



ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION

The Athens City Council met in regular session on **Tuesday, January 21, 2025**, at 6:00 p.m. in the Athens City Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Eaton presiding. Vice Mayor Curtis led the invocation. Councilmember Duggan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call:

PRESENT: Duggan, Pelley, Curtis, Eaton
ABSENT: Sherlin

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

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Duggan moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 17, 2024 stipulating that a correction be made for Consent Agenda item M and; Councilmember Pelley seconded. Minutes approved.

Previously recorded as “John Duggan to Friendly City Sister Cities Committee”
Correction recorded as “Larry Eaton to Friendly City Sister Cities Committee”

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Curtis, Pelley, Eaton
NAYS: None

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COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- a) Proclamation: Mr. Mike Bevins
presented by Vice Mayor Curtis
- b) Proclamation: School Board Appreciation Week
presented by Councilmember Duggan
- c) Police Appreciation
presented by Glenn Whiting

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CITIZEN'S COMMENTS GERMANE TO THE AGENDA

1. Tyler Boyd – Opposed to the demolition of North City School.
2. Glenn Whiting – Opposed to the demolition North City School.
3. Charlie Senn – In favor of Amy Sullins to fill vacancy on the McMinn County Library Board.

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CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Approve Resolution 2025-01
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE
ATHENS UTILITIES BOARD'S ELECTRICAL IN LIEU OF TAX PAYMENTS
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025
- b) Approve Resolution 2025-02
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE
ATHENS UTILITIES BOARD'S GAS IN LIEU OF TAX PAYMENTS
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025
- c) Approve FY 2024-2025 Fund Balance Transfer
- d) Approve Final Close-Out Document for the USDA Rural Development Loan for the School Building Project
- e) Approve Resolution 2025-03
A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE THE WEEK OF JANUARY 26-31, 2025,
ATHENS FLOOD AWARENESS WEEK
- f) Approve Appointment of James Fries to the Council Advisory Committee (Duggan)

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to approve all consent agenda items; Councilmember Pelley seconded. No Discussion. Motion approved.

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Pelley, Curtis, Eaton
NAYS:

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ORDINANCES

- NONE -

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OLD BUSINESS

- a) Rescinding the December 17, 2024, Vote to Demolish North City School and Authorize Staff to Prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) to Solicit Interested parties to Determine their Interest in Leasing the Building and Making Improvements.

Councilmember Pelley moved to approve; Councilmember Duggan seconded. Discussion began with Councilmember Pelley stating that too many people have spoken in opposition of the demolition of the building. **Motion Failed.**

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Pelley
NAYS: Curtis, Eaton

b) Appointment to the McMinn County Library Board

Councilmember Duggan moved to appoint Jacob Burnette to the McMinn County Library Board; Mayor Eaton seconded. Discussion began with Councilmember Pelley opposing Jacob Burnette in favor of Amy Sullins. Councilmember Duggan spoke in favor of Jacob Burnette because he could bring a different perspective to the table. Mayor Eaton speaks in favor of Jacob Burnette. **Motion Failed**

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan
NAYS: Pelley, Curtis
ABSTAIN: Eaton

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to appoint Amy Sullins to the McMinn County Library Board; Councilmember Pelley seconded. Vice Mayor Curtis spoke in favor of Amy Sullins because of her qualifications. Councilmember Duggan stated that it's not about qualifications, but about giving other citizens an opportunity to serve. **Motion Failed**

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Pelley, Curtis
NAYS: Duggan
ABSTAIN: Eaton

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NEW BUSINESS

a) Discussion of a Historic Overlay District for the Downtown Area and First Reading of Ordinance No. 1136 Creating the H-2 Historic Overlay District

ORDINANCE NO. 1136:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE, PROVIDING THAT THE ATHENS MUNICIPAL CODE, TITLE 14, CHAPTER 2 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE, BE AMENDED BY REVISING SECTION 3.04.14 SO AS TO ADD SUBSECTION "G" THAT ESTABLISHES THE H-2 HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT LIMITS AS BOUNDED BY COLLEGE STREET, GREEN STREET, PARK STREET AND HILL STREET; AND PROVIDING THAT THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP IS AMENDED SO AS TO ATTACH THE H-1 HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT AS DESCRIBED HEREIN AND ON THE ATTACHED MAP; AND PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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Vice Mayor Curtis moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance 1136; Councilmember Duggan seconded. Councilmember Pelley opposes the historic overlay. Councilmember Duggan is in favor but questions the section of the overlay that includes the college campus and a church that falls into the district. Vice Mayor Curtis speaks in favor of elaborating the importance of preserving our historic properties. **Motion Approved.**

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Curtis, Eaton
NAYS: Pelley

- b) Discussion of the Appraisal Results of Downtown Building to be Used as a City Hall
No Action.
- c) Authorize the City Manager to Begin Planning for the Design and Future Construction of an Additional Fire Station on Elizabeth Street

Vice Mayor Curtis moved approval; Councilmember Duggan seconded. Councilmember Pelley stated that this project is long overdue. **Motion Approved.**

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Pelley, Curtis, Eaton
NAYS:

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REPORTS**

Community Development 4th Quarter Report & 2024 Annual Building Report
presented by Director of Community Development, Anthony Casteel

Finance Department Monthly Report
presented by Director of Finance, Mike Keith

Fire Department Monthly Report
presented by Deputy Fire Chief, Brandon Ainsworth

Police Department Monthly Report
presented by Police Chief, Fred Schultz

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REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

Program of Work
presented by City Manager, Randall Dowling

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CITIZENS COMMENTS**

1. Dick Pelley
2. Stephen Dick
3. Glenn Whiting

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Mayor Eaton called a recess at 7:23pm. Councilmember Pelley moved to challenge the chair; no second. Mayor Eaton called the meeting back to order at 7:26pm.

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ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Eaton moved to adjourn; Councilmember Duggan seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: Pelley



RANDALL DOWLING, City Manager



LARRY EATON, Mayor