

November 13, 2023

City of Marion – Regular Meeting

November 13, 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, WEBB AND STOECKLIN
AND MAYOR ABSHER.

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER BARWICK

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Absher led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Absher read a proclamation to demonstrate the city's support of National Adoption Day on November 17, 2023. DCFS Attorney Jeff Shore, Judge Amanda Byassee Gott, and Attorneys Andrea McNeill and Teresa Machicao-Hopkins were present for the presentation of the proclamation. Attorney McNeill told the Council and audience that she has filed twenty-two cases representing thirty-one children for National Adoption Day. She explained that Judge Gott will oversee these cases that will break their previous records for adoptions granted on National Adoption Day.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marion resident Amber Carrington lives at the corner of Malden and South Russell Streets. She asked the Council if a stop sign could be installed at that intersection. This is the intersection immediately north of Longfellow School. She explained her daughter attends Lincoln School and gets bussed there each morning. The bus stop is by Longfellow School, so her daughter has to cross Malden Street and Russell Street to get to the bus stop. Ms. Carrington walks her to the bus stop each morning because of speeding traffic in that area. Mayor Absher told her Commissioner Webb and Street Department Superintendent Doug Phillips will have to look at this issue to determine if a sign can be placed there.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

BUILDING AND CODE SERVICES

Request for a Petition to Repeal and Disclaim City Zoning Authority for Property Identified as PIN 06-09-200-019 Located Outside City Limits

Mayor Absher stated there is a piece of property owned by REDCO outside of city limits that Southern Illinois Reentry is looking to purchase to place a reentry facility/halfway house. Mayor Absher explained the city has authority to zone properties outside city limits that are located within a mile and a half of city limits. He does not know why the city zoned this property Industrial in 2001. He said the city rarely enforces the authority to zone outside of city limits. Southern Illinois Reentry petitioned the Zoning Board to repeal and disclaim city zoning authority for the property. The Zoning Board unanimously approved the petition and recommended the city disclaim zoning authority for the property.

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Attorney John Nations representing Southern Illinois Reentry told the Council the property index numbers as listed on the agenda was incorrect as a digit was missing.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve a request for a petition to repeal and disclaim city zoning authority for property identified as PIN 06-09-200-019 (the correct PIN) located outside city limits. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

CEMETERY

Award Bid for New Ford F350 or New Dodge 3500 Cab and Chassis

Commissioner Webb told the Council the Cemetery Department needs to replace a dump truck to haul dirt. They have solicited bids for a cab and chassis only. They will solicit bids for a bed at a later date. They received four bids. They were as follows:

Jim Hayes, Inc.	2024 Ram 3500	\$46,539.00
Jim Hayes, Inc.	2024 Ford F350	\$45,771.00
Absher Arnold	2024 Ram 3500	\$49,280.00
Vogler Ford	2024 Ford F350	\$49,811.00

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the low bid of \$45,771 from Jim Hayes, Inc. for a 2024 Ford F350 cab and chassis, a budgeted item. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Hire Levi Jones to Fill an Open Dispatch Position

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the recommendation of Commissioner Barwick and Chief Fitts to hire Levi Jones to fill the open dispatch position at the probationary two rate per the collective bargaining agreement with a start date of November 16, 2023. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Police Chief David Fitts introduced Levi Jones to the Council and told them he is currently a dispatcher in Pulaski County. Mr. Jones thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve the community.

Hire Bryan Ferrell to Fill an Open Dispatch Position

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve the recommendation of Commissioner Barwick and Chief Fitts to hire Bryan Ferrell to fill the open dispatch position at the probationary one rate per the collective bargaining agreement with a start date of November 20, 2023. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

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Police Chief David Fitts introduced Bryan Ferrell to the Council. Mr. Ferrell told the Council he is currently working in upper management associated with a retail store and has lived in Marion the last seven or eight years. He said he looks forward to serving.

Purchase 2023 Dodge Durango from Jim Hayes, Inc. for \$39,316

Commissioner Patton made a motion to approve the recommendation of Commissioner Barwick and Chief Fitts to purchase a 2023 Dodge Durango from Jim Hayes, Inc. for \$39,316.

Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Police Chief David Fitts told the Council no one locally has interceptors in stock. He had to research on the internet to try and find one. Mayor Absher stated he wants to be sure the city has a competitive bid on the Durango and Chief Fitts assured him it is a competitive bid. Mayor Absher explained this vehicle replaces a totaled vehicle. He told the Council the explorers are almost impossible to get right now. Chief Fitts told the Council Morrow Brothers Ford said it would be several months before they will have any available. Mayor Absher asked if Chief Fitts had talked with any other departments having experience with the Durangos. Chief Fitts said Saline County has them and they say they are improved.

SEWER DEPARTMENT

Engineering Services Agreement with Horner & Shifrin, Inc. for the Boswell Lift Station and Sewer Relining Project

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Horner & Shifrin, Inc. for the Boswell Lift Station and Sewer Relining project. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

Public Works Superintendent Brent Cain explained this lift station is separate from the big project. He said this is the first of seven lift stations being replaced.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Resolution 2023-17 Appropriating \$500,000 to Match Funding for Sioux Drive Extension

Mayor Absher told the Council the planning for the extension of Sioux Drive has taken some time. He reminded them they passed a resolution for this project last year for Delta Regional Authority appropriating \$500,000 for the city's ten percent share in the project cost. IDOT is also contributing two million dollars to the project, and they need the city's resolution in their format. Resolution 2023-17 is in IDOT's format.

Mayor Absher made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-17 appropriating \$500,000 to match the required funding for the Sioux Drive Extension project. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

2024 Schedule of City Council Meetings and 2024 City Holidays

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Mayor Absher said the city has to approve the schedule of council meetings and holidays for 2024. These are posted for the public.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the 2024 Schedule of City Council Meetings and the 2024 City Holidays. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Appointment of Charlotte Smoot as Deputy City Clerk

Mayor Absher said with the departure of Kiley Gould as Deputy City Clerk recently, Chief of Staff Cody Moake and City Clerk Tammy Beasley interviewed eight candidates for her replacement. He told the Council their pick is his recommendation for the appointment for Deputy City Clerk.

Mayor Absher made a motion to appoint Charlotte Smoot as Deputy City Clerk at \$21.63 per hour plus benefits pending pre-employment testing. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

Announcement and Approval of 2023-2024 Tax Levy Estimate of \$100.00

Mayor Absher explained each year since the 2020 payable tax year the city has all but eliminated the property tax levy. He said for a variety of technical reasons, the city does levy a very small amount, \$100 in total. The city is required to announce this at a Council Meeting.

Absher made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 tax levy estimate of \$100. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

Health Insurance Renewal with Blue Cros Blue Shield

Mayor Absher explained this is the third year renewing with Blue Cros Blue Shield. He said the city has no chance of lessening premiums unless claims are reduced, so there is no point in bidding out the insurance because it will not be competitive. He said the city continues to look for cost effective ideas. He said the employees and their families are overusing the health insurance. Insurance agent Jon Cavaness told the Council five percent of the people account for sixty-five percent of the claims. He told them eighteen claimants accounted for \$2.6 million in claims. He said the plan covers 180 employees and 372 people in total. Jon reported the premiums will increase almost five percent for next year. Chief of Staff Cody Moake reminded the Council premiums did not increase last year.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the health insurance renewal with Blue Cross Blue Shield. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Patton – Accounts & Finances

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Commissioner Patton read the Police Department and Narcotics Unit reports for October since Commissioner Barwick was absent. He reported 1,805 dispatched calls; 1,890 Marion 911 calls; 4,111 non-emergency calls; and 154 ambulance calls in October.

Commissioner Patton had no report for the Treasurer's Office.

Commissioner Stoecklin – Public Property, Civic Center, Pavilion

Commissioner Stoecklin read the Water Department report since last council meeting. He reported the ice rink is under construction. He gave a big shout out to the Civic Center for the variety of shows coming in the future. He also said there are several Very Merry Marion Christmas activities coming up.

Commissioner Webb

Commissioner Webb reported the Street Department has been working on a storm water project on Broeking road. They have been cleaning ditches in anticipation of upcoming rain. They have been assisting with Christmas decorations downtown and assembling the ice rink. He reported the Cemetery Department had six burials in October.

Commissioner Barwick – Public Health & Safety

Commissioner Barwick was absent.

Mayor Absher – Public Affairs

Mayor Absher had no report.

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 Mayor Absher entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

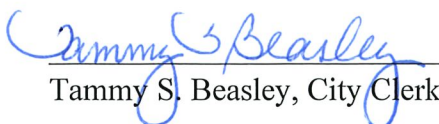
ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, WEBB AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA. COMMISSIONER BARWICK ABSENT.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:24 P.M.



Michael W. Absher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tammy S. Beasley, City Clerk