

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
THURSDAY, JULY 12, 2022
6:15 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING 6:15 P.M.

A public hearing was held on July 12, 2022 at 6:15 P.M. to allow for public comments on **Ordinance 22-06 An Ordinance to Set Rates for Sanitation Services**. The meeting was duly advertised to the local media, posted at the Marion City Hall and on the City's website.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the public hearing to order and opened it up for any public comments. Hearing no comments, Councilwoman Tassie Lewis made a motion to adjourn the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING 6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by Marion City Council on July 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in which Mayor Ashley Brady presided. Council members Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Joseph Frazier, Donny Gerald, Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt and Tassie Lewis were present. Staff present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, Fire Chief Jeremy Bass, and City Clerk Lakesha Shannon.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order, and asked that there be a moment of silence to honor the recent loss of the Town of Sellers Mayor Frank Jones. Following the moment of silence, Mayor Brady gave the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. He then welcomed all press and guest that were in attendance.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to approve the minutes of the following meetings: **Regular City Council Meeting on June 14, 2022, Special City Council Meeting on June 24, 2022, and Public Hearing Meeting on June 30, 2022.**

The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

JUNE EMPLOYER OF THE MONTH:

Mayor Brady named City Treasurer Patricia Brown the June Employee of the Month. He thanked Mrs. Brown for fantastic job that she does in managing the City's budget and helping with the annual audits.

PROMOTIONAL CEREMONY:

City of Marion Fire Chief Jeremy Bass noted that the fire department is growing in great ways. He thanked Personnel Director Elizabeth Gray for her assistance in interviewing over a dozen applicants for the firefighter positions. Chief Bass then led a promotional ceremony to recognize the following officers:

Engineer Matthew Walters

Captain Nicholas Ammons

Mayor Brady then administered the oath of office to the officers, and congratulated them on their new positions.

RESOLUTIONS OF CONGRATULATIONS:

Mayor Brady presented Resolutions of Congratulations to the following Marion County students for their recent athletic achievements:

- **Travis Stuckey on winning the 2022 SC High School Class 2A Discus Throw State Championship**
- **Pee Dee Academy Lady Golden Eagles on winning the 2022 SCISA State Softball Championship**
- **Pee Dee Academy Golden Eagles on winning the 2022 SCISA State Baseball Championship**

Mayor Brady commended the students on a job well done, and thanked the parents and coaches for their efforts in helping to make these students successful in their outstanding athletic accomplishments.

2nd READING OF ORDINANCE 22-06 AN ORDINANCE TO SET RATES FOR SANITATION

SERVICES:

Councilman Ronald Atkinson motioned to approve 2nd reading of Ordinance 22-06 **An Ordinance to Set Rates for Sanitation Services.** The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker, and carried unanimously.

2nd READING OF ORDINANCE 22-07 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART 7, SECTION 7-

6008 RELATING TO YARD SALES, SO AS TO INCREASE THE FEES:

Councilman Michael Baker motioned to approve 2nd reading of Ordinance 22-07 **An Ordinance to Amend Part 7, Section 7-6008 Relating to Yard Sales, So as to Increase the Fees.** The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker, and carried unanimously.

2nd READING OF ORDINANCE 22-08 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 5-6035 FEES

FOR CITY INSPECTIONS:

Councilman Joseph Frazier motioned to approve 2nd reading of Ordinance 22-08 **An Ordinance to Amend Section 5-6035 Fees for City Inspections.** The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

2nd READING OF ORDINANCE 22-09 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 3-2005 FEES FOR BURIAL PERMITS:

Councilman Ronald Atkinson motioned to approve 2nd reading of Ordinance 22-09 **An Ordinance to Amend Section 3-200 Fees for Burial Permits.** The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker, and carried unanimously.

ROSE HILL CEMETERY BIDS:

Mayor Brady stated that during last month's meeting, Council accepted the low bid of \$26,400 from A-1 Landscaping for the Rose Hill Cemetery maintenance. Once the contract was awarded, the business owner withdrew stating he cannot complete the contract at that amount he originally bid. Mayor Brady noted that two meetings were held with the business owner to discuss the full scope of the project prior to accepting the bid.

Mayor Brady recommend that the second lowest bid of \$30,000 be accepted from Elliot's Lawn Care. A second meeting was also held with Mr. Elliott and he is comfortable with his bid as presented.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson motioned to approve the Rose Hill Cemetery Maintenance bid from Elliot's Lawn Care. The motion was seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald, and carried unanimously.

Mayor Brady stated the architect agreement was received for the city hall renovation project. Mr. Alan Ammons explained that this is capital sales tax project in which \$500,000 was awarded. The project will renovate the exterior of the building to include the roof, windows and doors. Renovations will also be made to the council chambers to include the installation of audio and video equipment.

Mr. Ammons stated Boykin & Munnerlyn Architect Associates will draw up the plans and determine what other renovation options can be included with total project funding of \$500,000. The architect fees will be 7.8% of the total project cost. Mr. Ammons noted that this company was also the architect for the Marion County Courthouse renovations, and the construction of the City of Marion Fire Station #15.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt motioned to allow Boykin & Munnerlyn Architect Associates to proceed with the architectural plans for the city hall renovation project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL:

Mrs. Kathy Hall Godbolt was present to address council regarding gun violence. She stated that she lost her grandson on June 16, 2022 to an act of gun violence. She asked for council's help in ensuring that the police officers can get help in controlling this issue. She stated that people are afraid to come out of their homes because of the gun violence. She further stated that the community is hurting, and they feel they have no one to talk to about this issue. Mrs. Godbolt introduced the Scott and McCall families who also loss a son to gun

violence in the City of Marion. She expressed concerns for teenagers having guns larger than the police.

Mrs. Godbolt asked that the City put something in place to help educate the youth on gun violence. She stated that she along with other affected families are willing to stand together with council to help change things. She asked that council come out into the community more and see what's going on. She also asked to meet with council to further discuss this issue.

Mayor Brady expressed his condolences to Mrs. Godbolt, Mrs. Scott and Mrs. McCall, and thanked them for coming to address their concerns. He stated that council recently met with SLED and local law enforcement to discuss gun violence. He stated that the City is working to hire new police officers; however, this is a nationwide issue of police shortages.

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt expressed his condolences to the families, and noted that he can personally relate to their pain as he recently lost a child. He stated council has made efforts to address the issue by meeting with SLED and the Gang Task Force.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis referenced a shooting that took place about 3 years ago in the City of Marion. She stated that she spoke with council about her concerns, and they have always offered complete support for any initiatives to address the issue of gun violence. She noted various events with speakers and mentors that were held in the City to help stop gun violence in which the Mayor and council members attended. She further stated that there

will be more future events, and council will stay in touch and work together with the community because it's going to take a collaborative effort.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson thanked Mrs. Godbolt for coming, and stated that council will do what they can to help make a change.

Councilman Donny Gerald expressed his condolences to the families. He stated that a lot of the problem with this issue is the fact the witnesses are not willing to talk and provide law enforcement with necessary information to help address the gun violence. He mentioned that the City is looking into a potential phone app that will allow citizens to report information regarding crimes confidentiality from their cell phones. He stated that he would be happy to sit down and discuss these issues with anyone as needed. Mayor Brady noted that he and Mr. Ammons were on the scene of the incident involving Mrs. Godbolt's grandson, and heard several people say that they would not provide information to law enforcement regarding what happened. Mayor Pro Tem Hunt expressed the importance of witnesses speaking up to help allow law enforcement to properly charge a suspect with a crime.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Ammons provided an update on the Manning Street survey of the old Coca Cola building walls. He stated that he recently spoke with the survey engineer, and he will be doing a survey of the property within the next 2-3 weeks. Mr. Ammons stated that there is still an issue with semi-trucks coming through Manning Street. He stated that there are plans to

install signage in the truck parking lot to advice of which way to exit. He stated that they also discussed installing cameras in the parking lot, or installing a fence. Councilman Ronald Atkinson recommended issuing citations.

Mr. Ammons presented council with the final architectural plan of the Green Street Sports Complex. He pointed out a ditch area that has been an issue; however, permission has been granted DHEC and the Core Engineers to straighten the ditch along the property line. He stated that project is now ready to submit for bids.

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt motioned to move forward with advertising the Green Street Sports Complex for bid. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, and carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY LEGAL UPDATE:

There was no legal report.

DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATES FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR:

Mayor Brady congratulated City Treasurer Patricia Brown for all her work in helping to complete the 2022-2023 budget. He also thanked council for the smooth process of adopting the budget. Mayor Brady stated that city employees are working to keep the grass cut throughout the City. He also stated that the City is hiring in various departments. Mayor Brady reported that the new street signs are being installed from Liberty Street to N. Main Street, and bids are being received to replace the street signs on S. Main Street down to Marion High School.

Councilman Michael Baker asked about the status of the Community Policing Grant. Mr. Ammons stated that the grant application is currently being completed. Councilman Baker also stated that the community needs to be encouraged to utilize 911 to report crimes. He noted that he sometimes follows to see how many people report shootings or crimes in his area, and most times it's only him. Some citizens are concerned that the police will show up at their residence if they make the call to report a crime. Mayor Brady mentioned the mobile app that the City is looking to get which will allow confidential reporting of crime.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson thanked the police department for all that they do, as well as the officers that are staying with the City. Mr. Ammons reported that a certified officer was recently hired.

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt stressed the importance of exercising and taking care of yourself.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis thanked Ms. Marilyn Woodberry for her upcoming back to school supply giveaway initiative for the community. She stated that it is very imperative to let the kids know they are loved, and events such as this helps to make a difference.

ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business, a motion was made to adjourn by Councilman Ronald Atkinson and seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis; the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Ashley Brady

City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon

