

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
April 8, 2014
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on April 8, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ronald Atkinson, Ralph Atkinson, Odessa Gregg, Emerson Hunt and Joseph Frazier were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Pam Jones, and Attorney Kenneth Davis.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV)

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to accept the minutes from the regular meeting on March 11, 2014, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Mayor Davis presented the Mayor's Monthly Beautification Award to Mrs. Fran Beth Beeson and Mr. Nate Rollins for their outstanding efforts in keeping Marion clean and beautiful. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed by residents in their neighborhood and those who pass by and see them diligently keeping the area clean. Mayor Davis commented that due to a suggestion by Mrs. Beeson, the City is in the process of forming another beautification committee which will involve our children and asked that she serve on that committee. At Mayor Davis's request, City Clerk Pam Jones gave a brief overview of what the commitment hopes to accomplish once it is up and running.

City Clerk Pam Jones read a Letter of Recognition for Mr. Lynn Ceasar on his induction into the South Carolina Basketball Officials Association Hall of Fame on March 26, 2014. On behalf of the City of Marion, Mayor Davis presented Mr. Ceasar with the framed letter and offered congratulations on his accomplishment.

Mayor Davis recognized the Marion Girls 12U and 10U teams for winning their respective 2014 State Girls Basketball Championship. A celebration to honor the girls' accomplishments was held April 3rd at the Lion's Club Park. The players enjoyed a cookout and were presented with t-shirts and medals.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to allow Roscoe Horne use of Grice's Recreation Center on June 21st for a community-wide Kid's Day, aka "Funday", seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. They will offer free food, games and refreshments. Motion carried.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to accept the agreement, as presented, with Trinity Behavioral Care for the Victim's Assistance Program; seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson. The motion carried **6-1**, with Councilman Emerson Hunting voting **no**.

Ms. Ellen Hamilton of the Pee Dee Coalition was present to request funding for their programs for child abuse, family abuse and sexual assault, and to thank the City for their support over the past 19 years. April is designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month and the Coalition would be willing to speak to any schools, churches or other groups. They are requesting \$131 more than they usually receive. Ms. Hamilton thanked Councilwoman Gregg for inviting her to speak at this meeting. Mayor Davis thanked her for coming and asked if Council had any questions, which at this time they did not.

Ms. Dolly Boyer was present to ask for funding for the Neighborhood Watch Program. They are seeking funding, in the amount of \$500 to file for their federal ID# and 501 3-c status
Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to allow *Relay for Life* use of Withlacoochee Park on Saturday, April 12^h from noon until midnight, at no cost, seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

At the recommendation of Mayor Davis, Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to appoint Mr. AL Blake to the GSWSA Citizen's Advisory Board, term to run July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2016, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion for a budget transfer of \$4,000 from health insurance (there is a small surplus due to lack of officers) for upgrades on 2 Police Department computers, as required by SLED, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Regarding the 1 Cent Capital Projects (Tollison and Elementary Gym) Mr. Ammons stated that PMH Architects would come to City Council for approval before exceeding the budget. There is currently \$40,000 in contingency and Council would have to approve over that amount. Mayor Davis recommended letting them know there would be no additional monies until they came before Council for their approval. Mr. Ammons will e-mail PMH and let them know. Mr. Ammons explained that with the 1% projects, the money spent from the contingency would be reviewed by him, Mayor Davis and the County to make sure it is within the budget and an eligible item that can be done. If problems arise outside of the original scope of work (and budget), that will be brought before Council for their review.

90% of the debris removal has been completed, but the tree trimming has been suspended indefinitely by the SCDOT. We have filed for FEMA reimbursement of 75%. We are waiting to see if the state will pay for the remaining 25%. Mayor Davis commented that it is costing us now as we are using some of our people to clean up state streets, for which we will not be reimbursed. The City cannot overrule the Governor's orders when she asked DOT to be in charge; we will comply with state law and will comply with whatever we are told, with the understanding that if he has City employees clean up Main Street, we will not be reimbursed. This is our City and we need to keep it clean.

Mr. William Sanders of City Hall and Fire Department Volunteer, was named *Employee of the Month* for March and presented with a gift certificate.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

City Attorney Kenneth Davis has nothing to discuss at this time.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Davis commented that all Departmental reports are sent out the Council packets.

Mayor Davis asked that any Department heads or committee representatives offer their comments. Mr. Craig Lightfoot of the Recreation Advisory Committee commented that all is well and they are happy to be a part of the City. Police Captain Cindy Barr reported that there have been some robberies and asked that citizens report anything suspicious to the Police Department. Mayor Davis commented that Rev. Larry Williams would be donating 5 boxes for residents (who will not be identified) to leave tips that may help with crimes committed. Ms. Deloris Wilson, secretary of the Citizen's Advisory Committee, appreciates the response the committee receives when they advise the City of areas that need attention. Mayor Davis asked that Council members in District 1, 2 and 4 give Mrs. Eaddy names of any residents who may be interested in serving on this committee. Ms. Lucta Gerald commented that the Diversity Committee would meet next week.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR

At the request of Councilman Michael Baker, Mr. Ammons told the audience that the State owns approximately 95% of our streets. The City actually owns only about 10 streets.

Councilman Joseph Frazier had no comment at this time.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson inquired about letters being sent out regarding issues with trash cans being left out, to which Mr. Ammons responded that Chief Gray had personally addressed this and we will see if this helps. Dennis has also been working on this.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no comment at this time.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg had no comment at this time.

Councilman Emerson Hunt stated that he had received numerous calls from concerned parents in support of the Boys & Girls Club. Councilman Hunt stated that he felt the Club was important part of the City and prays that they will stay with us and that our City can be supportive of that.

Mayor Bobby L Davis commented that we have an Attorney and when he gives us certain information, which could be constitutional information, then Council has a requirement to at least look at that, and that is what we have been doing the past two months, negotiating with the Boys & Girls Club, trying to come up with a solution. There is a constitutional question here, about the citizens of Marion paying for the B&G that everyone in the county is using. The community is not against the Club, because it is a good thing, but when 98% of the city kids can't use it, that's not good. When it's a constitutional question, when the citizens in Marion are the only ones funding that. The county is not funding that, Mullins is not funding that and they have kids there, Sellers and Britton's Neck are not funding that and they have kids there. We even have Latta kids on there and they are not funding that, but kids right around the corner from the B&GC can't go in. Nobody is fighting against the B&GC; we tried to negotiate and reach a compromise. Denim Day will be April 16th and a program will be held in front of City Hall at 11:00 a.m. The City of Marion will be closed on Friday, April 18th in observance of Good Friday. Town Hall meeting will be held Monday, April 21st at 6:00 p.m. at the Opera House and this will be the final chance to vote for the City flag. During the next Council meeting the results will be brought back to Council for them to uphold, or choose a flag of their choice, as is their right to do so. Mayor Davis stated that it is his feeling that this Council will go along with whatever choice the residents make. Economic Development Director Dr. Julie Norman has sent information on possible scholarships for Manufacturing Certification Programs. Please stop by the Clerk's office at City Hall and pick up this information if you are interested in being re-trained for skills for some of these jobs. Requirements will be to check criminal history, must be drug free, go through work-key certification and present your High School diploma or GED. A \$20 fee will be assessed to cover the drug test and background check. It will be well worth looking into as it could be beneficial to a number of our citizens. Mayor Davis asked City Clerk Pam Jones to explain a new litter campaign the City hopes to implement with the schools, encouraging our students to help keep Marion beautiful. This idea was presented to the Mayor, Clerk and Publicist by Mrs. Fran Beeson. Mayor Davis asked that anyone with an idea or suggestion for improvement, please stop by City Hall and leave your information with him, Mr. Ammons or Ms. Jones. Mayor Davis commented that we have to unify and humble ourselves and it's going to take all of us, along with prayer to accomplish this.

Mayor Davis entertained a motion for the request of \$500 by Ms., Dolly Boyer for the Neighborhood Watch, to which Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion; seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt. As a point of discussion, Councilman Ralph Atkinson commented that everyone was in favor of this

request, but we diligently need to consider postponing this funding until the 2014-2015 budget. Councilman Joseph Frazier withdrew the motion. Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to consider Ms. Boyer's request for funding in the upcoming budget for fiscal year 2014-15. The motion was seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt and carried. Councilman Frazier reminded all that Lent services would held this Wednesday at the Church of God and Mayor Davis encouraged everyone to attend as this is a good opportunity to bring us together.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter regarding the Boys & Girls Club, seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken. Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to enter open session, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to adopt the Boys & Girls Club lease as presented by City Attorney Kenneth Davis, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. The motion carried **4-3**, with Mayor Bobby L. Davis, Councilman Michael Baker, Councilwoman Odessa Gregg and Councilman Joseph Frazier voting **yes** and Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson, Councilman Ralph Atkinson and Councilman Emerson Hunt voting **no**.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson. Motion carried.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped: April 8, 2014