

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF A MEMBERSHIP
APPLICATION TO WELCOMING AMERICA**

Whereas, Harrisonburg is known as The Friendly City;

Whereas, Harrisonburg has a diverse population with many nationalities and ethnic groups with more than 50 languages spoken here; and

Whereas, immigrants are a vital part of our community, bringing fresh perspectives and new ideas, starting businesses, and contributing to the vibrant diversity that we all value; and

Whereas, a welcoming environment for all individuals—regardless of race, ethnicity, or place of origin—enhances the city’s cultural fabric, economic growth, global competitiveness, and overall prosperity for current and future generations;

Whereas, a more integrated community will help contribute to Harrisonburg’s prosperity and its commitment to American values; and

Whereas, Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Program, the Islamic Association of the Shenandoah Valley, NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center, the New Americans Council, Skyline Literacy, as well as state and local governmental agencies and other groups assist immigrants with becoming integral parts of the local community; and

Whereas, Faith in Action, a group of 19 congregations (see list attached) with combined membership of thousands of citizens, has decided to work toward greater integration into the community of our immigrant neighbors in the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, VA, and has joined with the above mentioned partners to this end; and

Whereas, Faith in Action has identified and recommended WELCOMING AMERICA, as a resource for local governments in developing public policy models and helping immigrants become full participants in their communities, and has encouraged Council members to consider City membership in Welcoming America; and

Whereas, Welcoming America also inspires people to build a community that embraces immigrants and fosters opportunity for all; and

Whereas, Welcoming America is leading a movement of inclusive communities to help make everyone who lives in America to “feel like they belong”; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Harrisonburg will take the following actions:

1. Proclaim its support for Welcoming America by applying to become an official member of the organization.
2. Designate a City staff person as the City key contact for Welcoming America. Such staff person will:
 - Participate in three annual conference calls to share and learn from other Welcoming Cities and Counties, and
 - Participate, if possible, in an annual conference of Welcoming Cities.

ADOPTED THIS 23RD DAY OF AUGUST, 2016.

BY:

Christopher B. Jones, Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Erica Kann, City Clerk