

MINUTES
MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024 AT 6:30 P.M.

MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Ashley Brady	Councilman Fred Gause
Councilman Ronald Atkinson	Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt
Councilman Michael Baker	Councilwoman Tassie Lewis
Councilman Donny Gerald	

STAFF PRESENT:

Alan Ammons, City Administrator	Tony Flowers, Police Chief
Patricia Brown, City Treasurer	
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 Brady led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

3. WELCOME CITIZENS, GUESTS & PRESS

Mayor Brady welcomed all citizens and guest.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- Regular City Council Meeting – May 14, 2024
- Budget Workshop – May 21, 2024
- Special Meeting – June 4, 2024

A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to approve the minutes of May 14, 2024, May 21, 2024, and June 4, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **MAY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Mayor Brady named Frank Mason with the Public Works Department as the May Employee of the Month. He noted that Frank is always very courteous and kind, and goes above and beyond to help any way he can.

6. **PRESENTATIONS**

➤ **Marion Recreation – 2024 Eastern District Girls 10U Basketball Championship**

Recreation Director Chasity Samuels congratulated the City of Marion 10U Girls Basketball Team on their outstanding accomplishment in winning the 2024 Eastern District Girls 10U Basketball Championship on February 24, 2024. She introduced each team member along with their coaches, and presented them with a certificate and sweatshirt. Mayor Brady and members of council also thanked the team and coaches for a job well done.

7. **APPROVE RESOLUTION**

➤ **Addendum to Employer Resolution for Participation in the State Insurance Benefits Program Regarding County/Municipality Councilmember Coverage**

Mayor Brady stated that the approval of this resolution allows city council members to be insured through the PEBA State Insurance Benefits Program. *A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve the Addendum to Employer Resolution for a Participation in the Stated Insurance Benefits. The motion passed unanimously.*

8. **REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

➤ **Peggy Gunter – Safety Concerning Gurley St. Recreational Area Including Swimming Pool Site**

Ms. Gunter thanked the City of Marion Recreation Department for a great job in working with the children as she witnessed during a recent visit. She also commended the City for a great job in hosting the recent crime and gun violence awareness event. She expressed her concerns with a comment made that said “stay in your lane.” She further expressed her concerns with a recent shooting outside her home, and throughout the neighborhood. She requested more police visibility in the area.

9. ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Administrator Alan Ammons provided an update on the capital sales tax projects. The city hall upgrades are ongoing with the plumbers working to complete the bathroom renovations, and the bullet proof glass and safety door being installed at the front entrance. Work continues on the lighting system at the Green Street Sports Complex, and the contractor has begun work on the restroom facilities. The City is participating in CTC projects to replace missing street signs, and repair sidewalks. These projects will likely be approved at the July CTC meeting, and work should begin around September.

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 thanked Councilwoman Tassie Lewis for heading the recent Unity Against Crime & Violence event at the Veterans Square. He asked that the community assist the City and law enforcement by speaking up about crime if they see something. Mayor Brady and Mr. Ammons will be attending an upcoming meeting with Senator Kent Williams and the Department of Resilience

to discuss the \$2.5 million dollar grant the City was awarded to clean out Catfish Creek. They are also working on the easements for the upcoming stormwater projects on Franklin and Marshall Streets. The public works department continues to cut grass throughout the City. In collaboration with the Azalea Garden Club, upgrades have been made to the fountain on Bobby Gerald Parkway to include a color changing LED light feature. The garden club has also installed a new water fountain at the Byars Park on the corner of Main Street and Harlee Place, and is working on refurbishing the water fountain at the Veterans Square. The street sign project on South Main Street is complete with the new decorative black signs installed. A city-wide canvas will be done to replace missing street signs.

Councilman Michael Baker:

Councilman Baker asked Police Chief Tony Flowers if the old surveillance cameras were still operable for use in additional areas. He commented on a recent shooting in his neighborhood, and expressed his concerns with miscommunication in the call to 911. He stated that the officers were dispatched to the wrong location on the first response. He stated that response time is very important in these types of situations, and asked Chief Flowers if he could review the 911 calls. Councilman Baker stated that council previously discussed a project in which family members can request that a memorial tree be planted in memory of their deceased loved ones. He asked that the City consider this project gain as Mr. Ammons has located a plant nursery that would provide the trees at a reasonable cost.

Councilman Fred Gause:

Councilman Gause thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He also thanked Councilwoman Lewis for hosting the recent event, and Ms. Gunter for all she does to communicate information to council on what's going on in the community. He commented on the crime watch group led by Ms. Dolly Boyer and the great work that they are doing. He suggested that another group be organized. Councilman Gause also shared feedback on his recent experience of witnessing how surrounding cities use technology to assist law enforcement with addressing crime. He asked for an update on the funding request to Congressman Russel Frye's office for assistance in purchasing the shot detection technology system. Mr. Ammons stated that the request has been sent to Senator Lyndsey Graham's office for review and consideration of funding. He commented on the success of the Flock Camera System and the shot detection technology in surrounding cities.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson:

Councilman Atkinson thanked Ms. Gunter for her comments and stated that he agrees that security cameras are needed to help address crime, as well as improved officer response time.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt also thanked Ms. Gunter for her comments and expressed his compassion for her recent experience with gunshots outside her home. He stated that gun violence is currently an issue throughout the country. Help from the community as a whole is needed to assist law enforcement in controlling the issue.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis:

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis thanked everyone for their comments. She stated that it was a unified feeling to have Mayor Brady and councilmembers standing with her during her crime and gun violence awareness event. She stated that she was empowered to host this event as you must stand firm on what you believe in. She thanked the community as a whole, and all who took a part in the event. Councilwoman Lewis noted that it's summer break for students, and suggested that parents take advantage of enrolling their children in the events offered by the recreation department. In closing, she asked that everyone do what they can to help make their homes and neighborhoods safe.

Councilman Donny Gerald:

Councilman Gerald expressed his compassion for what Ms. Gunter and Councilman Baker experienced during the recent gunshots outside their homes. He thanked the first responders and law enforcement for all they do, and asked that citizens speak up if they have any information on crimes.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to go into executive session to discuss a Contractual Matter, and an Economic Development Proposal. The motion passed unanimously.

13. POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

14. ORDINANCE 24-05 AN ORDINANCE TO CREATE A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT LOCATED AT 1108 N. MAIN ST., MARION, SC

A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance 24-05 An Ordinance to Create a Planned Development District Located at 1108 N. Main St., Marion, SC. The motion passed unanimously.

15. ADJOURNMENT

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

Mayor Ashley Brady

Lakesha Y. Shannon, City Clerk