

Athens City Council  
Regular Meeting  
February 9, 2015

Mayor Donald Neisler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Clerk Debra Richardson called roll. Present were Aldermen: Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Bobbie Dowell, Harry Nichols, Chris Reichert and Deni Wilson. Also in attendance were Mike Burg, Linda Wasilewski, Merle Messersmith, Tom Croft Sr., and Rex Kieffer.

Mayor Neisler introduced Mike Burg, the Coordinator for Menard county Emergency Management Agency. Burg addressed the council about a meeting to be held on March 5, 2015 at the Athens fire department regarding a network broadband system to be used nationwide. Burg stated that Illinois FirstNet is a public safety network linking law enforcement, emergency management, fire, public works and EMS. Burg indicated that any one with questions should plan to attend the meeting.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Reichert, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2015 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Dowell, seconded by Alderman Nichols, to approve the treasurers', police, water and wastewater reports. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Canterbury, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to approve the payment of the bills. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Reichert, seconded by Alderman Dowell, to approve the American Legion's plans for a July 4, 2015 celebration to be held at the Salzenstein Park. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to include the Athens library 40th anniversary proclamation in the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Reichert, to approve continuing with the current annual license fees for waste haulers, gaming machine, gambling machine, beer garden and sale of liquor. Motion passed unanimously.

Those fees are as follows: waste haulers \$200.00, gaming machines \$50.00, gambling machine \$25.00, beer gardens \$25.00, and liquor license \$540.00.

Mayor Neisler recommended that the council approve a 5% water rate increase. Alderman Nichols requested that the council hold off on voting on a rate increase until after he has had a chance to study the financial figures further. Council agreed to wait on a vote for a water rate increase.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Wilson, to reschedule the March 5, 2015 committee meeting to March 3, 2015. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Neisler stated that the IEPA has requested that the City make a decision on the closing of Well #3. IEPA has asked that the City decide on a date to either abandon Well #3 or repair it for use. Mayor Neisler stated that he would like to keep the Well #3 on standby in case of an emergency. He would like for Klingner to write IEPA a letter stating the City's intent on this matter. Mayor Neisler stated that to keep the Well #3 open they would need a good test from it. Alderman Nichols suggested that the council approve the closing of Well #3. Mayor Neisler indicated that Klingner has reported that it would cost just as much to repair Well #3 as it would

to construct a new well. Alderman Nichols stated that Well #3 was used as an emergency well when the water main broke under the Sangamon River.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to approve the closure of Well #3 before August 1, 2015. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Neisler stated that the City has plenty of dirt to be used for fill at the well site. He will direct Klingner & Associates to address a letter to the IEPA stating the City's intent to abandon Well #3.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Dowell, to approve a pay increase of \$1.00 an hour for officers Benjamin Hollis and Derrick Fritz. Motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Nichols stated that he has researched the pay scale for the office of mayor. He stated that he has found city's of comparable size paying the mayor between \$1,300.00 and \$1,750.00 per month. Mayor Neisler stated that the council would need to hold the mayor accountable for spending the necessary time doing their duties as mayor. Alderman Nichols stated that the City would need to have someone who is knowledgeable of the workings of a city government.

Alderman Buhr stated that Mark Oller is no longer interested in the mowing of the West Cemetery. Buhr asked that the mayor place an ad in the paper requesting bids for the mowing and maintenance of the West Cemetery.

Alderman Wilson asked about having a streets and alleys report given at the committee meetings. Mayor Neisler stated that Nick Lott does not want to present a report at meetings, but would be willing to put together a written report.

Mayor Neisler informed the council that Don Squires would like to attend a water conference with Jason Upton. Alderman Reichert asked about the cost for that conference. Mayor Neisler stated he thought it was around \$150.00.

Alderman Nichols asked if a drop box could be added to the drainage project being done on Washington Street. There was discussion on drainage and where the tile is located in the area. Alderman Buhr asked about a drop box being plugged at the Salzenstein Park on Jefferson Street. Mayor Neisler and Alderman Buhr would look into this issue.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Canterbury to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.