

Athens City Council
Committee Meeting
May 7, 2015

Those in attendance were Mayor Donald Neisler, Clerk Debra Richardson, and Aldermen: Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Bobbie Dowell, Harry Nichols and Deni Wilson. Alderman Chris Reichert was absent. Persons in the audience included Wayne Nelson of Illinois Rural Water Association, Linda Wasilewski, Rex Kieffer, Tom Croft, Sr., Officer Derrick Fritz and Randy Stevens.

Mayor Neisler introduced Randy Stevens, an IMRF representative for the Illinois Municipal League employee retirement fund. Stevens stated that IMRF also provides disability and death benefits in addition to pension plans. Stevens reported that IMRF is the 54th largest pension plan in the United States, and one of the best-funded plans in the state. Funds come from member contributions, which is 4.5 percent of each employee's salary. The employer is given a rate at which they are required to contribute and can change from year to year. The rate study for the City is approximately 9 percent at this time. Stevens indicated that all employees would be required to enroll in the plan, with no exceptions.

Wayne Nelson from Illinois Rural Water Association presented the water and wastewater report. Nelson stated that the DMR has been submitted and water testing has been completed. Nelson noted that a pipe was plugged at the plant due to lime sludge. Nelson informed the council that they need to consider having the lime sludge removed from one of the lagoons at the water plant. Nelson indicated that IEPA told him that Well #4 couldn't be used until Well #3 has been capped. Mayor Neisler indicated that the City has been using Well #4, and was not aware that it was not to be used. Nelson stated that Well #4 was not tested until the last of April and he informed the City that these tests were to be taken at the first of every month. Nelson indicated that he was told the City would be given a waiver for the late testing. Mayor Neisler stated that he has sent letters to IEPA and Sangamon County Health regarding the capping of Well #3.

Nelson stated that things are going well at the wastewater plant. Nelson reported that the IEPA had not updated the City's permit number, so they showed that the testing had not been done for the past three years. Nelson indicated that this has been taken care of.

Mayor Neisler indicated that there was a street and alleys report done by Don Squires and Karissa Carls. Mayor Neisler reported that Brent Freesmeyer, Don Squires and himself drove around looking at the streets to decide what was in need of repairs. Mayor Neisler stated that there is a list of streets and what needs to be done. Mayor Neisler stated that the engineer has looked at the streets that were oiled last year to determine why they are peeling. Mayor Neisler stated that he thinks this happened because of wet weather conditions at that time and the City will not get any recourse on it. Freesmeyer is recommending lime stone chips to be used this year, and the City may need to keep it watered to keep down the dust. Mayor Neisler stated that the total of the projected improvements would be \$46,423.00. Alderman Dowell stated that he has been asked what can be done on Hughes Alley. Mayor Neisler stated that they did not look at any alleys. Mayor Neisler indicated that the council needed to make a decision on what streets need maintenance so the process can get started.

Mayor Neisler stated that Chief Becker, Alderman Buhr and himself interviewed Robert Beard for the position of water and wastewater operator. He reported that he is recommending Beard for the job. Alderman Buhr stated that he felt that Beard would be an excellent fit for the job. Buhr indicated that Beard has been employed in many locations over the world, including the City of Carlinville and Curran Gardner Water. Mayor Neisler noted that Beard holds a Class A water license and Class 1 wastewater license.

Mayor Neisler stated that the 2015 - 2016 budget has been comprised and is ready to be placed on review. Mayor Neisler reported that the City has plans to cancel the contract with the

company who provides the mats and cleaning mop supplies. He stated that the City has already purchased their own mats and the cleaning supplies needed.

Mayor Neisler stated that Chief Becker had sold the pitching machines, only to find out that they were being used by AYSA. Mayor Neisler noted that it did not take long for council members to be informed that AYSA was not happy about the matter. Mayor Neisler stated that he met with Jeff Grieve and others from AYSA and promised that the City would get the pitching machines back or make it good with them. Mayor Neisler stated that the City has ordered a new pitching machine, at a cost of \$2,607.00.

Mayor Neisler asked if there was any information on the hydrant maintenance to be done by the fire department. Alderman Dowell stated that he had spoken with Chief Crowe, who had heard that the City might be employing a new water and wastewater operator. Crowe asked that the new operator meet with him to discuss this issue.

Mayor Neisler informed the council that the storm drainage work behind the post office is to be done this week.

Mayor Neisler asked if the council would like to consider placing an ad in the Shriner Circus program. He noted that a full-page ad would cost \$145.00.

Mayor Neisler announced that water shut-off's would be done next week.

Mayor Neisler informed the council that Parkside Homes would be having a grand opening on Wednesday and everyone is invited.

Mayor Neisler stated that a company by the name of Baird would like to present bond refinancing information to the council.

Alderman Dowell stated that last week an Athens officer was involved in a foot chase that could have ended badly because the officer could not get reception on his portable radio. Dowell stated that the City needed to consider purchasing a repeater, so police are able to have a strong signal for communication. Dowell stated that this device could be added to the fire department tower. Dowell indicated that he had not received a definitive answer on a price at this time. Officer Derrick Fritz stated that this has been an issue for a long time.

Alderman Wilson stated that she would like to have flower planters placed on Main Street. Wilson indicated that she would present her recommendations at the Monday meeting.

Mayor Neisler stated that the employee's have requested that the City purchase a 220 welder, at a price of \$360.00. They currently have a 110, but it does not meet their needs.

Council reviewed bills and meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM.