

MINUTES
MARION CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 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

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **PUBLIC HEARING CALLED TO ORDER**

Mayor Ashley called the public hearing to order.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ORDINANCES:**

- **2nd Reading on Ordinance 26-09 An Ordinance to Amend Rates for Sanitation Service**

Mayor Brady opened the floor to public comments on Ordinance 26-09.

There were no comments from the public.

3. **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no comments, a motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to adjourn the public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

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 – June 9, 2026
- Special Meeting – June 22, 2026
- Public Hearing/Special Meeting – June 30, 2026

A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2026 Regular City Council Meeting, June 22, 2026 Special Meeting, and the June 30, 2026 Public Hearing/Special Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

5. JUNE EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mayor Brady named Athletic Director Chris Thompson as the June 2026 Employee of the Month. He thanked Chris for all his hard work with the Recreation Department, and highlighted his work in hosting the recent 10U Baseball Championship Tournament.

6. FIRE DEPARTMENT PROMOTION CEREMONY

An installation ceremony was held for Battalion Chief Charles Collins with the City of Marion Fire Department. He was officially sworn in by Mayor Ashley Brady. Mayor Brady noted that you can always count on Battalion Chief Collins to be there assisting with any fire related incidents in the city.

7. APPROVE ORDINANCE:

- **2ND Reading on Ordinance 26-09 An Ordinance to Amend Rates for Sanitation Services**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Tassie Lewis, seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald to approve 2nd Reading on Ordinance 26-09 An Ordinance to Amend Rates for Sanitation Services. The motion passed unanimously.

8. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – 10 YEAR UPDATE PROPOSAL:

Mayor Brady stated that the city has been working with the Pee Dee Council of Governments to prepare the 10-Year Comprehensive Plan Update. Funds have been included in the budget for this project, and the cost will be \$15,000 plus travel expenses for Council of Governments staff. ***A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson to approve \$15,000 for the 10-Year Comprehensive Plan Update plus travel expenses for Pee Dee Council of Government staff. The motion passed unanimously.***

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Alan Ammons reported that the Capital Sales Tax projects were submitted to the committee, and all projects were approved for funding as presented with a total budget of \$3.2 million. The city pool will remain open on its current schedule through July 29 which is the first day of school for Marion County students. The schedule will then change to Saturday's only for a few more weeks pending the availability of lifeguards. The CD Joyner Auditorium's HVAC system was surveyed and major repairs are needed. As a result of this, all new rentals have been postponed

through July and August to prevent any further damage to the system.

Administrator Ammons will keep council updated on the repair estimates.

There was a recent break-in at the city pool storage room resulting in the robot being stolen and damage to the door. The Marion Police Department is currently investigating the incident.

10. REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

➤ **Peggy Gunter – Safety Concerns in Neighborhood**

Ms. Gunter expressed her concerns with individuals parking in front of her house and suspiciously taking pictures of the home. She asked if the city is aware of any property being sold on her street that may affect her property.

11. CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney James Brogdon was not in attendance.

12. DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Mayor Ashley Brady

Mayor Brady stated that the Green Street Stormwater Project should be completed this week. The City of Marion Recreation Department has held several camps during the summer, and also have several upcoming camps for the youth. The 12U Girls Softball Team were the Eastern District Champions and State Championship runner-up. Mayor Brady commended the Recreation Department on both the 12U Girls and 10U Boys recent tournaments, as well as other great summer activities for the children.

Councilman Michael Baker

Councilman Baker reported that there is a really bad sink hole at the corner of Liberty and Middle Streets. Administrator Ammons reported that SCDOT has been notified and is currently addressing the issue.

Councilman Fred Gause

Councilman Gause thanked Ms. Gunter for her comments. He stated that he has received some calls from citizens concerned about a letter they have received from HTC. Administrator Ammons explained that no action is needed on the letters, as HTC will dig sections in the SCDOT right of way to install fiber optic lines. Councilman Gause also received calls regarding the Jones Ave roundabout project. Mayor Brady stated that the project has started and is estimated to be complete by the end of 2026.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson

Councilman Atkinson had no comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt stated that he is proud of city council and the work they are doing to make the City of Marion a better place.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis

Councilwoman Lewis thanked Ms. Gunter for coming to share her comments. She encouraged citizens to say something if they see something suspicious. She announced that there are several upcoming school supply giveaways in the city. She stated that she has also received calls from citizens that are concerned about HTC, and a few have received letters from them asking to buy a portion of their property.

Councilman Donny Gerald

Councilman Gerald stated that council needs to be proactive in informing the citizens about the upcoming Capital Sales Tax projects.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Fred Gause to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters Related to – Recreation, Police and Fire Departments, and a Legal matter. The motion carried unanimously.

14. POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Fred Gause, and seconded by Councilman Donny Gerald 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 Mayor Pro Tem Emerson Hunt to extend the moratorium on vape stores and to include liquor stores until the Zoning Board has an opportunity to review matters in the core business district.* Councilman Donny Gerald expressed his concerns with the vote as it affects a business that wants to open a liquor store in a building they are purchasing in the core commercial district that currently has no laws permitting that activity; however, this vote will prohibit that. He feels it's not good business on behalf of the city to change the laws now concerning that type business activity. Following discussion, *the motion passed with Councilmembers Michael Baker, Fred Gause, Ronald Atkinson, Emerson Hunt, Tassie Lewis,*

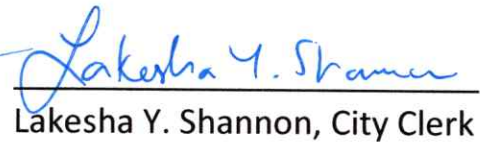
and Mayor Ashley Brady all voting in favor; Councilman Donny Gerald voted in opposition. The motion carried 6-1.

15. 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