

DAMASCUS TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes for March 4, 2024
7:00pm Regular Called Council Meeting

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

Absent: Katie Lamb, Mayor

Also Present: Gavin Blevins, Town Manager Kermit Turner, Police Chief
Tuesday Pope, Town Clerk Shawna Cook, Town Treasurer

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

Mr. McCrady asked for approval of the February 5, 2024, Regular Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the Minutes, as presented. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (5-0-1, with Mr. McCrady abstaining).

Mr. McCrady asked for approval of the February 13, 2024, Special Called Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to approve the Minutes, as presented. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Mr. McCrady asked for approval of the agenda, with the addition of Police Department Personnel Matters to the Closed Session items.

- Mr. Fields made a motion to approve the agenda, including the requested addition. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Committee Reports

Budget, Finance, and Administration:

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

Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes: *No collection rate reports were available from Accufund at the time this Treasurer's report was written. A request has been pending for this information. The last follow up on this item was February 29, 2024.*

Meals & Lodging Tax: *\$6,710.12 in Meal Taxes and \$5,041.80 in Lodging Taxes were collected for February 2024.*

<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>\$58,258.09</i>	<i>\$2,092.44</i>	<i>08/11/2017</i>
<i>EARMARK POLICE VEHICLE</i>	<i>\$494.45</i>	<i>\$626.20</i>	<i>04/04/2018</i>
<i>SEWER FUND CD</i>	<i>\$28,320.09</i>	<i>\$1,017.14</i>	<i>11/26/2018</i>
<i>ANTHEM RECOVERY</i>	<i>\$47,331.63</i>	<i>\$1,700.09</i>	<i>12/21/2018</i>
<i>ADDITIONAL WORKING CAPITAL</i>	<i>\$1,852.48</i>	<i>\$66.57</i>	<i>08/08/2019</i>
<i>TRAIL DAYS RESERVE</i>	<i>\$8,031.42</i>	<i>\$288.45</i>	<i>05/14/2020</i>
<i>TOD ARPA 2021</i>	<i>\$625,048.39</i>	<i>\$23,710.95</i>	<i>06/29/2021</i>
<i>VIP Stable NAV Liquidity Pool</i>	<i>\$769,336.55</i>	<i>\$29,501.84</i>	

<i>Bank</i>	<i>Balance</i>
<i>BANK OF DAMASCUS GENERAL FUND</i>	<i>276,724.80</i>
<i>BOM CDBG ARC DOWNTOWN</i>	<i>478.70</i>
<i>BOM CDBG PROGRAM INCOME</i>	<i>13,548.82</i>
<i>TRUIST GENERAL FUND</i>	<i>5,857.14</i>
<i>ARPA FUND CHECKING</i>	<i>100.00</i>
	<i>296,609.46</i>

Announcements:

- *The Council voted to pay Accufund costs from ARPA funds for the first year. A vote is needed to designate the pay from fund for Mountaineer Computer Systems, Inc. invoices.*
- *Ms. Coleman made a motion to pay Mountaineer Computer Systems from the General Fund's Admin line item for Professional Services (10-400-27). Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).*
- *A Council poll was conducted February 7, 2024, to close Town Hall from 1 P.M. until 3 P.M. for software training for the Clerk and Treasurer. The poll was approved (5-0), and training lasted only one hour, since the trainer had another appointment.*
- *I am requesting an extension to the deadline for submission of business license applications due to legal review and changes/ additions that may need to be made.*
- *Ms. Coleman made a motion to extend the deadline for 30 days, until May 31st, as recommended by Legal Counsel. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).*

Streets, Lights and Maintenance:

Mr. McCrady reported that the department has a new (used) bucket truck now. They have been cleaning debris from along the streets and sidewalks. Randy's Lawn Service is willing to renew their contract with the Town at the same rate as the past two years. Also, he is still moving forward with negotiations on a little truck and a backhoe for the department.

Parks and Recreation:

Mr. Jackson presented the following beer garden requests for Trail Days:

1. Trail Days Thursday (pm) – Laurel Creek Park event hosted by Sponsor 'Outside / Backpacker'. Similar to their event last year with raffles, food, and live music. Event host has requested a beer garden by The Damascus Brewery again.
 - Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (4-2, with Ms. Coleman and Mr. Fields opposed).
2. Trail Days Friday (pm) – Laurel Creek Park event hosted by the 'Head Outside Awards' with awards ceremony, food, and live music. Event host has requested a beer garden by The Damascus Brewery.
 - Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (4-2, with Ms. Coleman and Mr. Fields opposed).
3. Trail Days Saturday – With consensus from the Trail Days Committee, The Damascus Brewery requests permission to set up a beer garden in the Town Park.
 - Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (4-2, with Ms. Coleman and Mr. Fields opposed).

Planning Commission:

Nothing at this time.

Police and Fire Advisory:

Chief Turner presented the following report for the previous month:

Operations:

February 2024, Damascus Officers had 92 calls for service. We have taken 6 investigative reports and made 1 arrest. We had 2 reportable accidents.

Arrests are as follows: Shoplift 1

Traffic Enforcement Activities:

We issued 17 citations along with 21 warnings. The Speeding violations were 25 mph zone 7, 35 mph zone 5, Reckless Driving by Speed 1, Fail to Obey Highway Sign or Stop Sign 3 and Driving Suspended 1.

Speeding complaint areas include:

N Beaver Dam Ave & Laurel Ave

Special Report:

We have scheduled our next Drug Take Back for April 27, 2024, from 10am till 2pm at the Town Park.

Special Notes:

Officer Thurston has received his ballistic vest and has it in service currently.

Police Vehicles: The new vehicle arrived at the office on February 12, 2024, and was paid for upon inspection. I have dropped the vehicle off to get it marked and I have 4 quotes from 3 different companies to discuss for the installation of the equipment.

- Mr. Hayes made a motion to approve the equipment cost from East Coast Emergency Vehicles at \$4,927.18, and installation quote from Above Expectations LLC, at \$2,118. Mr. Fields 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Auxiliary: I have a gentleman that is interested in joining the Damascus Police Dept Auxiliary, I have completed the background check, and he is a certified Law Enforcement Officer and currently works for Ballad Health full time. Mr. Campbell agrees to assist with Trail Days and any special event that we have. I would like to ask for the town to go into closed session for discussion.

Incident Case Status Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(02/01/2024 - 02/29/2024)

Offense:	Active:	Active TOT O/A:	Inactive:	Inactive WOF:	Closed Service:	Closed Except.:	Closed Arrest:	Adult Arrest:	Juvenile Arrest:	Adu./Juv. Arrest:	Unfnd.:	Rptd.:	Actual:
23C - Shoplifting	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
23G - Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
90Z - All Other Offenses	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	3
Totals:	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	6	6

Citation Totals by Charge

Damascus Police Department

(02/01/2024 - 02/29/2024)

Charge:	Number of Charges:
46.2-301 - REVOKED/SUSPENDED	1
46.2-821 - FAILURE TO STOP AT A STOP SIGN	1
46.2-830 - fail to obey highway sign	2
46.2-862 - RECKLESS DRIVING (SPEED) 20 OVER 25 OVER IN 35 ZONE	1
46.2-874 - SPEEDING 25 MPH ZONE	7
46.2-875 - SPEEDING 35 MPH ZONE	5
Total:	17

Arrest Race/Sex Totals by Offense

Damascus Police Department

(02/01/2024 - 02/29/2024)

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:
23C - Shoplifting	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Totals:	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

Damascus Volunteer Fire Department

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

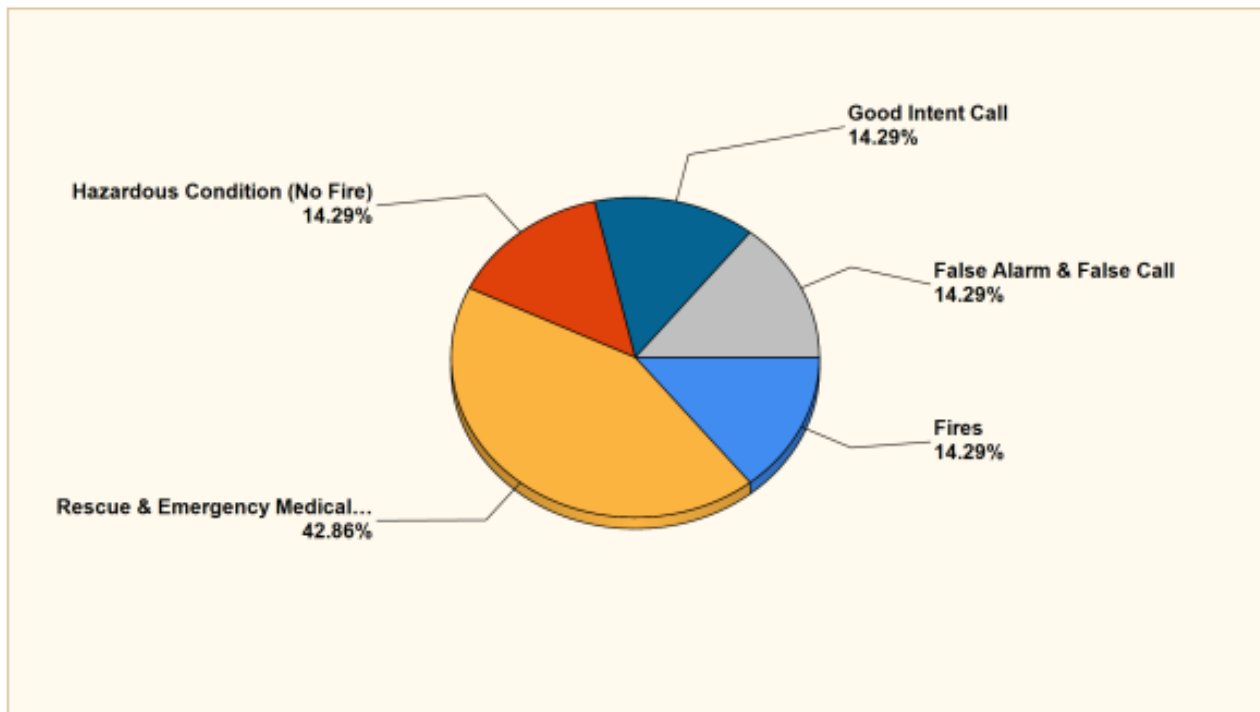
Damascus Fire Department

Damascus, VA

This report was generated on 3/1/2024 11:57:32 AM

Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 02/01/2024 | End Date: 02/29/2024



MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	1	14.29%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	3	42.86%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	1	14.29%
Good Intent Call	1	14.29%
False Alarm & False Call	1	14.29%
TOTAL	7	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
121 - Fire in mobile home used as fixed residence	1	14.29%
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	1	14.29%
322 - Motor vehicle accident with injuries	2	28.57%
412 - Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	1	14.29%
622 - No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	1	14.29%
700 - False alarm or false call, other	1	14.29%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	7	100%

Incident Type and Street Name for Date Range

Incident Status: Reviewed | Start Date: 02/01/2024 | End Date: 02/29/2024

Incident Date	Address	Incident Type
02/04/2024	Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	False alarm or false call, other
02/05/2024	Monroe RD, Meadowview (RR name Meadow View), VA 24361	No incident found on arrival at dispatch address
02/12/2024	Fisher Hollow RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Fire in mobile home used as fixed residence
02/21/2024	Jeb Stuart HWY, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with injuries
02/27/2024	Zion Church RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Motor vehicle accident with injuries
02/28/2024	Confederate Road RD, Glade Spring, VA 24340	Medical assist, assist EMS crew
02/29/2024	Cemetery Ridge RD, Damascus, VA 24236	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)
Total incidents: 7		

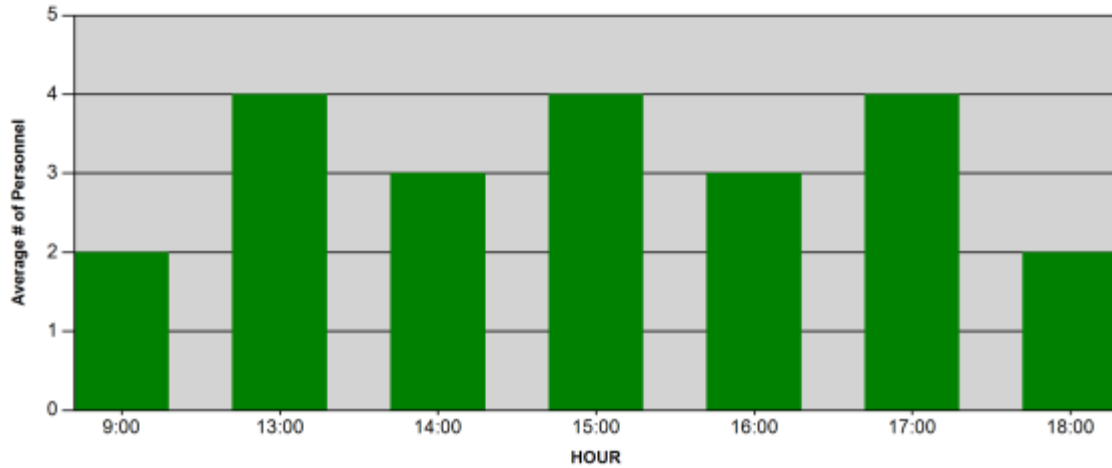
Incident Statistics

Zone(s): All Zones | Start Date: 02/01/2024 | End Date: 02/29/2024

INCIDENT COUNT			
INCIDENT TYPE		# INCIDENTS	
EMS		3	
FIRE		4	
TOTAL		7	
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	
0		0	
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (Dispatch to Arrival)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:08:57	0:08:25	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS			0:08:27
LIGHTS AND SIREN - AVERAGE TURNOUT TIME (Dispatch to Enroute)			
Station	EMS	FIRE	
Station 1400	0:03:56	0:03:14	
AVERAGE FOR ALL CALLS			0:03:40
AGENCY		AVERAGE TIME ON SCENE (MM:SS)	
Damascus Fire Department		28:06	

Average Number of Responding Personnel per Hour for Date Range

Start Date: 02/01/2024 | End Date: 02/29/2024



Hour	Avg. # Personnel
09:00 - 09:59	2.00
13:00 - 13:59	4.00
14:00 - 14:59	3.00
15:00 - 15:59	4.00
16:00 - 16:59	3.00
17:00 - 17:59	4.00
18:00 - 18:59	2.00

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

Start Date: 02/01/2024 | End Date: 02/29/2024

PERSONNEL	TIME SPENT ON INCIDENTS (Hours:Minutes Dispatched to Cleared Scene)
Campbell, Candace	2:33
Campbell, Dalton	1:20
Campbell, Wendy	1:17
Doss, Brady	0:13
Johnson, Michael	1:45
Richey, Jordan	1:26
Turner, Kermit	3:17
Turner, Walter B	2:42
Widener, Alex	0:41
Total:	15:13

Response Percentage per Station per Personnel for Incident Types for Personnel

Personnel: All Personnel | Incident Type(s): All Incident Types | Start Date: 02/01/2024 | End Date: 02/29/2024

Personnel	Calls Attended	% of Calls for Selected Incident Types
Station: Station 1400		
Belcher, Emalee	3	42.9%
Campbell, Candace	5	71.4%
Campbell, Dalton	4	57.1%
Campbell, Wendy	1	14.3%
Doss, Brady	3	42.9%
Hicks, Emilee	3	42.9%
Hicks, Noah	2	28.6%
Johnson, Michael	6	85.7%
Jones, Andrew	2	28.6%
Jones, Dave	6	85.7%
Justice, Jason	2	28.6%
Richey, Jordan	4	57.1%
Turner, Kermit	4	57.1%
Turner, Walter B	6	85.7%
Widener, Alex	3	42.9%
Widener, Bailey	2	28.6%
Total Incidents for Station 1400	7	

Total Incidents for all Stations

7

Chief Turner also reported that the Fire Department is considering selling their building on S. Shady Ave., where Souls Harbor Church is currently leasing. If this is decided upon, the Town will be given the right of first refusal for purchasing the building, and the property would be donated back to the Town.

Mr. McCrady stated that the Fire Department needs to move forward with having a separate water meter installed for that building, as it currently shares one with the Town's bathhouse. Also, the Town can donate the department what budgeted money the Town has saved by the Fire Department burning brush at the IDA property instead of Public Works hauling it to the dump.

Special Committees

Nothing at this time.

Citizens Comments

None at this time.

Manager's Report

Scattered Site Housing Rehab Project

- *The hybrid rehab/substantial rehab at 123 S Railroad Ave is nearly complete, we are just working on the sanitary sewer.*
- *The substantial reconstruction at 233 Douglas Drive is complete (the old house has been demolished).*

Creeper Trail

- *Trestles 30 & 31: The Conservancy is still working with USFS and Prosim Engineering to get all of the construction drawings approved – USFS has preliminarily approved our designs but is requiring that the bents be tested prior to final approval for bid.*
- *Trestle 16: The VCTC is assisting USFS with assessments for T16 to determine which direction USFS will move forward on designs for repair or replacement.*

Miscellaneous

- *Camera Upgrade: I've been working with one of our known vendors to get a proposal for camera system upgrades Town-wide, integrating into our current network (attached). This company has implemented a few technology upgrades around that I am aware of without issue.*
 - o *The council is requested to authorize the Town Manager to move forward with contracting the camera installation.*

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to move forward with contracting the camera installation, as requested. Mr. Hayes 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- *Police vehicle: The 2024 Explorer ordered in FY23 has been delivered and the police department solicited quotes for outfitting the vehicle.*
- *Drive 2.0 grant: The Town has \$20,000 earmarked from the Virginia Tourism Corporation for a project(s) within a narrowly defined scope set forth by VTC in accordance with the planning process that the Town utilized to secure the funding. Our priority is to use the funds for a feasibility study for the "IDA Property" but need to secure some additional funds. We need to have final submission to VTC by 03/15. I've reached out to Washington County and the IDA and received tentative approvals for matching funds, but we continue efforts to secure the match.*
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to continue moving forward with securing those matching funds and submit final approval to the Virginia Tourism Corp. of what the plan is to use the funds for. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- *Laurel Creek Trail: I've met with VDOT about reconfiguring the trail in front of the post office and they are in initial support, but I need to get some general drawings created for formal approval and construction. This was requested of Council and Council requested that I get an estimate of cost – the cost estimate from the original designer is \$800-1,000 to update "not-for-construction" drawings.*
 - *The council is asked to authorize the Manager to get updated drawings on the street markings and redesign of the Liberty Ave intersection curbs.*
- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to get updated drawings on the street markings and redesign of the Liberty Ave intersection curbs and coordinating with VDOT. Mr. Hayes 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- *LOVEwork: We are working on getting final designs and quotes to install a LOVEwork in accordance with VTC guidelines and utilizing \$1,500 in funding allocated from VTC for the purpose. We haven't yet received much interest in the project.*
(The item died due to lack of a motion.)
- *Gazebo Renovation: We have received quotes for repairs to the gazebo in the Town Park prior to Trail Days.*
 - *The council is asked to approve the quote for repairs to the gazebo structure.*
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve renovating the gazebo without building back the stairs in front of the main stage at this time, but having a custom gate made/installed

instead. Mr. McCrady 2nd the motion, which passed (4-2, with Jackson and Kemmerlin opposed).

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to approve the gazebo renovation quote from Appalachian Contracting Co., in the amount of \$4,290. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- *Surplus Property: The town has received the new police vehicle and agreed to remove the old Explorer from service. The public works department has received the new bucket truck.*
 - *The council is asked to authorize placing the 2013 Ford Explorer, the 2000 Chevy bucket truck, and any other equipment on auction.*
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to authorize placing the 2013 Ford Explorer, the 2000 Chevy bucket truck, and any other equipment, out for public auction, as requested. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Mr. McCrady reported that a Council Poll was conducted on Feb. 15th, which passed (4-0), for approval to purchase a used bucket truck, up to \$37,500, using the Public Works Capital Outlay line item (which has \$40,000 budgeted for this fiscal year. We ended up purchasing a 2008 Ford F450 bucket truck for \$35,000 from Riverside Auto, Inc.

Mr. Blevins also presented a quote for repairs to the Town's bathhouse on S, Shady Ave. that recently got water damage due to vandalism. The quote for repairs from Appalachian Contracting Co. is \$6,750.

- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to approve the quote from Appalachian Contracting Co., for repairs to the S. Shady Ave. bathhouse. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Legal Matters

- Mr. Kemmerlin made a motion to, at the appropriate time, Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and Police Department Personnel Matters, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Old Business

Covered under the Manager's Report.

New Business

Nothing at this time.

Consent Agenda

- Ms. Coleman made a motion to pay the bills for invoices exceeding \$2,500, 2nd by Mr. Kemmerlin. The motion passed (6-0).
- 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. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Mayor & Council Members Reports

Mr. Jackson reported the next Trail Days Committee meeting will be next Monday.

Mr. Kemmerlin reported that they have been looking into extending the Public Works shop's covered salt shed area by about 40ft on each side by 24ft deep in order to accommodate equipment and vehicle storage. Currently everything sits out in the weather.

- Ms. Coleman made a motion for authorization to move forward with these plans and gather quotes. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).

Mr. McCrady reported that he and Mr. Kemmerlin are going to Christiansburg tomorrow to look at a used mini truck for sale because Public Works is still in need of one.

Announcements

UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- *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. Jackson made a motion to Recess into Closed Session for Discussion and Consideration of Personnel Matters regarding the Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and Police Departments, per VA Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- Mr. Fields made a motion to return to Open Session, 2nd by Mr. Jackson. The motion passed (6-0).
- *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
Beaty Jackson- Yea
Robert Kemmerlin - Yea
Jack McCrady - Yea

- Mr. Hayes made a motion to appoint Robert Campbell to the Police Department Auxiliary, as recommended by Chief Turner. Mr. Fields 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- Mr. Fields made a motion to hire Amanda Puckett as the Pool Manager for the 2024 swim season, at \$15 per hour. Mr. Kemmerlin 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to raise the hourly pay for Kristen Jones to \$13 per hour. Mr. Jackson 2nd the motion, which passed (6-0).
- Ms. Coleman made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Mr. Kemmerlin. The motion passed (6-0).

Katie Lamb, Mayor

Tuesday Pope, Clerk