDED	9
46.2-613 - Expired thirty day tag / Improper Registration	4
46.2-646 - EXPIRED REGISTRATION	8
46.2-707 - DRIVING WITHOUT INSURANCE	1
46.2-711 - Improper registration	1
46.2-715 - IMPROPER DISPLAY OF FRONT TAG	1
46.2-722 - FORGED/ALTERED LISENCE PLATE	1
46.2-804 - PASS ON DOUBLE LINES	1
46.2-806 - Wrong way on One Way Street	1
46.2-816 - follow to close	1
46.2-821 - FAILURE TO STOP AT A STOP SIGN	6
46.2-825 - FAIL TO YIELD MAKING LEFT TURN	1
46.2-830 - fail to obey highway sign	3
46.2-852 - reckless driving	1
46.2-862 - RECKLESS DRIVING (SPEED) 20 OVER 25 OVER IN 35 ZONE	10
46.2-874 - SPEEDING 25 MPH ZONE	97
46.2-875 - SPEEDING 35 MPH ZONE	66
46.2-902.1 - NO PROOF OF INSURANCE	1
Total:	236

Incident Case Status Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(01/01/2025 - 12/31/2025)

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:
11A - Rape	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
13B - Simple Assault	1	0	0	0	0	2	5	7	0	0	0	8	8
18.2-186.3 - Identity Theft	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	3
18.2-479.1 - Resisting Arrest	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
220 - Burglary/Breaking & Entering	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
23C - Shoplifting	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	5	0	0	0	6	6
23D - Theft From Building	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
23F - Theft From Motor Vehicle	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
23G - Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
23H - All Other Larceny	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	5	5
250 - Counterfeiting/Forgery	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	3
26A - False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
26B - Credit Card/Automated Teller Machine Fraud	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
26E - Wire Fraud	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
290 - Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	5	5
35A - Drug/Narcotic Violations	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
35B - Drug Equipment Violations	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
46.2-301 - Drive Suspended or Revoked	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
520 - Weapon Law Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
90D - Driving Under the Influence	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	2
90G - Liquor Law Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
90J - Trespass of Real Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	0	0	0	6	6
90Y - Conspiracy to Commit One of the Group 'B' Offenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	6	0	1	0	8	2	30	18	2	0	1	48	47
Totals:	22	0	3	0	11	9	56	45	2	0	1	102	101

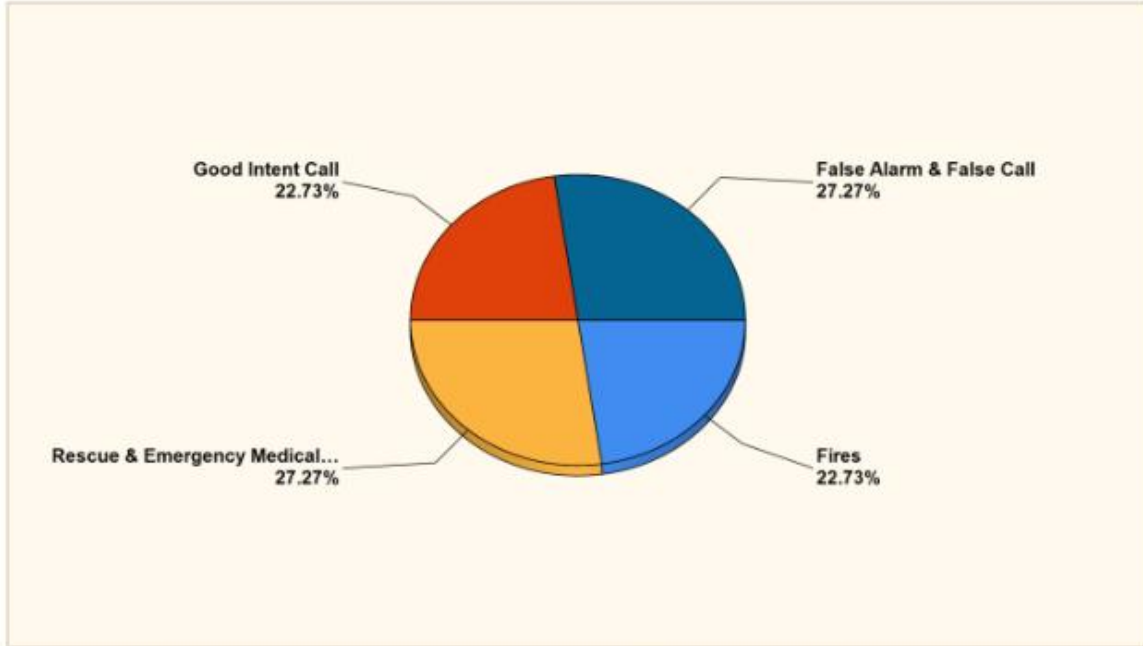
Damascus Fire Department

Damascus, VA

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Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 12/01/2025 | End Date: 12/31/2025

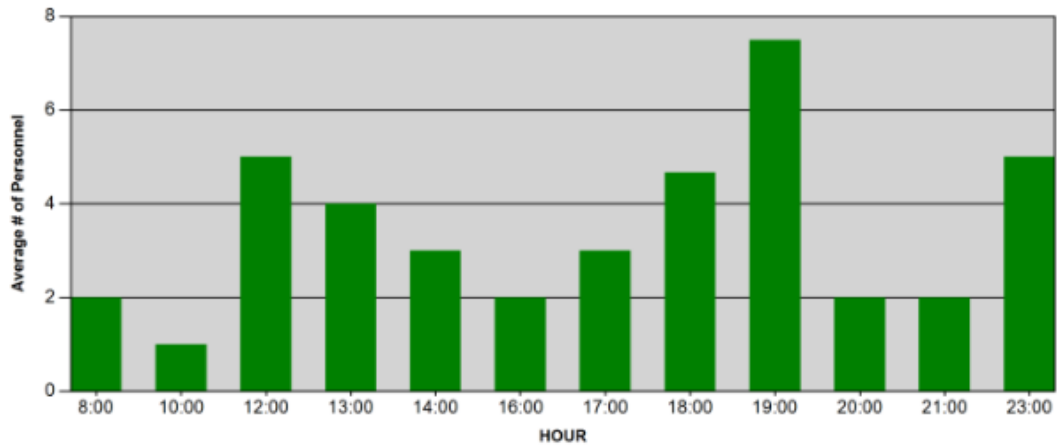


MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	5	22.73%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	6	27.27%
Good Intent Call	5	22.73%
False Alarm & False Call	6	27.27%
TOTAL	22	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
111 - Building fire	2	9.09%
140 - Natural vegetation fire, other	1	4.55%
141 - Forest, woods or wildland fire	1	4.55%
142 - Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	1	4.55%
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	1	4.55%
322 - Motor vehicle accident with injuries	2	9.09%
324 - Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	3	13.64%
611 - Dispatched & cancelled en route	1	4.55%
622 - No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	4	18.18%
733 - Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	1	4.55%
735 - Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	4	18.18%
743 - Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	1	4.55%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	22	100%

Average Number of Responding Personnel per Hour for Date Range

Start Date: 12/01/2025 | End Date: 12/31/2025



HOUR	AVG. # PERSONNEL
08:00 - 08:59	2.00
10:00 - 10:59	1.00
12:00 - 12:59	5.00
13:00 - 13:59	4.00
14:00 - 14:59	3.00
16:00 - 16:59	2.00
17:00 - 17:59	3.00
18:00 - 18:59	4.67
19:00 - 19:59	7.50
20:00 - 20:59	2.00
21:00 - 21:59	2.00
23:00 - 23:59	5.00

Incident Statistics

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 12/01/2025 | End Date: 12/31/2025

INCIDENT COUNT			
INCIDENT TYPE		# INCIDENTS	
EMS		6	
FIRE		16	
TOTAL		22	
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		9.09	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (Dispatch to Arrival)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:12:09	0:14:01	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS		0:13:04	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE TURNOUT TIME (Dispatch to Enroute)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:05:07	0:05:38	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS		0:05:37	
AGENCY		AVERAGE TIME ON SCENE (MM:SS)	
Damascus Fire Department		50:17	

Incident Type and Street Name for Date Range

Incident Status: Reviewed | Start Date: 12/01/2025 | End Date: 12/31/2025

Incident Date	Address	Incident Type
12/01/2025	36234 Rush Creek RD, Glade Spring, VA 24340	Medical assist, assist EMS crew
12/02/2025	Jeb Stuart HWY, Abingdon, VA 24210	Motor vehicle accident with injuries
12/06/2025	615 Mock AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional
12/06/2025	Mock AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Smoke detector activation due to malfunction
12/06/2025	Mock AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction
12/06/2025	Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	Natural vegetation fire, other
12/06/2025	Mock AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction
12/07/2025	Monroe RD, Damascus, VA 24236	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address
12/07/2025	Government RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Forest, woods or wildland fire
12/08/2025	Widener Valley RD, Damascus, VA 24236	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address
12/08/2025	Bennington WAY, Damascus, VA 24236	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address
12/08/2025	Monroe RD, Meadow View (RR Name For Meadowview), VA 24361	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.
12/09/2025	Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address
12/15/2025	126 Damascus Drive DR, Damascus, VA 24236	Building fire
12/17/2025	215 Imboden ST, Damascus, VA 24236	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction
12/18/2025	22788 Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction
12/18/2025	26460 Nestlewood RD, Abingdon, VA 24210	Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire
12/21/2025	22364 Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.
12/26/2025	Jeb Stuart Highway HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.
12/27/2025	Jeb Stuart /Blue Springs, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with injuries
12/29/2025	Osceola RD, Abingdon, VA 24210	Dispatched & cancelled en route
12/30/2025	Bucks Bridge RD, Glade Spring, VA 24340	Building fire
		Total incidents: 22

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

Start Date: 12/01/2025 | End Date: 12/31/2025

PERSONNEL	TIME SPENT ON INCIDENTS (Hours:Minutes Dispatched to Cleared Scene)
Abt, Wolfgang	3:34
Blevins, Eddie	0:23
Comett, Cory	1:07
Davenport, Adam	3:34
Doss, Brady	
Hicks, Emilee	1:37
Hicks, Noah	1:37
Hopson, Nickolai	13:59
Johnson, Michael	15:44
Jones, Andrew	0:24
Lawson, Shawn	2:39
Miller, Christian	1:37
Phipps, Makayla	4:34
Richey, Jordan	6:53
Turner, Kermit	12:27
Turner, Walter B	6:56
Yarber, Chase	6:26
Yarber, Justin	6:26
Total:	89:57

Response Percentage per Station per Personnel for Incident Types for Personnel

Personnel: All Personnel | Incident Type(s): All Incident Types | Start Date: 12/01/2025 | End Date: 12/31/2025

Personnel	Calls Attended	% of Calls for Selected Incident Types
Station: Station 1400		
Abt, Wolfgang	5	22.7%
Billett, Anthony	2	9.1%
Blevins, Eddie	7	31.8%
Cornett, Cory	2	9.1%
Davenport, Adam	11	50.0%
Doss, Brady	1	4.5%
Greer, Jesse	1	4.5%
Hicks, Emilee	3	13.6%
Hicks, Noah	6	27.3%
Hopson, Nickolai	14	63.6%
Johnson, Michael	20	90.9%
Jones, Andrew	2	9.1%
Jones, Dave	3	13.6%
Justice, Jason	1	4.5%
Lawson, Shawn	12	54.5%
Miller, Christian	8	36.4%
Phipps, Makayla	9	40.9%
Richey, Jordan	11	50.0%
Schlichting, Grace	1	4.5%
Turner, Kermit	17	77.3%
Turner, Walter B	7	31.8%
Widener, Anthony	1	4.5%
Widener, Jacob	1	4.5%
Yarber, Chase	12	54.5%
Yarber, Justin	11	50.0%
Total Incidents for Station Station 1400	22	

Total Incidents for all Stations 22

Mr. Campbell added that Damascus Rescue had 882 calls in 2025, with 247 of them in the Town limits.

Code Enforcement:

Mayor Lamb presented the following activity report for the previous month from the Town’s Code Enforcement Officer, Marty Berry:

Visits and Contacts: 5
Lodging: 0
Assist P.D.: 3

Zoning: 5
Meals: 0

Business License: 0
Complaints and Investigations: 1

Special Committees

- Community Events & Economic Engagement Coordinator – K.T. Martin presented the following:

I'm excited to share a quick snapshot of what's happening with Events and Economic Engagement, plus some upcoming opportunities for the Town of Damascus.

Here are the wonderful results from this year's Christmas Parade!

- * We had 41 parade entries, up 12 from last year, including 6 new participants joining the fun this year.*
 - * The official judging booth and Master of Ceremonies were a big hit*
 - * Santa, cookies & hot cocoa at the Fire Hall was a crowd favorite.*
- Overall, the parade and holiday activities were a true showcase of what makes Damascus so special*

Following the excitement of the Christmas Parade, we rolled right into another milestone for Damascus - the Virginia Creeper Trail Groundbreaking Ceremony, hosted in partnership with the Town of Abingdon & Kiewit Corporation at Damascus Town Park.

The event drew hundreds and featured incredible leadership and recognition from Mayor Katie Lamb, Governor Youngkin, Chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service Tom Schultz, and local representatives as we celebrated the next stage of rebuilding the upper half of the Virginia Creeper Trail.

A special shoutout goes to our very own Julie Kroll, who played an integral role in coordinating and bringing all the pieces together to make this event such a success.

Next up, some exciting news from our local business community. We're thrilled to announce the 5 recipients of the Damascus Business Community Thrive Grant! Last month, our grant committee reviewed and scored 10 applications, & after careful consideration, these businesses rose to the top:

- 🌟 Trail Town Adventure Golf*
- 🌟 Bad Bagels Pet Emporium*
- 🌟 Cardinal Music Hall*
- 🌟 Stone Fly Co*
- 🌟 Appalachian Heritage Distillery & Brewery*

Each of these businesses is taking the necessary steps to receive their funding after June 30th, and we can't wait to see how they continue to grow and contribute to the vibrancy of Damascus.

Building on that momentum, we've got three new businesses coming to downtown in the next few months: Cardinal Music Hall, Damascus Fitness, and Trail Town Adventure Golf - plus the buzz of a few more exciting updates to come!

One more big announcement for our town, I'm absolutely thrilled to share some incredible news about Kiewit, the company restoring the upper half of the Virginia Creeper Trail, They

are demonstrating their deep commitment to our community & have chosen to be the title sponsor for all 7 Town of Damascus events in 2026 and a community sponsor for Trail Days, which already has its own title sponsor.

With a generous donation of \$2,500 to each event, Kiewit is more than a sponsor, they are fully invested in the care and growth of Damascus. Their support ensures that our events continue to thrive and reflect the heart of our town.

Lastly, I would like to request the Town Council's approval for two exciting events that will bring increased tourism, community engagement, and economic activity to Damascus in 2026. Both events are led by outside organizations partnering with the Town, and each aligns perfectly with our economic growth plan, creating opportunities for local businesses and enhancing the visitor experience.

- 1. Virginia Highlands Festival – “A Day in Damascus”*
 - o Proposed date: Thursday, January 30th*
 - o Locations: Town Park & Laurel Creek Park*
 - o This is an extension of the very popular Virginia Highlands Festival, and it will bring festival-goers into our town, supporting local restaurants & businesses.*
- 2. Appalachian Sustainable Development – “A Taste of Damascus”*
 - o Proposed dates: Sunday, August 16th or Sunday, August 23rd*
 - o Location: Town Park*
 - o This event will highlight our local restaurants and farmers, draw visitors from across the region, and create a meaningful economic boost for businesses in downtown Damascus.*

I respectfully request the Town Council's approval to utilize Town Park and Laurel Creek Park for these events. Please note that this will require an official vote.

- Mr. Buckley made a motion to approve the use of the Town's parks for the proposed events, as requested. Mr. Faust 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

➤ Damascus Health Center Commission – Proposed Resolution:

WHEREAS the Town of Damascus, Virginia, by and through the Damascus Town Council, has created the Damascus Health Center Commission; and

WHEREAS, said Commission requires the appointment of five (5) Commissioners;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1. Mr. John Henderson shall be and hereby is appointed as Commissioner of the Damascus Health Center Commission for a term of one (1) year, said term to commence on January 1, 2026, and end on December 31, 2026.
 2. Ms. Michele Chesser shall be and hereby is appointed as Commissioner of the Damascus Health Center Commission for a term of two (2) years, said term to commence on January 1, 2026, and end on December 31, 2027.
 3. Mr. Samuel Campbell II shall be and hereby is appointed as Commissioner of the Damascus Health Center Commission for a term of three (3) years, said term to commence on January 1, 2026, and end on December 31, 2028.
 4. Ms. Sean Albro shall be and hereby is appointed as Commissioner of the Damascus Health Center Commission for a term of four (4) years, said term to commence on January 1, 2026, and end on December 31, 2029.
 5. Ms. Tomie Jo Campbell shall be and hereby is appointed as Commissioner of the Damascus Health Center Commission for a term of five (5) years, said term to commence on January 1, 2026, and end on December 31, 2030.
- Mr. Buckley made a motion to approve the proposed resolution, as presented. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (4-0-1, with Mr. Campbell abstaining).

Citizens Comments

Nothing at this time.

Manager's Report

Chris Bell presented the following Manager's Report for the previous month:

Creeper Trail

- Successful groundbreaking ceremony held on 12/18/25 with Kiewit
- Official closure of Trestles 16 & 17/trail now in effect thru September 2026
- Coordination of VDEM camera removal and storage with Kiewit
- Awaiting finalization of Trestle 16 & 17 design for floodplain approval
- Working on Mutual Aid agreement with USFS & Washington County

Town Hall

- Installation of restroom exhaust fan system
- Addition of "Town of Damascus" lettering on council chamber wall

Emergency Preparedness

- Washington County HQES alert system implementation this month
- Mock emergency rescue simulation scheduled for January 20th at Creek Junction
- Awaiting delivery of 20 tons of road de-icing salt from Morton

FEMA/VDEM

- Awaiting approval from FEMA on Greenspace Land Acquisition Program for 205 N. Railroad
- Creekside Park restoration bid published, due date 1/23/26
- Town awaiting further reimbursement for Helene repair projects

Grants

- (6) bids received for Laurel Gateway Feasibility study. Contract to be awarded 1/28/26
- SEAP submitting EDA grant application this month for Recovery Coordinator funding
- SORBA Tr-Cities applying for Hope grant to build temporary Beaverdam Progression Skills Trail
- Submitting application for Bass Pro & Cabela's Outdoor Fund Local Impact Grant for Trout Days support

Miscellaneous

- Town Park Mock Property – Council action required to abate \$205.85 of taxes for parcel 172B1-A-148 located within Town Park acquired by the Town this past October
 - Mr. Albro made a motion to abate the tax amount. Mr. Faust 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Bayer Property – Letter of Intent signed and submitted. Awaiting sales agreement and application submission for the DEQ VRP program.
- Retired Ford Explorer – Retired police vehicle auctioned on GOVDEALS for \$2,345
- Stormwater Study – H&P has completed initial design suggestions for stormwater infrastructure additions (see attached designs) Discussing with VDOT, WCSA, and property owners
- Farmer's Market – Awaiting approval for SNAP program and applicants for 2026 Market Manager due 1/15/26
- Pool Management Staff – Advertisement for seasonal pool management positions to be posted this month
- Trademark– Applications to trademark “Trail Town, USA” and “Appalachian Trail Days” were submitted on 12/15/2025

<h2>Legal Matters</h2>

Nothing at this time.

Unfinished Business

Nothing at this time.

New Business

- Town Hall roof repair – Council action needed
 - Mr. Albro made a motion to accept the Town Hall roof repair proposal from Cornett Roofing for \$5,300. Mr. Creech 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Deed of Easement for WCSA (to access the island behind the pool) – Council action needed
 - Mr. Albro made a motion to approve the Deed of Easement as proposed. Mr. Faust 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Proposed Golf Cart Ordinance - Council action to schedule a joint Public Hearing with the Planning Commission, if the consensus is to move forward with pursuing this
 - Mr. Buckley made a motion to schedule a joint Public Hearing with the Planning Commission during the February Council meeting regarding the proposed golf cart ordinance. Mr. Albro 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Consent Agenda

- Mr. Faust made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$2,500, 2nd by Mr. Albro. The motion passed (5-0).
- Mr. Albro 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. Faust 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0).

Mayor & Council Members Reports

Mayor Lamb expressed her appreciation for town staff and maintenance department for all they do behind the scenes that people don't realize; thanked Julie Kroll for being instrumental in the Creeper Trail groundbreaking event; thanked Kiewit for their community involvement and the work they are doing; and hopes everyone had a wonderful holiday.

Mr. Albro encouraged citizens and businesses to be patient as we hope that business will pick up in town once all the contractors are here working.

Mr. Buckley thanked our Code Enforcement Officer, the Police Chief, and the Town Manager for taking care of some issues involving an alley that had been blocked and other code violations at a

property in town; the Creeper Trail groundbreaking was a great event and thanked all involved; thanked Mr. Creech and the maintenance crew; and thanked Ms. Martin for being such a big motivator in town.

Mr. Campbell stated Jacob Holmes was just named Mayor of Bristol, and he wishes him well.

Mr. Creech said there are good vibes in town with anticipation of business picking up with Kiewit and other contractors here working on the trail rebuilding project; and he enjoyed riding along in the maintenance truck in the Christmas parade.

Mr. Faust said he was glad to be there and expressed his appreciation for Town staff, who do their jobs wonderfully; very much enjoyed the Christmas parade; and is looking forward to all the 2026 events.

Announcements

UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Town Hall will be CLOSED on the following days in January:

January 1st – New Years Day

January 19th – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

- 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**!
- Mr. Albro made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Mr. Campbell. The motion passed (5-0).

Katie Lamb, Mayor

Tuesday Pope, Clerk