

MINUTES
MARION CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M.

MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Alan Ammons, City Administrator
City Treasurer Patricia Brown
City Clerk Lakesha Shannon

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 – July 14, 2026

A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2026 Regular City Council Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

5. JULY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mayor Brady named Donnie Williamson with the Public Works Department as the July 2026 Employee of the Month. He thanked Donnie for all his hard

in operating the departments heavy equipment to keep the city clean and beautiful.

6. RECREATION DEPARTMENT AWARDS PRESENTATION

Recreation Director Chasity Samuels presented awards and shirts to the 2026 SCAP 2U Softball Eastern District Championship team and coaches. Director Samuels, Mayor Brady and Council congratulated the girls on an outstanding season.

7. ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT:

City Auditor Brenda Jackson with Kenneth Cobb & Co. provided a high-level overview of the City's independent audit report ending fiscal year June 30, 2025. She stated that the City once again received a clean unmodified opinion, which is the top opinion that can be received. Mrs. Jackson highlighted the following items from the audit:

- Current cash flow is a little over \$5 million.
- Restricted cash is \$1.9 million.
- Total Fixed Assets a little over \$12.6 million.
- Total Liabilities are \$9.4 million, which mainly consists of pensions and OPEB obligations paid on retirees.
- General Fund Balance is \$5.3 million
- Hospitality Tax Revenue \$884,000.
- Operational Revenues was \$603,000, with mainly consisted of the \$487,000 business license revenue that was favorable to budget.

In closing, Mrs. Jackson noted 2 findings which were inadequate segregation of duties and preparation of financial statements. She stated that these are common findings in small rural cities due to limited staff.

There was also a management letter that addresses one additional finding regarding bank reconciliation; however, there is already a plan in place to address this matter with additional training. Mayor Brady thanked Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Patricia Brown, City Department Heads and Administrative Staff for maintaining an outstanding budget.

8. **PROCLAMATION FOR NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK 2026:**

Members of the Healthcare Partners of SC leadership team was present to accept the Proclamation for National Health Center Week 2026 from Marion City Council. The team highlighted all the diverse services they have available to assist the community with their healthcare needs, as well as their state-of-the-art facility.

9. **RESOLUTION FOR RETIREE HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENT (HRA):**

Mayor Brady explained that Resolution for HRA stating that retirees will receive an increase from \$225.00 to \$325.00 for their Medicare supplement. *A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, seconded Councilman Fred Gause to approve the increase the amount from \$225.00 to \$325.00 for the Employee Health Reimbursement arrangement (HRA). The motion passed unanimously.*

10. **FIRE DEPARTMENT DRONE KIT BIDS:**

Mayor Brady stated that the city received a grant from Duke Energy to purchase a drone kit for the fire department. Bids were solicited and 3 were received. *A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Mayor Pro tem Hunt to approve the bid of \$10,231.63 from Drone Deer Recovery for the Fire Department Drone Kit. The motion passed unanimously.*

**11. 1ST READING ON ORDINANCE 26-11 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND
ORDINANCE 06-13 SECTION 200 TABLE 1 SECTOR 44-45 AN ORDINANCE
TO PROHIBIT LIQUOR STORES IN THE CORE COMMERCIAL ZONING
DISTRICT**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance 26-11 An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 06-13 Section 200 Table 1 Sector 44-45 An Ordinance to Prohibit Liquor Stores in the Core Commercial Zoning District. The motion passed unanimously.

12. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Alan Ammons stated that there was a typo on the recently approved Capital Sales Tax projects for the Opera House and CD Joyner Auditorium resulting in the numbers being transposed between the two projects. Mr. Ammons noted the upcoming community events that will be held in conjunction with the 250th Anniversary Celebration. A meeting was held with representatives from the Pee Dee Council of Governments to discuss the city's Comprehensive Plan which is tentatively scheduled to be completed by January 2027. Public meetings and special council meetings will be held prior to its approval. The Highway 76 bridge repairs are on schedule to be completed by Thanksgiving 2026. Councilman Donny Gerald suggested that the city be proactive in sharing details about the Capital Sales Tax projects and the positive benefits these projects will have on the community. Administrator Ammons will prepare some talking points that council can share with the community to keep them informed.

13. CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney James Brogdon had no comments.

14. DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Mayor Ashley Brady

Mayor Brady stated that the Green Street Stormwater Project is complete. Bids for the Rose Hill Cemetery Stormwater Project will be reviewed on August 27th. A grant was received for this project which will help with drainage issues. Six fire department staff were recently certified in Car Seat Installation. All City of Marion police officers are currently certified in autism training.

Councilman Michael Baker

Councilman Baker stated that a 10.5-acre area between Jackson and Rose Hill Cemeteries belong to St. John AME and Wise Chapel AME churches. An easement was signed between the 2 churches to give the construction company the right of way to widen that area during the dredging project.

Councilman Fred Gause

Councilman Gause congratulated the 12U girls' softball team on winning the championship. He also commended Healthcare Partners of SC on their impressive services and beautiful facility. He expressed his excitement of the city receiving the drone and he is looking forward to how useful that type of technology will be. Councilman Gause expressed his concerns and reported some recent issues he experienced with gunshot activity in his neighborhood in which he had to contact law enforcement. He encouraged citizens to always call 911 if they believe they head gunshots. He thanked

Administrator Ammons for all that he does for the community and to keep council informed on things that are happening in the community.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson

Councilman Atkinson had no comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt also commented on his excitement about receiving the drone technology.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis

Councilwoman Lewis reported that there were stray bullets fired on Cooper Street. She thanked Police Chief Tony Flowers for addressing complaints and her concerns. She also commended Chief Flowers on the success of the recent Family Fun Day, as well as others who hosted local Back to School Drives in the community.

Councilman Donny Gerald

Councilman Gerald had no comments.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to go into Executive Session to discuss a Contractual Matter and Economic Development. The motion carried unanimously.

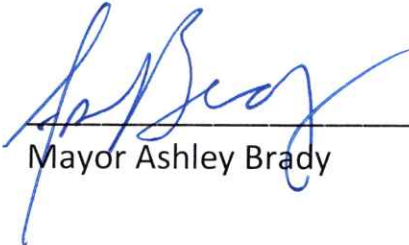
16. POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, and seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to return from Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. Mayor Brady stated that there was no action taken in executive session. *A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause,*

seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to amend the Hospitality Tax Budget by \$6,500.00 to allow the City to reimburse Marion Baptist Church for paving the Opera House parking lot. The motion passed unanimously. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt, seconded Councilman Ronald Atkinson to give the Mayor and City Administrator authorization to offer Swamp Fox Timber Company up to \$300.00 per month for use of their parking lot on Tom Gasque Boulevard for a period of 5 years, and to execute any necessary contracts for this transaction. The motion passed unanimously.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, ***a motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.***



Mayor Ashley Brady



Lakesha Y. Shannon, City Clerk