

Athens City Council  
Committee Meeting  
Thursday, January 4, 2018

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 Larry Buhr was absent. Persons in the audience included Norm Flowers, Steve Lindsey, Don Ferricks, Tom Gum, Robert Cooper, Aaliyah Kissick, Cheryl Kissick, Chris Roberts, Michael Roberts, William Singer, Todd Lawson, Gary Richardson, Rex Kieffer, Kegan Kieffer, Robert Bluett, Karissa Carls, Nicole McCormick, and Derrick Fritz.

Mayor Dowell opened the meeting and recognized the American Legion members and thanked them for their service. Sergeant Derrick Fritz presented the Police Report. The Mayor presented the treasurer's report in Treasurer Ryan Seifert's absence. The Mayor said that the Streets & Alleys Report and Water Report would be presented Monday. Robbie Bluett presented the Sewer Report and there was discussion about the EPA letter in regards to the sewer plant inspection. Robbie proposed purchasing an ORP meter to reduce phosphorous levels biologically rather than through the introduction of chemicals. He also provided information and pricing on the meter. The Mayor said that we want to make sure we get the best price before purchasing. Alderman Canterbury said that the Cemetery Board did not meet but they had opened the bids for the cemetery farm lease that morning. There were 4 bids for the acreage behind the cemetery and the high bid went to Brown Farms.

First on the agenda was the repeal of the outdated Sexual Harassment Ordinance and replacing it with the revised Sexual Harassment Ordinance 01-2018. The vote to approve the ordinance will be on the agenda for Monday.

Mayor Dowell went on to say the Lions Club had contacted him for a donation for the 2017 Toys for Angels program. This \$1000 donation will be on the agenda for vote on Monday.

Adding the new water clerk, Nicole McCormick, to the meter deposit account was next on the agenda. The Mayor said that this will ensure we are in compliance with banking rules and will be on the agenda for vote on Monday.

Next on the agenda was the auditor's report, the Annual Financial Report for the City of Athens for the years ended April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and 2016 prepared by the Kyle McGinnis Firm. The Mayor said that he had met with Mr. McGinnis, CPA, about the audit and is pleased to report that no disagreements arose during the audit. There are copies of the audit available for the public to view at City Hall. The Mayor will ask the council to approve the report on Monday.

Next on the agenda was the application for a liquor license submitted by the American Legion, Menard County Post 129. Norm Flowers spoke on behalf of the American Legion. He said that if the application is approved, funds made by the American Legion will be used for the benefit of the veterans, our community, and youth. Norm said that there are kids hoping to go to Boys' State, Girls' State, and the Police Academy. The Legion hopes that in a few years, this would also allow for scholarships for youth in our community. The Mayor summarized that, in the past, the American Legion had submitted a liquor license application and that the family who had originally donated the park to the city may possibly take back the land if approved. For this current application, Mayor Dowell asked the city attorney for a legal opinion on this and read the statement from the attorney: "The city would not let this proposal move forward if it was not in the opinion of the attorney that the city was legally allowed to do so." The Mayor provided the

application and information from the attorney to each council member and encouraged each council member to thoroughly review the information before making a decision. The council will be asked to make a motion and vote on the application on Monday. The Mayor provided time for questions and discussion.

Under Old Business, the Mayor said that Clean Uniform Company was scheduled to be here for uniform fitting on Tuesday but were unable to make it because their trucks gelled up. They are rescheduled to come this next week.

The Mayor gave an update on problem properties. Bids have been received for the demolition of the property at 501 S. Adams that had suffered a fire. This should be completed within 30 days. In regards to another property behind the park, the property owner hopes to be financially ready to tear it down in June.

Under New Business was the donation from the Stahl Athens Community Park Charitable Foundation. This donation will be deposited to the city's budget line item entitled Park Improvements and will be held and disbursed according to foundation rules.

Next the Mayor asked the council and attendees to meet Ailiyah Kissick, a senior at Athens High School. Ailiyah stood and introduced herself, stating that she will be opening a brick and mortar store in uptown Athens called AK Boutique selling upscale clothing. Ailiyah invited everyone to stop by the new store which will open February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Mayor took a moment to introduce the city employees present in the audience: Utility Clerk Nicole McCormick, Office manager Karissa Carls, Wastewater operator Robbie Bluett, and Athens Police Sgt. Derrick Fritz. The Mayor said that he wants the community to be familiar with our city faces.

The Mayor asked if there were any public comments. Office Manager Karissa Carls said she would like to give an update on her research into getting a card reader for the office and better security back-up. She said we are in compliance now but will need to update this year. Karissa will have more information for the council Monday.

This ended the agenda for the evening. The Mayor thanked everyone and asked the council to review the bills. He also passed around a thank you card from the food pantry and thanked the American Legion members as they exited. While reviewing bills, Alderman Canterbury asked how we are doing with the savings since the telephone change-over. Mayor Dowell said we are doing very well and are on track to save 17K this year.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to adjourn at 7:40pm. Motion passed unanimously.