



## **MINUTES**

### **City Council Work Session**

**4:00 PM - Tuesday, December 15, 2020**

City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue

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The City Council of the City of Marion, Linn County, Iowa met in informal work session, Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at 4:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

**PRESENT:** Grant Harper, Steve Jensen, Nicolas AbouAssaly, Will Brandt, Rene Gadelha and Randy Strnad

**ABSENT:** Colette Atkins

Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

Kay Fisk with Horizons discussed Neighborhood Transportation Service (NTS) statistics from the past year. She stated they were able to keep services running throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and provided rides to essential employees at no cost. She stated in fiscal year 2019-2020, there were 4,640 rides to Marion and 3,501 rides from Marion. NTS is requesting \$33,273 for fiscal year 2021-2022 which is a 5 percent increase from the previous year.

Nick Glew, MEDCO President, provided a year end update. He shared information regarding unemployment claims, labor force data and new construction starts. He also provided information on what MEDCO will be focusing on for 2021.

Community Development Director Tom Treharne provided information regarding the Rookwood Estates, LLC request for master planning support. He stated staff received a request to annex property located east of Highway 13 and north of Highway 151.

Council Member Atkins arrived at 4:33 p.m.

Treharne stated all parties surrounding this property want to see this property develop into something beneficial for all parties. The request is to use funding available through a urban renewal area to hire a consultant to help develop a master plan for this area. Council Member Harper asked what the next step would be. Community Development Director Tom Treharne stated he would like to get some direction from Council on if they would like to see this move forward and solicit proposals from consultant. Chad Pelley provided information about the project and property which includes around 150 acres

plus an additional 160 acres to the east that could be included in the master plan. Council Member Jensen stated this project does align with the strategic plan in regards to advance planning. He would be in favor of the City using funds to bring in a consultant. Mayor AbouAssaly also stated he sees it as an opportunity to be a part of the process to make sure what happens there adds value to the community.

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 4:46 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

Nick Glew provided information regarding the Green Park Apartment Living, LLC request for financial assistance. Chad Pelley provided information regarding the development at 3100 10th Avenue. They are looking for an abatement process to make this project financially feasible.

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 4:51 p.m. Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 4:58 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 5:03 p.m. Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 5:06 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 5:07 p.m. Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 5:28 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 5:42 p.m. Mayor

AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

Council discussed items for Thursday night's meeting with no action taken.

## **OTHER DEPARTMENT DISCUSSION**

City Manager Lon Pluckhahn provided some history regarding the compensation study that was prepared by Paypoint HR. He explained past practice and purpose of the new study. Human Resources Director Kirsten Fisher reviewed compensation recommendations, employee benefits and outcomes of employee focus groups. She stated the next steps would include determining what the compensation philosophy should be, draft a compensation philosophy statement, evaluate and assess the recommendations, establish compensation framework, and then create a performance review process. Lon stated since the study has been done, a lot of positions have changed and we need to true up the report. He stated this is one data point but staff are also looking to obtain some additional data points to create new strategies. Council Member Jensen stated he did not see what Paypoint HR based the recommended raises on. Kirsten stated there is some good information in the report but would say it is incomplete. Paypoint HR took Marion positions and matched them to the 33 respondents comparable to Marion and took the averages. Council Member Atkins asked if the study looked at salary only or total compensation including benefits. Kirsten stated they compared salary to salary and then benefits to benefits. Council Member Gadelha stated she welcomes a conversation on philosophy, but wondered if we ever have a problem hiring or if employees leave because of pay and benefits. Kirsten stated she is working to revamp the recruitment process in order to help attract people and to build up the talent pipeline. Council Member Jensen asked if a comment that came out of the focus groups had to be mentioned several times in order to appear in the report. Assistant to the City Manager Amal Eltahir stated they highlighted the comment if it was significant and showed up in multiple responses.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

Motion to adjourn to closed session regarding confidential records pursuant to 22.7(50) as permitted under Section 21.5(1)(k) of the Code of Iowa.

Moved by Strnad, seconded by Harper, to approve the above referenced item. Assistant City Attorney Ryan Tang stated that she has reviewed the subject matter to be discussed and found it to be an appropriate topic for closed session.

Approved by the following votes:

Ayes: Harper, Strnad, Atkins, Jensen, AbouAssaly, Brandt, and Gadelha

Moved by Jensen, seconded by Atkins, to reconvene to regular session.

Approved unanimously

## **ADJOURN**

Mayor AbouAssaly adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

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Nicolas AbouAssay, Mayor

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Rachel Bolender, City Clerk

The undersigned City Clerk of Marion, Iowa certifies that the minutes shown immediately above were published in the Marion Times on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

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Rachel Bolender, City Clerk