



ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION

The Athens City Council met in regular session on **Tuesday, January 20, 2026**, at 6:00 p.m. in the Athens City Hall Council Chambers, with Mayor Eaton presiding. Councilmember Duggan led the invocation. Vice Mayor Curtis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call:

PRESENT: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton
ABSENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Tuesday, December 16, 2025 – Regular Session

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

APPROVED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton
NAYS: None

COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- A. Proclamation presented – Athens City School Board of Education Appreciation Week
- B. VIVID award presented – Lowes Athens

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS GERMANE TO THE AGENDA

- Glenn Whiting commented on proclamations and other community awards. He stated that a former Council member deserved recognition beyond a plaque.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Appoint Mitchell Bryant to fill the position of Athens City Judge.
- B. Approve Continuation of HHM as the City Auditors for FYE June 30, 2026.
- C. Approve Resolution 2026-01, A Resolution to Declare the Week of January 25-30, 2026, as Athens Flood Awareness Week.
- D. Approve Resolution 2026-02, A Resolution Authorizing the City of Athens, Tennessee, to Apply for Grant Funding Through the Tennessee America 250 Grant Program - For Footsteps Through History: America 250 at Heritage Park, a Historical Walking Trail.
- E. Approve Resolution 2026-03, A Resolution Authorizing the City of Athens, Tennessee, to Apply for Funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program for Improvements to the Congress Parkway and Decatur Pike Intersection and Adjoining Corridor.
- F. Approve Resolution 2026-04, A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a Grant Application to the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation for Emergency Rescue Equipment.
- G. Approve Fee Schedule Changes for Baseball/Softball Field Rentals at Regional Park, Heritage Park, Prof Powers Park, and Fisher Field

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

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

ORDINANCES

-None-

OLD BUSINESS

-None-

NEW BUSINESS

A. Bid Award for RFP 25-18 to Renovate Regional Park House into Parks & Recreation Offices.

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to reject all bids due and proceed with the alternate plan to move Parks & Recreation to the Southeast Tennessee Trade & Conference Center; Seconded by Councilmember McCowan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

B. Bid Award for RFP 25-19 to Sell Property Located at 2201 Decatur Pike

Councilmember Sherlin moved to accept the bid from McMinn Ventures LLC in the amount of \$100,000 and to allocate those funds for expenditures related to the Parks & Recreation Department's relocation from City Hall to the Conference Center; Vice Mayor Curtis seconded the motion.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

C. City Council Appointment of Scott Mashburn (Vice Mayor Curtis) to Council Advisory Committee.

Vice Mayor Curtis moved to appoint Scott Mashburn to the Council Advisory Committee; Seconded by Councilmember McCowan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

D. City Council Appointment of Joe Kimbro (Councilmember Duggan) to Council Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Duggan moved to appoint Joe Kimbro to the Council Advisory Committee; Seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

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E. City Council Appointment of Josh Goodman (Councilmember McCowan) to Council Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Sherlin moved to appoint Josh Goodman to the Council Advisory Committee; Seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

F. Mayor's Appointment Athens Municipal Regional Planning Commission (AMRPC).

Mayor Eaton appointed Ryan Droke to AMRPC, pending Council confirmation. Motion to confirm by Vice Mayor Curtis; second by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

G. Mayor's Appointment to Athens Housing Authority (AHA).

Mayor Eaton appointed Stan Harrison to the AHA, pending Council confirmation. Motion to confirm by Vice Mayor Curtis; second by Councilmember Duggan.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

H. New Business

Councilmember Sherlin moved to conduct binding arbitration instead of mediation with Glenn Whiting; Councilmember McCowan seconded for discussion.

Discussion referenced prior Council actions regarding Mr. Whiting and the next potential steps. Councilmember Sherlin requested permission to question Mr. Whiting; Mayor Eaton denied the request. Councilmember Sherlin appealed the decision of the Chair; the appeal failed for lack of a second. Vice Mayor Curtis moved to call the question; Mayor Eaton seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

FAILED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Sherlin

NAYS: Curtis, Eaton

ABSTAIN: Duggan

I. New Business

Mayor Eaton moved to pay half the cost for mediation with Glenn Whiting; Vice Mayor Curtis seconded.

PASSED

Roll call vote:

YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton

NAYS: None

REPORTS

- A. Community Development 4th Quarter Report
- B. Community Development Annual Building Report
- C. Finance Department Monthly Report
- D. Fire Department Monthly Report
- E. Fire Department Yearly Training Hours Report
- F. Police Department Monthly Report

REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

- A. Program of Work

CITIZENS COMMENTS

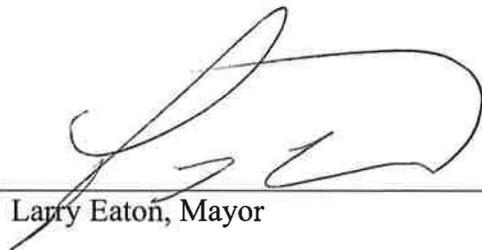
- Junita McClure-Lewis expressed concerns about adding new business items that are not on the agenda, and the placement of public comments not germane to the agenda on the meeting agenda.
- Glenn Whiting commented on the proposed mediation between himself and the City.
- Charlie Senn addressed Council regarding matters not related to City business.
- Abby Burke Carrol spoke regarding citizen comments and suggested Council adopt a code of conduct.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Eaton adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.



Randall Dowling, City Manager



Larry Eaton, Mayor