



### **Mayor Victor Contreras Update;**

Hello Marion Citizens, I hope you are all doing well and had a Happy Thanksgiving. I hope you are looking forward to spending time with your immediate families for a Joyous Christmas and just as a reminder take every precaution to keep them safe. The Annual Tree lighting was on December 4<sup>th</sup> at the City Hall starting at 6:30pm. It was great to have some normalcy in the city by having this event.

Your new councilmembers are as follows; Felix Arambula, Richard White, Abigail Maberry, Chris McClain and incumbent Shane Pawelek. We have seated a **Planning and Zoning Committee**, the officers will be as follows, Chairman Jeffery Patterson, Vice-chairman Catherine Lindquist, Secretary Renee Zunker and member Yomi Ajasin. They will be taking the P&Z responsibility away from the City Council, in the absence of a P&Z the council had those duties. They will be another set of eyes and ears to review our ordinances and listen to presentations from our citizens and developers. In the meeting former P&Z Chair Councilman Chris McClain gave the committee an overview of what is expected from them. If you have a little time on your hands and want to be a part of shaping the City of Marion please stop by the City Hall and apply. We have an opening for one more committee member but you must live within the Marion city limits.

**Grant opportunity; CDBG-MIT grant application** has been completed, turned in and now the waiting game begins. I keep these potential improvements in my mind every day and pray we are one of the City's that are allotted the funds, this will be great for the City of Marion's infrastructure needs. These are federal Government Land Office Funds from the Hurricane Harvey Mitigation process. During Harvey the city experienced a lack of water and also experienced some adverse situations with our sewer system. We can only use these funds for specific items associated with the Harvey Mitigation. I presented to the Council the final part of the process that I have been working on since early July of this year. This has been at least a four month long project to get to this point, it started with the idea of instead of paying an **estimated \$440,000** to just repair a portion of our sewer plant but be able to do a great deal more for our infrastructure needs. If we are approved we will be able to cover those costs for less than **a fourth of that cost**. The first step was to write up the Request for Proposal and Request for Qualifications and select the Grant-writer and the Engineering firm from those companies that applied, a side note these companies won't be paid unless we are awarded the grant. The next step was to work with them and come up with a viable plan that would have a positive impact for the majority of our citizens. I believe we have such a plan, I am going to think positive and once we are selected to receive the grant we will be able to replace the sewer head works, upgrade the sewer plant, replace a few sewage lines (Seidel, Meadow Dr. and N. Cunningham near Sun Flower Dr. and some alleyways in the city) replace some of the Manholes and all the Manhole covers. With replacing those lines, the applicable roads would have to be redone. We will also be able to have a more constant pressure in our water system by building a new 500,000-gallon Water Tower as well as bringing in a new 12-inch diameter water main from the Wagner Booster Station, the line will be located on the South end of town. This is a short explanation of what we could accomplish with the **\$10,000,000 grant** that will only cost the city (\$100,000), that is **1%** of the total which is not an everyday occurrence normally the entity's contribution can be as high as 50%. I want to thank the council in believing in the project and voting in a motion to approve each part of it. Now as I have said already we have to wait and see if we are approved in January or February of 2021.

Please practice "Social Distancing", use your face masks, wash your hands with water and if not available use hand sanitizers.

*Mayor Victor Contreras*

