



MINUTES

City Council Work Session

4:00 PM - Tuesday, April 1, 2025

City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue

The City Council of the City of Marion, Linn County, Iowa met in informal work session, Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 4:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

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

ABSENT: Nicolas AbouAssaly

Mayor Pro Tem Miskimen presided over the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

Annual presentation from YMCA

Bob Carlson, Dale Emerson and Kaitlyn Studer with the YMCA and Parks Director Seth Staashelm and Recreation Coordinator Allie Waterman spoke about the past year attendance at the YMCA, programs offered and the partnership with the City of Marion. An overview of amendments to the Memorandum of Agreement with the City was shared. Future opportunities between the YMCA and City were also provided. Councilmember Harper spoke about the regionalism we consider when approaching projects and thanked the YMCA for their partnership.

Annual presentation from Trees Forever

Molly Stuelke with Trees Forever provided an overview of the organization, programs they offer and their partnership with the City. Mayor Pro Tem Miskimen asked about trees planted in the right-of-way are planted and asked what the maintenance look like. Stuelke stated Trees Forever and volunteers will water the trees once a week for a year and will replace any tree within that timeframe if needed.

Annual Presentation from Marion Chamber of Commerce

Chamber of Commerce President Jill Ackerman provided a recap from the past year including events, ground breakings, and membership. An overview of their strategic focus areas was also discussed including development of a business expo and member retention. Additional information was shared including tourism, leadership and business development. Councilmember Mentzer thanked the Chamber for their partnership. Councilmember Mentzer asked if reasons why members leave is known. Ackerman stated most are saying they don't have the time to utilize the benefits. Councilmember Harper asked if there is any benchmarking done against other chamber offices in comparable communities. Ackerman stated there are some benchmarking tools that are used but each chamber is unique. Ackerman shared Marion is strong in business

development but low on advocacy at the State level. Councilmember Jensen stated the Chamber has played a very important role in the growth of Marion and recommended a focus be on filling vacant storefronts.

Annual Presentation from the Marion Water Board

Water Department General Manager Todd Steigerwaldt provided an overview of the board, their budget and projects in the works or coming soon. Steigerwaldt also spoke about a proposed 3% rate increase to be effective July 1. He stated a public hearing will be held June 10 at 4:00 p.m. This rate increase is related to increased electric rates. Councilmember Jensen asked how the new water tower will benefit residents. Steigerwaldt stated water pressure will be about 20 psi stronger and will serve neighborhoods to the north.

UPCOMING AGENDA REVIEW

City Council review of the April 3, 2025 agenda. Council discussed the upcoming agenda with no action taken.

EXEMPT SESSION

Motion to adjourn to exempt session regarding collective bargaining as permitted under Section 20.17(3) of the Code of Iowa.

Moved by Harper, seconded by Jensen, 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 exempt session. A roll call vote was taken.

Approved unanimously

ADJOURN

Mayor Pro Tem Miskimen adjourned the meeting at 5:21 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