

July 14, 2025

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 COMMENT

A representative from the SBA addressed the Council regarding disaster loans that are available for residents affected by the May 16th tornado. She told them the SBA is still accepting applications for low interest federal loans through August 18, 2025. These loans are for homeowners, business owners, and renters. Mayor Absher told her the city will put this information out on the website.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

BUILDING & CODE SERVICES

18" Foot Variance at 1314 N Courtney Street, Parcel # 07-18-102-008 for a Proposed Storage Building/Workshop

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the zoning board's approval of an 18' foot variance at 1314 N. Courtney Street, Parcel # 07-18-102-008 on the west side of the proposed storage building/workshop. (Gurley) Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

Commissioner Patton asked a question about the variance requested. While Chief of Staff Moake looked to find the notes from the zoning board meeting, Mayor Absher suggested the Council move on to the next agenda item.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Announce the Retirement of Police K-9

Commissioner Barwick announced the retirement of Police K-9 Zara after over ten years of service.

Police Chief David Fitts introduced Sergeant Daniel Ogen, Zara's handler. Sergeant Ogden told the Council Zara has been his partner for the last six years and on August 15, 2025, she will retire from service. He told them she is eleven years old and was purchased from Vohne Liche Kennels in Denver, Indiana in 2016. She is a dual-purpose K-9 that detects narcotics and does patrol. He said they have been partnered together since May 2019. He told them he and Zara have logged countless hours of training and numerous hours of demonstrations throughout

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southern Illinois. He said she has been a loyal companion and protector. He told the Council he will be selecting a new dog from Vohne Liche Kennels on August 18, 2025. He thanked the McCabe Family Foundation for their generous donation to the K-9 unit.

Special Presentation by the McCabe Family Foundation

Police Chief David Fitts thanked Barry Hancock for putting the Police Department in touch with the McCabe Family Foundation and making them aware of their grant process. Chief Fitts applied for a grant that was unanimously approved and will be used to pay for a new dog and training for Sergeant Ogden. Chief Fitts introduced Barry Hancock, Ray Hancock, Neil Saffelder, and Cathy Newbold who were present representing the McCabe Family Foundation. Barry Hancock told the Council the McCabe Family Foundation has been in existence for three years and provides scholarships for Marion High School students planning on attending SIU, John A Logan College, or the University of Illinois who are majoring in agricultural or teacher education. He said money from the foundation also goes to St. Joseph Catholic church and various other community projects.

Mayor Absher told the members of the Foundation that the city is grateful, and he thanked them on behalf of the taxpayers.

Mr. Hancock presented Police Chief David Fitts with a check. The meeting paused briefly for photos and then resumed.

Mayor Absher went back to agenda item 5A, requesting an 18" variance at 1314 North Courtney Street. After some discussion, he decided to table this item to the next council meeting due to insufficient information.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Regulations for Utility Use of Public Dedicated Right-of-Way within the City for Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Mayor Absher told the Council this item is something City Attorney Wendy Cunningham and Economic Development and Municipal Planning Director Glenn Clarida have been working on. City Attorney Cunningham told the Council that Glenn has tried to get Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperative on the same street lighting terms as Ameren. He also negotiated the same regulations that are applied to Ameren when work needs to be done in the right-of-way. He negotiated these terms with the person in charge of the Cooperative.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the rules and regulations for utility use of public dedicated right-of-way within the city for Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

STREET DEPARTMENT

Contract with Samron Midwest Contracting for the FY26 Street Overlay Program

Commissioner Webb told the Council the bid letting was held for the Street Overlay Program and the bids came in a little over \$2 million. He said the engineer's estimate was around \$1.7 million. Chief of Staff Moake was able to allocate some TIF funds to help pay for part of the project.

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Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve a contract with Samron Midwest Contracting for the FY26 Street Overlay program as low bidder with a bid totaling \$2,086,747.40 using Motor Fuel Tax and TIF Funds. He told the Council sixty-seven streets will be paved totaling 11.3 miles. Prior to the meeting, he gave each Commissioner a list of the streets to be paved. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

SEWER DEPARTMENT

Engineering Services Agreement with Horner & Shifrin, Inc. for the Parks Lift Station Rehabilitation Project

Commissioner Stoecklin told the Council this engineering services agreement is for a project that is a budgeted item with a total project cost of \$489,000.

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Horner & Shifrin, Inc. for the Parks Lift Station Rehabilitation Project. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

WATER DEPARTMENT

Ordinance 4053 Directing the Sale of Surplus Personal Property, 2013 Chevrolet C1500 Silverado Pickup

Commissioner Stoecklin told the Council this Water Department truck is no longer needed. He said they received a bid of \$500 from Integrity Motors to purchase the truck as-is. Mayor Absher added that the truck is not operable.

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve Ordinance 4053 Directing the Sale of Surplus Personal Property, a 2013 Chevrolet C1500 Silverado Pickup. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

Engineering Services Agreement with Horner & Shifrin, Inc. for the Dogwood Lane Watermain Replacement

Commissioner Stoecklin told the Council this engineering services agreement is for a project that is budgeted at a cost of \$396,955.

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Horner & Shifrin, Inc. for the Dogwood Lane Watermain Replacement. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Resolution 2025-11 Authorizing Mayor Absher to Sign the "Second Amended and Restated Intergovernmental Economic Development Agreement"

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Mayor Absher stated that this resolution is pertaining to REDCO. He explained that twenty-five to twenty-six years ago the municipalities and the county created REDCO and agreed to fund it to buy the land and service the debt to buy the land for the Industrial Park. That was in preparation for Aisin moving to Marion. During the last year, the executive board of REDCO has been in discussion about what REDCO looks like moving forward. There is still land that needs to be developed and sold, so REDCO still needs to exist. Mayor Absher and the other mayors involved have encouraged REDCO to go ahead and pay off the existing debt with the funds they have and then reduce the budgeted amounts the municipalities will pay. The city will pay about one half of the amount that has been previously paid each quarter. This is a five-year commitment and then this will be revisited.

Mayor Absher made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-11 authorizing Mayor Absher to sign the "Second Amended and Restated Intergovernmental Economic Development Agreement". Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

Ordinance 4052 Adding Territory to the Williamson County Enterprise Zone

Mayor Absher told the Council this ordinance will add several parcels to the Williamson County Enterprise Zone. The mayors and officials met and discussed the pros and cons of adding the parcels. There were no cons, and it was unanimously approved to add the territory. Many of the parcels are in the development area that is being worked on right now. He explained this is better for the taxing bodies because it is much shorter lived than TIF and allows some sales tax abatement for the developers. Each municipality in the county must approve this for it to take effect.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 4052 adding territory to the Williamson County Enterprise Zone. Commissioner Stoecklin seconded the motion.

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

FY26 TIF Grant Applications received through July 10, 2025

Mayor Absher told the council there is a list of TIF grant applications in the packet.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve FY26 TIF grant applications received through July 10, 2025. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Determine Whether the Need for Confidentiality Still Exists with Respect to Closed Session Minutes per 5 ILCS 120/2.06

Mayor Absher stated that City Attorney Cunningham has determined the need for confidentiality still exists with respect to closed session minutes.

Mayor Absher made a motion to determine that a need for confidentiality still exists with respect to closed session minutes per 5 ILCS 120/2.06. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

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Global Investigative Services, Inc. Proposal for Background Screenings

Mayor Absher asked City Clerk Tammy Beasley Wright to talk about this item. City Clerk Wright explained that the background screening company currently being used for liquor license, solicitor permit, and new employee background screenings, Hire Image, has been purchased by another company. The new company does not allow the liquor license and solicitor permit applicants to pay for their screenings at the time the screenings are initiated. Due to the volume of screenings involved with the seventy-three active liquor licenses, the city cannot pay for the screenings and bill the applicants to reimburse those costs. Hire Image recommended Global Investigative Services, Inc., because they use a similar platform and will have the capability for applicants to pay for screenings at the time in initiation. City Attorney Cunningham explained that the company purchasing Hire Image does not perform background screenings on minors. These are necessary because the city hires minors at the Civic Center and the Hub Recreation Center. She told them Global does have the capability to perform the screenings on minors. She thought it would be best to also use Global for employee screenings. She told them she has already reviewed the Master Services Agreement.

Commissioner Patton made a motion to approve using Global Investigative Services, Inc. for liquor license, solicitor permit, and new employee background screenings. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

Collective Bargaining Agreement with Dispatch Employees Represented by the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police through April 30, 2029

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Dispatch Employees Represented by the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police through April 30, 2029. Commissioner Barwick seconded the motion.

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

Collective Bargaining Agreement for Dietary Employees Represented by Laborers' Local 773 through April 30, 2029

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement for Dietary Employees Represented by Laborers' Local 773 through April 30, 2029. Webb seconded the motion.

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

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Webb – Streets & Public Improvements

Commissioner Webb reported that the Street Department has been replacing a storm culvert on Lake Drive. They have been digging out the rock at the Russell Street roundabout. They have been updating school markings, mowing right-of-way, and working on sidewalks on Vicksburg Street. The Cemetery Department had fifteen burials in June.

Commissioner Patton

Commissioner Patton had no report.

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Commissioner Stoecklin – Public Property

Commissioner Stoecklin read the Water Department report since the last council meeting. He thanked everyone for supporting the Knights of Columbus July 4th celebration. He noted that Mayor Absher had a record sixty-six dunks in sixty minutes.

Commissioner Barwick – Public Health & Safety

Commissioner Barwick read the June Fire Department report. He reported ninety-eight total calls. He read the June Police Department report. He reported 2,108 dispatched calls; 1,873 emergency calls; 3,823 non-emergency calls; and 178 ambulance calls.

Mayor Absher – Public Affairs

Mayor Absher had no report.

MISCELLANEOUS

Police Chief David Fitts said there have been several games played at the new ballpark.

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE SESSION

6:16 P.M.

Mayor Absher made a motion to go into executive session under the Illinois Open Meetings Act to discuss collective negotiating matters 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) and pending or possible litigation 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11). Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

7:13 P.M.

Mayor Absher made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session and resume the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

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

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

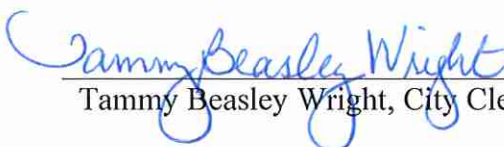
ON ROLL CALL VOTE COMMISSIONERS PATTON, BARWICK, WEBB, AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER ALL VOTED YEA.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:14 P.M.



Michael W. Absher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tammy Beasley Wright, City Clerk