

**MINUTES**  
**MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**TUESDAY, DEEMBER 12, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Ashley Brady  
Councilman Ronald Atkinson  
Councilman Michael Baker  
Councilman Fred Gause  
Councilman Donny Gerald  
Councilwoman Tassie Lewis

*\*\*Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt was not in attendance*

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Alan Ammons, City Administrator  
Patricia Brown, City Treasurer  
Lakesha Shannon, City Clerk  
James Brogdon, City Attorney  
Tony Flowers, Police Chief

**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 – November 14, 2023

***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve the minutes of November 14, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.***

5. **NOVEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Mayor Brady named the entire Public Works Department as Employees of the Month. He thanked the department for all of their hard work in decorating and beautifying the City for the holiday season.

6. **2<sup>ND</sup> READING ORDINANCE #23-08 – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY OF MARION FIREWORKS ORDINANCE**

*A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve seconding reading of Ordinance #23-08 An Ordinance to Amend the City of Marion Fireworks Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilman Fred Gause and carried unanimously.*

7. **2<sup>ND</sup> READING ORDINANCE #23-10 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF MARION CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 9-1009 LOITERING**

*A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve 2<sup>nd</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. **2<sup>ND</sup> READING ORDINANCE #23-11 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUSINESS LICENSE ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARION, SC TO UPDATE THE CLASS SCHEDULE AS REQUIRED BY ACT 176 OF 2020**

Mayor Brady stated that this ordinance allows for the updates of business license classifications and codes as required by the State. *A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, and seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Ordinance #23-11 An Ordinance Amending the Business License Ordinance of the City of Marion, SC to Update the Class Schedule as Required by Act 176 of 2020. The motion carried unanimously.*

**9. SERVE & CONNECT**

Chief Tony Flowers presented Council with a proposed program that he would like to implement in the City of Marion. The nonprofit program called Gary's Groceries was inspired by the wife of a police officer killed in 2015, and is geared to assist families in need. If approved, the program would allow officers to provide a week's supply of food and supplies to a family of 4 should they see a need during a call for service at a residence. This program would also allow officers to connect with the community in a positive manner during calls rather than appearing to only be there for an arrest or a negative response. Items provided would include food, diapers, car seats, etc. to families in need. The program is at no cost to the City, and items are provided in partnership with private companies such as Walmart and AT&T. Chief Flowers noted that this will be the first program of its kind in the Pee Dee region.

**10. EMPLOYEE CHRISTMAS BONUS**

Mayor Brady presented a recommendation to Council asking that all city employees receive a Christmas bonus using ARP funds. ***A motion was made by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve the Employee Christmas Bonus using ARP funds. The motion carried unanimously.***

**11. ENGINEERING AGREEMENT – DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE GROUP**

Mayor Brady stated that Council previously discussed stormwater projects that would be completed using grant funding. An agreement was presented to Council from DRG Development Resource Group to complete the needed projects on Franklin Ave and Marshall Street areas. Mr. Ammons stated that drainage pipes will be installed on these streets that will address current issues

in surrounding areas. Mr. Ammons also stated that Council would approve the projects prior to the start dates; however, the agreement is required to move forward with the process and to allow the engineering firm to make recommendations. ***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve the engineering agreement with DRG Development Resource Group. The motion passed unanimously.***

**12. APPROVE 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE**

***A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to approve the 2024 City Council Meeting Schedule. The motion passed unanimously.***

**13. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

➤ **Annette Williams – Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Day**

Ms. Williams noted that October 15 is recognized nationally as Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Day. She shared her personal experience of infant loss, and presented information on a program she created to provide awareness and support. Ms. Williams stated that this topic is not widely discussed; therefore, she would like to host an annual awareness event in the City of Marion at the fountain on Bobby Gerald Parkway starting October 15, 2024. She would also like the City to adopt a proclamation and attend her upcoming event. Ms. Williams stated that she has a private Facebook group for members to discuss and receive support as needed; however, she wants to further extend her services in the community. She asked for recommendations of how she can further get the word out in the community. Councilman Gerald and Councilwoman Lewis suggested that she reach out to the local hospitals to make

them aware of the services she provides. Mayor Brady advised Ms. Williams that the City will support her efforts and provide the proclamation.

**14. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

City Administrator Alan Ammons reported that the city hall upgrades are still in progress. The roof has been completed, and the window and door replacement, and renovations to the council chambers are currently in progress. Mr. Ammons noted that work continues at the Green Street Sports Complex; however, some delays have been experienced due to the contractor awaiting materials. He also stated that CWS sanitation services will remain on schedule during the holiday.

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

Attorney James Brogdon had no update.

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

**Mayor Ashley Brady:**

Mayor Brady commented on the recent Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Program. He noted that it was the largest crowd ever in attendance for the event. The annual Employee Christmas Luncheon will be held on December 15 at 1:00 pm at the Shannon Wilkerson Gym. The City of Marion will also distribute the annual Christmas food boxes on December 19. These boxes are provided in partnership with Food Lion and funded by private donations. City of Marion police officers and firemen will assist with the distribution of the boxes. There will be 100 boxes delivered to families in need, and each box will provide Christmas dinner to a family of 4. In closing, Mayor Brady wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**Councilman Michael Baker:**

Councilman Baker wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**Councilman Fred Gause:**

Councilman Gause commented on the great turnout and program at the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting. He also thanked the Marion Chamber of Commerce, Councilman Donny Gerald and Anderson Brothers Bank for a wonderful business after hours event. Councilman Gause wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**Councilman Ronald Atkinson:**

Councilman Atkinson wished everyone a Merry Christmas, and thanked Councilman Gerald and Anderson Brothers Bank for the wonderful Chamber of Commerce business after hours event. Councilman Atkinson requested information on a food vendor that sets up on Liberty Street and serves food during late night hours. He is concerned that the vendor has no DHEC documentation posted and provides food services without a wash sink, restrooms, or lights. He feels that this poses a liability on the City if someone should get sick since the vendor has a City business license. Mr. Ammons stated that DHEC has been notified and they are supposedly investigating the situation. A letter was also sent to the vendor by DHEC. City Attorney James Brogdon will research the situation and an update will be provided to Council.

**Councilwoman Tassie Lewis:**

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis wished everyone a Merry Christmas, and extended her thanks for all the support with the Annual Rise Above It All Coat Drive.

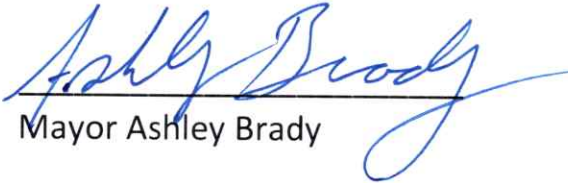
**Councilman Donny Gerald:**

Councilman Gerald wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councilman Fred Gause thanked HMRA Director Taylor Newell for the great job she does with the downtown development.

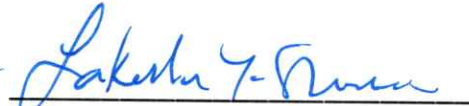
**17. ADJOURNMENT**

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



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ashley Brady", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor Ashley Brady



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lakesha Y. Shannon", written over a horizontal line.

Lakesha Y. Shannon, City Clerk