

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Marshall Board of Alderman**  
**Regular Meeting**  
January 23, 2023  
6:00 p.m.

In attendance were Mayor Nancy Allen, Aldermen Billie Jean Haynie, Thomas Jablonski, Aileen Payne, Christiaan Ramsey and Laura Ponder Smith. Also in attendance were Town Administrator Forrest Gilliam and Town Attorney Jamie Stokes.

Mayor Allen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Item 1

Upon motion by Alderman Ramsey, seconded by Alderman Haynie, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the agenda as amended to move Item 5 – Water and Sewer Projects to Item 7, and renumber Items 6 and 7 (Island Erosion Control and Special Event Street Closure) as 5 and 6.

Item 2

Upon motion by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Jablonski, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2022 regular meeting.

Item 3

Serina Henson, CPA with Lowdermilk Church and Co. presented a copy of the Town’s audit for Fiscal year 2021-2022.

Item 4

The Board reviewed information regarding three appointments to the Board of Adjustment, two of which are currently filled and one of which is vacant. Upon motion by Alderman Haynie, seconded by Alderman Payne, the Board voted 5-0 to table action on board appointments until the February meeting in order for the Town Administrator to check with the existing appointees to see if they are willing to continue for another term.

Item 5

Mariah Hughes, with Ivy River Partners, presented an updated plan and schedule for a proposed grant funded project for plantings to control erosion and make other improvements to the park on Blannahasset Island. The grant is funded to Ivy River Partners/Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation and Development, which will administer the funds and oversee the project. No Town funds will be used and grant funds will not flow through the Town, but the Town needs to give permission for the work to take place on its property. Upon motion by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Payne, the Board voted 5-0 to authorize the project to move forward on the Town’s property.

Item 6

Alexandra Arden, Director of the Downtown Marshall Association, presented a request to close South Main Street from Baileys Branch to Bridge Street for DMA’s “Marshall Gras” event to be held on Tuesday, February 21 from 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. The detour for the hour of closure will be Jerry Plemmons Way, and local traffic will be permitted to properties within the closed area as well as Hill Street. The closure will have to be approved by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. The closure will require three off-duty police officers to direct traffic and patrol the event,

with officers being paid directly by the Downtown Marshall Association. Upon motion by Alderman Payne, seconded by Alderman Ramsey, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the request and authorize the Town Administrator to seek appropriate approval from NCDOT for the closure.

#### Item 7

Forrest Gilliam, Town Administrator, presented a summary of progress the Town has made to its water system over the past 10 to 15 years. Use of grant funding to replace a significant portion of the Town's oldest water lines, in conjunction with training of Town staff in leak detection and the staff's diligence on this front has reduced the Town's monthly unaccountable water rate from an average of 40 percent in 2009 to 11 percent in 2022. This significant reduction in lost water has reduced the Town from being at over 80 percent of its water production capacity to 60 percent. To improve the resiliency and reliability of the Town's water supply, the Town in 2022 purchased the property containing three wells that provide approximately half of the Town's water. With this purchase, the Town now owns rights to all of its wells and does not have to pay annual lease payments or negotiate the lease terms. The Town used funds from the American Rescue Plan Act, as well as a portion of proceeds from the 2018 Hunter Creek Watershed conservation easement to purchase the property. The Town has also agreed to work with Madison County and the Town of Mars Hill to construct a new water line between Marshall and Mars Hill to provide an emergency backup source of water, funded by a direct appropriation of Federal American Rescue Plan Act funds directed to Madison County in the 2021 State Budget. The Town is no longer in an emergency situation with water, but additional development and ongoing changing circumstances require the Town's effort to identify additional water sources and make additional improvements to the water system, while also beginning to address issues with the sewer system that were lower priority as some of the most critical water issues were addressed over the past decade.

Garry Moore with Vaughn and Melton presented a draft list of water and sewer projects to be incorporated into an updated Capital Improvement Plan for funding over the coming years. The list was developed by Jamie Chandler, Maintenance Supervisor, Don Byers, water/sewer consultant, Forrest Gilliam, Town Administrator, and Vaughn and Melton based on past project listings and known issues with system age and maintenance. The list prioritizes projects that improve the resiliency of the system to serve existing water and sewer customers, prior to expanding to serve new areas. Projects will need to be funded over a period of years through a mix of grant funds and Town funds. Discussion took place regarding the initial list, which will be revisited as part of the budget development process and as funding opportunities arise.

#### Item 8

Forrest Gilliam, Town Administrator, presented the Tax Collection and Water/Sewer Collection Report for December, 2022.

A copy of the Unaccountable Water Report and Monthly Operating Report for the Town's wells from Byers Environmental was presented to the Board.

The financial report for the month of December was presented to the Board.

### **Reports from Boards and Community Organizations**

**Downtown Marshall Association** – No report

**Board of Adjustment** – No meeting

**Planning Board** – Met January 17<sup>th</sup>

**Parks and Recreation** – Met January 11<sup>th</sup>

## Department Reports

**Fire Department** – Report is in packet.

**Police Department** – Report is in packet

**Water Department** – Jamie Chandler

**Maintenance Department** – Jamie Chandler

**Zoning Department** – Forrest Gilliam

## Public Comment

Elizabeth Pantzer – Dog waste, speeding/traffic infractions, litter on Jerry Plemmons Way

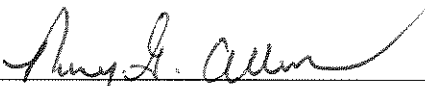
Rhiannon Vaughan – Public restrooms for downtown

Emily Patrick – Parking/other infrastructure for downtown businesses, dog waste/enforcement

Upon motion by Alderman Haynie, seconded by Alderman Ramsey, the Board voted 5-0 to enter into closed session for the purposes of attorney-client privilege, property, and personnel.

Upon motion by Alderman Haynie, seconded by Alderman Jablonski, the Board voted 5-0 to return to open session.

Upon motion by Alderman Payne, seconded by Alderman Ramsey, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 8:32 p.m.

  
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Nancy Allen, Mayor

  
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Forrest Gilliam, Town Administrator