Athens City Council
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 13, 2018

Mayor Dowell welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7pm at Athens City Hall. Clerk Cindy McFarland called roll. Present were Aldermen: Chris Basso, Larry Buhr, Tom Croft Sr., Tom Herman, and Butch Nichols. Absent was Alderman Ron Canterbury. Also in attendance were Linda Wasilewski, Gary Richardson, Dorene & Ed Kileen, Mo Williams, BJ Fitschen, Fire Chief Joe Crowe, Michael Lockwood, Hayley Yoakum, Treasurer Ryan Seifert, Police Chief Tim Becker, Police Officer Chris Thomas, Peyton Thomas, Rex Kieffer, Steve DiGiovanna, Russ Witmur, Norm Flowers, City Engineer Brent Freesmeyer, Library Director Donna Cunningham, and Robbie Bluett. The Mayor asked if any Veteran present would like to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. All stood, and Norm Flowers led the pledge.

The Mayor asked the council to take a moment and review the Street Report before the vote to accept the monthly reports. Motion was made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Nichols, to approve the police, treasurers', water and wastewater, streets and alleys, and office manager's reports. Ayes: Basso, Buhr, Croft, Herman and Nichols. Motion passed.

Next, the Mayor asked for a motion to approve the July meeting minutes and bills. Motion made by Alderman Herman, seconded by Alderman Basso, to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2018 Committee Meeting and the July 9, 2018 Regular Council Meeting and the July bills. Ayes: Basso, Buhr, Croft, Herman and Nichols. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Basso, to approve the increase of Officer Zanon's salary to $16.50 per hour as had previously been discussed at the July meeting. Ayes: Basso, Buhr, Croft, Herman and Nichols. Motion passed.

Next the mayor asked for a motion to approve the purchase of a 3" bore for $5,250. Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Herman to approve this purchase. Ayes: Buhr, Croft, Herman, and Nichols. Nays: Basso. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Herman, seconded by Alderman Nichols, to approve the purchase of a fluoride meter for the water plant for $545. Ayes: Basso, Buhr, Croft, Herman and Nichols. Motion passed.

Next on the agenda was the implementation of a $250 charge for any new water service requiring the use of the bore during service installation which would take effect September 1, 2018. This charge would offset the cost of the new bore. Sewer Operator Robbie Bluett explained that he had contacted other municipalities to see what they charged for this service. He found that Petersburg does not offer this service and requires that the water customer hire their own. Another municipality charges $500 for the boring service. Alderman Herman made a motion to amend the ordinance and implement a $500 charge for the boring service. There was no second. Alderman Nichols made a motion to amend the ordinance and implement a $250 charge for the boring service. Alderman Basso seconded the motion. Ayes: Basso, Buhr, Croft, and Nichols. Nays: Herman. Motion passed.

The Mayor noted that the Methodist Church will be having a back to school festival at 5pm on August 15th. The Athens Fire Department, Police, EMS, and Library will all take part in the festival.

Next on the agenda was Library Director Donna Cunningham who was present to address the council with the annual Library Report and statistics. Donna approached the podium and said that she would share some of the pleasant surprises from the annual library report. For example, during the year, the library meeting room was used over 150 times; there were over 8,500 visits to the library compared to 7,936 last year; and there are 337 registered resident and non-resident library card holders. The library recently finished another successful summer reading program with over 150 kids taking part. The library has just started a monthly Lego Club and Storytime will be beginning again soon. There will be a book sale October 12-14. Mayor Dowell thanked Donna for her service at the library and Donna thanked the City for all they do to assist the library. In addition, Mayor Dowell announced that the Library had partnered with the Athens Police Department and designated the parking lot in front of the library as a safe location for residents to exchange items sold via the internet. The area is well-lit and recorded by high-resolution digital surveillance 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

The Mayor then introduced the City Engineer Brent Freesmeyer who was present in order to address Barn Hollow road work concerns. Brent explained that the City of Athens receives about $4000 per month from the Motor Fuel Tax for maintenance of the city's streets; approximately $50,000 per year. The streets in Barn Hollow are scheduled to be swept, patched, and seal coated with black trap rock this year as recommended by IDOT so that the streets are not lost. The cost for this is approximately $29,000, which is $11,000 more expensive than the alternative limestone, which is very dusty. If the streets in Barn Hollow were to be milled and have new asphalt installed, the cost would be approximately $225,000. Brent provided a sample to those in attendance of the black trap rock that will be used. The Mayor said that last year the council had voted to have Barn Hollow done with limestone but the residents complained and the project was cancelled. Alderman Herman said that if we are spending more in Barn Hollow and using this black trap rock for them, we should use it throughout the city to be fair. The Mayor said that he knows the residents of Barn Hollow have some concerns about problems with oil in the past and the new black trap rock. He asked if a Homeowners Association may be possible in order to fund asphalting or cementing the roads in Barn Hollow. Mayor Dowell said that he also contacted the Menard County Treasurer's Office to see if the residents of Barn Hollow pay a different tax rate than the other residents of Athens and they do not. There were residents of Barn Hollow in the audience who were present to voice their concerns. Ed Kileen approached the podium and asked if the oil could be spread by a wand instead of the truck method normally used which causes oil to be heavier is some areas. Brent explained that this method is only as good as the wand operator and is no guarantee that there would not be heavier areas of oil. Dorene Kileen suggested that just the cul-de-sacs be asphalted. Brent said that this is possible but only if you have the budget. Russ Witmur said that the last time the city did the cul-de-sacs, they were worse than before they were done. Mo Williams repeated previously voiced concerns and asked "what of this doesn't work?" BJ Fitschen said that the road in front of the Cantrall Schools is black trap rock and it has held up great even with all the traffic and heavy busses. He suggested that residents go take a look at it. Norm Flowers asked about all the other streets in the city that need done. The Mayor said that it may be that in next year's budget we use more funds from the gaming funds for our roads and less to donate to groups in our city. Alderman Herman said that he has been to Rushville

frequently and has seen the roads they have done with black trap rock and they are holding up well.

The Mayor said that was everything on the agenda for tonight and asked the council if they had anything else to discuss or if there were any public comments. Linda Wasilewski gave a short cemetery update and also mentioned that Cedar Street is terrible and needs repair. Treasurer Ryan Seifert said that there is a pot hole in front of his house that needs fixed. The Mayor said that the air conditioning in the city hall building went out this weekend. Don Squires is working with the Dixon Brothers to get it repaired. The AC unit is 17 years old. The Mayor will keep the council posted concerning the repair.

The Mayor thanked everyone for coming. Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Herman, to adjourn the meeting at 8:27pm. Motion passed unanimously.