

**DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes for October 21, 2024**  
**7:00pm Regular Called Council Meeting**

**Council Members Present:** Susan Coleman, Charles Fields, Beaty Jackson, Robert Kemmerlin, and Jack McCrady

**Absent:** Tom Hayes

**Also Present:** Katie Lamb, Mayor  
Shawna Cook, Town Treasurer  
Kermit Turner, Police & Fire Chief  
Chris Bell, Town Manager  
Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk

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

Mayor Lamb reported on the following:

1. Due to the devastating effects that Hurricane Helene had on Damascus, an emergency Special Called Council Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 1pm at the Damascus Library for the following Closed Session items, and during this meeting, due to the temporary displacement of Town Hall, it was the consensus of the Council to hold Special Called Council Meetings on Wednesdays in October at 1pm, at the Library, for the same three Closed Session items.
  - i. Discussion and Consideration of Admin and Public Works Personnel Matters, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1).
  - ii. Discussion and Consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3).
  - iii. The protection of the privacy of individuals in personnel matters not related to public business, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (4).
2. On October 9<sup>th</sup>, the Special Called Meeting for that day was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts, and a Council Poll was conducted to reschedule the October Regular Called Council Meeting to Monday. The 21<sup>st</sup>, 6pm, at the Rock School Auditorium, which was approved (6-0).
3. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, the following Council Poll was conducted, and approved (5-1, with McCrady opposed to item #1).

Due to the damage caused by Hurricane Helene, immediate restoration efforts are needed and require approval of the following 3 items:

- 1) Authorization for the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with Doug Ellington for use of the property at 135 W. Laurel Ave, to be used for the storage of building materials.
- 2) Authorization for the purchase of a used 6'x10 dump trailer needed by the Public Works department from O'Quinn Trailer in Coeburn for \$5,195. This is needed to continue with debris removal, both short-term associated with storm debris, as well as long-term for brush pick-up, gravel, and mulch.
- 3) Authorization for the Town Manager to enter into a month-to-month agreement to lease the Damascus Motor Sales building as a temporary Town Hall location for \$1,000 per month, plus utilities. This will be needed until repairs and renovations on Town Hall are complete.

4. On September 29<sup>th</sup>, a Council Poll was conducted and approved (5-0) to give Town Manager, Chris Bell, the authority to act on all emergency relief efforts as needed.
5. The October 16<sup>th</sup> Special Called Council Meeting did not have a quorum present, so no action was taken.

\* It was the consensus of the Council to cancel the Special Called Council Meetings on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of October.

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the September 3, 2024, Regular Called Council Meeting Minutes.

- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to approve the August 5, 2024 Minutes, as presented. Mr. Fields 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the September 9, 2024, Special Called Council Meeting Minutes.

- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to approve the Minutes, as presented. Mr. Jackson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the October 2, 2024, Emergency Special Called Council Meeting Minutes.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the Minutes, as presented. Mr. Jackson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion failed (3-0-2, with Kemmerlin and McCrady abstaining), and will be revisited at the November meeting.

Mayor Lamb asked for approval of the agenda.

- Mr. McCrady made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Jackson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
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## 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 2024 first half Real Estate is at 81.29% and 2023 Personal Property is at 82.14%. Please note that as of September 30, 2024, not all payments were posted in Accufund due to personal property supplements needed to be migrated to the Accounts Receivable module.*

**Meals & Lodging Tax:** *\$30,477.43 in Meal Taxes and \$13,414.05 in Lodging Taxes were collected for September 2024.*

*Balances shown below are from the September 30, 2024 statement, which did not include FYTD information. The report that included the fiscal year to date information could not be processed on my computer on September 30<sup>th</sup> due to conditions at Town Hall.*

<i>Town of Damascus Virginia Investment Pool (VIP)</i>	<i>Account Balance</i>	<i>Inception Date</i>
<i>RESERVE FUND</i>	<i>\$60,140.86</i>	<i>08/11/2017</i>
<i>EARMARK POLICE VEHICLE</i>	<i>\$509.91</i>	<i>04/04/2018</i>
<i>SEWER FUND CD</i>	<i>\$29,235.36</i>	<i>11/26/2018</i>
<i>ANTHEM RECOVERY</i>	<i>\$48,861.27</i>	<i>12/21/2018</i>
<i>ADDITIONAL WORKING CAPITAL</i>	<i>\$206,261.26</i>	<i>08/08/2019</i>
<i>TRAIL DAYS RESERVE</i>	<i>\$8,291.06</i>	<i>05/14/2020</i>
<i>TOD ARPA 2021</i>	<i>\$550,546.89</i>	<i>06/29/2021</i>
<i>VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool</i>	<i>\$903,846.61</i>	

*The balances shown below are from online banking:*

*Bank of Damascus:*

*General Fund: \$201,324.77*

*CDBG ARC Downtown: \$478.70*

*CDBG Program Income: \$13,548.82*

*ARPA: \$76.00*

*Total: \$215,428.29*

### Announcements:

- o A Council poll was held on 9/17/24. The motion was for Council authorization to suspend any penalty and interest on real estate and personal property tax payments that have been made since June 20, 2024, until such time as penalty calculations and other issues with the financial software are resolved. Further to allow these payments to be processed in the system without any applicable penalties and interest. The motion passed (5-0).*

- *The real estate penalty calculation has now been corrected. Interest calculations for meals and lodging taxes are now in place in the system. Personal property supplements have been moved into the Accounts Receivable module and payments can be processed. Would the Council prefer to start applying 2024 first half real estate penalty now, along with interest that would have occurred from July 2024- present? Personal property supplements also need a penalty applied, as well as interest from September 2024 to present. 2023 personal property would require interest applied from July 2024-present. The reason this occurred was due to issues with the financial software that required resolution.*
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to forego the 2024 1<sup>st</sup> half real estate penalty, as well as the penalty for 2023 personal property supplements, as well as the interest on those and all past years. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
- *2024 second half real estate and 2024 personal property tax tickets could possibly go out within the next three weeks. I am required to get tax tickets out in the mail at least fourteen days prior to the due date. This is a tight timeline. Would the Council consider extending the due date for this set of tax billings?*
- Mr. Fields made a motion to extend the due date for this set of tax billings until January 15, 2025. Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
- *Due to the flood, meals and lodging tax remittances may be delayed. Would the Council consider waiving penalties and interest on late remittances for a period of time?*
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to waive the penalty and interest on meals and lodging taxes, starting September 21<sup>st</sup> and through the end of December.
- *Due to resolving concerns with the financial software and the flood that occurred on September 27, 2024, our audit has now been delayed. The auditor projects that we may be able to get the audit completed in December 2024.*
- *The line of credit with the Bank of Marion needs to be renewed. If the Council chooses to do so, it will require a vote.*
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to renew the Town's line of credit with the Bank of Marion. Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

### **Streets, Lights and Maintenance:**

Mr. Kemmerlin reported the maintenance crew has been doing a whole lot of debris pick-up, and are no longer picking up trash from personal properties because we no longer have dumpsters provided by the county to use.

## **Parks and Recreation:**

Mr. Jackson reported that despite the natural disaster, Trail Days 2025 will go on, and planning is underway. Also a reminder that the Town will need to hire a new pool manager for the 2025 season.

## **Planning Commission:**

Mr. Bell reported that the Planning Commission meetings will resume tomorrow at 6pm.

## **Police and Fire Advisory:**

Chief Turner presented the following report for the previous month:

### **Operations:**

*September 2024, Damascus Officers had 80 calls for service. We have taken 3 investigative reports and made 3 arrests. We had 1 reportable accident.*

*Arrests are as follows: Warrant Service 1, Trespass 1 and False Pretenses 1.*

### **Traffic Enforcement Activities:**

*We issued 13 citations along with 9 warnings. The Speeding violations were 25 mph zone 2, 35 mph zone 7, Expired Tags 1, Forge/Altered Tags 1 and No Endorsement 2.*

### **Speeding complaint areas include:**

*Nothing New Currently.*

### **Special Report:**

*We had one of our speed signs that had an issue, and it had to be sent and repaired and got it back. While getting it charged the other sign we had started not working. I have not had a chance due to the time frame of getting it back and the flood to get it worked on.*

### **Special Notes:**

*The LPR Camera system has 2 of the 3 cameras put into place and the third one is scheduled for Thursday October 17 to be installed. Once these are complete then the police department will be going through the training on the camera system and then going live with them.*

**Police Vehicles:** *Officer Price and my vehicles will be getting a complete service on them due to the flooding that we had on September 27, 2024. We had both vehicles that day in some high water and I am having to get one laptop screen due to damages receive from the day of the flood.*

## Arrest Race/Sex Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(09/01/2024 - 09/30/2024)

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:
90J - Trespass of Real Property	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	2	0	2
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

## Citation Totals by Charge

Damascus Police Department

(09/01/2024 - 09/30/2024)

Charge:	Number of Charges:
46.2-328 - NO ENDORSEMENT	2
46.2-646 - EXPIRED REGISTRATION	1
46.2-722 - FORGED/ALTERED LISENCE PLATE	1
46.2-874 - SPEEDING 25 MPH ZONE	2
46.2-875 - SPEEDING 35 MPH ZONE	7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>13</b>

## Incident Case Status Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(09/01/2024 - 09/30/2024)

Offense:	Active:	Active TOT O/A:	Inactive:	Inactive WOF:	Closed Service:	Closed Except.:	Closed Arrest:	Adult Arrest:	Juvenile Arrest:	Adu./Juv. Arrest:	Unfd.:	Rptd.:	Actual:
26A - False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
90J - Trespass of Real Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
90Z - All Other Offenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

Chief Turner also thanked the citizens of Damascus for all their help during the flood disaster and recovery.

# Damascus Volunteer Fire Department

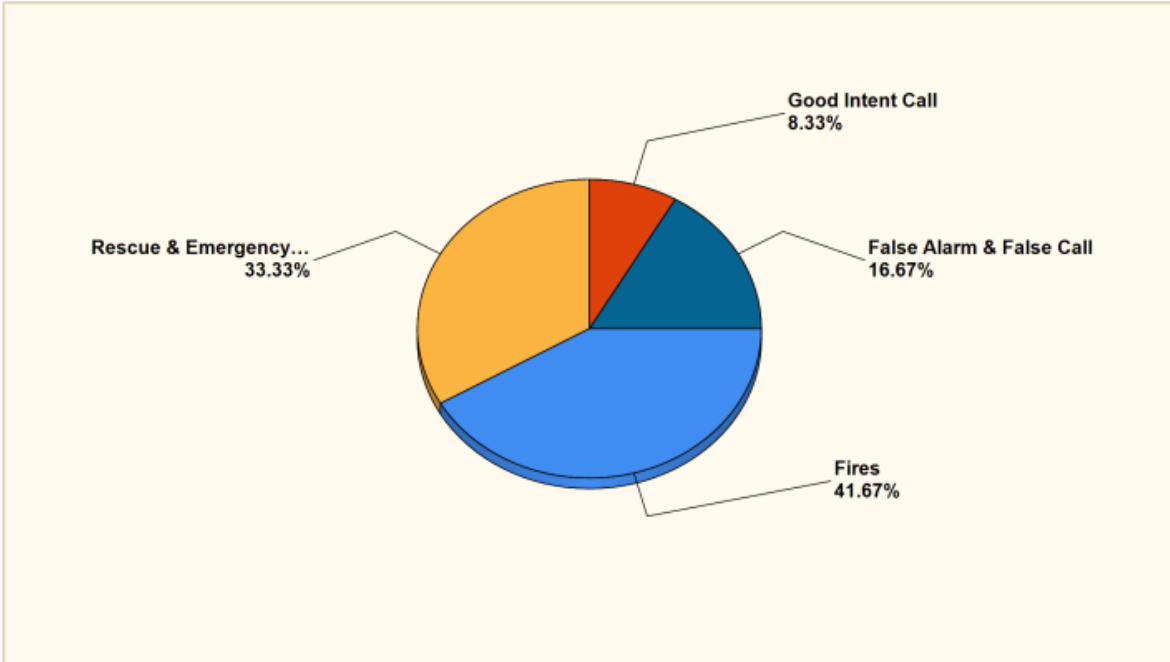
Chief Turner presented the following report for the previous month's activities:

## Damascus Fire Department

*Damascus, VA*

This report was generated on 10/18/2024 4:20:53 PM

**Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range**  
 Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 09/01/2024 | End Date: 09/30/2024

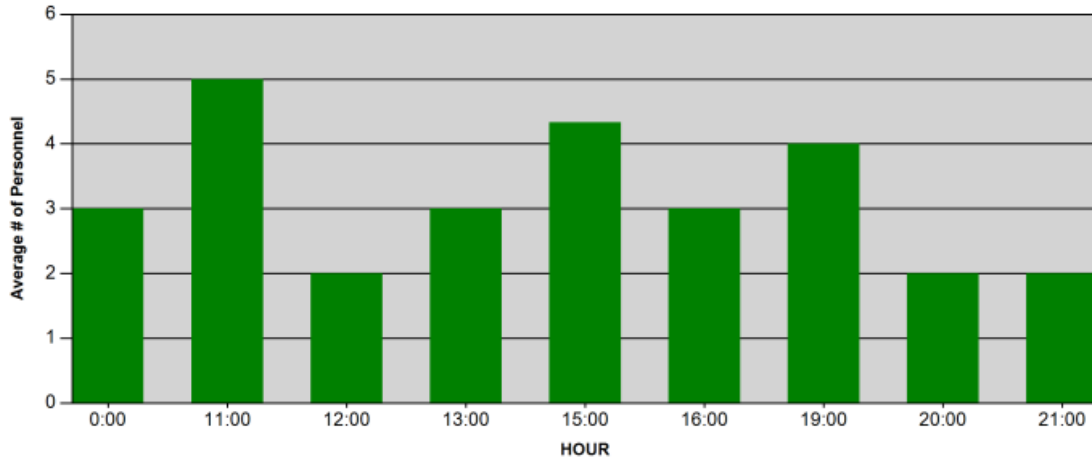


MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	5	41.67%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	4	33.33%
Good Intent Call	1	8.33%
False Alarm & False Call	2	16.67%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100%</b>

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
111 - Building fire	1	8.33%
118 - Trash or rubbish fire, contained	1	8.33%
131 - Passenger vehicle fire	1	8.33%
140 - Natural vegetation fire, other	1	8.33%
150 - Outside rubbish fire, other	1	8.33%
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	4	33.33%
622 - No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	1	8.33%
711 - Municipal alarm system, malicious false alarm	1	8.33%
735 - Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	1	8.33%
<b>TOTAL INCIDENTS:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Average Number of Responding Personnel per Hour for Date Range**

Start Date: 09/01/2024 | End Date: 09/30/2024



Hour	Avg. # Personnel
00:00 - 00:59	3.00
11:00 - 11:59	5.00
12:00 - 12:59	2.00
13:00 - 13:59	3.00
15:00 - 15:59	4.33
16:00 - 16:59	3.00
19:00 - 19:59	4.00
20:00 - 20:59	2.00
21:00 - 21:59	2.00

**Incident Statistics**

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 09/01/2024 | End Date: 09/30/2024

INCIDENT COUNT			
INCIDENT TYPE		# INCIDENTS	
EMS		4	
FIRE		8	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>	
TOTAL TRANSPORTS (N2 and N3)			
APPARATUS	# of APPARATUS TRANSPORTS	# of PATIENT TRANSPORTS	TOTAL # of PATIENT CONTACTS
<b>TOTAL</b>			
PRE-INCIDENT VALUE		LOSSES	
\$0.00		\$0.00	
CO CHECKS			
<b>TOTAL</b>			
MUTUAL AID			
Aid Type		Total	
Aid Received		2	
OVERLAPPING CALLS			
# OVERLAPPING		% OVERLAPPING	
4		33.33	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (Dispatch to Arrival)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:16:19	0:10:50	
<b>AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS</b>		<b>0:12:52</b>	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE TURNOUT TIME (Dispatch to Enroute)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:03:27	0:06:18	
<b>AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS</b>		<b>0:05:18</b>	
AGENCY		AVERAGE TIME ON SCENE (MM:SS)	
Damascus Fire Department		42:35	



**Incident Type and Street Name for Date Range**

Incident Status: Reviewed | Start Date: 09/01/2024 | End Date: 09/30/2024

Incident Date	Address	Incident Type
09/02/2024	Virginia Creeper, Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew
09/04/2024	Orchard Hill Rd., Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew
09/04/2024	Blue Spring Rd, Meadow View (RR Name For Meadowview), VA 24361	Passenger vehicle fire
09/07/2024	Virginia Creeper, Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew
09/11/2024	Appalachian Trail DR, Damascus, VA 24236	Natural vegetation fire, other
09/13/2024	Creeper TRL, Damascus, VA 24236	Medical assist, assist EMS crew
09/13/2024	Beech Grove RD, Glade Spring, VA 24340	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address
09/19/2024	Widener Valley RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Building fire
09/19/2024	McCann RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Outside rubbish fire, other
09/21/2024	Widener Valley RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Trash or rubbish fire, contained
09/22/2024	N Beaver Dam AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction
09/22/2024	Mock AVE, Damascus, VA 24236	Municipal alarm system, malicious false alarm
		<b>Total incidents: 12</b>

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

Start Date: 09/01/2024 | End Date: 09/30/2024

PERSONNEL	TIME SPENT ON INCIDENTS (Hours:Minutes Dispatched to Cleared Scene)
Davenport, Adam	3:59
Doss, Brady	0:25
Hicks, Emilee	1:35
Hicks, Mindi	0:25
Hicks, Noah	1:35
Johnson, Michael	12:03
Jones, Dave	4:31
Phipps, Jennifer	7:19
Richey, Jordan	6:14
Span, Nick	1:45
Turner, Kermit	6:59
Turner, Walter B	7:23
Widener, Alex	3:57
<b>Total:</b>	<b>58:08</b>

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

Personnel: All Personnel | Incident Type(s): All Incident Types | Start Date: 09/01/2024 | End Date: 09/30/2024

Personnel	Calls Attended	% of Calls for Selected Incident Types
<b>Station: Station 1400</b>		
Davenport, Adam	3	25.0%
Doss, Brady	3	25.0%
Hicks, Emilee	2	16.7%
Hicks, Mindi	3	25.0%
Hicks, Noah	3	25.0%
Johnson, Michael	8	66.7%
Jones, Andrew	2	16.7%
Jones, Dave	4	33.3%
Phipps, Jennifer	2	16.7%
Richey, Jordan	4	33.3%
Span, Nick	1	8.3%
Turner, Kermit	9	75.0%
Turner, Walter B	7	58.3%
Widener, Alex	3	25.0%
Widener, Anthony	1	8.3%
Widener, Bailey	1	8.3%
<b>Total Incidents for Station Station 1400</b>	<b>12</b>	

**Total Incidents for all Stations**

**12**

## Special Committees

Nothing at this time.

## Citizens Comments

None at this time.

## Manager's Report

Chris Bell presented the following Manager's Report:

### ***Creeper Trail***

- *Trail Closed: Due to the devastating effects of hurricane Helene, 17 miles of the Virginia Creeper Trail is closed from Trestle 17 up to Whitetop. At least 18 trestles are either missing or destroyed. The governor has formed a task force to assist the USFS assess the damage and develop a plan for restoration. The first 17 miles of the trail owned between the Town of Damascus and Abingdon are open to the public (Trestles 1 – 16).*
- *Creeper Trail Policy: The town of Abingdon has initiated an amendment to their ordinance, permitting e-bikes on the trail. It is my recommendation for the town of Damascus to follow suit and hold a public hearing to adopt and mirror the same policy to keep consistency with the "one trail" theme and spur economic recovery by promoting the first half of the trail.*
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to move forward with a Public Hearing regarding the matter. Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (4-1, with Ms. Coleman opposed).

### ***DOF Urban & Community Forestry***

- *Three qualifying quotes were received on 9/3/24 for the removal of trees on town property. Bids ranged from \$67,200 to \$67,870. (See attached) Due to the storm, the scope of work may have been impacted and DOF is reassessing 10/23/24 – 10/24/24. It is my recommendation that the town proceed with selecting a contractor to expedite the process once a revised scope of work is complete. My recommendation is for Lundy's Tree Service to be selected since they volunteered and donated their time, equipment, and resources during the aftermath of the storm (Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>) by cutting and removing fallen trees around town.*
- Mr. McCrady stated that since the scope has changed after the flood, it will have to be put back out for bids again.

### ***Town Hall Renovation***

- *One qualifying quote was received for the Town Hall renovation project related to ADA accessibility and emergency egress with a base bid of \$28,190. Due to the flooding that occurred at Town Hall, the scope of work will be modified to include new flooring, carpet, wallboard, etc. Project will be placed on hold until full remediation, insurance, and the request for public assistance thru FEMA processes have been analyzed and completed.*

### ***Temporary Town Hall***

- *Town Hall staff, offices, and equipment are temporarily relocating to 786 N. Beaver Dam Ave. Setup will continue through the end of the month with the primary goal of implementing the new phone & voicemail system. The drop box will still be in use at 208 W. Laurel Ave.*

Mr. Bell recommended the temporary Town Hall office hours be open to the public from 10am to 3pm, and still closed to the public on Wednesdays.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to change the temporary Town Hall office hours to be open to the public from 10am to 3pm for the next three months, and still closed to the public on Wednesdays. Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

### ***Helene Storm Damage***

- *Town assets and infrastructure damaged and/or destroyed include the following:*
  - o *Town Hall & Fire Station*
  - o *Trail Center Garage*
  - o *Laurel Creek Park Pavilion, Restrooms, and Trail*
  - o *Dog Park*
  - o *Storm Drain on Trestle*
  - o *Sinkholes & asphalt on Legion St., Imboden, Liberty, N. Reynolds, Trestle, N. Shady, Adkins (See attached)*
- *Working with Washington County Emergency Management team and registering for Public Assistance w/ FEMA by end of month*

### ***Damascus Strong Fund as of Oct. 18, 2024***

- *Creeper Trail Restoration / Maintenance – Approx. \$11,690.00*
- *Downtown Restoration / Beautification - \$7,129.00*
- *Emergency Services - \$28,313.00*
- *Undesignated – \$111,200.00*
- *Recommendation to form a 5-person committee of trusted advisors/employees to appropriate undesignated funds similar to Washington County*
- Ms. Coleman made a motion for the Council to authorize a 5-person committee of trusted advisors/employees to appropriate undesignated funds, with the members being approved by Council. Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

### ***IT – Higher Ground***

- *New town hall roof tower, wireless bridges, and park cameras installation complete.*
- *Change order required for pool requiring additional bridge and roof mount in the amount of \$2,218. (See attached) Change will eliminate the need for separate internet service at the pool, yielding a \$250 a month savings. Seeking council approval.*
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to authorize the \$2,218 change order, as presented. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

- *Quote received for additional wireless bridges and access points to extend public wi-fi along Laurel Ave. through downtown corridor in the amount of \$4,180. (See attached). Seeking council discussion and direction.*
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to authorize the \$4,180 quote, as presented. Ms. Coleman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

**Engineering**

- *Legion St. sidewalk/parking/drainage project placed on hold due to severe damage associated with Hurricane Helene.*
- *PER for stormwater along downtown corridor study placed on hold until further discussions with VDOT regarding Rt. 58 repair associated with Hurricane Helene.*
- *Laurel Creek stream bank stabilization project on hold as damage assessment continues with Army Corp./ FEMA.*
- *Exploring the need for a term contract for engineering services associated with storm restoration efforts and the FEMA process.*

**Miscellaneous**

- *Recodification: Revisions on the first edited draft to conform Town ordinance to the current requirements of state law submitted to CivicPlus. Revisions to the Subdivision and Zoning chapters will require review by both Planning Commission and Town Council*
- *Gap Analysis + Feasibility Study: Request for Proposal had a Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> deadline (day of the storm). Single bid received. Study on hold, funds to be possibly reallocated.*
- *Laurel Creek Trail: Following up with VDOT for approval of restoring parking spaces along N. & S. Reynolds street.*
- *Laurel Ave. Painting / Striping: Completed on 9/17/24*

**Code Enforcement:**

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

*Visits and Contacts: 7*  
*Lodging: 3*  
*Assist P D: 0*

*Zoning: 5*  
*Meals: 3*

*Business License: 1*  
*Complaints and Investigations: 3*

<b>Legal Matters</b>
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At the appropriate time, motion to Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Admin Personnel Matters, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1); Discussion and Consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3); and, the protection of

the privacy of individuals in personnel matters not related to public business, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(4).

## Old Business

1. Tree Removal Project Bids, Contractor selection – on hold
2. BZA update – Tom Davenport and Bryan Bryant have been sworn in.
3. Feasibility Study & Gap Analysis – on hold
4. Town Hall renovation – on hold

## New Business

Mr. Jackson reported that the Damascus Health Center Commission has recently lost two members, so those seat vacancies need to be filled in the near future.

## Consent Agenda

- Mr. McCrady made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$2,500, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Kemmerlin. The motion passed (5-0).
- 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. Jackson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).

## Mayor & Council Members Reports

Mayor Lamb submitted the following: “Many thanks to our Town Manager, our Chief Chief, all the first responders, and the Swift Water Rescue Teams. Many thanks to the VA Department of Emergency Services. Many thanks to the crews that came in and made Laurel Creek Bridge passable. Many thanks to all the folks who donated supplies, time, and funding. Thanks to all restaurants and to the local grocery stores that prepared free meals. Thanks to all the ministry teams providing free clean out/muck out, demolding, repacking of belongings, and carrying the salvageable belongings back inside. Thanks to town Staff!! Thanks to folks in the community that banded together to take care of each other! Kerry Guest, Hunter and Anya Faust, Councilman Kemmerlin, to name a few! Many thanks to our amazing maintenance crew! Eduardo, Nick, Heath, and Scott, who took care of his neighbors in Taylors Valley! Many thanks to our Parks and rec director. Many thanks to United Way and FEMA with recovery and efforts to rebuild! Many thanks to our volunteers, Tony Miller, Shelly Altizer, Holly Morrow. I do not have time to mention all of you that have helped or are helping. But please know how much we appreciate you and your tireless efforts. Bless all of you!!!”

Ms. Coleman agreed with Mayor Lamb.

Mr. Jackson commented that it has been amazing how the town has pulled together, and reminded everyone to vote in the upcoming election.

Mr. Fields thanked everyone who helped, as well as the good Lord because it could have been worse.

Mr. Kemmerlin thanked the maintenance crew, and recognized the help they have received from the Town of Abingdon, the Dept. of Corrections, and the citizens that have pitched in. He also would like this to be used as an opportunity for us to be even more special than we were before.

Mr. McCrady stated that we have a lot of town angels, and thank God there were no fatalities. He cautioned Council to plan for at least a couple of years of shortfall in revenue.

## Announcements

### UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- October 26<sup>th</sup> First Baptist Church and One Way Ministries' Fall Festival in the Town Park from 10-4
- Halloween will be observed on Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, with crosswalks guarded from 6-8pm. \* Hurricane Helene flooding caused damage to many of our roads and sidewalks, so please be careful where you are walking, and use flashlights once it starts getting dark.\*
- *For information on upcoming events, go to our website [visitdamascus.org](http://visitdamascus.org). For citizen info go to [damascus.org](http://damascus.org), and don't forget our social media presence on **Facebook** and **Instagram!***
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Personnel Matters, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to return to Open Session, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Kemmerlin. 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

Charles Fields – Yea

Beaty Jackson– Yea  
Robert Kemmerlin - Yea  
Jack McCrady - Yea

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to extend for an additional twelve months the additional custodial duties of the Town Treasurer, Shawna Cook, with an increase of the bi-weekly stipend for doing so to \$200, effective 11/01/2024. Mr. Kemmerlin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to temporarily hire Gavin Blevins, through the MRPDC, for eight hours per week, at \$1,600 per month, to facilitate floodplain management and compliance associated with flood damage. Mr. Jackson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to renegotiate the contract with Randy's Lawn Service to eliminate contract labor of mowing services on town property. Mr. Fields 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, which passed (5-0).
- Mr. McCrady made a motion to adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Jackson. The motion passed (5-0).

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Katie Lamb, Mayor

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Tuesday Pope, Clerk