

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by Marion City Council on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 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 Chief Tony Flowers.

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 REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 9, 2022:

Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting held on August 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, and carried unanimously.

SEPTEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:

Mayor Ashley Brady named the entire Public Works Department as the September Employees of the Month. He noted that the department worked hard to keep the city clean and safe during the recent storm. He added that they are continuing to clean up debris throughout the city. The department will be provided lunch in recognition of their hard work.

PRESENTATIONS:

Pee Dee Coalition – Mrs. Michelle Brewton Smith

Mrs. Brewton-Smith thanked council for being a part of the recent domestic violence awareness video. She noted that October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and her organization is taking every available opportunity to spread awareness about the seriousness of issue. She stated that Pee Dee Coalition is hosting a vigil in the Zion community on October 13, 2022 to honor the lives of 5 Marion County residents that died as a result of domestic violence since 2020. The victims' families will be in attendance to receive a proclamation on behalf of Marion County council.

Mrs. Brewton-Smith shared some domestic violence statistics and stated that this a growing concern in the community. She stated that Pee Dee Coalition has provided shelter assistance to some Marion County residents for over a year to remove them from domestic violence situations. The organization was able to share valuable information to Marion County school teachers regarding the behavior issues of children who are in domestic violence homes. She noted that SC remains in the top 10% of the nation's domestic violence homicide cases.

Mrs. Brewton-Smith announced that Pee Dee Coalition was gifted the old Marion County Helping Hands building as their new office location, and they will be hosting their grand opening on October 27, 2022. She also announced that an upcoming domestic violence walk will be held in the City of Mullins to honor victims.

Ms. Marilyn Woodberry – Pick42 Foundation

Ms. Woodberry stated that she is a volunteer for the Pick42 Foundation, and for the past 6 years they have hosted a toy drive at Mullins High School. This year’s event will be held on December 10, 2022. She noted that only 30% of Marion County children have participated in the event; therefore, she would like for council to help share the information with the community. Online registration for the event will begin on October 26, 2022 in which parents can register their children to receive toys. Ms. Woodberry stated that the event receives local sponsorship from partners like Walmart who donated \$1,500. Ms. Woodberry stated that she hopes the event can be hosted in the City of Marion in the future. In closing, Ms. Woodberry stated that Pick42 Foundation also provides a food pantry in which she donates food items to those in need.

SET DATE FOR SPECIAL MEETING:

Mayor Brady recommended that council meet on October 26, 2022 at 5:15 pm to approve the bids for the concrete at the downtown commons area, and a new fire truck. He noted that a \$400,000 grant was received to purchase the new fire truck.

1st READING OF ORDINANCE #22-11 AN ORDINANCE TO SET HOURS OF OPERATION IN

CORE COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT:

Mayor Brady stated that the downtown district is growing, and the plan is to attract residential and business growth in that area. Ordinance 22-11 would set the hours of

operation for businesses at 5:00 am to 12:00 am. This would allow for residents living in that district to have a period of quiet time with no business activity.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-11 **An**
Ordinance to Set Hours of Operation in Core Commercial Zoning District. The motion was seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald, and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH BIWEEKLY PAY PERIOD:

Mayor Brady explained that currently city employees are paid weekly; however, council has previously discussed changing to a biweekly pay period. He suggested that council table this discussion for now due to concerns from employees. He requested to move forward with changing to an electronic timekeeping system, and noted that City Treasurer Patricia Brown is currently working on this process. Mayor Brady stated that the change to a biweekly pay period and electronic timekeeping system would allow a more efficient process for the finance staff. Councilman Ronald Atkinson recommended that a time limit be put on the transition to a biweekly pay period rather than continually tabling the discussion.

Mayor Brady discussed the barriers weekly pay causes when trying to hire part time police officers. Council had a lengthy discussion on the concerns and benefits of changing to a biweekly pay period. They further discussed providing employees with a \$500 bonus to cover the first transition week into the biweekly pay period. Mayor Pro Tem Hunt stated that he spoke with some employees and they seemed to be okay with the changes. Councilwoman Tassie

Lewis and Councilman Michael Baker stated that in speaking with employees, there seemed to be a lack of communication in how the changes would take place.

City Administrator Alan Ammons recommended that Mayor Brady meet with the concerned departments to discuss the changes, as well as provide a written communication to all employees.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson motioned to approve the **Resolution to Establish a Biweekly Pay Period** beginning after February 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, and carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Brady welcomed Mr. Ammons back and thanked him for all he does for the city. City Administrator Alan Ammons stated that he is back at work and continuing his road to recovery.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE:

There was no legal update from City Attorney James Brogdon.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR:

Mayor Ashley Brady thanked the public works department for all their hard work during the recent storm. He stated that the city did not experience any major damage. He reported that the city's grant writer is applying for a stormwater mitigation grant for Catfish Creek that will allow for more cleanout of the area. Mayor Brady provided an update on a recent meeting hosted by a professional engineering firm hired by Marion County at which

they discussed possible solutions for stormwater mitigation. Mayor Brady stated that the city is still working with SCDNR to install the 2 fishing piers at Catfish Creek. In closing, Mayor Brady stated that it is Fire Prevention Week, and the fire department is hosting events and visiting schools to educate the children.

Councilman Michael Baker stated that he was glad to have Mr. Ammons back at work. He also reported that Councilman Joseph Frazier is still sick.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson stated that he was glad to have Mr. Ammons back at work.

Mayor Pro tem Emerson Hunt stated that he is praying for Councilman Frazier for a speedy recovery. He also commented that the Halloween decorations and purple domestic violence bows look great on Main Street. Mayor Pro Tem Hunt welcomed Mr. Ammons back and thanked him for his dedication in serving the city. In closing, he commented on the importance of exercise and heart health. He encouraged citizens to get out and move.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis thanked the guests for attending the meeting. She commented on the importance of domestic violence awareness and spreading the word. She also asked that everyone share the information regarding the Pick42 Foundation toy drive. Councilwoman Lewis stated that she is praying for Councilman Frazier.

Councilman Donny Gerald stated that he is often asked how he feels about serving on city council. He stated that he enjoys the unity of the current council, and how they work together to make the best decisions for the citizens.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter regarding the recreation department, and contractual matters regarding Green Bulb and the Transportation Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and carried unanimously.

POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM(S):

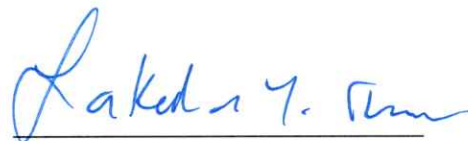
Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, and carried unanimously. Mayor Brady stated that there was no action taken during executive session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business, a motion was made to adjourn by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt and seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis. The motion carried unanimously.



Mayor Ashley Brady



City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon