

Athens City Council
Regular Meeting
Monday, December 11, 2017

Mayor Dowell welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7pm at Athens City Hall. The Mayor asked if any Veteran present would like to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. All stood and Norman Flowers led the pledge.

Clerk Cindy McFarland called roll. Present were Aldermen: Chris Basso, Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, TomCroft Sr., Tom Herman, and Butch Nichols. Also in attendance were Linda Wasilewski, Kenneth Babcock, Jo Babcock, Merle Messersmith, Rex Kieffer, Gary Richardson, Norman Flowers, Michael Lockwood, Hayley Yoakum, Dalton Abrams-Meredith, Charles Mester, Sharon Mester, Karissa Carls, Nicole McCormick, and Jack Harlan.

Mayor Dowell started the meeting by asking the council to take a moment to review the streets and alleys report submitted by Don Squires. Alderman Buhr asked the Mayor about the status of the Boars Nest entrance. Mayor Dowell replied that he had just heard back from the Secretary of DOT Rich Brauer that we will not need to have a DOT pre-approved contractor as long as they are bonded. District 6 has put this on their priority list and will get back to us as soon as possible. Then a motion was made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Basso, to approve the police, treasurers', water and wastewater, and streets and alleys report. Motion passed unanimously.

Then the Mayor said that before voting on our agenda items tonight, he would like to introduce some of our city employees who are here with us tonight. The Mayor introduced Police Office Dalton Abrams-Meredith, Streets worker Michael Lockwood, Utility Billing Clerk Nicole McCormick, and Office Manager Carissa Carls.

Motion made by Alderman Herman, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2017 Committee Meeting and the November 9, 2017 Regular Council Meeting. All ayes. Minutes approved, motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Canterbury, seconded by Alderman Herman, to approve the payment of the November bills. All ayes: Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Basso, to approve a zoning variance requested by Charles "Butch" Mester allowing him to build an accessory building on his lot without principle use with the stipulation that Mr. Mester clean up his problem properties by January 2019. Ayes: Basso, Buhr, and Nichols. Nays: Canterbury, Croft, and Herman. The vote resulted in a tie. Mayor Dowell cast the tie-breaking yes vote. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to pass Ordinance 13-2017, Tax levy ordinance of Road District No. 13, Menard County, Illinois for the corporate year beginning May 1, 2017 and ending the 30th day of April, 2018. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Herman, to pass Ordinance 14-2017, Tax levy of the City of Athens, Illinois for the corporate year beginning May 1, 2017 and ending the 30th day of April, 2018. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Basso, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to renew the trash collection contract with Republic Services for disposal services at the sewer plant. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Basso, to extend Sunday hours for city bars on New Year's Eve, 12/31/17, until 1am. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Basso, to allow a \$120 each, as needed, boot allowance for city public works employees. Motion passed unanimously.

Next on the agenda was city employee uniform exploration. Mayor Dowell contacted additional uniform companies to gather more information. There was discussion about uniform pricing, safety, compliance, and logistics details. Motion made by Alderman Canterbury, seconded by Alderman Basso, to approve providing city employees with uniforms at a cost not to exceed \$3,400 per year. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Herman, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to further explore a more professional office/email operating system as suggested by Alderman Basso on Thursday. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to approve donating \$400 to the food pantry for moving expenses to be paid from the gaming fund. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to accept Zoning Board member Karen Stott's resignation effective immediately. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to appoint Jeff Stott to fill the vacant Zoning Board member seat. Motion passed unanimously.

The Mayor then read the Illinois Bicentennial Proclamation-Illinois 200. Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Herman, to adopt the proclamation. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Herman, seconded by Alderman Basso, to approve city employee Christmas bonuses: \$200 for full time and \$100 for part time. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Herman, to continue the employment of Gabe Richardson on a 3 day per week part time basis. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to move employee Michael Lockwood to assist in the water department during the 3 days per week that Gabe Richardson is working. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Herman, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to adopt a prepared form for the city of Athens and move forward on procedures for miscellaneous complaints and property nuisance complaints. Motion passed unanimously.

The mayor asked the council if they had anything else to discuss or if there were any public comments. Mayor Dowell said that would conclude our agenda this evening. He thanked everyone for coming and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and safe Happy New Year. Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm. Motion passed unanimously.