

Athens City Council
Committee Meeting
April 9, 2015

Those in attendance were Mayor Donald Neisler, Clerk Debra Richardson, and Aldermen: Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Bobbie Dowell, Harry Nichols and Chris Reichert. Alderman Deni Wilson was absent. Also present were Police Chief Tim Becker, Treasurer Darin Bowman, Rex Kieffer, Linda Wasilewski, Tom Croft Sr., and Talbert Tomlin.

Mayor Neisler introduced Talbert Tomlin and stated that Mr. Tomlin requested to address the council concerning a vacated alley. Tomlin informed the council that his neighbor has questioned the boundaries of a vacated alley and has been harassing his brother about the situation. Tomlin stated that this person has threatened to tear down his brother's fence. Tomlin indicated that he had requested information from the City on the vacation of the alley, but the ordinance he was given was not for the property he is concerned about. Tomlin stated that he has documents from Menard County that show the alley has been vacated. Mayor Neisler stated that the council would need petitions to open the alley, and the council would have to approve the change. Tomlin stated that the property markers have been found. Mayor Neisler directed Chief Becker to meet with Tomlin to research the ordinances.

Police Chief Tim Becker presented the police report. Chief Becker reported that the owner of the Main Street building with the collapsed rear wall has told him that the wall is going to be repaired soon. Chief Becker informed the council that there is progress being made on the garage on the Meyer's property on Main Street. Chief Becker stated that there were numerous cases for the month of March.

Darin Bowman presented the treasurers' report. Bowman reported that the City had received \$2,500.00 in March from video gaming. Bowman stated that the bond transfers have not yet been made. Bowman indicated that the DCEO invoices would be mailed out on Friday. He noted that Bryant had made a \$250.00 payment on his loan. Alderman Dowell stated that another defaulted loan recipient was working in Springfield.

Mayor Neisler noted that there was a water and wastewater report in the council's documents. He stated that Don Squires had provided the council with the first street's and alley's report. Alderman Buhr asked about the sinkhole at the Salzenstein Park. Mayor Neisler stated that he would look into it by the next meeting.

Mayor Neisler read a resignation letter effective April 17, 2015 from Nick Lott.

Mayor Neisler reported that the City had received one bid for the West Cemetery mowing and maintenance. Mayor Neisler indicated that Lisa Basso would be recommended for a one-year contract, with an option to continue.

Mayor Neisler indicated that the fire department has sent the council a letter stating their procedure for the flushing and flow testing of the fire hydrants. Mayor Neisler stated that he would like for Aldermen: Nichols, Buhr and Dowell to meet with the fire department.

Mayor Neisler stated that he had asked Chief Becker to draft a letter and ordinance that will cover damage to electronic water meter transponders, which continue to be damaged mainly by homeowners when mowing. Chief Becker stated that the cost for a transponder is \$150.00, not including installation. Chief Becker reported that there have been a significant number of transponders damaged recently. Chief Becker stated that the ordinance has been drawn up and is ready for the council to vote on. Chief Becker indicated that as of April 1, 2015, the cost of a damaged transponder that needs to be replaced would be added to the customers water bill.

Mayor Neisler noted that the Athens library is seeking sponsors for their "Read to the Rhythm" program. Mayor Neisler stated that he would like the council to consider donating towards the program. Mayor Neisler stated that this community has a fine library, and suggested encouraged everyone to support the library.

Mayor Neisler informed the council that the City has received a bid for drainage work that includes a drop box, to be done on Washington Street by Excavating Partners Inc. at a cost of \$6,760.00. Mayor Neisler stated that the line was videoed and the clay tile needs to be repaired. Mayor Neisler indicated that the project should take one day to complete. Mayor Neisler stated that he is working on contacting the owner of the post office building to get permission to do the work.

Mayor Neisler stated that he has received several applications for the water and wastewater operator's positions and he would like to have an executive session to discuss this issue.

Mayor Neisler indicated that he would like to hold off on the IMRF retirement plan report at this time due to the recent change of employees.

Mayor Neisler stated that the Shriners would like to place an organizational sign at the entrance to Athens on Route 29.

Mayor Neisler stated that there would be about forty water customers shut off on Monday due to nonpayment.

Alderman Reichert asked who is responsible for the maintenance at the entrance to Barn Hollow. Reichert stated that he has been told that the City owns the property and is responsible for it. Mayor Neisler stated that he is not aware of any such document. Reichert indicated that Barn Hollow residents have taken care of it in the past.

Linda Wasilewski asked if the City could provide salt to spread on the grass in the driveway of the West Cemetery. Chief Becker stated that there are some persons available that have community service hours to use that will help with cemetery projects.

Alderman Reichert asked about the time frame for the moving a vehicle. Chief Becker stated that vehicles must move at least every two weeks. Chief Becker indicated that all vehicles must have valid plates and be operable.

Council left for conference room for executive session on personnel matters at 7:37 PM.

Council returned to meeting room to review bills at 8:07 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.