

April 22, 2024

City of Marion – Regular Meeting

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Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Marion held in the Council Chambers at 5:30 P.M. Mayor Absher called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. The City Clerk called the roll, and the response was as follows:

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

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER PATTON

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Fire Chief Tim Barnett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments this evening.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

NEW BUSINESS

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Recommendation to Hire Hunter Rishel, Matthew Dalton James, and Patrick McCowen as Firefighters

Commissioner Barwick made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Police and Fire Merit Board to hire Hunter Rishel, Matthew Dalton James, and Patrick McCowen to open Firefighter positions, terms per the collective bargaining agreement. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Fire Chief Barnett told the Council the new Firefighters will be introduced at the next council meeting.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Recommendation to Hire Corey Hacker as a Patrol Officer

Commissioner Barwick made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Police and Fire Merit Board, Commissioner Barwick, and Chief Fitts to hire Corey Hacker as a patrol officer at the Probationary 1 rate per the collective bargaining agreement with a start date of May 6, 2024. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

Police Chief David Fitts introduced Corey Hacker. He told the Council Mr. Hacker will attend the Illinois State Police Academy in Springfield starting May 12th. Mr. Hacker thanked the Council for the opportunity and said it is a great opportunity for he and his wife.

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BUILDING & CODE SERVICES

Zoning Board Denial of a Special Use Permit Request at 702 South Russell Street

Mayor Absher introduced this agenda item and stated the applicant was not present at the meeting to appeal the Zoning Board's decision. Mayor Absher stated the city relies upon the Zoning Board to hear each case and they have voted unanimously to deny this special use permit request. Mayor Absher stated his opinion is that the Zoning Board made the correct decision based on the city code. He explained that essentially a room has been built on to a home and the homeowner wants to supplement her income by using it as a vacation rental. The addition to this home makes it a duplex and that type of multi-family housing is not allowed in an R-1 zone district. The Zoning Board made their decision based on this information. None of the neighbors attending the meeting tonight wished to comment on the Zoning Board's decision.

Mayor Absher made a motion to affirm the Zoning Board's denial of a Special Use Permit request at 702 South Russell Street, PIN# 06-24-154-012 to have a multi-family home in an R-1 zone to use as a vacation rental (Figuera). Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Mayor Absher explained agenda items 8 A, B, and C are all related. He said there is a correction to be very carefully read on item B. It was a scrivener's error that is actually in the packet but was not worded correctly on the agenda.

Mayor Absher said there are some very large numbers on these agenda items. He reminded everyone over two years ago the city entered into a contractual agreement with the federal government at their request, for the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge who is dealing with almost one hundred-year-old infrastructure for water and sewer systems. The Refuge contacted the city to see if the city would be interested in taking over the water supply and sewer service and in being the general contractor so that upgrades meet the city's specifications. The city is being reimbursed dollar for dollar for expenditures plus a fee with funds from the federal government.

Bid from Haier Plumbing for Water Distribution System Improvements for the Refuge Water and Sewer Project

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to accept the low bid of \$6,774,752.20 from Haier Plumbing for water distribution system improvements for the Refuge Water and Sewer Project. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

Bid from TRIKOTE for Elevated Tank Rehabilitation for the Refuge Water and Sewer Project

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to accept the low bid of \$519,000 from TRIKOTE for elevated tank rehabilitation for the Refuge Water and Sewer Project for contract B and also \$431,000 from TRIKOTE for contract A. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

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Bid from Midwest Petroleum for Sewer System Improvements for the Refuge Water and Sewer Project

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to accept the low bid of \$3,545,903.26 from Midwest Petroleum for Sewer System Improvements for the Refuge Water and Sewer Project.

Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Mayor Absher explained the Sioux Drive project is a long-time grant funded project that will build a road off of Skyline Drive going east that will serve a multi-modal sports complex in that area. Project Engineer Ryan Farley told the Council the bids came in twelve percent under budget.

Bid from ET Simonds for the Skyline Drive, Campground Road, and Sioux Drive Improvement Project

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the low bid of \$3,681,999.30 from ET Simonds for the Skyline Drive, Campground Road, and Sioux Drive Improvement Project. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

Hub TIF Grant Application for Bennie's Italian Foods 309 North Market

Mayor Absher said the Hub TIF grant application from Bennie's Italian Foods is for awnings and exterior lighting.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve a Hub TIF Grant Application from Bennie's Italian Foods (309 North Market). Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Mayor Absher said the budget is set this time every year and it is an educated guess. Statutorily, the city must align the actual expenditures with revenues. Resolution 2024-12 is to align the FY24 revenues and expenditures as they actually happened.

2024-12 Authorizing Revision of the FY24 Annual Budget

Mayor Absher made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-12 authorizing revision of the FY24 annual budget. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Ordinance 3953 Adopting the FY25 Annual Budget

The budget hearing was held at 5:00 P.M. this evening in the Council Chambers in City Hall. Mayor Absher opened the hearing and told the audience the purpose of the budget hearing is to give the public the opportunity to ask questions. He announced the budget has been on display in the City Clerk's office and online. Hearing no questions or comments, Mayor Absher adjourned the budget hearing at 5:03 P.M.

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Mayor Absher explained it takes four months and involvement by every department head and the Treasurer to create the annual budget. As required by statute, the budget hearing was held at 5:00 PM and the budget has been on display in the City Clerk's office and online for the statutorily required amount of time. There were no comments from the public during the budget hearing. Treasurer Lance Roye reported total budgeted expenditures of a little over \$119 million with an estimated general fund surplus of \$409,000 for the year. Treasurer Roye thanked retiring Treasurer Steve Hale for training him and for planning ahead to make it easier for him to transition into the position. Mayor Absher said the four-month overlap was planned on purpose. Mayor Absher said he appreciates all the hard work from everyone involved.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3953 adopting the FY25 annual budget. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Non-Union Employees' Salary Adjustments included in the FY25 Budget Effective May 1, 2025

Mayor Absher explained salary adjustments are routine this time of year and are built into the budget. These salary adjustments are not included in collective bargaining agreements.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve non-union employees' salary adjustments included in the FY25 budget, effective May 1, 2025. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Mayor Absher told the audience the city has a very small token for Treasurer Hale in comparison to the number of years he has dedicated to the city. Mayor Absher credited Treasurer Hale with modernizing many of the processes in the Treasurer's office. He stated that Treasurer Hale is leaving the city in the best financial shape in its one hundred eighty-five-year existence, and it was not that way twenty-eight years ago. Mayor Absher said the city is grateful for Treasurer Hale's service and is not sure where the city would be without it and told him he will be missed. Treasurer Hale, Treasurer Roye, and employees from the Treasurer's office joined Mayor Absher at the podium.

Treasurer Hale thanked the city for the opportunities he has had over the years. He said he has worked with three different mayors, countless people, and many Councils. He said they have all been great and it has been a privilege. He credited the various Councils over the years with making decisions that have really made a difference in Marion. He expressed his gratitude to all of them.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Mayor Absher said it is routine this time of year to appoint department heads and supervisors. He noted there are no changes to existing supervisors.

Ordinance 3951 Approving the Appointment of At-Will Department Supervisors

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3951 approving the appointments of at-will department supervisors. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

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Ordinance 3952 Repealing and Replacing the Liquor Control Ordinance

Mayor Absher stated there has been an overhaul to the current liquor code due to some technical changes that need to be made. He said the classifications have been renamed. He also pointed out that page eight, section 15 E gives the Liquor Commissioner the authority to extend the hours to sell and serve liquor for special occasions. He noted the biggest change is to allow grocery stores to sell beer and wine. He stated that he is personally neutral on this issue. He reported that he had conversations with two or three grocery store chains that were interested in locating in Marion. He also noted it was never stated in the city code that grocery stores could not sell liquor. He explained this change will allow grocery stores, which are specifically defined, to sell beer and wine. Convenience stores are not included in this change. He said by definition, there are currently five stores that are eligible to apply for this license: Kroger, Walmart, Aldi, Target, and Smalls. After some discussion, Commissioner Stoecklin suggested the number of grocery store licenses available for issue should be increased from five to eight. Mayor Absher explained that licenses will still renew each year on January 31st. He also noted that current license holders will not have to renew their licenses now. They can wait until January and will then renew with the new classifications. Any new incoming businesses will be using the new classifications.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3952 repealing and replacing the Liquor Control Ordinance. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Webb – Streets & Public Improvements

Commissioner Webb reported the Street Department has been working on sidewalks on Jackson and Granite Streets. They finished the storm replacement project in Spring Garden and that should help with drainage in that area. They have been mowing right-of-way and empty lots and putting up street signs. The Spring Clean Up started today. Everything is good at the Cemetery Department, and they continue to mow.

Commissioner Stoecklin – Public Property, Civic Center, Pavilion

Commissioner Stoecklin read the Water Department report since the last meeting. He asked two trivia questions this evening.

Mayor Absher – Public Affairs

Mayor Absher reported that Club 60 now offers monthly food boxes to all eligible seniors. They accept applications on Wednesdays at 11:00 am. Applicants must bring their identification. The boxes are available for pickup the first Tuesday of each month after lunch. This program is operated at no cost to the taxpayers.

Commissioner Barwick – Public Health & Safety

Commissioner Barwick had no report.

Commissioner Patton – Accounts & Finances

Commissioner Patton was absent.

Commissioner Stoecklin told the Council he attended the Wayne Newton show at Marion Cultural and Civic Center last night. He said Mr. Newton was very gracious to the staff.

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MISCELLANEOUS

There were no miscellaneous items to come before Council this evening.

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 he entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

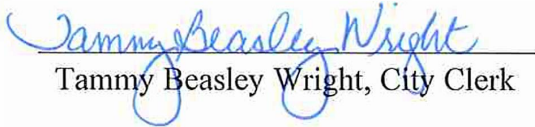
ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS BARWICK, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA. COMMISSIONER PATTON ABSENT.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:25 P.M.



Michael W. Absher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tammy Beasley Wright, City Clerk