

**MINUTES**  
**MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Ashley Brady

Councilman Fred Gause

Councilman Ronald Atkinson

Councilman Donny Gerald

Councilman Michael Baker

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis

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

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Alan Ammons, City Administrator

James Brogdon, City Attorney

Patricia Brown, City Treasurer

Tony Flowers, Police Chief

Lakesha Shannon, City Clerk

**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 – December 12, 2023

*A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve the minutes of December 12, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.*

**5. DECEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Mayor Brady named maintenance shop mechanic Kyle Rogers as the December Employee of the Month. He thanked Kyle for all his hard work in keeping the city trucks and equipment running smoothly. Mayor Brady also thanked the Public Works, Police, and Fire Departments for all their hard work in the quick cleanup of the City following the recent storm.

**6. PROMOTION CEREMONY – CITY OF MARION FIRE DEPARTMENT**

This ceremony has been rescheduled for the February 2024 council meeting.

**7. ANNUAL UPDATE FROM HMRA**

HMRA Executive Director Taylor Newell provided Council with an update of business progress and events in downtown Marion. She thanked city employees for all they do to help with event setup. She highlighted the success of the 2023 Retail Trail event that allowed participants the opportunity to stop in and shop with all downtown businesses. She also noted that the 2023 holiday events went very well, and the carriage rides were a big hit as always. Mrs. Newell stated that January, June and July are usually slow months for downtown businesses. She encouraged citizens to really shop and support downtown Marion during those times. She announced that HMRA is excited to implement a new project in downtown Marion which will include the installation of large music speakers on each corner of downtown to play continuous music. The speakers will also be used to advertise special events. She thanked Councilman Donny Gerald for assisting them in obtaining funding for this project. Mrs. Newell reported that the Annual Chili Cook Off will be held on February 24, 2024 from 11:00am – 5:00pm, and tickets are currently available. A series of Rise and Shine meetings for 2024 have been scheduled with the first being held on

January 31 at 9:30 am at The Groundout Coffee Shop. The 2024 HMRA calendar of events will be available this week following the HMRA Board approval.

**8. APPROVE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

Council approved the following committee appointments:

- **Employee Grievance Committee (3-Year Term)** – Jonathan Brantley, Poette Lewis, Richard Moody, Randy Brown, Marilyn Rogers, Josh Virzi. ***A motion was made by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, and seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve the Employee Grievance Committee member appointments as presented for a 3-year term. The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Fireman's Fund Trustee Committee (4-Year Term)** – Chief Kevin Hammond. ***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, and seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve the Fireman's Fund Trustee Committee member appointment as presented for a 4-year term. The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Historic District Commission (3-Year Term)** – Ed Mason, Alex Stedman, Jake Kennedy, Thomas McElveen, Lucta Nolan. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to approve the Historic District Commission member appointments as presented for a 3-year term. The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Tree Commission (3-Year Term)** – Thomas McElveen, Corey Craig, Robert McFarland, Betty Eskridge, Arnetha Daymond. ***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, and seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to approve the Tree Commission member appointments as presented for a 3-year term. The motion carried unanimously.***

- **Zoning Board of Appeals (3-Year Term)** – James Graves, James Mitchell, Russell White, Byron Beck. ***A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to approve the Zoning Board of Appeals member appointments as presented for a 3-year term. The motion carried unanimously.***

**9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

City Administrator Alan Ammons reported that the city hall upgrades are still in progress. He stated that there is currently a delay in completing the window installation due to a manufacturers error with the supplies. The windows will need to be removed and reinstalled once the supplies arrive. Mr. Ammons stated that there will be a Joint City/County Meeting held on January 29, 2024 at the Marion County Administration building. Councilman Gause asked if the manufacturer will cover the cost of the window replacement error. Mr. Ammons stated that the manufacturer will cover the cost.

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

Attorney James Brogdon was not in attendance.

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

**Mayor Ashley Brady:**

Mayor Brady commented that the MLK Day Walk was a great success and the weather was perfect. He stated that last week's storm was not as bad as it could have been, and he thanked city employees for all their work in quick cleanup. Mayor Brady asked council to consider recommendations for the Citizen Advisory Committee so that this committee can be reactivated. There were some recent appointments; however, more members are currently needed.

**Councilman Michael Baker:**

Councilman Baker asked for an update on city committee memberships. Mr. Ammons provided an update regarding the committees and meeting schedules. He stated that there are vacancies on several committees, as it difficult to find people willing to serve on a volunteer basis. Councilman Baker stated that it's not always possible to get members from each district, therefore, it may be best to allow any willing volunteer to serve. Mr. Baker also asked that council be allowed to assist with recommending committee members rather than names being presented on the agenda for approval without prior knowledge. Mr. Ammons stressed that we need volunteers to serve on every committee.

**Councilman Fred Gause:**

Councilman Gause stated that there is a need for young at heart members on the city committees, and he is committed to making sure we recruit active members. He thanked the Public Works, Fire and Police Departments as well as Mayor Brady, Mr. Ammons and Councilman Donny Gerald for their service to the community during the recent storm cleanup. He also asked that we keep Mayor Brady and his family in our prayers.

**Councilman Ronald Atkinson:**

Councilman Atkinson thanked everyone for their work during the recent storm.

**Councilwoman Tassie Lewis:**

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis thanked everyone for attending. She asked that everyone be mindful of what's going on in their neighborhoods and report any suspicious activity to law enforcement. She encouraged everyone to be vigilant when driving through neighborhoods early mornings when children are standing at bus stops before daybreak. Councilwoman Lewis commended Bishop Michael

Blue and the Door of Hope Church for another successful MLK Day Program. She also asked that we continue to remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy.

**Councilman Donny Gerald:**

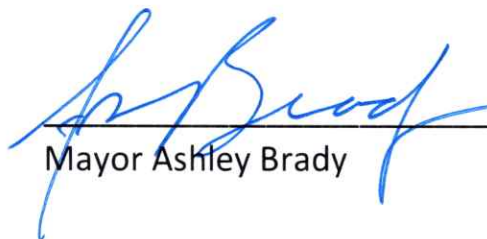
Councilman Gerald had no comments.

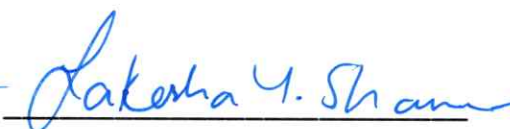
Councilman Michael Baker commented on the report he received regarding loud noise that he requested last month. He asked Chief Flowers to provide an update to council of loud noise and any suggestions of ordinance changes during next month's meeting.

Mayor Brady introduced the new Recreation Director Chasity Samuels. Ms. Samuels stated that she is excited to work for the City of Marion. She has immediately started working to implement a mission and vision statement, and a logo for the recreation department, as well as making some cosmetic changes to the office. She announced some upcoming events that include a Daddy-Daughter Dance that will be held on February 10<sup>th</sup>. She is also working on a Mother-Son Date Night, a Senior Prom for ages 55 and up, sports camps, and various other events to engage youth activity. Mayor Brady stated that the City is working to implement a 100% cashless system at the recreation department. All registrations will be completed online and paid electronically.

**12. 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.***

  
Mayor Ashley Brady

  
Lakesha Y. Shannon, City Clerk