

February 23, 2026

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 BARWICK, WEBB, AND STOECKLIN AND MAYOR ABSHER. COMMISSIONER PATTON ARRIVED AT 5:33 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Absher led the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Absher told the audience that there will be some special presentations this evening. One is to recognize a long-time employee who retired in December.

Commissioner Stoecklin told the Council and audience that over the last thirty-five years Brent Cain has worked his way up through the ranks starting as a laborer at the Wastewater Plant and retiring as the city's Director of Public Works. Through Brent's career, the city has seen major upgrades to the sewer infrastructure including a major wastewater treatment plant upgrade in 2000. He told them under Brent's leadership the city has focused on maintaining older sewer lines by relining them with a sleeve that will add another fifty years of life to those lines. In recent years Brent has led projects including building a new water tower on the city's east side and a total infrastructure replacement project throughout the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge benefiting the Refuge and its tenants. Those upgrades will soon be part of the city's system making the Refuge and their tenants customers of the city. Brent has been committed to the long-term health of the city's underground infrastructure. He not only understands the maintenance and repairs needed today but has planned and budgeted for upgrades over the next decade. He has set the city up for future success. Commissioner Stoecklin said the city hates to lose him but is grateful for his leadership. On behalf of a grateful city, Commissioner Stoecklin congratulated him on his retirement and presented him with a plaque recognizing his years of service.

Brent thanked the city for giving him the opportunity to work here and raise his family here. He thanked everyone he has worked with over the years.

Mayor Absher told the Council and audience that on Valentine's Day, McKenlee Miller and Alex Henry arrived at her home in the 300 block of South Market Street. They heard a disturbance next door and went to investigate. They were unable to contact their neighbor due to the height of a fence but could hear someone in distress. They called 911 and the Marion Police Department responded and found the neighbor had been outside for several hours after a fall. Without McKenlee and Alex's help the neighbor would have suffered more and may not have survived. Mayor Absher stated that because they did not ignore what they heard and made an effort to help, McKenlee and Alex helped to save someone's life. Mayor Absher presented them with challenge coins.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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Marion resident Carmen Allen-Adeoye reported that she had been contacted by scammers trying to get her personal information. She contacted Police Chief David Fitts for help, and he was able to verify that it was a scam. She told the Council that Chief Fitts is her hero today.

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.

Boyton Street Community Center board member Darrell Wimberly introduced the two newly appointed board members. He also thanked Chief of Staff Cody Moake and David Stotlar for their work to get the new addition to the center completed.

Newly appointed board member Katherine Dawson told the Council she volunteers at the center because she likes working with children. She told them she looks forward to working with the board to serve the community and the children.

Newly appointed board member Colin Howthorn thanked the Council for the opportunity to join the board. He told them this is a great opportunity to be part of the forward thinkers and innovators in the community and to serve his community. He announced some upcoming events.

NEW BUSINESS

THE PAVILION

Cell Service Amplifier from Novacom Communications

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve the purchase of a cell service amplifier from Novacom Communications, a budgeted item. Commissioner Webb 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 4095 Vacating Property in the Shannon Heights Subdivision

Mayor Absher explained that the area being vacated by this ordinance is bordered by Hendrickson and Concord Streets and Midway Court and covers thirty-six parcels of irregular shaped lots. This area will be turned into five parcels. The Williamson County Tax Assessor's Office recommended this process to the city and developer.

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve Ordinance 4095 vacating property in the Shannon Heights Subdivision. 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 February 20, 2026

Mayor Absher stated that there is one TIF grant application to be approved this evening.

Commissioner Stoecklin made a motion to approve FY26 TIF Grant Applications received through February 20, 2026. Commissioner Patton seconded the motion.

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

Ordinance Setting Landscaping Requirements for New Commercial Projects

Mayor Absher told the Council that this ordinance has been in the works in the last couple of years. Currently, there is no requirement in the city code for commercial development to include landscaping. He explained that the city wants commercial developers to keep landscaping in mind without over burdening them with regulations. Chief of Staff Cody Moake benchmarked Mattoon's ordinance because they are a similar sized town and have a similar growth pattern as Marion. The idea is to create something that architects and builders can understand clearly and that is easy for the Building and Codes Department to regulate. The ordinance benchmarks frontage or total square footage of a development and has a metric where the developer must make a certain percentage of that landscaping. Mayor Absher explained that most all the chain restaurants that come to town already do this. He then explained how the metrics would work. He asked the Council to consider this ordinance for future passage.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Marion and the Laborers' Local 773 Public Works Employees Retroactive to May 1, 2025

Mayor Absher made a motion to approve a Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Marion and the Laborers' Local 773 Public Works employees retroactive to May 1, 2025. Commissioner Barwick 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 working on sidewalks on Midway Court. They repaired the cul-de-sac on Danielle Court. They have been running the street sweeper, patching potholes, and repairing sidewalks. They took down the ice rink and power washed around the square. He reported the Cemetery Department had three burials in January and three burials during the first week of February.

Commissioner Patton

Commissioner Patton had no report.

Commissioner Stoecklin – Public Property

Commissioner Stoecklin read the Water Department report since the last meeting. He reported five meter pits were repaired or replaced; five water leaks were repaired; three services were updated; three fire hydrants were repaired; and three water taps were done. He asked two trivia questions this evening. He reported the Civic Center has been very busy the last few days.

Commissioner Barwick – Public Health & Safety

Commissioner Barwick had no report but asked a trivia question this evening.

MISCELLANEOUS

Police Chief David Fitts announced that police officer testing will be Saturday, March 21st at 8:00 A.M. and applications may be picked up at the Police Department.

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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. No one had a need for executive session. 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 6:03 P.M.



Michael W. Absher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tammy Beasley Wright, City Clerk