

Athens City Council
Committee Meeting
September 8, 2016

Those in attendance were Mayor Donald Neisler, Clerk Debra Richardson, Treasurer Darin Bowman and Aldermen: Anita Bednarko, Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Tom Croft Sr., Bobbie Dowell and Harry Nichols. Persons in the audience included Zoning Administrator Judi Harlan, Jack Harlan, Operator Robin Cawley, Police Chief Tim Becker, Gary Richardson, Merle Messersmith, Debbie Herrick, Rex Kieffer, Linda Wasilewski, Chad Gaub and John Tobias.

Police Chief Tim Becker presented the police report. Chief Becker reported that Keagon Robinson's squad truck needs tires and the cost would be \$582.00. Chief Becker requested that the council approve for Sergeant Derrick Fritz to attend a two day school for training. The training is known as ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) and is to be held in Tremont, IL, at a cost of \$595.00. There were five ordinance violations during the month of August. Chief Becker stated that he placed copies of the new ordinances in the council folders for their review. He indicated that attorney Bill Siders had sent Michael Meyers a letter regarding violations on his property at 500 N. Main Street. Alderman Dowell indicated that he would like to move forward with court proceedings against Meyers. Chief Becker noted that there were 110 calls for service, 58 traffic stops, 30 citations, 28 verbal warnings and two crashes.

Treasurer Darin Bowman informed the council that there was a DCEO payment of \$275.00 made in August. Bowman indicated that the monthly transfers have been made, which leaves the general fund balance at \$96,280.33. There was a video gaming payment of \$2,447.00 in August. Bowman stated that the water revenue balance has not been correct for the past two months.

Alderman Dowell stated that he had looked at the situation of the drainage ditch at Main and Washington Streets. He indicated that he asked Don Squires to check into getting a grate made for the area. Dowell questioned Mayor Neisler about when the oiling and chipping would be done. Mayor stated that he was expecting it done in August, but he would tell Squires to push for the work to get done.

Robin Cawley reported that they have been doing tree trimming at the water plant and Well #6 passed the test and is now being used. Cawley stated that the aerator had been cleaned and they changed out a section of lime tubing. She indicated there was a six month service done on the generators. They are currently awaiting the humidity testing at the water plant. There are plans for the cleaning of the lagoons as soon as the farm fields are ready. Cawley stated that there is a chemical feed system at the wastewater plant that is not in use at this time. The blowers have been serviced and the generators had a six month service done. Cawley indicated that she is planning to have the new decanter installed. The material for the Johnson Road project has been delivered and they are waiting for the permit from IEPA. Cawley stated that a leak detection crew searched for a water leak and they found a substantial leak at a fire hydrant on Madison Street. The hydrant is isolated and turned off at this time. Cawley noted that she has asked Brent Freesmeyer to get a bid on the replacement of the platform for Well #4. Alderman Nichols asked about the running of a water line to the Mester property on South Main Lane.

Mayor Neisler stated that the council would need to consider the employee healthcare with Health Alliance Group. He indicated that the increase would be 5.9%.

Mayor Neisler informed the council that they need to consider the writing off of the water receivable list. Alderman Dowell indicated that he would like for the City to make sure that no person on the list can return to the City and receive water service.

Mayor Neisler indicated that he would like a clarification on the water ordinance. He stated that water users pay for the first 2,000 gallons at a set rate and then a set rate for each 1,000 gallons after that. Mayor Neisler stated that when a person asks for their water to be shut off and then turned back on, the person would be charged the minimum charge for the month. Mayor Neisler asked the council for clarification. Council agreed that the person should be charged a minimum bill.

Mayor Neisler stated that he would like for the City to use some money from the video gaming fund to purchase carnival armbands for the less fortunate children in the community. Mayor Neisler recommended that this be done through the Athens Food Pantry.

Alderman Dowell informed the council that he would like for the City to offer three \$1,000.00 scholarships for high school seniors. Dowell stated that the students would apply and the council would review and decide on the recipients. Dowell stated that he has spoken with the school about the process. Dowell indicated that the monies would go to the school and not to the student.

Zoning Administrator Judi Harlan asked where the project at High Prairie stands at this time. Chief Becker indicated that the City needs a plan from IDOT and the engineers are working on a plan to submit. Harlan indicated that the post office would not deliver mail until the street is named. Harlan stated that she has all the approvals from the property owners for the vacation of the alley located between West North Grand Avenue and Bell Street.

John Tobias addressed the council regarding the annual food drive done by the high school leadership committee. Tobias reported that they have set a goal of 10,000 cans. He stated that this is the nineteenth year for the food drive. Tobias indicated that Channel 20 News has said that they would be there for the unloading of the bus at the pantry. He noted that Fancy Creek Township made a donation of \$250.00 and Athens FFA gave a \$1,000.00 check. Tobias stated that the kids always work hard and they feel good about what they are doing for the less fortunate. Alderman Dowell stated that he would like the council to consider a donation of \$2,000.00 towards such a worthy cause.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.