

REGULAR MEETING – MARION COMMON COUNCIL – DECEMBER 5, 2023 – 7:00 P.M. – CITY HALL

The Common Council of the City of Marion, Indiana met in regular session on Tuesday, the 5<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023 at the hour of 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall.

On the call of the roll the members were shown to be absent or present as follows:

Present: Cline, Stodghill-Weeks, Luzadder, Henderson, Brunner, Cowgill, Cain, and Fouce.

Absent: Fordyce.

Council President Robin Fouce said, tonight, she is so happy to share with them their Neighborhood Spotlight for tonight. They have Bill Gartland here with Atlas Foundry. As he steps to the podium, she wants to say that Atlas Foundry recently received a Proclamation by Lori Goss-Reaves, Representative. For 130 years, Atlas Foundry has been in Grant County and how phenomenal is that and what a deposit they have made on our community. She is so thankful for them, Bill Gartland and Atlas Foundry, for many reasons but one personal. Her nephew found himself fighting for his life and in there, they gave him hope. They employed him. He loved his time at Atlas Foundry and they are just so thankful for them for providing that for the citizens of the county and of Marion. Please share with them Atlas Foundry, Fouce told Gartland. Bill Gartland told the Council, certainly, thank you. He appreciates the opportunity to speak to the City Council. He was really surprised and shocked and honored by Lori Goss-Reaves' Proclamation from the Statehouse, recognizing Atlas Foundry. The Indiana Manufacturer's Association started recognizing some of their members about eight years ago and Atlas Foundry was inducted into the Indiana Manufacturing Association Hall of Fame this year and Representative Goss-Reaves recognized Atlas Foundry for that honor. They're 130 years old, as Councilwoman Fouce announced. He's part of the 4<sup>th</sup> generation and his (inaudible) Pat's son in law, Ron Karnes, is part of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation running Atlas Foundry. They've been active in the community, employing people, supporting initiatives, and just really honored to be here. They, as he shared that night, they hire college kids during the summer, if anybody has college kids that need summer jobs. They're harder to find because Atlas Foundry is hard work but it's a great college appreciation job because after a summer in Atlas Foundry, they're really excited to go back to school and they seem to buckle down harder and he's attesting to that from personal experience. After his freshman year, his grades got a lot better. He realized what was available to him if he didn't succeed in college. So it's just always been a resource for the community and the community's always been a resource for Atlas Foundry and he'd like to thank the City Council for inviting him to speak today, Gartland said. Fouce said, thank you again and congratulations. It is a commendation well earned and deserved by Atlas Foundry and they're looking for them to be around another 130 years and contribute to the community so they really appreciate that. She will receive any comment or words of anything from the Council. Councilman Cline? Councilman Mike Cline said, first of all, thank you for being here, not just tonight but the company and in general. Second, he has a son who had a character-building summer there and it was good for him. And third, tell them about some of the, because they've got stuff all over the country that comes from Atlas Foundry. What is it? Where does it go? Where's it end up? Mr. Gartland said, certainly. They make a wide variety of product. The one that everybody seems to recognize or know what they are are stadium seat sides, stadium seat parts for both football stadiums, baseball stadiums. They are anywhere from Kokomo at Jack Rabbit Stadium to replacement seats are going in the Toronto Dome right now for the Toronto Blue Jays. They've done St. Louis Cardinals, Chicago White Sox, Chicago Cubs, Pittsburgh Steelers, Cleveland Browns, just a wide variety of industry. But another part they make is, the customer's just right up the road in Wabash, Ford Meter Box. They have a brass bronze foundry and make components for meters but the meter box itself is cast iron with a cast iron lid, sitting out in your front yard. They started making those for Ford Meter Box probably 10 years ago and they're a great customer. They're probably in their top five customers, maybe #2 this year, maybe #1. And the last project he remembers they're doing for them was New Orleans and it was a rush order. The pattern shop barely got the pattern to them. The City of New Orleans was looking for a competitor to provide castings for meter box lids and they came through, got a thank you letter from the customer saying they saved them. The City of New Orleans was their first municipal customer. They've been doing work for the City of New Orleans for decades and so, but they have meter box lids and meter box bodies everywhere and that's another identifiable product. But they make valve guides for Cummins and John Deere and Caterpillar. They sell them to a machine shop, they get machined so they don't know what all they end up on. They make hydraulic valve bodies that go on log splitters and a number of other parts to provide hydraulic force. So you never know if the log splitter you're using might have a hydraulic valve

2

body from Atlas, Gartland said. Councilman Brian Cowgill said, hi buddy, thank you very much for being here tonight, Bill. Like Robin, his nephew has worked for them for a number of years, he's going to retire there. It's made him into a man. He's been 20 years there, you're a man, let him tell them, and he appreciates that as well. But he just appreciates everything that they've done for Marion for 130 years. That's amazing. There's not very many people that can say that and that they are into their 5<sup>th</sup> generation now of doing that is phenomenal. He appreciates.... Like Councilman Cline brought up, that was great. He didn't realize they did all them. He would ask him that really use really good supportive things for the Bears and the Cubs because they need all the support they can get. So he thanks him for everything, Bill. He's a good friend of his and he appreciates him, Cowgill said. Gartland replied, thank you, Brian. Councilman Jim Brunner asked Gartland, how many employees do they have and he was just thinking, before he answers that question, he thought Hart Shoes might be the oldest business in town. They're getting ready to close their doors after 110 years. They've got two decades on them so they're not even close. So, how many employees do they have at their place right now? Gartland told Brunner they're roughly at 125. That includes 10 temporaries right now that they hire 90 days to full time. It's just hard. Turnover on temps has been well over 300% this year. Trying to find the right fit of employees who want to work. But they're slowing down on hiring right now, watching the economy, orders are slowing down. Everybody's a little concerned about what 2024 is going to bring but they're not planning any layoffs. They'll just probably use the attrition of temps that don't make it to pare down their work force, Gartland said. Brunner said, thank you and God bless. Councilman Brad Luzadder said, unlike the Council members here, he actually started working for Atlas Foundry in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Over the announcements, it came that they needed someone to clean the offices and he was excited. He was looking for a good position and he went and did it all the way through high school. When he went to college, his parents took over and it was three years ago that they stepped away after all of these years. He's grown up with the Gartland family and it is such an honor to have known him, Bill, and the area in which he has worked with as well as the reputation of Atlas all over the world. He never, ever had to worry about support. Atlas was always there to support the City of Marion and continue to do so. They've had some really good discussions in his (Gartland) office, asking for words of advice and he can't thank him enough for all the support that he's done for the city but also for him and his family. Thank you, Luzadder said. Gartland said, certainly. Thank you, Brad. Ms. Fouce told Gartland, thank you so much for taking time to come this evening and continued blessings and prosperity to him, his family, and the generations ahead that will hence be Atlas Foundry. Thank you, Bill.

Council President Fouce said they do not have the approval of the previous minutes available due to an understandable reason. They'll look forward to having those at their next Council meeting. So that means they'll have two minutes to approve.

**CONSIDERATION AND RATIFICATION OF PRE-APPROVED CLAIMS** – Council President Robin Fouce said she will move into consideration and ratification of the pre-approved claims. She will entertain a motion, barring any comment. Councilman Brian Cowgill said, so moved and Councilman David Cain seconded. Fouce said a motion's been made by Councilman Cowgill and seconded by Councilman Cain for consideration and ratification of the pre-approved claims. Is there any question on that motion? Roll call please. Motion carried by the following vote. Aye: Cline, Stodghill-Weeks, Luzadder, Henderson, Brunner, Cowgill, Cain, and Fouce. Nay: None.

**CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS** – Council President Fouce said now they will have consideration of claims. They have yet to receive their required vouchers and invoices and so she will entertain any comment or entertain a motion for consideration of the claims. Councilman David Cain said, Madam Chairman, he moves that they table. Councilman Brian Cowgill said he'll second. Fouce said a motion's been made by Councilman Cain, seconded by Councilman Cowgill to table consideration of the claims. Is there any question on that motion? Roll call please. Motion carried by the following vote. Aye: Stodghill-Weeks, Luzadder, Henderson, Brunner, Cowgill, Cain, and Fouce. Nay: Cline.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS** – Council President Robin Fouce said now, do they have any committee reports? Councilman Brunner? Councilman Jim Brunner said he would just like to report on the Park Board meeting that they held yesterday, if he may. Got some really good news. The last three years, the number of people that are using the Splash House are just going up, up, up, almost 600 a day, which he thinks is remarkable. And so, he wanted to report

COMMITTEE REPORTS Continued

on that. It's really making us a lot of money and they're going to have to do a little work out there but looking forward to the year of 2024. That was the best part of the Park Board meeting. Also looking forward to, they're pretty sure that by the spring of this next year, they're finally going to get the Dog Park up and rolling. So, look forward to that in 2024 also. So there's some good news for the Park Board, Brunner said. Fouce said, thank you, councilman. Do we have any other committee reports?

Councilman Brian Cowgill said yeah, he'd like to report on the Board of Works meeting. He attended it yesterday. It was pretty quick. Janet Pearson started it off with 619 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street is a vacant lot and it sold for \$800. And then Jeff Edwards from the Transportation Department got up and spoke and through their Drug and Alcohol Policy, they added the saliva test now in there as well and that passed. They can use that as another source for checking for drug or alcohol. And then Jerry Foustnight, 1815 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, that property has been approved for demo. It's been needing it for a long time and it was approved. And then they adjourned after that, Cowgill said. Fouce said, thank you. Do we have any further? Councilwoman?

Councilwoman Annalisa Stodghill-Weeks said she just wanted to do a follow up to the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting when Sue Kershner, a volunteer for the Grant County Humane Society, came to speak to the Council. When she came, she just trying to seek some solutions to help with issues that they're experiencing at Marion Animal Control. Just a few of the concerns addressed by Ms. Kershner and the others include lack of manpower. This has caused Marion Animal Control either to unwillingly or unable to respond to calls from the public. She invited the Council to reach out to Brenda Volmer, the Board President of the Grant County Humane Society, to hear some of these instances. Unlike Marion Animal Control, the Grant County Humane Society does not receive any funding from the City of Marion. They solely operate on donations from the citizens. The City of Marion does allocate a budget through the Building Department, however, they're only open four days a week, six hours a day on the days they are open. That's only 24 hours a week. Animals are in need 24 hours a day. Due to this, it's felt that the animals are suffering in the community. At the present time, it's assumed that Marion Animal Control has the ability to enforce current ordinances in place for the animals, however, they want it known that the Grant County Humane Society is able and willing to help with enforcing the laws and ordinances in place for the animals. Lack of training. For example, they heard the story about Hudson with the tranquilizer dart. It was told to her that Marion Animal Control, that Dr. Durkes does not have an x-ray machine to assess injuries. If x-rays are needed, they have to transport the animal to another vet's office. In her opinion, it sounds that we need to find additional funding and begin working on issues happening at Marion Animal Control. As well as Marion Animal Control and the Grant County Humane Society to partner to continue to help the animals of the community. At this time, she requests that this will go to committee for further discussion amongst the Council as a whole, as well as invite Jerry Foustnight and Brittany Shrout to discuss what they are in current need of as well as work on solutions to begin fixing the issues they are having, Stodghill-Weeks said. Ms. Fouce told Stodghill-Weeks, thank you for a follow up to that. They have a Code Enforcement Committee. Who chairs that committee? Councilman David Cain said he does. Fouce asked, would he convene that committee regarding such matters? Cain said, yes ma'am. Fouce said, thank you so much. So is that adequate for you and they'll take it from there? She did want to invite Commissioner Foustnight and also Brittany Shrout. Stodghill-Weeks said she's the manger at Marion Animal Control.

Ms. Fouce asked, do we have any further committee reports? Okay, she has a few things to share with them. One thing is that the contract for the City Council attorney ends December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year and so, as a Council, they want to be prepared for how they will move forward and get that process started. What she will need, she believes, is an announcement that they'll be accepting resumes for the City Council attorney. She believes that's how they did that last time and then they would want those returned in time for, and they want it posted in time for, let her look at the calendar real quick, the first meeting in January, which she believes is January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. So at that first Council meeting January 2<sup>nd</sup>, they would end the meeting, do the interviews, make a selection, and have their attorney for the Council at that time. She will look up and review the budget, what they budgeted for that, and also the contract previously that they had for that. So they want to consider that also at the time they acquire a City Council

attorney. Does anyone have any follow up on that? Thank you for that. And if they need anything from her, please let her know, clerk.

Council President Fouce said, Mr. Martindale or it came to her attention that Mr. Martindale, Charles Martindale, who's been with them and been wonderful for them, he's retiring and that will be effective the 31<sup>st</sup> of this year as well. And what a treasure and an asset he has been to their Transportation Department. For those of them that don't realize, they have free transportation to their residents of Marion and they have had that for years because of Mr. Martindale's efforts of securing grants and staying up on anything that's offered through DOT for transportation. And correct her if she's wrong but she thinks their whole Transportation budget is afforded through the efforts of Mr. Martindale and the grants that he secures for them. One of the Council members told Fouce it's 75%. Fouce said, yeah, 75%, so what a substantial amount and what a benefit to their citizens that ride the bus for free, to the doctor, to wherever. It's a quality of life thing. During COVID, the bus drivers were out, picking folks up and they were on the front lines is what she would say. Mr. Martindale certainly was a part of those efforts. They are grateful for him to go to his next passage of life but they're sad to see him go and what big shoes someone will have to fill for that position, Fouce said. Councilman Brian Cowgill asked, didn't Mr. Edwards from Transportation say that anybody that could be interested in that or if they know somebody, to contact him, that he's holding interviews? Fouce told Cowgill, they will get that set up. He said they'd talk about getting that set up. But yes, that will be something. That's what she was saying, it'll be big shoes to fill but they will get that set up, or he will get that set up.

Ms. Fouce said today she attended a Zoom meeting, a Microsoft meeting with GM, General Motors, and they talked about their new line that came in and they showed illustrations of that. It was a group of about eight or nine community folk that they showed illustrations of the machine. They called it a press or something that will come up and do some of the production. It's a whole lot of stuff. And they just wanted to give them an update on that. They talked about partnering with the community and the efforts that they have had, wanting to continue and improve those efforts. Her encouragement was that they can seize the moment to inform the citizens and continue to be available publicly, to keep them updated, let them know what their products are, let them know when they'll be hiring. They will, she thinks he said they will be hiring, she's pretty sure he said they will be hiring first internally here in January of 2024. She believes they will start some hiring first internally. They will promote and hire from within the corporation. Die makers, two skilled trades, die makers, she wants to say, and millwrights are two of the skilled trades they are at a deficit for but also there will be some hourly production positions that will come available and they'll keep them abreast of that timeline and let them know so she's hoping that they can announce that here in the Council Chambers as that comes. They want to continue to invite them to the Council meetings and to talk about General Motors and how they can help us and how we can help them and continue that relationship. So, that was a good thing to participate in today.

Fouce said, also, a week ago, they all had the opportunity, the local elected officials had the opportunity to attend the Ready 2.0 conference update out at the Tomahawk and they were fortunate to have State Treasurer Daniel Elliott there and he talked about economic development, the dollars that are available, the Bond Bank that the state now has, and the alternatives that they, as a municipality, have toward procuring funds for economic development projects. Someone add to that or that was there would like to add to that, please do. That was kind of the gist of it. He's really excited for the City of Marion, the County of Grant for the good things that they have ahead for them. And so, they were pleased to be in his presence. That concludes her committee report. Do they have any further committee comment? She'll have the clerk read the Unfinished Business.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE NO. 21-2023 2<sup>ND</sup> READING AND PUBLIC HEARING

The City Clerk read Appropriation Ordinance No. 21-2023 by title only, an ordinance of the City of Marion, Indiana, appropriating certain funds for the City of Marion, Indiana, and providing for the effective date thereof. From the Municipal Wheel Tax Fund to Miscellaneous Contractual Services the amount of \$54,737.77. City Controller Julie

5

APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE NO. 21-2023 Continued

Flores told the Council, as they are aware, these are Wheel Tax money that they started getting in 2023 that were not appropriated so this \$54,737.77 is the August Wheel Tax money that was received in October so they're here asking that this money be appropriated so it could be used still in 2023. Council President Robin Fouce said, thank you, Controller Flores. Do they have any questions regarding this from the Council? This is a public hearing and she'll start that public hearing portion of the meeting tonight. This is a public hearing regarding Appropriation Ordinance No. 21-2023 for the amount of \$54,737.77 to be appropriated to the Wheel Tax Fund. Please step to the podium, state your name, your address, and your position on agree or disagree with this transfer of funds to be allocated for Wheel Tax. Attorney Harker, if he will keep time, they have three minutes to speak. Public hearing, Fouce said. Going once, going twice, three times. This concludes the public hearing portion of their meeting. Again, she'll ask the Council do they have any questions or comments regarding Appropriation Ordinance 21-2023? Councilman Mike Cline said, just refresh their memory. What happens if they don't do this? Mrs. Flores told Cline they can't spend it. It'll just sit there. The funds will just sit there. It doesn't revert anywhere. The funds will stay in that fund. She will say that they have received the September draw. They got that in on November 29<sup>th</sup> and it was \$55,149.57. So, they don't have time to spend that so that will remain in the fund. Fouce asked Cline, is that all, councilman? Cline said, yeah, he's sorry. Fouce asked, does anyone else have any question or comment regarding this? Barring no further question or comment.... Flores asked, is it possible to suspend the rules? If they could suspend the rules and pass it tonight, that would be her only request. Ms. Fouce said they can do that she believes. So, barring no further question or comment, she'd entertain a motion to suspend the rules. Councilman David Cain said, Madam President, he moves that they do suspend the rules on Additional Appropriation Ordinance No. 21-2023. Councilman Jim Brunner seconded. Fouce said a motion's been made by Councilman Cain, seconded by Councilman Brunner to suspend the rules on Appropriation Ordinance 21-2023. Any question on that motion? Roll call please. Motion carried by the following vote. Aye: Cline, Stodghill-Weeks, Luzadder, Henderson, Brunner, Cowgill, Cain, and Fouce. Nay: None. Cain said, Madam President, he moves that they pass Appropriation Ordinance No. 21-2023. Councilman Brunner seconded. Fouce said a motion's been made by Councilman Cain, seconded by Councilman Brunner to pass Appropriation Ordinance No. 21-2023. Any question on that motion? Roll call please. Motion carried by the following vote. Aye: Cline, Stodghill-Weeks, Luzadder, Henderson, Brunner, Cowgill, Cain, and Fouce. Nay: None.

Council President Robin Fouce said, okay, she wanted to take time today before their adjournment. Really appreciate everyone coming. They have someone that they just want to extend all of their love to. She is such a treasure to them and has been so helpful and really just been having a hard time, that she is here today, she was here yesterday and the day before is just phenomenal what a strength that they find in her and they just want to give her some love today from the Council to her and they have a little bit of appreciation. We love you, Debbie. Bless you and your family on the passing of your loved one. Heaven has another angel, Fouce said. So if they see Debbie, give her some hugs today. She told Goodman, thank you for all that you do.

Fouce said, again, next meeting, she would like a closing committee report. If they are on a committee and you are a Marion City Council person, they need a report from them next meeting. That will be their final meeting of the year and that's on December 19<sup>th</sup> and they want to hear from all of the committees and come up with something if they don't have anything. Also next meeting, if you're a Council member and you are moving on and will no longer be on the Council, that'll be the time to turn in their electronics. Bring them that day and she'll try to have Danny here to receive them. They want to bring those and turn those in that day, if they're not able to do that prior to that day. If they do turn it in prior to then, please send her a note so they know they got everything where it's supposed to be that day. Thank you all so much for coming. Blessings and she'll entertain a motion for adjournment. On a motion by Cain, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cowgill, the meeting adjourned. Time being 7:34 p.m.