

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2017
6:30 P. M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Ralph Atkinson, Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Joseph Frazier, Odessa Gregg, and Emerson Hunt were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon and City Attorney Chris Elliott.

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

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on February 14, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Mr. Larry Singletary of the City of Marion Sanitation Department was named *February Employee of the Month* and will receive a gift certificate.

The Mayor's Monthly Beautification award was presented to Mr. Carlton Gurley. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Gurley for helping to maintain the beauty of the City. Mr. Gurley commented that it is an honor to receive this award from the City of Marion.

A resolution was presented to Mr. William "Bill" Johnson, Jr. honoring his retirement as President/CEO of Pee Dee Federal Savings Bank. The Mayor and Council members all stood with Mr. and Mrs. Johnson to present the resolution which was read by the City Clerk. Mr. Johnson thanked Council for their support and stated this is truly an honor. He added that he and his wife were not born or raised in Marion County, but they truly love this community.

Mr. Anthony Harris, a consultant for Francis Marion University, thanked Mayor Davis and Mr. Ammons for taking the time to meet with him in January, as he traveled throughout the Pee Dee area speaking to municipalities about FMU. Mr. Harris introduced Mr. Darryl Bridges, Executive Director of the FMU Foundation, who presented information to Council regarding FMU and its scholarship program. Mr. Bridges noted that there are currently about 4,000 students at FMU, with 96% being from South Carolina. He highlighted some of the major programs offered and the upcoming program expansions. He noted that there are currently 75 students from the City of Marion enrolled at FMU, and 447 alumni. Mr. Bridges requested that Council consider including a scholarship within the annual budget for a citizen of the City of Marion to attend FMU. He stated that the scholarship could be flexible in its amount and criteria, and not exceed the student's needs. It would be for a full-time degree seeking student who maintains a certain GPA and demonstrates financial need. Mr. Bridges suggested a scholarship amount of \$2,500 per year and noted that this is the amount supported by most municipalities. Mayor Davis commented that the City of Marion will always support Francis Marion University and that Council will take this request under advisement.

Mr. Phillip Huffman of Southern Resource Advisors, LLC presented Council with information about non-personnel expense reduction and revenue enhancement consulting services offered through his company. He stated that they review expenses such as telephone, electricity and copier services to determine ways to save money while maintaining the same quality of services currently received. The company will also search for revenues the city may be missing. Any savings or revenues found would be shared for two (2) years. If no savings are found there would be no costs to the city. Mr. Huffman stated that most of the work is done at their facility so that it does not interfere with the daily operations of city staff. He also stated that nothing would be billed until the revenue is deposited into the city's account. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Huffman for coming and stated that Mr. Ammons would contact in the future.

Mrs. Debbie Erwin, Event Lead for the Marion County Relay for Life, requested Council's permission to host the 2017 Relay for Life Event at Withlacoochee Park on April 29th from 11:00

am to 11:00 pm. She also requested the use Wilkerson Gym as a backup location in case of inclement weather. Mayor Davis approved the date of April 29, 2017 for the Relay for Life Event at Withlacoochee Park. He asked Mr. Ammons to make sure the gym is available for that date in case of inclement weather. Mrs. Erwin also requested approval for future use of the park for Relay for Life events, pending the parks availability for the requested date. She stated that this request is being made so that they would not have to come before Council each year for approval. Councilman Emerson Hunt asked if the event happens around the same date each year. Mrs. Erwin stated that the dates vary from mid to the end of April, usually depending on spring break. Mayor Davis added that the A.C. Tollison Gym could be used if Wilkerson Gym is not available for the backup location.

Mr. Ammons presented information regarding the bids for drainage and sidewalk repairs at the Green Street Ballfield. He stated that there are some drainage issues near the concession stands. The project was advertised in the newspaper and only one bid was received from Herrington Construction for \$12,500. Mr. Ammons stated that there is currently \$5,000 available in the Recreation Department budget. He asked permission of Council to use additional funding from the Parks and Recreation Improvement account to cover the expenses. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to accept the low bid from Herrington Construction for \$12,500 for the Green Street Drainage Project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Ammons provided an update on the Hurricane Matthew storm damage. He stated that the City has submitted all documentation to FEMA to request reimbursement. Most of the documents have been approved and refunds should start arriving soon. A reimbursement request was also submitted to SCDOT for the "first push" in which the City helped to clear the streets during the first few days after the storm. Mr. Ammons stated that the damaged tree stalks on the public right-of-ways and parks around town are still being counted, and a bid packet will be prepared soon for removal. Regarding disaster recovery, Mr. Ammons commented that case workers from the SC Palmetto Disaster Recovery team are setup in the Marion County

Administration building and are available to help residents with housing needs. Mr. Ammons stated that the school supply funding request was submitted earlier this year due to the flood. He provided Council with the amount of funding available to donate and noted that the proceeds will be covered by auction funds. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to allow the Mayor and City Administrator to move forward with the budget adjustments for the school supply donation due to Hurricane Matthew. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

City Attorney Chris Elliott had no update at this time.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Davis stated that Departmental Reports are included in the Council packets.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Councilman Emerson Hunt acknowledged Coaches Lance Gurley and Maurice Hopkins who were in attendance. He commented that they give a lot to the youth and they work hard traveling all over the state for games. He stated that the bond between these coaches and the youth affect their lives more than money. Councilman Hunt also acknowledged the youth that were in attendance and thanked them for being such great students and citizens.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg also thanked the coaches and the parents for investing in the lives of our youth. She asked that those who work with the youth continue to support them and ensure that they be the best that they can be.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no comment at this time.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson commented on the city's noise ordinance. He stated that there are some pickup trucks riding around town that will shatter the glass in your house from the noise. He stated that there have been no noise violations on the monthly police report, and asked that Chief Tennie make sure the officers are enforcing this law.

Councilman Joseph Frazier also acknowledged the youth and the coaches for the great job they are doing. Councilman Frazier stated that he previously asked about some streets that were supposed to be listed on the national registry. Mr. Ammons stated that he spoke with Jeffery Graham, Marion County GIS Coordinator, who said the streets were reported to Google, SCDOT and the state GIS Department. Mr. Ammons stated that the city and county have done everything they could do to get these streets listed. He noted that the streets will show up on some devices but not all. He said Mr. Graham will continue working to resolve this issue. Councilman Joseph Frazier asked about the sidewalk repairs he requested on Jones Avenue. Mr. Ammons stated that this request has been reported to SCDOT since Jones Avenue is a state street. Mayor Davis asked that Mr. Ammons follow-up on this issue.

Councilman Michael Baker stated that he agrees with Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson's comments regarding the noise ordinance. Councilman Baker asked that Mr. Ammons provide all Council members with a copy of the letter he received regarding the Marshall Street property that is owned by the City of Marion. He also asked that this item be placed on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Mayor Davis expressed his appreciation to Mr. Lance Gurley, the coaches and young people in attendance for all they do in regards to their participation in the recreation programs. He also thanked them for being good, productive young men. Mayor Davis stated that he has a meeting scheduled with Mr. Gurley and other coaches, and asked that they bring any items of discussion to the meeting. He stated that Council will be provided with anything that needs to be shared with them following the meeting. Mayor Davis stated that there are two gyms open during the summer for the youth, and the city works to provide other activities when possible. He added that they can't always accommodate everything they would like to due to employee restraints. Mayor Davis thanked all the young people again for coming out to be a part of the meeting. He also thanked the parents for allowing their kids to participate in the city's programs. He asked that they stop by the recreation department to obtain a list of the many programs available to the youth. Mayor Davis revisited Councilman Joseph Frazier's comments about the street names. He stated that the issue is not just the renaming of the streets, but it's also the emergency factor

when a street cannot be located due to the name change. He stated that the City needs to stay on top of these updates. Mayor Davis commented that the recent basketball tournaments were a success and additional students will be participating in the programs this year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Carl Shcleg was not present to address Council.

Mr. Kevin Crawford expressed his appreciation to Council for the monthly Beautification Awarded he received. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Crawford for all he does for the community and the elderly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to enter Executive Session to receive a legal update from the City Attorney. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon

Taped: March 14, 2017