



ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION

The Athens City Council met in regular session on **Tuesday, November 18, 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, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

ABSENT: None

Note: The seat vacated by Councilmember Pelley's resignation on October 23, 2025, remains unfilled.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Tuesday, October 21, 2025 – Regular Session
- B. Thursday, October 23, 2025 – Called Session

Councilmember Duggan moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.

APPROVED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- A. Athens City Primary School Report
- B. VIVID Award – James “Jim” Robert Nelson
- C. Southeast United States / Japan Association (SEUS) Conference - Lindsey Ferguson
- D. Visit to Athens Sister City, Isahaya, Japan - Mayor Eaton & City Manager Dowling

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS GERMANE TO THE AGENDA

- Glenn Whiting commented that he did not feel former Councilmember Pelley received sufficient recognition following his resignation from the City Council.
- Abby Burke Carroll announced she will be running for Athens City Council in 2026.
- Tyler Munger expressed his support for Perry McCowan to fill the current vacancy on the City Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve Replacement of Existing Court Lighting Fixtures and Add New Pedestrian Lighting at Ingleside Park and Replace Existing Court Lighting Fixtures at Heritage Park
- B. Approve Updates to 457 Deferred Compensation Plan

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

ORDINANCES

- A. Second Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance 1147, An Ordinance to Amend Title 3 “Municipal Court”, Chapter I, Section 3, of the Athens City Code, by Removing the Requirement that the City Judge be a Resident of the County.

Mayor Eaton opened the public hearing. One citizen spoke in favor of removing the residency required. Mayor Eaton closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Sherlin moved to approve Ordinance 1147; seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.

FAILED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Sherlin, Curtis

NAYS: Duggan, Eaton

- B. Second Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance 1148, An Ordinance Amending the City of Athens, Tennessee Municipal Zoning Ordinance Regulating Development within the Corporate Limits of Athens, Tennessee, to Minimize Danger to Life and Property Due to Flooding, and to Maintain Eligibility for Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Mayor Eaton opened the public hearing. There being no citizens wishing to speak, Mayor Eaton closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to approve Ordinance 1148; seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

OLD BUSINESS

-None-

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Public Hearing for Resolution 2025-29, a Resolution adopting a Plan of Services for the Annexation of the Lee Drive Area Property by the City of Athens, Tennessee

Mayor Eaton opened the public hearing. There being no citizens wishing to speak, Mayor Eaton closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Duggan moved to approve Resolution 2025-29; seconded by Mayor Eaton.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

- B. Resolution 2025-30, a Resolution to Annex Property Located off Lee Drive and Described in the Body of this Resolution, and to Incorporate the same Within the Boundaries of the City of Athens, Tennessee.

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to approve Resolution 2025-30; seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

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- C. First Reading of Ordinance 1149, an Ordinance to Amend The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Athens, Tennessee, so as to Amend the Official Zoning Map to Include and Zone Property off Lee Drive to R-3 (High Density Residential District) Said Area Being Located Within the Corporate Limits of Athens, Tennessee.

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance 1149; seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

- D. Bid Award of RFP 25-16 Fireworks & Drone Light Show for July 4, 2026

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to award the bid to Pyro Shows, Inc. (\$119,000); seconded by Mayor Eaton. Councilmember Sherlin moved to amend the motion to only award the bid for fireworks without the drone show; failed due to lack of second. After discussion Vice Mayor Curtis withdrew the original motion.

Councilmember Duggan moved to postpone the item to December 8, 2025 Work Session; seconded by Councilmember Sherlin.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Eaton

- E. Engineering Agreement to Proceed with Phase 1 of Market Park Master Plan

Councilmember Duggan moved to approve Phase 1 of the Market Park Master Plan presented by Kimley Horn; seconded by Mayor Eaton.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

- F. Historic Preservation Commission - Vacancy

- application on file – James Fries

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to appoint James Fries to the Historic Preservation Commission; seconded by Councilmember Sherlin.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

- G. Discuss Graffiti Ordinance

No Action.

- H. Choose a Process for Filling City Council Vacancy

- Call for Nominations from City Council
- Establish Application Period and Accept Applications

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to set the following process for filling the vacant City Council seat:

- (1) Accept applications through December 5, 2025;**
- (2) Review applications during the December 8, 2025 Work Session;**
- (3) Make an appointment at the beginning of December 16, 2025 Regular Session; and**
- (4) Administer the oath of office for the newly appointed Councilmember so they may participate in the remainder of the meeting.**

Mayor Eaton seconded the motion.

Councilmember Sherlin raised a Point of Order, stating that the motion did not follow the order of options listed on the agenda. Mayor Eaton denied the Point of Order.

Councilmember Sherlin appealed the ruling of the Chair; however, no second was offered, and the appeal failed.

Councilmember Sherlin then moved to amend the motion to allow Council to make nominations during the present meeting. No second was offered, and the amendment failed.

Councilmember Sherlin moved to amend the motion by appointing Perry McCowan to fill the vacant seat. No second was offered, and the amendment failed.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: Sherlin

Councilmember Sherlin moved to:

- (1) Begin the application process immediately (November 18, 2025);**
- (2) Close the application period on Monday, December 1, 2025;**
- (3) Hold a special-called meeting at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2025, to review the submitted applications, make an appointment to fill the vacancy, and administer the Oath of Office to the newly appointed Councilmember.**

Seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

I. Under New Business, the Council considered an item not listed on the agenda.

Mayor Eaton moved to appoint Mitchell Bryant as Interim City Judge; seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Duggan, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: Sherlin

J. Under New Business, the Council considered an item not listed on the agenda.

Mayor Eaton moved to amend the Memorandum of Understanding between the McMinn Regional Humane Society (MRHS) and the City of Athens to allow a representative appointed by the City Council to set on the MRHS Board; seconded by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: Eaton

NAYS: Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis

REPORTS

- A. Finance Department Monthly Report
- B. Fire Department Monthly Report
- C. Police Department Monthly Report

REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

- A. Program of Work

CITIZENS COMMENTS

- Charlie Senn commented on matters which are not under the authority of the City Council.
- Glenn Whiting commented on the scheduled mediation for November 21, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Eaton adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:33 p.m.



Randall Dowling, City Manager



Larry Eaton, Mayor