

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF MEETING

January 23, 2024

The Athens City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 23, at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Sherlin presiding. The invocation was given by Vice Mayor Eaton; and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Curtis, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.

The following decisions were made and ordered made a part of the records of the Athens City Council.

- 1 -

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 19, 2023, City Council Regular scheduled meeting were submitted and approved. **Council Member Curtis moved; Vice Mayor Eaton seconded.**

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin

NAYS: None

- 2 -

REQUESTS FROM CITIZENS

Five (5) individuals addressed the Council expressing concerns about the time change of City Council Meetings, Council Member Pelley, and recent new developments.

City Attorney Caldwell requested permission to address the Council and citizens concerning this portion of the agenda. He provided clarification that anyone speaking from the podium should present request to the Council, citizens should make no allegations toward anyone, and keep your comments diplomatic.

- 3 -

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sherlin advised the recording clerk to read the following items into the record:

- a) Approve schedule for Athens Travelers Cruise In except for May 18 due to previously scheduled Relay for Life event at Market Park.
- b) Approve Resolution No. 2024-01 for Athens Flood Awareness week.
- c) Approve Resolution No. 2024-02 for Assistance to Firefighters Equipment Grant.
- d) Approve workplace harassment non-retaliation (whistleblower) policy and

procedures.

- e) Approve policy for break time and space requirements for nursing mothers.
- f) Approve bid for Law Enforcement weapons.
- g) Approve purchase of trucks for Public Works and Community Development utilizing State of Tennessee Bid and declare three Ford Escapes as surplus property.
- h) Approve GEOS proposal for North Jackson and Slope Stability Assessment.
- i) Authorize the Mayor, City Manager and Fire Chief to look for land to be purchased for an additional fire station.
- j) Authorize Fire and Police radio upgrades to 800 MHZ utilizing state bid pricing.

Mayor Sherling asked for a motion. **Council Member Curtis moved, Vice Maor Eaton seconded, that the Consent Agenda as stated be approved.** Roll call:

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.
NAYS: None

- 5 -

ORDINANCES

None

- 6 -

OLD BUSINESS

None

- 7 -

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to postpone Item B on the agenda to change the time limit during Citizen input at Council Meetings from 5 minutes to 3 minutes.

Mayor Sherlin asked for a motion. **Vice Mayor Eaton moved, Council Member Curtis seconded to postpone discussion to the next study session for this item.** Council Member Curtis felt it necessary to delay the discussion since Council Member Witt-McMahan was absent during the meeting.

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.
NAYS: None

Motion to change the meeting time of the City Council study session from 6pm to 3pm.

Mayor Sherling asked for a motion. **Council Member Curtis moved, and Mayor Sherlin seconded to change the meeting time of the City Council study session from 6pm to 3pm.** Council Member Pelley spoke in opposition against the time change. Vice Mayor Eaton discussed the importance of public awareness. This is a work study session, not the Council meeting where the public has an input on the time to come and speak. Council Member Pelley spoke and said this was an imposition on the Council members. Mayor Sherlin said this could very well just be a trial run.

Roll call:

AYES: Curtis, Eaton, Sherlin
NAYS: Pelley

Motion to limit Citizen input at Called Council Meeting to be restricted to items specified on the agenda.

Mayor Sherlin asked for a motion. **Council Member Curtis moved, and Vice Mayor Eaton seconded to limit citizen input specifically for the agenda at Called Council Meetings.** Mayor Sherlin opened the floor for discussion. Council Member Pelley spoke in opposition. Vice Mayor Eaton reminded the Council and citizens, this is specifically for special called meetings only. City Attorney Chris Caldwell suggested this item be postponed until Council Member Witt-McMahan is in attendance.

Roll Call:

AYES: Curtis, Eaton, Sherlin
NAYS: Pelley

Motion regarding termination of k-9 program for Police Department

Attorney Chris Caldwell read resolution to donate Dunya to McMinn County Sheriff Department. **Vice Mayor Eaton made an amendment to the resolution that all surplus items go with the dog to Sheriff Department. Council Member Curtis seconded.** Attorney Chris Caldwell spoke to revise the resolution with k9 Dunya plus all necessary equipment for her support and welfare to serve within NCSO and be transferred as surplus property. Council Member Pelley called the question. No second. Question failed. Chief Schultz spoke in regard to what is considered surplus.

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin
NAY: None

January 23, 2023

Page 4 of 5

Upon conclusion of the original motion, Mayor Sherlin called roll call to Vote on Resolution as Amendment

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin

NAY: None

-11-
REPORTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY BUILDING REPORT

Community Development Director Anthony Casteel presented the building permit quarterly/annual report for the City of Athens. The report was accepted as presented.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Finance director Mike Keith presented the Finance Dep Report for December 2023. The report was accepted as presented.

- 12 -

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Brandon Ainsworth presented the Fire Department Report for December 2023. The report was accepted as presented.

- 13 -

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Police Chief Fred Schultz presented the Police Department Report for December 2023. The report was accepted as presented.

- 14 -

REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Deb Wallace presented an update on various projects and programs taking place. The report was accepted as presented.

- 15 -
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 7:37p.m.

Council Member Curtis moved, Vice Mayor Eaton seconded, for the meeting to be adjourned.

AYES: Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.

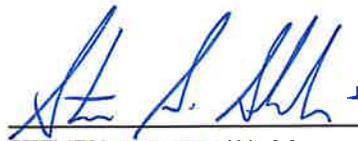
January 23, 2023

Page 5 of 5

NAYS: **Absent**



DEB WALLACE, City Manager



STEVEN S. SHERLIN, Mayor

