

**MINUTES**  
**MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Ashley Brady

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt

Councilman Ronald Atkinson

Councilman Michael Baker

Councilman Fred Gause

Councilman Donny Gerald

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Alan Ammons, City Administrator

Patricia Brown, City Treasurer

Lakesha Shannon, City Clerk

James Brogdon, City Attorney

Bobby Jones, Police Captain

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ashley Brady.

**2. PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Ashley Brady led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

**3. WELCOME CITIZENS, GUESTS & PRESS**

Mayor Ashley Brady welcomed all citizens and guest.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES**

➤ Regular City Council Meeting – October 10, 2023

***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting held on October 10, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.***

**5. OCTOBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Mayor Brady named Officer Andrew Elliott with the City of Marion Police Department as the October Employee of the Month. He thanked Officer Elliott for all that he does for the Marion Police Department and for the citizens of Marion.

**6. APPOINT GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER**

Mayor Brady stated that a vacancy needs to be filled on the City of Marion Grievance Committee. Fireman Josh Virzi was recommended for appointment to complete the unexpired 3-year term vacancy. *A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, and seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis to appoint Josh Virzi to complete the unexpired term vacancy on the Grievance Committee. The motion carried unanimously.*

**7. 1<sup>ST</sup> READING ORDINANCE #23-10 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF MARION CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 9-1009 LOITERING**

Mayor Brady stated that the amendment to Ordinance #23-10 would prohibit tent camping, RV's, fire pits, and etc. on public and private property within the City. *A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, and seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance #23-10 An Ordinance Amending the City of Marion Code of Ordinances Section 9-1009 Loitering. The motion carried unanimously.*

**8. APPROVE BIDS****➤ Playground Equipment Installation**

Mayor Brady stated that a bid of \$23,158 was received from Webb's Irrigation & Playground Equipment to complete the installation of the playground equipment at the Green Street Sports Complex. *A motion was made by Mayor*

***Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, and seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis to approve the bid of \$23,158 from Webb's Irrigation & Playground Equipment to complete the installation of the playground equipment at the Green Street Sports Complex. The motion carried unanimously.***

➤ **Police Department Body Worn Cameras**

Mayor Brady stated that the City received a Public Safety Grant in the amount of \$26,000 that will be used to purchase new body worn cameras for the police department. The new cameras include upgraded technology and will sync with the current in-car cameras. ***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, and seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve the bid of \$25,894 from Motorola Solutions for the purchase of new body-worn cameras for the Police Department. The motion carried unanimously.***

9. **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

City Administrator Alan Ammons reported that the City of Marion will observe and close for the Thanksgiving Holiday on November 23-24, and the Christmas Holiday on December 22, 25, and 26. Mr. Ammons stated that the City Hall upgrades are in progress. The roof has been completed, and the window and door replacement, and renovations to the council chambers will begin this week. Mr. Ammons noted that the playground at the Green Street Sports Complex is being utilized regularly. He also stated that the lighting contractor is currently working to complete the installation of the lights, and recreation sports will be held at the park starting next year. Mr. Ammons provided Council with an update on the recent grants that the City has been awarded. He noted that Council would need to further discuss the Fire Department SAFER Grant. He stated that the SCPRT Grant for the Green Street Sports Complex for the walking

track would need a commitment from Council to approve a 50/50 match by paying \$180,000. ***A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, and seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to approve the SCPRT Grant and commit to a 50/50 match of \$180,000. The motion carried unanimously.*** Councilman Donny Gerald thanked staff for all the hard work on obtaining the grants. Mayor Brady noted that the City has received over \$3 million in grants over the past 2 years. Mr. Ammons stated that the previously approved surveillance cameras from Flock are on schedule to be received early 2024. Councilman Michael Baker requested a list of areas at which the cameras will be installed. Mayor Brady stated that the LPR cameras will track license plates and assist with crime prevention. There will be 8 cameras installed initially, and grants will be applied for to purchase additional cameras. Mr. Ammons stated that the police department will have access to about 80 cameras to assist with crime watch.

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

Attorney James Brogdon had no update.

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

**Mayor Ashley Brady:**

Mayor Brady stated that the \$400,000 CDBG grant check has been received to purchase the new fire truck. The truck will not be available immediately, as it takes a few years to build. Mayor Brady noted that an individual donor has provided \$5,000 to purchase bullet proof vests for the City of Marion Fire Department, and the vests have been ordered. Mayor Brady stated that the Public Works Department has been busy installing holiday decorations, and the Annual Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting is scheduled for December 3<sup>rd</sup>. He thanked all city departments for their help in coordinating these events.

**Councilman Michael Baker:**

Councilman Baker had no comments.

**Councilman Fred Gause:**

Councilman Gause thanked everyone for attending the city council meeting. He commented that the surveillance cameras would be helpful in locating missing elderly persons and/or children if needed. He thanked Council and staff for all their hard work.

**Councilman Ronald Atkinson:**

Councilman Atkinson also thanked everyone for attending the city council meeting.

**Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt:**

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt had no comments.

**Councilwoman Tassie Lewis:**

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis thanked everyone for attending. She asked citizens to be mindful of their surroundings and to please report anything they see that is suspicious. Councilwoman Lewis stated that the Annual Rise Above It All Coat Drive will be held on November 18 at CD Joyner Auditorium, and November 25 at Grice's Recreation Center in conjunction with a free community Thanksgiving meal giveaway. She shared her inspiration for starting the coat drive 7 years ago, and asked that everyone who can to please donate a coat.

**Councilman Donny Gerald:**

Councilman Gerald thanked everyone for attending the council meeting. He commented on the upcoming community meeting at the Marion Opera House that is being hosted by Councilman Fred Gause. He expressed his concerns in not being personally invited to participate in the meeting, and for initially finding out

about the meeting via Facebook. He stated that he received a text from Councilman Gause last night. Councilman Gerald stated that Council is supposed to be united; however, only some of the council members have been asked to participate. The agenda included some City councilmembers and County officials as speakers. He stated that he would have loved to be a part of the meeting to show the community that the entire Council is involved and united. Councilman Gause responded that the meeting was initially planned as a District #4 meeting only. He later found out that another community meeting was scheduled for that same day in which he was asked to participate. He then considered rescheduling his meeting which led to last minute planning. He stated that he asked the County officials that represent District #4 to participate in the meeting to answer questions that may relate to their organizations in which he could not provide answers, and the city council members were asked to speak and highlight certain departments within the City. Mayor Brady and Councilman Ronald Atkinson also expressed their concern in receiving the late notice of the meeting via text message. Councilman Gause apologized for any confusion caused by the planning of his meeting, and stated that it was in no way planned to excluded anyone.

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

***A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to go into executive session to discuss a Contractual Matter – Land Acquisition, and a Personnel Matter – Recreation Department. The motion carried unanimously.***


**13. POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

***A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, and seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to return to regular session. The motion carried unanimously.*** Mayor Brady stated that there was no action taken in executive session.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business. ***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, and seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.***

  
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Mayor Ashley Brady

  
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Lakesha Y. Shannon, City Clerk