

Athens City Council  
Committee Meeting  
Thursday, September 6, 2018

Mayor Dowell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Clerk Cindy McFarland called roll. Those in attendance were Mayor Bobbie Dowell, Clerk Cindy McFarland, and Aldermen: Chris Basso, Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Tom Croft Sr., Tom Herman, and Butch Nichols. Persons in the audience included Linda Wasilewski, Merle Messersmith, Gary Richardson, Rex Kieffer, Jackie Lindsay, Police Chief Tim Becker, and Nicole McCormick.

Chief Tim Becker presented the Police Report, stating that PT Officer Chris Thomas will graduate from the police academy on 9/15/18 and will begin solo patrols. He also provided the council with a copy of the Interagency Agreement with the Sangamon County Sheriff's Dept. which grants our police officers, and specifically the School Resource Officer, police authority while on the Cantrall School Campus. Chief Becker also said that he had requested an activity report for Athens from Menard County Animal Control. He provided the January-August 2018 report to the council and said that he has requested that we receive this report more frequently. Mayor Dowell went over the report with the audience. Then the Mayor referred to the August Balance Sheet, explaining that Treasurer Ryan Seifert is not feeling well tonight. The Mayor asked the council to note the amount in the Video Gaming Income Savings account and to consider possibly dedicating some of this money monthly to streets, sidewalks, and improvements. Mayor Dowell said that the Streets Report would be available Monday, and then went on to the Water Report. He said that it is believed that Well #4 was struck by lightening on 8/16/18 and is not running correctly. The well pump itself appears to be the issue. Brotcke will perform the repair work when the area dries up. Alderman Herman asked if this repair would be covered by insurance. Mayor Dowell said he is checking on this and if it is not, he will check to see if it is covered under the Brotcke repair agreement. The Mayor said that the Sewer Report and the Office Manager's Report will be presented Monday. Alderman Canterbury presented the Cemetery Report. He said there was discussion of cemetery markers to make it easier to identify specific rows, and possibly closing the south end cemetery road for burials where the road goes east due to the rocks. Mowing is going well, and Linda Wasilewski will be proving an estimate for a dead tree that needs removed. Alderman Canterbury added that Mr. John Redding from Wisconsin is trying to locate his great-grandparents graves in the old part of the cemetery.

First on the discussion agenda was the Interagency Agreement with the Sangamon County Sherriff's Dept. Mayor Dowell said this will be on the agenda for Monday. Next, the Mayor provided playground equipment information and pictures for the council. He said that the Stahl Foundation will be meeting to discuss the new equipment for the playground.

Next on the agenda were the ride tickets for the Fall Festival. The Mayor said that last year we had spent \$992 on the ride tickets for Food Pantry clients and he asked if the council was interested in providing these tickets again this year. Alderman Nichols asked if this was successful last year and Alderman Buhr replied that people were very appreciative. The council agreed that this would be on the agenda for Monday.

The Boars Nest entrance was discussed next. Mayor Dowell said that Chief Becker had contacted IDOT for an update and had received an email back stating that IDOT has received approval to write the entrance permit and that we should hopefully receive the permit in the next week. After that, the city will open the project for bids.

Next on the agenda was the Prevailing Wage Rate Ordinance for 2018. The city attorney provided this to us for adopting at our next meeting. It will be on the agenda for Monday.

Then the Mayor said that he had spoken to Alderman Canterbury about possibly painting the bulk water shed. Alderman Canterbury presented the information he had gathered. He provided plans,

paint & supply quantities, pricing, and color possibilities. The city would need to open an account with Sherwin Williams to get the discount pricing on the paint. The Mayor said that community service workers are available to provide the labor and he would be available to assist with painting as well. He said that the city has issued several ordinance citations to problem properties and he will help out to make sure that the city keeps its own properties looking good as well. Alderman Herman asked if this could be paid from the gaming fund and the Mayor replied in affirmative. This will be on the agenda for Monday. Mayor Dowell thanked Alderman Canterbury for his hard work on this project.

Next, Mayor Dowell said that the Capital City Century Bike race event will be held the weekend of September 7-9. They will pass through Athens and use our large pavilion as one of the stops. The city building itself will not be open.

Last on the discussion agenda was Jackie Lindsay who took the podium to speak to the council regarding liquor sales hours. Mayor Dowell explained that Jackie is the new owner of the Athens Corner Pub. Ms. Lindsay said that she has owned the bar since 8/3/18, has put a new roof on the bar, and her goal is to bring the bar up to standards. Her patrons have asked her to be open later on Sundays for sports events such as football games. With a closing time of 9pm, people may have to leave the bar at half-time. Alderman Buhr asked if this would be for all city bars and Mayor Dowell confirmed that it would. Chief Becker said there have been no problems at the bars. Mayor Dowell asked how the council would like to proceed. Alderman Basso suggested an 11pm closing time and the council concurred. Mayor Dowell said this will be on the agenda for Monday. At this time, Ms. Lindsay said that after listening to the topics discussed tonight, she would like to suggest that the basketball courts be repaired, possibly using money from the gaming funds or the Stahl Foundation. Mayor Dowell said that Violet Wiker, with the Athens Youth Council, is gathering information for this repair currently.

First under Old Business was an update on problem properties. The four problem properties that were on the August 30 court docket have been moved to September 27. Next under Old Business, was the Fall Festival update. Mayor Dowell said that the festival schedule will be in the paper, on social media, and posted in several locations. The Mayor said that he had received a letter from the Illinois Department of Human Rights with information on how our city could be part of the 2018 Fairness and Equity Campaign. Mayor Dowell will be submitting the application to have our Fall Festival endorsed as a Fairness & Equity Campaign Event.

Under New Business, Mayor Dowell said that the new Fire Station Crossing signs have been received and will be installed on Hargrave soon.

Linda Wasilewski had signed up to make a public comment. She rose and approached the podium to address the council. She said that the water does not drain well on her street when it rains a lot. Mayor Dowell said that he will have Don Squires check the drain areas to see if something is blocked. Linda also said that some of the boys who ride their bikes around town would like to build a bike track or something at the old park. Mayor Dowell said that we should talk to Violet Wiker about this as well to see what things like this may be planned, and to make sure these boys know about the Athens Youth Council.

Mayor Dowell added that the review of the ordinance regarding raffles and poker runs had been received back from the attorney with changes. This was provided to the council and will be on the agenda for vote on Monday.

This ended the agenda for the evening. The council reviewed the bills. The Mayor thanked everyone and asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Herman, to adjourn at 7:50pm.