

December 23, 2024

City of Marion – Regular Meeting

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REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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 PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB, AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Absher led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Matt Farrell was present to address the Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Purchase 2024 Dodge Durango to Replace Totaled Patrol Vehicle

Commissioner Barwick made a motion to purchase a 2024 Dodge Durango to replace a totaled patrol vehicle. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Police Chief David Fitts told the Council this meeting is one of his favorite council meetings each year because he gets to publicly recognize the work of the officers and dispatchers.

Dispatcher of the Year Presentation

Police Chief David Fitts told the Council the Dispatcher of the Year started work as a dispatcher when they were sworn and carried weapons. He said this dispatcher has worked for twenty-seven years and is retiring in June. He said this dispatcher has been helping to instruct the new dispatchers. He presented the Dispatcher of the Year award to Anthony Emery. Mr. Emery thanked the Council, Chief Fitts, and Assistant Chief Wright. He told them he will have twenty-eight and a half years of service when he retires.

Officer of the Year Presentation

Police Chief David Fitts told the Council the Officer of the Year can be a patrol officer or an investigator. This year's recipient a patrol officer. This officer led the department in traffic stops, citations issued, and overall reports taken and written during the last twelve months. He started his career with the department as a Dispatcher. He presented the Officer of the Year award to Officer Mason Dodd. Officer Dodd said he appreciates everyone, and that God deserves all the praise.

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Mayor Absher briefly paused the meeting to allow the visitors to leave.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Purchase New Pump for Sewer Department

Commissioner Stoecklin approved the purchase of a new pump for the Sewer Department to replace a twenty-year-old pump at a cost of \$21,500 plus \$800 freight. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Ordinance 3992 Accepting Right of Way Dedications from Marion Heights II, Inc.

Mayor Absher told the Council there is information in their packets regarding the right-of-way dedications.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3992 accepting right of way dedications from Marion Heights II, Inc. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

FY25 TIF Grant Applications Received Through December 20, 2024

Mayor Absher told the Council there are three grant applications this time. All three are for the Hub TIF.

Commissioner Webb made the motion to approve FY25 TIF Grant applications received through December 20, 2024. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

Ordinance 3994 a Residential TIF I Redevelopment Agreement with Matt and Jennifer Lee

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 3994 a Residential TIF I Redevelopment Agreement with Matt and Jennifer Lee. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

Chief of Staff Cody Moake told the Council the Residential TIF Redevelopment Agreement is for a property a 1009 Hillcrest. The house there burned and was demolished. Matt and Jennifer Lee built a new home on the lot and have already sold it.

Hearing no further discussion, Mayor Absher called for the vote.

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

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Ordinance 3993 Authorizing a Loan Agreement for Building and Code Services Department Vehicles

Commissioner Patton told the Council the Treasurer's Office has solicited bids from local banks to finance the recently purchased Code Enforcement cars. First Southern Bank will issue a loan not to exceed \$46,955 for a five-year term at an interest rate of 3.84 percent.

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Commissioner Patton made a motion to approve Ordinance 3993 authorizing a loan agreement for Building and Code Services Department vehicles. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Proposal from Jeff Mayer to Plant Trees Throughout Marion

Chief of Staff Cody Moake told the Council that Jeff Mayer stated a desire to help the city identify places to plant trees in public spaces around town. He has offered to do the leg work, including getting access agreements from property owners and schedule the planting and maintenance of the trees. The first phase of Mr. Mayer's plan will plant one hundred thirteen trees throughout Marion. Chief of Staff Moake explained Ameren makes funds available to trim back trees away from power lines. Since there are no trimmings scheduled for Marion for 2025, they agreed to make these funds available to the city to purchase the trees in the form of a \$10,000 grant. Since several of the locations chosen for planting trees are within a TIF District, the cost of the trees is a TIF eligible expense. Chief of Staff Moake recommended the remaining cost be covered by TIF funds. The trees will be planted by Housman's Landscaping and will be warrantied through them.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve a proposal presented from Jeff Mayer to contract with Housman's Landscaping for a total of \$39,115 to plant one hundred thirteen trees in the locations listed in the packet. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

Intergovernmental Agreement with Marion Unit #2 to Develop Single-Family Homes on Midway Court

Mayor Absher explained over the last four years, the city has acquired abandoned and dilapidated structures in the Midway Court/Concord Street area. The city has partnered with a developer that was going to build a fourteen-million-dollar development there. The development will consist of twenty-nine single family homes and eight duplexes. The developer has applied to the state three years in a row for tax credits through the Illinois Housing Development Authority. They will apply for those credits again this spring. That will substantially rebuild a portion of the property the city has acquired between Hendrickson and Concord Streets that is also bounded by Vicksburg Steet and Midway Court. Some vacant lots were identified that are not included in the tax credit application area that are prime for rebuilding. Mayor Absher gave credit to Chief of Staff Moake for thinking of approaching the School District to partner with the city to build in that area. He thanked Chief of Staff Moake for the idea.

Chief of Staff Moake said the city sees this as an opportunity to keep costs down and provide housing for a growing workforce. He said he is excited for the opportunity to provide owner-occupied single-family homes, and he thinks this is a step in the right direction to support the Midway Court neighborhood. He thanked building trades instructor Lester James for building good, quality homes. Building Trades student Hailey Muldrew has an interest in architecture and jumped at the opportunity to help design these homes. She presented floor plans for the homes to the Council and audience. Chief of Staff Moake indicated there would be safeguards in place to ensure owner occupied homes that hopefully will be sold for \$150,000 or less. They will be required to be owner occupied for five years or the city will have the ability to purchase them

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back at the same price. He thanked School District Superintendent Becky Moss and CFO Kim Watson for their help with this project. Mayor Absher stated the goal is to see the properties to stay owner occupied for five years and not be flipped.

Mr. James told the Council it takes three semesters to build a 2,000 square foot home. He thinks the students can build two homes in four semesters.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the intergovernmental agreement with Marion Unit #2 to develop two single-family homes on the parcels listed on Midway Court. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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 gave a brief update on the Water and Sewer project with the Refuge and reported that Haier Plumbing is two thirds finished. He reported the solar project at the sewer department should be starting in a few months since almost all agreements are in place. He asked two trivia questions this evening and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Webb – Streets & Public Improvements

Commissioner Webb reported the Street Department has been using the vac truck to clean storm drains on Morningside, Boyton, and Russell Streets. They cleared an extreme blockage at 1300 North Van Buren. They have been trimming trees along the sidewalks. He reported all is well at the Cemetery.

Mayor Absher – Public Affairs

Mayor Absher thanked everyone who worked on the Christmas activities this year. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

MISCELLANEOUS

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

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE SESSION

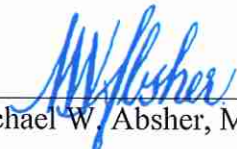
Mayor Absher stated he did not have a need for executive session this evening and asked if any of the Commissioners had a need for executive session. Hearing no need for executive session he entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

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

Meeting Adjourned at 6:15 P.M.



Michael W. Absher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tammy Beasley Wright, City Clerk