

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 6:30 p.m. Mayor Ashley Brady presided. Council members Ralph Atkinson, Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt, Joseph Frazier, and Tassie Lewis were present. Staff present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Attorney James Brogdon, Vickie Nichols, Cliff Wilbanks, and Chief Bobby Crawford.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order, gave the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Brady welcomed citizens, guests, Hometown TV and Naeem McFadden from the Marion Star & Mullins Enterprise to the meeting.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular City Council Minutes held on August 14, 2021. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried unanimously.

AUGUST EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Derric Ray was named the August Employee of the Month. Mayor Brady expressed his thanks to Lt. Ray. Lt. Derric Ray has been with the Marion Police Department since 2007. He has served in many different roles. He began as a patrol officer, eventually working his way up

to shift supervisor, traffic division and now serves as the lieutenant over patrol while still being responsible for traffic enforcement.

Assistant Chief Tony Flowers said Lt. Derric Ray is always someone you can depend on and is willing to fill in anywhere needed at a moment's notice. Derric is well-known throughout the community for his friendliness, openness, fairness and is well respected by his peers and community members. He is very professional, especially when dealing with the community and is passionate about his career and the community he serves.

PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Ashley Brady stated that the Proclamations for National Suicide Prevention Month and Hometown TV 8 were in their packet and asked for a motion. Mayor Pro-Tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to approve the Proclamations. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.

RESOLUTION

Mayor Ashley Brady explained that the resolution was to authorize the submission of an application by the City of Marion to the Division of Community Grant Program for the purchase of a Fire Truck. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

BIDS ON RESURFACING WILCOX AVE

Mayor Ashley Brady gave an update on the bids for the Wilcox Ave – Asphalt Resurfacing Project. He stated that the City received four bids on September 14, 2021: (1) Coastal Asphalt,

Conway, (2) Herrington Construction, Mullins, (3) CR Jackson, Darlington and (4) Palmetto Corp., Conway. The low bidder was Palmetto Corp, Conway. A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson and seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis to accept the low bid from Palmetto Corp; motion carried unanimously.

REQUEST TO TRANSFER FUNDS

Mayor Ashley Brady stated that we need to transfer funds from the Auction Account to Public Works to purchase mowing equipment. Councilwoman Tassie Lewis made a motion to approve the transfer funds. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

REQUEST TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL

Frankie Brown appeared before Mayor and City Council to address his concerns with water drainage problems on Edgewood Drive and the surrounding areas. Mr. Brown stated how terrible the situation has gotten on that side of town. His concern was when will the City get on that side of town. Mr. Brown said with all the water standing and not flowing he is afraid with all the rain backing up or if another hurricane comes, it may cause severe damage or even lose his home as well as others in the area. After a lengthy discussion about his concerns, Mayor Brady stated that he fully understood his frustration, and as they had spoken earlier, he explained to Mr. and Mrs. Brown that when you have two or three inches of water there is a problem when the drains are not flowing. The Mayor said he had been there himself pulling trash from the drain trying to get the water flowing. The City has spoken with SCDOT and they have determined that pipes have collapsed and they have ordered the pipes to be replaced in

that section under the road. The pipes have come in were installed on September 14, 2021. The issue is the amount of water the City gets. When the water gets so high it goes underneath Northside Ave, through the woods to Walnut Street Public Housing. It then goes to Grand Strand Water & Sewer. It picks up at a 60-inch drain line, from there runs down behind Burger King turns and goes to State Farm, then across NAPA parking lot. A 60-inch water line that water hits a canal goes to a cemetery and when the canal gets so full and the swamp is full then that water will not flow until the swamp dries out. The City wishes it could control the swamp, but are working on a plan to get permission so that the water goes underneath Northside Avenue to remove pipes that are in the woods. There are pipes in the woods that are damaged. When we get those pipes replaced this will make the water in the canal flow a little better. We must get SCDOT around there because it's a SCDOT project. The City doesn't like to see flooding around town either. The issue is we can't control the amount of water or rain. But we are trying to alleviate the issue. We wish we could say we can fix it tomorrow, we can't, but we do have a game plan. Mayor thanked Mr. Brown for his concerns and comments and stated we are working hard to correct the problem.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis asked Mr. Brown was there anyway the City employees could keep, as best they could, those areas free so they wouldn't backup? Mayor said that this is why we use the Vac-truck to clean those areas. But with all the rain we get, when it gets so high it doesn't matter how much we keep the areas clean the water won't flow freely until we get the pipes removed. But we do our best in keeping the drains and catch basins clean.

Mayor Pro-Tem Emerson Hunt stated he didn't know the issue was that bad in the area. He said he knew that the Mayor is working very hard to address the issues. We are working very hard to get all the drain issues in the City resolved. I know personally that the Mayor gets out and helps clear the drains himself. He is like a Boy Scout. Always willing to help whenever, no matter what the task may be. Mayor Pro-Tem Hunt stated to Mr. Brown that we have heard you and the council will get together and get back with you. He said it's not just happening to your property it happening all around including my property. There is no overnight solution.

FIREMAN'S FUND TRUSTEE COMMITTEE:

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to appoint/reappoint the following committee members for a 4-year term:

- Mayor Ashley Brady – Reappointed September 2021 for term ending June 2025
- Patricia Brown - Reappointed September 2021 for term ending June 2025
- Shelly Sarvis - Appointed September 2021 for term ending June 2025
- Carson Whittington - Appointed September 2021 for term ending June 2025

The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Ammons updated Council on the completion of Hurricane Florence FEMA Project on Bobby Gerald Parkway. The City is now going to Catfish where some pipes are damaged from Hurricane Florence. Those pipes have been repaired, about 100 feet of the walking trail has been repaved. Also repairs and paving were made from Bobby Gerald Parkway to the fountain. Those were old pipes that were damaged during Hurricane Florence. Mr. Ammons

updated Council on daily operations due Covid-19. We are at full capacity with the rental of city facilities. He encourages everyone to follow all safety precautions required by CDC guidelines. Mr. Ammons stated that there was a request from Scott Martin, D/BA Martin Service Center, concerning a piece of property behind his business.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

City Attorney James Brogdon had no update.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Mayor Ashley Brady updated Council on a house that was damaged by fire on Pearl Street has been demolished. Mayor relayed this to Council and said it may have been addressed before. He knows the City may want to tear down housing and he would love to get them down as well but there's a process: (1) There has to be an asbestos inspection, (2) Clean letter of health from the asbestos inspection, (3) A DHEC Permit and (4) Customer permission. When we receive all this information we will be more than happy to demolish the house free of charge. We know it makes our neighborhoods look better.

Mayor also said that the work on the bathrooms for Main Street Commons has begun. The concrete has been poured. Also, as discussed earlier, we have purchased a new 10 foot bush hog, thanks for allowing us to transfer the funds. We did get approval for the Asphalt for Wilcox Ave. The CTC Committee will be meeting next month (October) and we will be going to them for additional funds to pave Henry McGill Street.

Councilman Michael Baker had no comments at this time.

Councilman Joseph Frazier had no comments at this time.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson acknowledged that Ms. Patricia Brown is here tonight and she goes through the neighborhood picking up trash on Walnut Street and would like to thank her for her always keeping the neighborhood clean. Mayor Brady stated you can see her all over the neighborhood. Councilman Ronald Atkinson stated she was like a steward of the neighborhood.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked where did the City stand with the penny option sales tax for the renovation of City Hall and Green Street. Mayor Brady said the county is still waiting on one project to be completed out. Once that project is complete then they can start disbursing funds. City Administrator Ammons stated that for Phase II we are looking at about 36 days. Mr. Ammons stated that he has spoken with the County Administrator Mr. Tim Harper a couple of times. Mr. Ammons said what he thinks is they are waiting after the 1st of the year to start releasing funds. Mayor stated that with one portion we will be doing City Hall and Green Street. Councilman Atkinson thanked them for the update. He said it had just been awhile since he heard anything.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis thanked the City for removing the dilapidated house and it looks great and she knows it's a working process to get the houses removed. Please be safe in your neighbors, if you see something that looks suspicious please call the authorities. Crime is very terrible and we are trying to keep everyone safe, especially our seniors and children.

Pro-Tem Emerson Hunt stated that this water drainage is problem all around the state. He stated to Mr. Brown that we hear you and your concerns. The Water is a problem and we won't stop

working until we get all the storm drains corrected. If you have concerns please bring them before council so we can see what we can do to solve the problem. I believe this is the council that will work toward getting a resolution to all the concerns of the citizens especially the Mayor. He works hard cleaning drains himself. I call him a boyscout. A lot of people don't know how much the Mayor works behind the scenes. With that being said, I can understand the gentleman's passion for his home. As I stated before if you have any concerns come forth and let us talk about them.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Ralph Atkinson and seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to go into executive session to discuss Personnel Matters; City Clerk, Fire Department, Personnel Policy and a Contractual Matter.

POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS

Returning from executive session, Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to return to regular session and seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried. Mayor Brady asked if there were any matters taken care of in executive session. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to authorize Mayor and the City Administrator to take funds from the ARP money we are to receive and execute an incentive bonus for our employees, both full-time and part-time. Also include in that bonus an opportunity for employees to get a stipend for becoming vaccinated. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

CONTRACTUAL MATTER

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to enter into an agreement with G & G Local Government grant writing/consulting services as presented in the package. Mayor said in discussing we will use monies from Hospitality Taxes. Councilman Ralph Atkinson said yes, we can pay for it using either Hospitality Taxes or General Fund and ARP. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mayor Ashley Brady

Interim City Clerk Vickie J Nichols