

Athens City Council
Regular Meeting
December 14, 2015

Mayor pro tem Harry Nichols called the meeting to order in absence of Mayor Neisler, at 7:00 PM at Athens City Hall.

All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Clerk Debra Richardson called roll. Present were Aldermen: Anita Bednarko, Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Tom Croft Sr., Bobbie Dowell and Harry Nichols. Also in attendance were Gary Richardson, Maggie Sanderfield, Rex Kieffer, Merle Messersmith, Donald Porter, Brodee McLarmilk, Jacqueline Stuebs, Kellie Conover, Abbigail Stuebs and Donna Cummingham.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Bednarko, to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2015 regular meeting. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Dowell, seconded by Alderman Croft, to approve the police, treasurers', water and wastewater and streets and alleys reports. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to authorize the payment of the bills. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Dowell, seconded by Alderman Croft, to pass **ORDINANCE 12-2015, TAX LEVY FOR THE CITY OF ATHENS, MENARD COUNTY, ILLINOIS, FOR THE COOPERATE YEAR BEGINNING MAY 1, 2015 AND ENDING APRIL 30, 2016.** Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Canterbury, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to pass **ORDINANCE 13-2015, TAX LEVY FOR ROAD DISTRICT #13, MENARD COUNTY, ILLINOIS, FOR THE CORPORATE YEAR BEGINNING MAY 1, 2015 AND ENDING APRIL 30, 2016.** Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Mayor pro tem Nichols stated that Chief Becker has requested the council authorize the enrollment of Dalton Abrams-Meredith in the part-time police academy on February 13, 2016. Alderman Dowell stated that the training fees are fully reimbursable from the State.

Motion made by Alderman Dowell, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to authorize the enrollment of Dalton Abrams-Meredith in the law enforcement training class to begin in February. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Bednarko, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to accept the recommendation of the Trustee of the Randall Perry Stahl Trust, allowing the Athens Community Park to become a beneficiary of the trust. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Dowell, to approve the research of funding and drilling for Well #7. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Mayor pro tem Nichols stated that the council would like to give employee's a monetary Christmas bonus and he recommended that they include the contractual water and wastewater operators.

Motion made by Alderman Canterbury, seconded by Alderman Dowell to authorize payment of Christmas bonuses of \$100.00 for part-time employees and \$200.00 for full-time employee's,

including Steve Sanderfield and Michael McCarty. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols. Motion passed.

Alderman Croft asked what had been done with the property on Mill Street that the City was to have acquired and cleaned up. Mayor pro tem Nichols stated that he thought that the City was still working on the cleanup and then would be putting the property up for bid. Alderman Buhr asked about the Athens Village Market liquor application. Mayor pro tem Nichols indicated that it needed to be reviewed further because of an incomplete application. Nichols stated that IDOT would be at the meeting in January to discuss the entrance at High Prairie subdivision and that Mayor Neisler is working on the cost estimates for the oiling and chipping of the road.

Mayor pro tem Nichols opening the meeting for public comments.

Gary Richardson asked why the City would want to consider spending such a large amount of money on the construction of the entrance to High Prairie. Richardson stated that it was said that if there were a fire, it would take too much time to come in on the north entrance. He reported that he drove the distance from the south entrance to the north entrance and then behind the Boar's Nest and it took an additional 38 seconds. Richardson asked why the City would want to inherit another problem. He stated that the City isn't taking care of the existing roads in town.

Merle Messersmith asked why the City couldn't get the property owner on Main Street to clean up his mess. Nichols stated that he would contact Chief Becker about the problem. Messersmith stated that the gutters have not been placed on the garage. Alderman Croft stated that the issue is not a zoning issue, but a health and safety hazard. Messersmith indicated that when there is a heavy rain, he gets the runoff from the garage. Richardson noted that the property is hazardous and an eyesore when coming into the City from the blacktop.

Maggie Sanderfield reported that the Athens library had submitted a letter to the City, asking why the library's tax levy percentage had been decreased. She stated that the library's attorney has tried to contact the City's attorney, but they have not gotten their questions answered. Sanderfield indicated that the library had requested that there be an increase for the library. Alderman Buhr indicated that Mayor Neisler had said that it was straighten out. Sanderfield stated that they have not heard from anyone.

Alderman Croft asked what had been decided about Steve Digiovanna's water tap for his new home. Mayor pro tem Nichols indicated that Mayor Neisler was suppose to check on it.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to adjourn the meeting. Ayes: Bednarko, Buhr, Canterbury, Croft, Dowell and Nichols.

Meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.