

**MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**REDISTRICTING WORKSHOP**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2012 9:00 a.m**

A special meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, July 24, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. over which Mayor Rodney Berry presided. Council members Ronald Atkinson, Ralph Atkinson and Betsy Atkinson were present. Council members Bobby Davis, Michael Baker and Odessa Gregg were not present. Also present were Mr. Alan Ammons, Mrs. Patricia Brown and Ms. Pam Jones. The media (Star/Enterprise) and a resident were also present.

Mayor Berry called the meeting to order.

Regarding the Re-Districting Plan, Mayor Berry stated that it was his understanding that any incumbent can examine their particular area and make suggestions to Mr. Bobby Bowers. About a year ago, Mr. Bowers came to a meeting with representatives from Marion County and all municipalities in Marion County. At that time, he explained some of the variances of re-districting, which has to be done every 10 years. Any incumbent can look at their district and make suggested changes and we all know that it has to fall in certain parameters. Mayor Berry commented that Councilwoman Atkinson saw some ways she would like to see changes in her district and she has spoken with Councilman Ralph Atkinson since some of the changes would involve his district. They have contacted Mr. Bower's office and asked for some changes and his office has provided them. Councilwoman Atkinson responded that we have a Plan 3 and a Plan 3B and then passed out a copy of Plan 3B for Council's perusal. Mayor Berry requested that Council members not present also receive a copy of Plan 3B. Mayor Berry asked if Mr. Bowers sent this plan to Councilwoman Atkinson to which she replied yes. Mayor Berry commented that it stays within the parameters because it has to go to the Justice Department. Mayor Berry stated that no action would be taken, but that he would ask that everyone look this over. Mayor Berry further stated that at the next Council meeting we will have an Ordinance in place, but Council will be voting on which Plan they want to send forward, with which Mr. Ammons concurred. Mr. Ammons stated that Attorney Lee has the Ordinance prepared, so we will be ready to vote on the 1st reading at our regular Council meeting and set the date for our public hearing before the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Mayor Berry wants to ask in open session if Councilman Ralph Atkinson has any questions since this involves his district as well, but postpones questions until the next meeting. Councilman Ralph Atkinson commented that he was looking at the map and right now doesn't have a problem. The map should be noted as Plan 3B in accordance to the stats that are 3B. Mayor Berry commented that this doesn't significantly change anything, but his understanding is that it cannot significantly the ethnic makeup; that is,

you cannot take a non-black district and make it a non-white district and vice-versa. Councilman Ralph Atkinson commented that it had to be approved by the state demographer's office and by the Justice Department. Mayor Berry asks that Council comes prepared to vote on this at the next Council meeting. Mayor Berry commented that he had not heard from any other Council members about anything changing in theirs, other than the first one that had Mrs. Odessa & Mr. Davis in the same district, so that one was null and void. Mr. Ammons stated that when we started talking about this a couple of months ago, the biggest change was that Councilman Davis' district grew by about 300-400 in population in the last 10 years. His actually shrunk land wise because it grew in population and Mr. Ammons thinks Mr. Atkinson picked up a lot of that area. Councilman Ralph Atkinson stated that based on the conversation he and Councilwoman Atkinson had with Sara Yorty in Mr. Bower's office, the recommendations that were asked for only affect each of their districts, it doesn't affect any of the other four district lines or makeup of the statistics within the individual districts, it just changes theirs. Councilman Ralph Atkinson further stated that some of the reason behind that is Betsy grew up in what was a portion of what was his district and she gets a lot of calls from that area and responds to them and we felt like that might be a better fit; he owns a piece of property that he wants to bring onto his district and this way both of those can be accomplished. Councilman Atkinson also stated that based on what the Budget Control Board explained to Betsy and him, this meets all the criteria that are required by the justice Department.

Regarding the C-fund Project for South Pine Street, Mr. Ammons commented that he was asking after the fact since he and the Mayor did this on their own as it was an 11<sup>th</sup> hour request. The Highway Department had put in their program to repave from Godbold Street along South Pine to Harlee Street. Also, Grand Strand has committed to put new water lines down in that area (some work will still need to be done on Harlee Street, but this should correct problems on Arch Street). Harold Coleman (SCDOT) called Mr. Ammons Wednesday morning before their committee meeting Wednesday night and told him that he had talked to some committee members and if the City would ask for the money they would probably get it. Mr. Ammons and Mayor Berry went to the meeting and asked for the money and they approved it. Mr. Ammons would like Council's approval to accept \$24,000 to resurface South Pine Street from Godbold Street to Harlee Street, which would be done after Grand Strand has made all repairs in this area. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the acceptance of the \$24,000 C-fund for the project on South Pine from Godbold to Harlee; seconded by Councilwoman Betsy Atkinson; motion carried.

Mayor Berry stated that at the last meeting, we engaged the County and approved to pay what we owe for E911; what we failed to do was find an appropriate spot to pay for it. Mr. Ammons commented that he met with Patricia and there was some money left over from the Capital items that we didn't do, i.e. air conditioning at the gym and some things were changed around throughout

the year. We want to bring something back about that at the appropriate time and maybe some other items on it. Mr. Ammons asked if Council would authorize Patricia to look at the budget for the next 4-6 months to find the appropriate place to pull the money from. Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked how quickly we needed to pay the County, to which Mr. Ammons responded that with Council's approval, the City is prepared to pay them this week. Councilman Ronald Atkinson commented that we obligated ourselves to pay this and we need to go ahead and pay it. Mr. Ammons stated that he would hand deliver the check to Mr. Harper. Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked where we were on the Resolution for the landfill and collecting the money for cutting the grass; also, have Robert Lee and Chuck McLain (County attorney) been able to get together? Mr. Ammons spoke with Mr. Lee yesterday and explained the urgency of the landfill situation and also the grass situation, which will reach a point where the County will say it's too late to get it on taxes this year. Mr. Ammons stated that he thinks we are quickly approaching that, as we only have about 3-4 weeks in August and he thinks that will be the end of that. Attorney Lee has e-mailed Chuck McLain and has gotten no response. Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked Mayor Berry if it would be appropriate for him (Mayor Berry) to call Tim Harper and tell him that Mr. Lee has tried to get up with Mr. McLain and we need this resolved, as he understood they would take care of this within 30 days. Mayor Berry responded that he would call Mr. Harper today. Councilman Ralph Atkinson stated that maybe that would get something started since they were talking about the ball in somebody's court and he had not been notified of any meetings with the committee that Mayor Berry recently asked him to serve on. It is Councilman Atkinson's understanding that Mr. Lee and Mr. McLain were going to spearhead that and if we need to have a meeting before the next Council meeting so that we can report back to Council, then we need to do that to get the garbage issue resolved and also try to get it worked out on this shortfall we're getting from the Fire Department dues, if it means going back to the County and if no other participants request more money, we may need to go back and say we need to bring this funding up to the \$100,000 to cover the shortfall which the County could raise the fee from \$35 to \$40, or whatever they need to do, to make the City whole. Mayor Berry is meeting with Mr. Harper at 2:00 today and will bring all of this up. Mr. Ammons will e-mail Mr. Lee and put it in writing that Mr. Lee and Mr. McLain need to get together and will also send a copy Mr. Harper. Mayor Berry asked Mr. Ammons to forward the money for the software as that has already been authorized. Mr. Ammons commented thought it would be appropriate to send a letter to the attorney along with \$6,000, which is our share of the software in a joint venture with Mullins. It is in the budget and approved and we will forward that in a letter to Tim and a copy to everybody saying "here is our portion of the software so you can get it in place". Councilman Ronald Atkinson wants a copy sent to the Chairman of the County Council to let them know we're waiting on Chuck. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to make an amendment to the budget to come up with the shortfall that we owe the County and give Patricia the leeway to work with Alan and the Mayor to find an appropriate place to pull those dollars to go ahead pay the County, seconded by Councilwoman Betsy Atkinson; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a possible contractual matter with Grand Strand, seconded by Councilwoman Betsy Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from executive Session, Mayor Berry stated that no action was taken.

Councilwoman Betsy Atkinson made a motion to enter Open Session, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; motion carried. Mayor Berry commented that there was some discussion on possible GSWA involvement in a splash pad on Bobby Gerald Parkway. Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to allow Mayor Berry do research on a splash pad and bring back to Council the information he finds, seconded by Councilwoman Betsy Atkinson; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Councilwoman Betsy Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.

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Mayor Rodney Berry

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City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped July 24, 2012