

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING 6:30 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

A regular meeting was held by City Council on September 10, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ronald Atkinson, Ralph Atkinson, Odessa Gregg, Emerson Hunt and Joseph Frazier were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Pam Jones, and Attorney Robert Lee.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV)

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to accept the minutes from the regular meeting on August .13, 2013, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Mr. Leroy Gregg was not present at this time to receive his Resolution, but would be present later in the meeting.

Mayor Davis presented the Mayor's Monthly Beautification Award to Dal "Pee Wee" Johnson for going above and beyond the call of duty to keep the City of Marion beautiful.

Ms. Lois Edwards of the S. C. Forestry Commission was present to give Marion the "Tree City" award for the 21st consecutive year. This award is presented to the City of Marion on behalf of the National Arbor Foundation and the

S. C. Forestry Commission for following guidelines in planting, sustaining and maintaining the abundance of trees in the City.

Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to receive the House of Blessings Donation Request as information, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to give \$1,500 (Bronze) Sponsorship to the UNCF (as has been done in previous years), seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Reverend Marvin Hemingway was present to request having a Youth Day March from City Hall, down Main Street, to C. D. Joyner Auditorium, on October 19, 2013, which is Marion County Youth Day. The theme of this year's Youth Day is "Stop the Bullying, Stop the Violence & Come Together". Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson made a motion to allow the Youth Day March, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked that there be a set time to block off Main Street for the march and Mayor Davis will talk with Chief Gray to get an appropriate time for the march. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

Regarding the 2013-2014 Capital Projects Budget (for computers), Mr. Ammons commented that this was a carryover from last year and was previously approved for last year's Capital Budget. The amount of \$30,000 is available this year to purchase computers and will be purchased on a state contract. Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Mayor Davis abstained from taking part in the discussion and vote regarding the Lease Agreement for the Community Garden and asked that Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson proceed. As discussed in the August meeting, lease agreements were drawn up for the community gardens properties belonging to Mr. Bobby Davis and Mr. Russ

Sloan. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the two lease agreements as presented in their packets, leasing property from Bobby L. Davis as lessor and Betty Anne Sloan, Randall Sloan and Cynthia Sloan as lessors, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried. Mayor Davis abstained from voting.

At the request of Sheriff Mark Richardson, Circuit Court Judge William Seals, Chief Administrative Judge Craig Brown and Solicitor Ed Clemments to use C. D. Joyner for General Sessions Court, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to accept the request, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to allow Marion County to use the City Council Chambers the week of October 7th for Criminal Motion Hearings, with the stipulation that the Sheriff's Department would provide adequate security at City Hall, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the following recommendations for the Recreation Advisory Committee: 3 Year Term: William Sanders, Russell White, Antonio Vaught, Craig Lightfoot, Jason Jordan, Kimberly Shelley, James Washington, Tassie Lewis; 2 Year Term: Eboni Johnson, Ogleretta White, Joey Skipper, Kenosha Hyman, Leroy Tart Jr., Calvin Washington, Janell Davis, and Chess Stepp, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Councilman Baker spoke briefly on the new City of Marion Partnership Advisory Committee (name pending), chaired by Mr. Al Blake, which has been established to help raise funds for various needed areas throughout the City. Mr. Blake commented on some possible projects including surveillance cameras, new technology for police cars and any projects that the community will benefit from. Councilman Baker commented that a small group was meeting and the group would eventually branch out, but first we need to decide in what direction Marion needs to move in order to get this

off the ground. Mayor Davis stated this could be very beneficial to all the citizens of Marion and we need any help we can get as we approach this new way of trying to get help for our citizens.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The Stormwater project at Grice's is now complete, with the exception of a small amount of fine-tuning which should be completed around the same time.

Regarding the Grice's Pool Project, PMH has requested a change order of \$2,798.92 to replace 120 ft. of pipe that needed to be replaced. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the change order, seconded by Councilwoman Odessa Gregg; motion carried.

For Council's review, in their packets there is information regarding some new equipment. Mr. Ammons and Mayor Davis saw a demonstration of the equipment, and a demo for Council could be set up 15 or 20 minutes before the next meeting.

Officer Tyrone Reed of the Marion Police Department was named August 2013 *Employee of the Month* and presented with a gift certificate.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney Lee received a memo from Attorney Chuck who is representing the City in a legal matter and which Mr. Ammons will pass out in Executive Session.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The Departmental Reports are sent out each month in Council's packets. Chief Jim Gray thanked everyone for getting more involved in what is happening in the community and encouraged everyone to keep calling. Arrests have been made in some car break-ins. He encouraged all to keep their cars locked. Mr. Chuck Wiegert reminded everyone about the events being held on Saturday, September 21st, which included the City's "Play Day", MPD's fish fry, farmer's

market, ping pong tournament, volleyball tournament and the corn hole tournament. Mrs. Mary Eaddy reported that she had 7 new members to be added to the Citizen's Advisory Committee per Council's approval. Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to accept the list as presented by Mrs. Eaddy, seconded by Councilwoman Odessa Gregg. Councilman Ralph Atkinson inquired as to whether action could be taken as it was not on the agenda. Attorney Lee commented that it could be accepted as information. Mayor Davis stated that Council would accept the list and get back to her on this. Mr. William Campbell, co-chair of the Senior Council, extended an invitation for all seniors to attend the next meeting on September 26th at 3:00 p.m. at the Fire Department meeting room. At this time the senior's main concern is funding for PDRTA, to which Mayor Davis responded that they would be given an update. Mrs. Bettie Jones, Historic District Commission had nothing to report at this time and Mrs. Mary Frazier, Voucher Program Committee, had nothing to report at this time.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Councilman Michael Baker had no comment at this time.

Councilman Joseph Frazier thanked the City Administrator and employees for getting the area in District 4 cleaned up.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson suggested that those residents that turned 90 years old get a Resolution from the City, without it being brought to Council every time one was requested. Information regarding the recipient would need to be provided to the Clerk in order to prepare the Resolution. Mayor Davis commented that this would be taken under advisement.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no comment at this time.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg commented that Mr. Ammons assisted her in some problem areas in District 5 and wanted to thank him publicly

Councilman Emerson Hunt had no comment at this time.

Mayor Davis presented Mr. Leroy Gregg a Resolution in celebration of his 90th Birthday. The Resolution was read by City Clerk Pam Jones. On behalf of Mr. Gregg, his daughter Geraldine Smalls thanked the City for the presentation.

Mayor Davis thanked Senator Kent Williams and the Marion County delegation for their assistance in obtaining \$36,000 for cameras for 8 police cars for the City of Marion. We previously received \$5,000 (from AWS) toward the purchase of police equipment and Chief Gray is talking to the state about obtaining an additional 4 laptops. We are in the process of receiving information about video surveillance for downtown Marion and those cameras are in the \$35 - \$40 thousand range. We will keep the public informed as to what we are doing, as the safety of our citizens is of the utmost importance. Reverend Larry Williams will once again give away a tractor-trailer load of food to our residents on Friday, September 13th at 11:00 a.m. at Grice's Recreation Center. Mayor Davis asked that everyone be mindful that we want to serve as many people as possible and to have only one person per family pick up food. Reverend Williams is holding a tent revival at the Grice's Center all week. On Saturday, September 14th, Mr. Fred Gause, along with the City of Marion, will be hosting a Martial Arts Tournament at the Marion High School Gym. Also on Saturday, there will be a Youth Safety Awareness Program at C. D. Joyner Auditorium and sponsored by our Youth Council. The Youth Council is planning more events in the future. Mayor Davis asked that any suspicious activity be reported to the Police Department. We may not stop all crime, but with your help, we will be able to curtail it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Ammons commented that Alliance Engineering was not present for Executive Session. Councilman Baker made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss Contractual Matter - Consulting Firm, City of Marion Services; Personnel Matter - former Employee Severance Agreement; Personnel Matter - Assessment of City Attorney; Personnel Matter - Personnel Evaluations. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier and carried.

Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis called the meeting back to order and stated that no action was taken.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg made a motion for the Consulting Service for the City of Marion, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. Question was raised on whether the motion was to get quotes for the consulting services. Councilman Ralph Atkinson and Councilman Hunt were under the impression that we would seek bids for this service so we would know the cost and not to seek bids would be fiscally irresponsible. Motion carried with Mayor Davis, Council members Baker, Gregg and Frazier voting *yes* and Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson and Council members Atkinson and Hunt voting *no*.

Regarding Former Employee Severance Agreement, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to take no action and allow any member of Council to attend the mediation, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to advertise the City Attorney position, which is approved by Council every 2 years and placed on the agenda for approval, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. Councilman Hunt expressed his concern that this would cause further divide and destroy precious ties in the City and begs that Council reconsider their motion and allow us to reappoint our Attorney. Councilman Ralph Atkinson concurs 100% with Councilman Hunt and understands that the position should be reappointed every 2 years according to the Ordinance, but does not see the need in advertising the position. Councilman Atkinson also expressed to Attorney Lee that he hoped he would reapply for the job. Councilwoman Gregg commented that she thought it was an open position to which persons, including Mr. Lee, could apply and it would be left to Council to choose. After some further discussion, the motion carried with Mayor Davis, Council members Baker, Gregg and Frazier voting *yes* and Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson and Council members Atkinson and Hunt voting *no*.

Mayor Davis stated that he would approve the names on the Citizen's Advisory Committee that Mrs. Eaddy previously presented, on Wednesday.

Mr. Ammons stated that the United Fund Banquet was Thursday, September 19th and any Council members should see Mrs. Brown for tickets if they wished to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped September 10, 2013