

MARION COMMON COUNCIL AGENDA

PRESIDENT – NICK MCKINLEY VICE PRESIDENT – GARY FORDYCE

Regular Meeting – Marion City Hall Council Chambers

Date: July 8, 2025

Time: 6:00 P.M.



SPECIAL MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

General Ordinance 14-2025- Food and Beverage Tax- 2nd Reading and public hearing

An ordinance of the City of Marion adopting a Food and Beverage Tax. Speaking Mayor Ronald Morrell

Executive summary: On or around May 6, 2025, Governor Braun signed House Enrolled Act 1427, which, among other items, amended Ind. Code §§6-9-61, allowing the fiscal body of the City of Marion to impose an excise tax, known as the city food and beverage tax. The Food & Beverage Tax applies to a transaction in which food or beverage is furnished, prepared, or served: (1) for consumption at a location or on equipment provided by a retail merchant; (2) in the City; and (3) by a retail merchant for consideration. The Food & Beverage Tax rate may not exceed one percent (1%) of the gross retail income received by the merchant from a qualifying food or beverage transaction. Money received by the City shall be distributed to the City's Food & Beverage Fund and only utilized for economic development, parks & recreation, and/or the pledging of money for bonds, leases, or other obligations for those purposes.

SPECIAL MEETING – MARION COMMON COUNCIL – July 8, 2025 – 6:00 P.M. – CITY HALL

The Common Council of the City of Marion, Indiana met in a special session on TUESDAY, the 8th day of July 2025, 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: Cain, Marshall, Fordyce, Brunner, Cline, Devine, Whitton, Cowgill, and McKinley

Absent:

GENERAL ORDINANCE 14-2025- Food and Beverage Tax 2nd reading and public hearing

An ordinance of the City of Marion adopting a Food and Beverage Tax.

- Mayor Ronald Morrell elaborates on the tax, describing it as a luxury tax on food and beverage consumed within the city.
- The tax is estimated to generate \$1,050,000 annually and is not applicable to grocery purchases.
- The tax is a response to the state's Senate Bill 1, which has significantly impacted the city's budget.
- Mayor Ronald Morrell outlines the proposed uses for the tax revenue: youth development, economic development, and park improvements.
- Specific projects include redeveloping Ballard Field into a youth sports complex and creating a skate park at Hogan Park.
- The airport's development is also a focus, with plans to improve sanitation and water facilities.

Public hearing

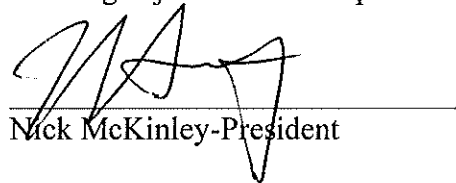
- Dr. Stacey Hunt supports the tax, highlighting its benefits for youth sports programs and community development.
- Karen Creech raises concerns about the ordinance's broad language and lack of specificity in funding allocation.
- Bill Creech questions the distribution of funds and the enforcement mechanisms for the tax.
- Kyle Hardwick argues that the tax will hurt small businesses and servers.
- Ryan Howell opposes the tax, suggesting the city should tighten its belt and reduce government spending.
- Keith Bennett supports the tax, citing the positive impact of the River District on local businesses.
- Jeremy Ensminger criticizes the council for not addressing the impact of the \$321.40 he paid in May.
- Chuck Binkerd from the Grant County Economic Growth Council supports the tax, emphasizing its importance for economic development.
- Michael Duke warns of future budget cuts and suggests focusing on raising the tax base rather than increasing taxes.
- Luis Treto supports the tax, highlighting its benefits for community amenities and youth programs.

- Deb Cain expresses her support for the tax to improve the quality of life in Marion, noting surrounding counties have had this tax for a long time.
- Randy Hiatt and Rose Cadena support the tax, citing the need for park maintenance and improvements.
- Charles Moon opposes the tax stating there are other ways.
- Nick McKinley and other council members discuss the implications of the tax and the need for bold decisions.

Motion to pass General Ordinance 14-2025 to third reading-Cline; second Brunner. Aye: Cain, Marshall, Fordyce, Brunner, Devine, Whitton, Cowgill, McKinley. Nay: Cline. Motion passes.

Motion to adjourn: Cowgill; second Cline. Aye: Cain, Marshall, Fordyce, Brunner, Devine, Whitton, Cowgill, McKinley. Nay: Cline. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.



Nick McKinley-President