

October 23, 2023

City of Marion – Regular Meeting

October 23, 2023

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Marion held in the Council Chambers at 5:30 P.M. The City Clerk was instructed to call the roll and the response was as follows:

PHYSICALLY PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Absher led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments this evening.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Barwick made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

NEW BUSINESS

STREET DEPARTMENT

Commissioner Webb told the Council there have been issues with the intersection of Garfield and Reeves Streets. They are adding two more stop signs in addition to the two already there to make the intersection a four-way stop.

Ordinance 3919 Authorizing Traffic Stop Signs on Garfield Street at Reeves Street Intersection

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve Ordinance 3919 authorizing traffic stop signs on Garfield Street at the Reeves Street intersection making the intersection a four-way stop.

Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

Ordinance 3921 Authorizing a Loan Agreement with First Southern Bank

Commissioner Webb told the Council that on September 25, 2023, they approved the purchase of two new Dodge Ram 2500 trucks. Ordinance 3921 is to approve the financing of the trucks.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve Ordinance 3921 authorizing a loan agreement with First Southern Bank to finance the purchase of two new Dodge Ram 2500 trucks at 4.65% for five years. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

BUILDING AND CODE SERVICES

Award Bid for Demolition of 1313 West Cherry Street

Mayor Absher stated City Attorney Wendy Cunningham had requested this item to be tabled.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING

October 23, 2023

Mayor Absher told the Council agenda items 7A and 7B are annexation petitions for neighboring parcels that want to be connected to the new sewer system.

Ordinance 3920 Approving a Petition for Annexation from Chris and Ginger Blue

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3920 approving a Petition for Annexation from Chris and Ginger Blue for parcel numbers 07-30-300-042 and 07-30-300-043.

Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

Ordinance 3922 Approving a Petition for Annexation from K. Webb Properties, LLC and Market Street, LLC

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3922 approving a Petition for Annexation from K. Webb Properties, LLC and Market Street, LLC for parcel numbers 07-30-300-050 and 07-30-300-051. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

Hub TIF Commercial Façade Renovation Grants

Mayor Absher asked Chief of Staff Cody Moake to talk about the Commercial Façade Grants. Cody explained Little Egypt Arts Association is the first of two applications he has received for these grants. They are doing some internal work to add an ADA compliant restroom. Because of this work, there will be some external work required including a new doorway and tuckpointing. Everything within the application qualifies for the grant.

Cody told the Council the second application received is for work on the Professional Arts Building on the corner of Jefferson and Market Streets. This application includes \$30,000 in total upgrades made to the building including exterior painting and sidewalk and drainage work. This all qualifies for the grant.

Each of the two applications will receive \$10,000 grants leaving \$230,000 in the fund. He told Mayor Absher a postcard is being mailed notifying businesses of this opportunity.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the Hub TIF Commercial Façade Renovation Grants as presented. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

Resolution 2023-15 and Resolution 2023-16 Donating Parcels to IDOT for Right-of-Way for the Route 37/Wildcat Roundabout Project

Mayor Absher told the Council agenda items 7D and 7E are related to one project. Chief of Staff Cody Moake told the Council that Hanson, who is acquiring right-of-way for IDOT, needed additional right-of-way for the project. Between two parcels, this totals three tenths of an acre. Cody said that since the city asked IDOT for this project, it seemed appropriate to donate the right-of-way. It is his understanding this will be the last property acquired before the project starts.

October 23, 2023

Mayor Absher made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-15 and Resolution 2023-16 donating the identified parcels to IDOT for rights-of-way for the Route 37/Wildcat Roundabout Project. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Annual Workers' Compensation and Property/Liability Renewal

Mayor Absher told the Council this is the time of year to approve insurance renewals. Chief of Staff Cody Moake explained he is pleased this year's renewal is a 2.4 percent increase over last year's rate.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the annual workers' compensation and property/liability renewal through IML's Risk Management Association for \$980,186.28. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

After some discussion regarding the various payment options, Mayor Absher called for a vote.

ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Patton – Accounts & Finances

Commissioner Patton had no report.

Commissioner Webb

Commissioner Webb reported the Street Department has been excavating on a various city lots for asphalt and working on sidewalks. They have been trimming trees, building dumpster enclosures, and doing general trash clean up around town. Everything is good at the Cemetery Department.

Commissioner Barwick – Public Health & Safety

Commissioner Barwick had no report.

Commissioner Stoecklin – Public Property, Civic Center, Pavilion

Commissioner Stoecklin read the Water Department report since last meeting. He reported the Water Department continues hydrant flushing. He said the Boyton Street Community Center is holding the National Lights on After School open house on Thursday, October 26, 2023, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. He asked two trivia questions this evening. The first question asked which food has the highest water content. The answer is celery. The second question asked which organ in the body has the highest water content. The answer is the brain which is seventy-five percent water.

Police Chief David Fitts reported the seventh annual Trunk or Treat will be this Saturday starting at 5:00 pm until the line is gone. There will also be a small carnival this year. He added the full-time sound engineer hired by the Civic Center is here tonight. He introduced Jared Blaylock and told the Council he is leaving the Police Department as a dispatcher to go work at the Civic Center. He told them he hates to lose Jared, but this is his passion, and he will do a great job.

October 23, 2023

Commissioner Stoecklin gave a shout out to Josh Benson and everyone who helped with the movie, Hocus Pocus Friday night.

Mayor Absher – Public Affairs

Mayor Absher had no report.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mayor Absher said he was going to ask Chief of Staff Cody Moake to address letters that have been sent out regarding the energy aggregation program. He explained every eighteen or thirty-six months, depending on the contract, the city has been a part of an aggregation contract with AGE which includes ninety plus municipalities that use bulk buying power. The current contract is expiring in December. Mayor Absher said since the letters have gone out, he has received angry phone calls and visits from constituents. He thinks it is important that everyone understands the program.

Cody explained the aggregation program applies to only the supply of energy, not the delivery of it. Ameren owns the lines that deliver the electricity. Cody also explained if a resident is part of the program their Ameren bill will list the supplier as Homefield. He said the current rate is \$0.054 per kwh. The new contract that starts in December will be \$0.084 per kwh. He told the Council earlier in the year, they approved and signed a power of attorney allowing AGE to negotiate a rate on the city's behalf. He said Southern Illinois Aggregation Partnership (SIAP) negotiated Homefield's best rate for a six-month period through June 2024. They were able to negotiate an opt in/opt out clause. If in June, Ameren's rate is lower than the rate negotiated with Homefield, the rate will be renegotiated, and a new contract signed. The city joined this program in hopes of saving residents money and in no way benefits from the program. He said residents may opt out of the program at any time. To opt out, residents can mail in the yellow card they received or can call Homefield. He said new customers who have recently moved to Marion or customers who have moved to a different location in Marion will have to opt in. He told the Council Ameren rates are available online for comparison. If a resident opts in or out, the change will take effect on their next billing cycle. Cody said AGE is also actively working on purchasing land for solar arrays for future use.

Mayor Absher suggested this might be an opportunity for residents to explore other options such as solar energy.

Cody told the Council several people have come in city hall to apply for peddlers permits to sell solar energy. He said if someone comes to your home selling solar energy, make sure they have a valid permit and ask them for their name and company information. He told the Council he is keeping a list of registered solicitors updated on the website. If the seller is not listed on the website, do not talk to them. He also said if they have a valid permit that is not an endorsement of their product. It only means they have applied and gone through the appropriate process.

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE SESSION

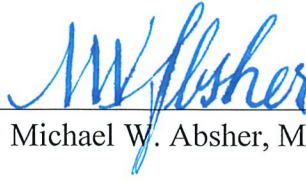
Mayor Absher stated he did not have a need for executive session this evening and asked if any of the Commissioners had a need for executive session. Hearing no need for executive session Mayor Absher entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

October 23, 2023

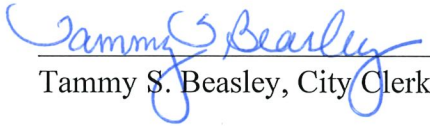
ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB AND
STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:05 P.M.



Michael W. Absher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tammy S. Beasley, City Clerk