



MINUTES

City Council Special Session

8:30 AM - Friday, January 31, 2025

Public Works, 202 44th Street

The City Council of the City of Marion, Linn County, Iowa met in special session, on Friday, January 31, 2025, at 8:30 AM, at Public Works, 202 44th Street, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Grant Harper, Steve Jensen, Gage Miskimen, Nicolas AbouAssaly, Sara Mentzer, Will Brandt, and Randy Strnad

ABSENT: None

Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

Discussion regarding the fiscal year 2026 budget and capital improvement program

City Manager Ryan Waller provided an overview of budget directives, impacts on the budget and information about property tax. Finance Director Lianne Cairry provided additional information regarding general levy, employee benefits levy and the debt service levy including legislative changes and impacts to the budget and residents. Staff provided overviews of their department or division budgetary drivers for the fiscal year 2026 budget.

Mayor AbouAssaly declared a recess at 10:17 a.m.

Mayor AbouAssaly reconvened the meeting at 10:33 a.m.

Council continued discussion of the fiscal year 2026 budget with no action taken. Staff provided overviews of their department or division budgetary drivers for the fiscal year 2026 budget. Finance Director Lianne Cairry reviewed revenues and a recap of the General Fund. Staff provided overviews of the proprietary funds including Road Use and Sanitary Sewer.

Mayor AbouAssaly declared a recess at 11:27 a.m.

Mayor AbouAssaly reconvened the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Council continued discussion of the fiscal year 2026 budget with no action taken. Staff covered the budgets for proprietary funds including Solid Waste, Stormwater and Urban Forest. Deputy Finance Director Brian McKenzie provided information regarding the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) including projects and funding. Finance Director

Lianne Cairy provided an overview of outstanding debt and other funds including City Communications Utility, Special Revenue, Economic Development, Urban Renewal Funds, Federal & State Forfeiture and others with limited or no activity.

City Manager Ryan Waller and Finance Director Lianne Cairy went through each of the items requiring more direction from council.

1. Funded New Requests - Council was in support of staff's recommendation.
2. Wage Increases - Councilmember Jensen stated he would like to see what the private industry is recommending for wage increases. Finance Director Lianne Cairy shared data that shows public entities usually lag the private industry. Waller stated staff will continue to investigate but would need an amount to submit with the budget. Council was in support of the recommendation.
3. Hotel/Motel - Council discussed the direct allocations. A majority of Council was in support of an increase to the recommendation.
4. Reserve Balance Allocation - Council was in support of staff's recommendation.
5. Capital Improvement Program - Deputy Finance Director Brian McKenzie shared what projects were added to the projects presented in November. Council was in support of staff's recommendation.

Staff discussed actions to do as the City looks ahead including continued review of fines and fees, continued utilization of the budget modeling tool, utility fund modeling, cost allocation alignment and more.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion to adjourn to closed session regarding real estate transactions as permitted under Section 21.5(1)(j) of the Code of Iowa.

Moved by Jensen, seconded by Harper, to adjourn to exempt session as stated above. City Attorney Kara Bullerman stated that she has reviewed the subject matter discussed and found it to be an appropriate topic for closed session. A roll call vote was taken.

Approved unanimously

Mayor AbouAssaly left the meeting and relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Miskimen at 2:00 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Miskimen presided over the meeting.

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

Approved unanimously

ADJOURN

Mayor Pro Tem Miskimen adjourned the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachel Bolender, City Clerk

The undersigned City Clerk of Marion, Iowa certifies that the minutes shown immediately above were published in the Gazette on the _____ day of _____, 20____.

Rachel Bolender, City Clerk