

Athens City Council
Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 5, 2017

Those in attendance were Mayor Bob Dowell, Clerk Cindy McFarland, and Aldermen: Chris Basso, Ron Canterbury, Tom Croft Sr., Tom Herman, and Harry Nichols. Alderman Buhr was absent. Persons in the audience included Judi Harlan, Jack Harlan, Rex Kieffer, Gary Richardson, Robert Bluett, Karissa Carls, Derrick Fritz, and Treasurer Ryan Seifert.

Sgt. Derrick Fritz presented the Police Report. He said that the new 2018 F150 squad truck is scheduled to be delivered next week. Mayor Dowell said that #1 on the agenda is info on the old 2012 F150 police truck, so we will go ahead and discuss. We were going to trade the truck in for \$13,500, however several people have expressed interest in the truck. Bids will open October 16, 2017 starting at a minimum \$13,500.

Treasurer Ryan Seifert presented the treasurer's report. The Mayor spoke about the streets and alleys report saying that quite a bit of patch, oil & chipping work has been done as well as curb painting on Main Street. The Mayor also presented the water report and discussed water and sewer hook ups for the new Food Pantry. This will be on the agenda for Monday night. Robert Bluett presented the sewer report. He said the EPA visit on the 27th went well; report to follow. The Mayor said that he was also present for this inspection and was told that the work our water crew had done prevented flooding and saved the city quite a bit of money. The Mayor thanked the water crew for their hard work. Alderman Canterbury said that there was no cemetery meeting this month but that Linda Wasilewski had said that the farm lease with Digiovanna Farm would be up soon. Alderman Canterbury said that the council may want to see if any other area farmers are interested.

There was discussion on the Brian Halcomb property. The Mayor asked Zoning Administrator Judi Harlan to briefly explain the history of the Halcomb property situation. Mr. Halcomb has been maintaining this area for years. Zoning Administrator Judi Harland advised that the city have the property surveyed.

Next on the agenda was Zephyr Drive. Mayor Dowell said that he has made several calls to the developer because the road should extend north and to the west of the new food pantry. The Mayor received a call back from the developer and was assured this would be taken care of.

Mayor Dowell said that Halloween trick or treating hours are normally 5-8pm. This will be on the agenda for Monday night.

Next was discussion on the city golf cart ordinance. The city has received multiple requests to lower the golf cart fee from \$50 to \$25 per year and to allow driving after dark.

Mayor Dowell gave an update on problem properties. The Mayor said that most of the work is done at 504 W. Jefferson and it looks good. He provided an expense sheet totaling \$8,650.13 that the city has spent on this property improvement. The Mayor asked what the council would like to do with the property. Alderman Nichols said we should put it up for bid and accept sealed bids for 30 days. The minimum bid will be set at \$8,650.13 and the city will reserve the right to reject any bid. This will be on the agenda for Monday. The Mayor and Chief Becker also had a lengthy, positive discussion with the owner of the house and trailer located at Jefferson & Adams.

The liquor license application from the American Legion was next on the agenda. The Mayor said that he would like to table this until next month. The Legion has been denied in the past. The Mayor would like to meet with our attorney and gather more information.

Next there was discussion on an agreement to establish an internet purchase exchange location. Sangamon and Menard County Crime Stoppers would like to make a safe zone for

internet purchases and contribute \$750 or half the cost for cameras in a designated location, possibly the library. The Mayor would like there to be a nice, safe place for citizens to make these transactions. Alderman Basso suggested the park so we would have cameras at the park.

Under Old Business, the Mayor gave a Fall Festival update. This year was our biggest year yet. The Mayor would like to hold the festival at this same time next year. The Mayor went on to say that we have a check from Ley Metals for \$270.20 from our metal recycling event. In the past we have donated this to a local organization. Alderman Canterbury suggested we split this between the Athens Police and Fire Departments for Halloween activities. This will be on the agenda for Monday. Next, Mayor Dowell said that Alderman Croft had asked at the last meeting about the speed limit in alleys and parks. The speed limit in alleys is 15 mph and in parks is 20 mph. There was discussion of lowering these speed limits.

Under New Business was the mowing of ditches. The Mayor said that there have been some instances this past year of people who will not mow their ditches and then the city has mowed them. There was a suggestion that the property owner be ticketed and then fines.

Mayor Dowell has started attending the Sangamon Valley LEPC meetings. At the last meeting he received information from Local #477 about assistance after a disaster. Local #477 can provide assistance to our city after a disaster in only 90 minutes at no charge. The Mayor would like us to be involved in this.

The Mayor asked if there were any public comments. Linda Wasilewski had a question about a road that is closed but still has some traffic on it.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to adjourn and enter into executive session at 7:55pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Council returned to the meeting room at 8:06pm to review bills.