

**MINUTES**  
**MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**CONFERENCE CALL / SHANNON WILKERSON GYM**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2020 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Ashley Brady	Councilman Joseph Frazier
Councilwoman Tassie Lewis	Councilman Ronald Atkinson
Councilman Ralph Atkinson	Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt
Councilman Michael Baker	

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Alan Ammons, City Administrator	Tony Flowers, Police Chief
Ainsley Sanders, City Clerk	
Patricia Brown, City Treasurer	
James Brogdon, City Attorney	

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – MAYOR ASHLEY BRADY**

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Ashley Brady.

**2. PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor stated that there won't be a pledge since we don't have a flag.

Mayor went on to do the prayer.

**3. WELCOME CITIZENS, GUESTS & PRESS – MAYOR ASHLEY BRADY**

Mayor Ashley Brady welcomed the attendee's online.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING MAY 12, 2020, SPECIAL MEETING JUNE 9, 2020, SPECIAL MEETING JUNE 11, 2020, SPECIAL MEETING JULY 6, 2020**

Mayor made mention that the minutes that are needing approval are Regular Meeting May 12, 2020, Special Meeting June 9, 2020, and Special Meeting June 11, 2020, and Special Meeting July 6, 2020. ***A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier to approve the minutes as presented.*** The motion carried.

5. **JUNE EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – MAYOR ASHLEY BRADY**

**June Employee of the Month** is Officer Casey Henry. In the past because of COVID-19 for all the hard work and dedication of our employees we used our entire City employees. We have a special honoree and she is here with us. Mayor allowed Chief Tony Flowers to do the introduction and he expressed in a brief discussion why Officer Casey was a good candidate for employee of the month. Chief stated that Officer Henry implemented CPR and kept patient alive until EMS could get there and take over. Also last month she was dispatched to a possible overdose. When she and another Officer arrived they quickly noticed that it was indeed an overdose and quickly administered narcan which in turn saved the person's life. Mayor stated many times the Officers are unlike for what they have to do but what she has done is positive. Mayor also stated that he is sure that the families are very appreciative for what she has done. Mayor thanked Officer Henry for all that she has done.

6. **1ST READING TO AMEND ORDINANCE 20-11, ORDINANCE SECTION 9-3001 - JUVENILES**

Mayor Ashley Brady mentioned that it was called to our attention by Chief Flowers that our ordinance needs to be changed and the State has made

some changes as to what is considered a Juvenile so we had to make some changes as you can see which was included in your packets. Basically what we are doing is changing persons under 17 changed to 19 and under 16 to 17. This is basically what the State is saying what a juvenile is. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson.*** Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt had a brief discussion of what a juvenile is along with Chief Flowers. The motion carried.

**7. STREET NAMING REQUEST AND ACCEPTANCE OF MUSEUM DRIVE INTO CITY SYSTEM**

Mayor stated that item number 7 (seven) is a request from Marion County, and they of course are working on the Museum, and created the Amazing Grace Clementa Pinckney Memorial at the Marion County Museum. In front of the Museum is a semi-circle driveway and the County's requesting to name it Museum Drive, and accept it into the City of Marion jurisdiction as Museum Drive. ***A motion was made by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier.*** A brief discussion followed and the motion carried.

**8. USDA GRANT – GRAPPLE TRUCK**

Mayor mentioned the USDA grant is a \$50,000.00 grant, and we will possibly have to come up with \$100,000.00 to fund the rest of the account in getting the of a 2nd grapple truck. Mayor Brady stated we need a motion to accept the grant of \$50,000.00. ***A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis to accept the grant.*** The motion carried.

**9. GARBAGE PICKUP DISCUSSION**

Mayor stated that there was a revised agenda that was sent out regarding the trash pickup. Mayor also stated that as everyone in the building may know that the trash service has not been not so good. Mayor also stated that we have had many conversations with Mr. Heustess. Mayor mentioned that we have been in contact a lot in making sure they stay on a timely basis. We did this back in January and February where we had to jump in and our City employees had to take their time on a Saturday. Thank goodness we have dedicated employees. Mayor expressed that we are not there yet and we do not want to get there. The citizens are frustrated and it is not like the winter time. It is the summer time. We have 100 degree days and trash cans sitting outside. We have flies and we know what flies lead to and it is just a disaster and a mess, smells bad. Mayor Brady, Attorney, and Alan had a conference call today with Mr. Jim Heustess regarding the slowness in them, and not being on a timely basis of the trash pickup. We are being land blasted on Facebook. We are getting phone calls on the weekend and if not Alan is getting them on the weekend. Mayor also stated that he bet the Council are getting calls as well. We don't like it, we do not approve of it, and they have a contract. Mayor also affirmed that it's simply pick up the trash. They asked Mr. Heustess what he's going to do to rectify the problem, so that we do not get in the situation where we were last year or the early part of the year that the City is paying him to do? In the conversation on the phone with Alan, Mayor, and Attorney Mr. Heustess advised that they were on schedule as of today, and everything was picked

up. The Friday trash was pretty much missed and they worked some Saturday, trying to catch up and finished up yesterday afternoon (the day before the Council meeting). Mayor reported that Mr. Heustess stated that they were going to stay on schedule. Mayor asked how Mr. Heustess will stop this from happening in the future. Mr. Heustess advised or informed us that he has brought two side loader trucks. Mayor briefly explained the difference of a side loader truck and a rear loader truck. Mayor expressed that Mr. Heustess will have to educate our citizens to make sure they are putting the front of the trash can to the street so when the truck grabs it the lid will flip back and flip it in the truck. Mayor don't suspect that the trucks will be fully aligned until one day next week. They will have to have training and proficient use on the trucks. The side loader trucks cost a little bit more to maintain, and purchase which will save some in the labor cost. He has assured us that he is getting the side loader trucks, and he will still have the rear loader trucks. He has a new operator's manager. The young lady is new to him but he says that she has been in the trash industry for 20 (twenty years). Mayor has advised him that he, Alan, and they want Winky to have her cell phone number so that we can be advised on a daily basis where they were at with the trash service with the City of Marion. He/she can call one of the three of them and say hey, we have finished up Tuesday's route. Hate to baby sit like that but until he can show and prove to me that he is doing what is supposed to be doing he's going to have to prove to me that he is picking up trash on a timely manner. We are also going to send him a letter recapping and his assurance is to us that they would stay on schedule, and we will get that letter out to him hopefully by

Friday. Mr. Brogdon will be drafting that letter and sending that letter as he was in on that phone conversation. In that letter we will also give him a notification. In that letter that in thirty days if he proves that he is good to go, unless we have a major hiccup then we might have to readdress things. To continue services like it is isn't working for the City of Marion. One thing that slows them down; and is a hazard for the employees, is that with rear service If the trash can at the residence gets full and set the bags beside the trash can. The employee has to pull the cart and dump, but if bags beside the road the employee has to grab the bags and they potentially have needles in them, dirty refuge and could possibly get contamination. So if possible let the residence know to put all trash in the container if at all possible in your districts. Mayor stated that he mentioned that they can't put the trash in the canister if they are not picking the trash up, and the trash can is full. A brief discussion with Council went on concerning the trash and the fact that the trash company is having a lot to deal with such as residence being home and having to go boxes, cleaning out there homes and so forth. Councilmembers pitched in on the discussion and touched on what they were thinking.

**10. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**Operations – Facilities – COVID 19**

Administrator Ammons stated that we still have all of our safety precautions in place as far as COVID. We are providing mask and all safety equipment as needed and as recommended by CDC in all of our facilities. As far as our rentals they are still closed. Ammons stated that

even the buildings that are open daily there is limited access. Have to have mask on. We have installed an electronic machine at the police department. Every individual coming from court (that's probably our biggest volume in the building at one time). We will continue to keep those safety measures in place until we get a vaccine.

### CTC Projects

a. Huggins Street paving

The paving of Huggins St. from Main St. to Bobby L. Davis Blvd.

Administrator stated that it is the worst in Marion by far. It has been patched and it has deteriorated beyond patching. We have an estimate here at about 85,000.00 for a little extra over run if Council approves it we will present to the CTC.

b. Museum Drive

### Miscellaneous

Also in talking about Amazing Grace Park and Museum (the horse shoe that is in the front of the museum) the paving for that and the sidewalks around it are a \$132,000.00 project. We need to get approval from Council to move forward.

Mayor added that the motion that we will need in talking and surveying the streets Huggins is by far the worst street that we have and of course some other streets but we were able to talk to the Chairman of the CTC and he's pretty much agreeable depending on the funding and their funding has come in and of course that is off the gas tax. Their funding is down and we have other projects that we want to hit, but I think we were able to get him

to say yea to Huggins St. and Museum Dr. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker.*** The motion carried.

**11. CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE**

Attorney stated that he didn't have anything.

**12. DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR**

**Mayor Ashley Brady:** Mayor mentioned that he wanted to go back to the Huggins St., and he expressed that it is an area that does need some assistance. DOT has advised us that they will be on Pee Dee Circle to do some drainage work. We will be working with Mr. Coleman and making sure that is taken care of. Mayor also reminded that Godbold and North Main St. are in the system to be paved and they are telling us that it will probably be within the next year to a year and a half. North Main St. was not even on the radar. Through begging and asking we got them on the radar.

More devastating news is that Beneteau is closing. Mayor stated that he had not spoken to no one at Beneteau, but they announced this morning that Beneteau after 30 plus years in Marion County with be closing. That is some pretty bad news for our community. They had a lot of well-paying jobs and over 200 employees. Mayor replied that they gave 90 days give or take.

Our mini excavator has come in. We've been putting it to use it has a bush hog attachment, mulcher, and we have cleaned up some areas and are a little bit behind. Blumenthal and Catfish creek, we have cleaned that ditch



bank out behind Blumenthal. We used the mini mulch head and that day we cleaned it out we had five or six cars of people fishing, and they were catching some good fish, and that is what we want a little recreation.

We have done some grass cutting at Rose Hill cemetery around the highway and today most recently we were down Bobby Gerald Parkway cutting that ditch bank that we can't reach beside. The catfish creek is 2 feet below the riverbank, and that evening in observance we got about a half inch three quarter worth of rain and that morning catfish creek was over the bank and the field look like Lake Marion so Mayor, Randy Brown, Tyler Seagroves put their kayak's in and try to find out why the water came up. About a mile and a half to two miles down, they encountered tree's weeds and it got to a point where they actually had to stop because weeds where taller than they were. They couldn't get not further, and Mayor stated that is a project that they are going to have to get with DNR and DOT or some other Governmental agency to see how we can go and clean that out. Mayor stood up in his kayak and Randy Brown was holding it, but as far as a mile you could see down it was nothing but weeds. Mayor stated also that he posted some pictures on Facebook. We are working on that stated the Mayor and Tom Rice trying to find the funding to clean up catfish. (Little more discussion went on, on the tape.)

Our City Pool and rentals are still closed. We are having phone calls regarding rentals but we are advising them that it's for the safety of our citizens. The COVID numbers are still rising and we feel like it's in the best interest of our citizens. For now everything is still closed.

Mayor wants to inform about two employees that were diagnosed with the COVID. One being at the fire department. He had worked that weekend and started feeling bad that Monday. He tested positive and so we hired a sanitation company to come in and fogged both Fire stations and fogged all of our Fire trucks. It was pretty neat to watch them do it, and in ten minutes time with the fogging they said everything was dead and give it 30 minutes and can go back in the building. Earlier this week we had an employee at City Hall that was diagnosed positive with COVID. She had not been at City Hall for ten or twelve days. So as an abundance of precaution we called in yesterday and we had them come in and sanitize City Hall with the fog material to spray the offices. It is a necessary thing to make sure we protect our employee.

**Councilman Joseph Frazier:**

Councilman Joseph Frazier stated that when mail comes to the City and mentioned he got the thing about this park over here, and as soon as he got it they had already canceled it. Mayor stated that he got his copy on the 7th that it was canceled as well. Mr. Ammons stated that he got his that it was canceled as well. Councilman stated that he could have just been called what if he didn't get the mail. He stated that he just could have been called. He mentioned "received the mail and just let it sit in the office three days before pass out." Mayor stated he thinks they canceled it before the mail went out. Mayor stated that he got the phone call and the email and the next day they called and canceled. Councilman stated if you don't want to

bring it out that day just call him and let him know come and get it. Mayor stated that we will advise Ainsley.

**Councilman Michael Baker:**

Councilman stated that mostly Alan and he have taken care of everything. Councilman also stated that catfish looks great.

**Councilman Ronald Atkinson:**

Councilman Ronald Atkinson had same issue with garbage pickup and stated that hopefully everything will pick up, and get back in order. Councilman Joseph Frazier stated that he was down by the gas station (Shell) and it seem like people are just crowded around the old place there. Mayor stated that we will get the Chief to patrol that area. Councilman Frazier stated that it's crowded every weekend. We are still supposed to be maintaining social distancing and strongly advise that citizens wear a mask. Mayor also mentioned that everyone in the room has there mask on, and if you are in public and cannot social distance need to be wearing a mask. Brief discussion between Councilmembers took place on tape.

**Councilman Ralph Atkinson:**

Councilman Ralph Atkinson did not have anything at the time.

**Councilwoman Tassie Lewis:**

Councilwoman Tassie stated that much of her issue had already been addressed. She said that we are asking the citizens to be patient with debris some has been picked up and some has not been picked up.

**Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt:**

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt stated that it is important for him to promote health and wellness and the mask is important. He does believe the fall is going to be much more dangerous than the summer because immune systems simply because flu, influenza, cold virus and on top of that corona virus. He expressed that he has been thinking about it a lot and the fact that health officials are tell us to keep our cardiovascular up, walk , and maybe riding a bike. We wouldn't need to wear a mask riding a bike because we are basically by ourselves. If we can do that he stated that he thinks it would save a lot of lives.

Mayor Pro Tem brought out that Mrs. Marilyn Woodberry would like for him to thank the Council for helping her with her coat drive and drive to schooling.

They were not able to be here simply because of the situation, but asked Pro Tem to address it for them.

Last thing Pro Tem would like to address it that we are going towards hurricane season and we live in this County. If the County owns a portion of land how can they not move forward to help us get funding to clear that land. Like Mr. Frazier said he thinks the County needs to come and address that with us. We help the County, and they should step up to help us because it's time out for our citizen's property to be drowned out. We have an acre or two of weeds to get rid of. Administrator Alan Ammons stated

that we are applying for a litigation grant and putting in for the study. We had an engineering firm come and did study. One thing was that we apply CDBG funds and other grant funds for the study to repair stormwater lines and general maintenance in the study. We will be applying for the study and it will cost anywhere from about \$125,000.00 to \$150,000.00.

We have made everybody aware as far as the State, DOT, DNR is the only one that we have not contacted but we will contact them. We have met with Mr. Tim Harper, Senator Tom Rice, so hopefully (Councilmember interrupted and where talking at the same time on tape). Brief discussion about working in concert with County, and Catfish being top priority.

Council Woman Tassie Lewis spoke about her Aunt losing her home twice. She had her home renovated with Matthew (cost thousands of dollars) at that time she had stage 3 lung cancer and here we are with Florence she lost her home again and she didn't live to see it being repaired. So it's been a devastation not only to Councilwoman Lewis home but a lot of the family's near the creek. Councilman Frazier stated that we pay County taxes to and he also stated that he argue with them but that he is the only one they talk about. Brief discussion about meeting with the County on it on tape.

- 13. *A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier to adjourn.***

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Mayor Ashley Brady

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Ainsley Sanders, City Clerk

Taped: July 14, 2020