



## MINUTES

### City Council Work Session

4:00 PM - Tuesday, November 17, 2020

City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue

---

The City Council of the City of Marion, Linn County, Iowa met in informal work session, Tuesday, November 17, 2020, at 4:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

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

ABSENT: None

Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

#### PROCLAMATIONS/OATHS

Mayor AbouAssaly read the proclamation for World Prematurity Day and presented it to Megan Valenta and Grace AbouAssaly representing the March of Dimes.

#### PRESENTATIONS

A team from Iowa BIG presented information to Council regarding the AARP Challenge Grant and requested Council approve matching the grant funds in order to obtain electronic assisted trikes. This project is in association with the Marion YMCA. Two trike options were shown. Mayor AbouAssaly asked what is the amount the match would be. Max Bunney stated that the grant amount is \$5,500. Council Member Jensen asked if these were fully electric bikes and how much exercise a user would get. Max stated they were electric assisted but could be fully powered by electric if the user got tired. Council Member Harper asked about the weight of the bikes. Max stated they are fairly heavy. Council Member Harper stated that it is a great idea and will assist those with mobility issues. Brooke Prouty stated the bikes would be purchased by the City and then donated to YMCA but language would be included in an agreement that states users don't need to be YMCA members. Council Member Strnad asked if a couple bikes could be stored in the Uptown area so they can be utilized in Uptown. Max and Brooke stated it could be discussed. City Manager Lon Pluckhahn stated a motion directing staff to proceed can be placed on upcoming agenda.

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

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 4:44 p.m. Mayor

Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 4:49 p.m. Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

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

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 4:50 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 4:54 p.m. Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

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

Mayor AbouAssaly relinquished the gavel to Mayor Pro Tem Jensen at 5:20 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Jensen presided over the meeting.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Jensen relinquished the gavel to Mayor AbouAssaly at 5:22 p.m. Mayor AbouAssaly presided over the meeting.

## **OTHER DEPARTMENT DISCUSSION**

Community Development Director Tom Treharne provided information regarding self-storage facilities in the BR, Business Regional zoning district and site/building design standards. Tom provided some history of current facilities in Marion. A moratorium was placed on self-storage facilities mostly along 7th Avenue and that expired in 2019. The project that Seth Green is proposing is new to the market. Tom provided examples of other facilities in Marion which include accessory building storage garages and traditional storage facilities. The zoning code currently allows these traditional storage facilities in Industrial areas only. The code could be changed and allow them in the Regional Business district. Staff considers the traditional facilities to be industrial in nature, and as such, recommends they remain in those districts. The project being brought forward is considerably different in design and does warrant further review. If Council desires to see self-storage expanded to addition zoning districts a number of design considerations would need to be added to zoning code including setbacks, location of doors, exterior materials, buffering standards and more. Mayor AbouAssaly agrees that traditional storage garages should not be in main commercial districts. If the proposed type of facility is permitted, there should be clear standards so it looks appropriate. Council Member Jensen agrees with the overall recommendation that they should not be added to the Business Regional district. Steve also agrees that an exception should be made for

climate controlled projects. He drove up to Waterloo and looked at Seth Green's project there. It does match pictures that were provided for the Marion project but it was only the climate controlled facility and not any of the traditional style garages. Council Member Brandt agrees that the climate controlled building should be allowed but then if the traditional storage garages are included they need to be set back and include lots of screening so they are not viewable from the main road. Council Member Harper stated he agrees with Council Members Jensen and Brandt. Mayor AbouAssaly stated that when initially looking at the main building of the proposed project he thought it would be okay but then he did not like the exterior storage buildings. Council Member Brandt stated there is a comment submitted on Zoom that the new proposal for the project in Marion has eliminated the traditional units and will only have the climate controlled building. Mayor AbouAssaly asked if this was discussion only or if a decision needs to be made. Tom stated he has a general idea of how Council would like to move forward and will add an action item for Thursday.

City Manager Lon Pluckhahn provided an update regarding COVID-19. He stated the City has moved back to phase one protocols. On Monday, the Governor issued a proclamation requiring masks. Linn County Public Health has also created mask regulations that would be discussed by the Linn County Board of Supervisors next week. Lon asked if Council would like to take any measures to support the Linn County mandate. Mayor AbouAssaly asked if the Governor's proclamation does anything to make the County's regulation unnecessary. Lon stated there are some differences between the two. Linn County's is more specific and spells out more individual business types. Council Member Jensen stated he thought the Board of Supervisors couldn't dictate what could happen in City limits. Lon stated that Linn County Public Health does have that authority. Council Member Jensen stated he was happy the Governor moved forward with her proclamation but has not had time to read the County's and is not sure of the differences. City Attorney Kara Bullerman stated Iowa's proclamation states that it is indoor areas when social distancing can't be met and is present for more than 15 minutes. Kara stated she is aware that further clarification will be communicated. Council Member Jensen stated he is in favor of more restrictive regulations like how Linn County's proclamation is. Mayor AbouAssaly also stated that the Linn County Public Health proclamation had some enforcement guidelines. Council Member Atkins stated the Governor's proclamation does appear to have some opportunities for people to not wear masks. If Linn County's proclamation was approved, it would shore up those differences. City Attorney Kara Bullerman confirmed that is correct. Council Member Atkins stated she would be in support that if Linn County doesn't shore up the differences the City should approve a mask requirement. City Manager Lon Pluckhahn stated Council would have time to add something to the next Council agenda once Linn County moves forward. Council Member Harper stated simplicity in situations like this will promote compliance. He stated if the City responds to Linn County's proclamation, our directive needs to be clear. Council Member Jensen stated COVID-19 has put a strain on hospitals and they have started to push back elective surgeries. This mask requirement is long overdue to get COVID under control. Council Member Atkins asked if since the City has moved back to phase one, if that means Council meetings will be fully virtual. Lon stated he anticipates holding the meeting virtually but as long as we can maintain social distancing and observe mask protocols, council members could attend in person if needed.

## COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Gadelha stated that she is taking a tour of the YMCA facility on Wednesday if two other council members would be interested in joining. She also asked if a closed session could be added on Thursday to discuss a personnel issue.

Mayor AbouAssaly adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

---

Nicolas AbouAssay, Mayor

---

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\_\_\_\_.

---

Rachel Bolender, City Clerk