

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2023
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by Marion City Council on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in which Mayor Ashley Brady presided. Council members Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Donny Gerald, Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt, and Tassie Lewis were present. Councilman Joseph Frazier was not in attendance. Staff present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon, City Attorney James Brogdon, and Police Captain Bobby Jones.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order, gave the opening prayer, and led the Pledge of Allegiance. He then welcomed citizens and guests.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING DECEMBER 13, 2022:

Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting held on December 13, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, and carried unanimously.

DECEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:

Mayor Ashley Brady named fireman Josh Virzi the December Employee of the Month. Mayor Brady stated that Josh has been with the City of Marion Fire Department for a while, and thanked him for all his hard work. He also noted that Josh just graduated with his EMT certification.

PRESENTATIONS:

Mr. Leroy Frazier – US Small Business Administration

Public Information Officer Mr. Leroy Frazier provided an update from the US Small Business Administration. He stated that he has been working throughout Marion County for the past month providing information in response to any economic impact to businesses or nonprofit organizations as a result of Hurricane Ian. He announced that financial assistance is available through the US Small Business Administration for any economic impact experienced as a result of Hurricane Ian. He highlighted that applicants could borrow up to \$2 million for uncompensated losses and ongoing expenses. The funds could be used to cover expenses such as mortgages, supplies, payroll, and other business expenses. He stated that there is a fixed interest rate over the duration of the loan, and the first payment is deferred for the first 12 months with zero interest. The application deadline is August 21, 2023.

Mayor Ashley Brady noted that January 9, 2023 was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. He thanked all of law enforcement staff for all they do to help provide a safe community for the citizens of Marion.

2nd READING OF ORDINANCE #22-12 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE #22-11

AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING CERTAIN HOURS OF OPERATION IN CORE COMMERCIAL

BUSINESS ZONE:

Mayor Brady explained that the recently adopted Ordinance #22-11 did not take into consideration New Years events that may be held by businesses in the core commercial

business zone. The amended Ordinance #22-12 will allow for businesses to remain open until 1:00 am to host events on New Year's Eve.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve 2nd reading of Ordinance 22-12 **An Ordinance Amending Ordinance #22-11 An Ordinance Prohibiting Certain Hours of Operation in Core Commercial Business Zone.** The motion was seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald, and carried unanimously.

RETENTION BONUS:

Mayor Brady stated that council previously discussed providing a \$500 retention bonus to all city employees as the payroll schedule changes from weekly to bi-weekly. This bonus will help employees through the transition week. The bonus will cost the city \$35,000, and will be paid out to employees in mid to late February. Mayor Brady added that City Treasurer Patricia Brown is also working to implement an electronic timekeeping system for more payroll efficiency.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt motioned to approve \$35,000 from ARP funds to provide the \$500 retention bonus to city employees. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL:

Ms. Pamela McRae

Ms. Pamela McRae was not in attendance.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Alan Ammons report that the LED street lights are still being installed throughout the city. He reported that the company Greenbulb is installing new LED lights inside the city gyms. Mr. Ammons provided an update on the issue of semi-trucks driving down Manning Street. He stated that there are still complaints regarding the trucks exiting the designated parking area onto Manning Street rather than Bobby Gerald Parkway. He stated that notices have been placed on the trucks to address this issue. Mayor Pro Tem Hunt requested to know if there are any other designated truck parking areas in the city. Mr. Ammons stated that he was not aware of any other areas, and noted that Walmart no longer allows truck parking in their lot.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE:

City Attorney James Brogdon had no legal update.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR:

Mayor Ashley Brady thanked the city's law enforcement staff for all they do. He commented that the Christmas Tree Lighting and all other holiday events were a great success. He thanked the Public Works department for all they do to keep the city beautiful during the holidays.

Mayor Brady provided an update regarding the old AWS dumpsters and trashcans that have been stored at the Heritage building. He stated that the majority of the dumpsters have been removed, and a few of the trashcans are still waiting to be removed. He spoke with the

owner of the trashcans and was advised that they would all be removed by the end of the month. Mayor Brady stated that he will work with Marion County to clean that property, and to fix the damaged fence that fell.

Mayor Brady announced that a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Walk will be held in the City of Marion on Monday, January 16. The walk will be followed by a program hosted by Bishop Michael Blue at the Door of Hope Christian Church. He encouraged citizens to attend.

Mayor Brady stated that the city is still working on the stormwater grant project on Franklin Avenue. He stated that the city recently tore down a house on Bobby Gerald Parkway, and will also be tearing down a burned house on Jones Avenue this week. Mayor Brady stated that the city will tear down any home as long as they receive the homeowner's permission along with the proper DHEC inspection permits, and asbestos abatement.

Councilman Michael Baker had no update.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson thanked the city for having extra dumpsters available during the Christmas holiday.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt encouraged citizens to get out and move, stay healthy, and take care of themselves.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis also thanked the city for providing the extra dumpsters during the holidays. She noted that there was a recent city trash delay due to mechanical issues with a CWS truck. Councilwoman Lewis announced that her church member, Johnasia Fling scored a perfect score on her SC IReady Math Test. She requested that council approve

a recognition of congratulations that she can present to Johnasia at church. Councilwoman Lewis asked that all citizens look out for each other, and especially look out for the elderly and children.

Councilman Donny Gerald had no comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a legal matter regarding the Police Department. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously. There was no action taken in executive session.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Mayor Ashley Brady

City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon