

Athens City Council
Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 7, 2018

Those in attendance were Mayor Bob Dowell, Clerk Cindy McFarland, and Aldermen: Chris Basso, Larry Buhr, Ron Canterbury, Tom Croft Sr., Tom Herman, and Harry "Butch" Nichols. Persons in the audience included Linda Wasilewski, Treasurer Ryan Seifert, Gary Richardson, Police Chief Tim Becker, Aaliyah Kissick, Ryne Crowe, Ellie Stuhmer, Karissa Carls, and Nicole McCormick.

Mayor Dowell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Chief Tim Becker presented the Police Report. Included in the report were three estimates from three different companies for security video systems for City Hall, a street surveillance system, and for the E-commerce site at the Library. Chief Becker said that Crime Stoppers would pay for part of the system for the E-commerce location and that funds from ordinance violations may be used for the street surveillance system. Mayor Dowell said we would put this on the agenda for Monday night. Treasurer Ryan Seifert presented the treasurer's report. Mayor Dowell said that the Street & Alleys report would be presented Monday. Ryne Crowe stepped forward to present the Water report. Ryne also suggested removing the roof fill from the bulk water building and replacing it with a side fill to improve safety. Alderman Buhr said he really appreciates the new bright light that was installed at the bulk water building which also improves safety. Mayor Dowell said that the Wastewater report will be presented Monday. Alderman Canterbury confirmed that there had been no Cemetery meeting. Karissa Carls presented the Office Manager report and said that the city will be mailing out customer information forms soon to update billing preferences and contact information. This same kind of form will be mailed out to area businesses for hours and contact information so that it can be included on the business section of the city website.

First on the agenda was Ordinance 03-2018, Annual Appropriation Ordinance and Estimate of Revenues of the City of Athens Road District No. 13, Illinois, for the Corporate Year beginning May 1, 2018 and ending April 30, 2019. Next was Ordinance 04-2018, Annual Appropriation Ordinance of the City of Athens, Illinois for the Corporate Fiscal Year beginning May 1, 2018 and ending April 30, 2019. The vote for each will be on the agenda for Monday.

Next on the agenda was a special use liquor license for the American Legion for the June 30th Salute to America. The council agreed this would be on Monday's voting agenda.

Mayor Dowell said that Representative Tim Butler had come to town and toured the Long 9 Museum. Mr. Butler will follow-up and see what he can do to help us with the Museum. We don't want it to end up as an empty building in town. Mayor Dowell and Representative Butler continued on to the Boars Nest. Mayor Dowell shared the city's frustrations with getting the entrance completed there. Mr. Butler toured the city viewing and discussing the road conditions, water and well issues, sidewalks, and lighting. Mayor Dowell said this was a good visit and he appreciated the Representative's time.

Discussion on vehicle replacement was next on the agenda. This will be discussed in July.

Next, the Mayor went on to the topic of the city-wide clean-up. He shared that sixteen dumpsters had been filled and the clean-up was a great success. Alderman Croft had been a great help each day driving a truck and picking up loads to take to the dumpsters. Alderman Herman asked what would happen to the problem property people who did not take part in the clean-up. Mayor Dowell said that the police will follow-up this month with warnings and citations. This led to an update on problem properties which was on the agenda under Old Business.

Grants had been scheduled to be torn down but at the last moment, someone had purchased the property. The new owner's intention is unknown. Several other properties are scheduled to be torn down mid-June. The property on S. Polk is hung up between two tax companies. The city will continue to mow the property and then put a lien on the property for the associated costs. Aldermen Nichols and Basso suggested that the city also issue ordinance violations against the property and Alderman Canterbury suggested this also be included in the lien. Then whichever tax company ends up with the property, they would be responsible for the lien.

The Mayor said that there is a dead tree that needs removed from the park as well as two closer to the street. He will gather bids for their removal.

Next was the topic of the upcoming street repair using the black trap rock. There is a possibility that it might bleed into people's driveways, however this should be minimal. Mayor Dowell suggested the he and Aldermen Buhr and Croft go out and speak to the residents of Barn Hollow to make sure everyone is aware of the upcoming road repair and any possible issues. Mayor Dowell said that this black trap rock also seals the roads which had been recommended by IDOT.

Mayor Dowell said that bid opening for street repairs will be at 2pm on June 11, 2018.

Under Old Business, Alderman Canterbury said that he wants to make sure we recognize John Eden for all he had done for our city. Mayor Dowell said maybe we could do something during the Fall Festival or the Illinois 200 Celebration. Alderman Croft suggested dedicating one of the ball diamonds in his name.

Under New Business was the Animal Abuse Protection Program. Emma Wiker will be holding this year's dog walk fundraiser on Saturday, July 14th, 2018, from 10am-noon. The Mayor asked if the council was interested in making a donation. Karissa will report back the amount the city donated last year. The council agreed this would be on the agenda to vote Monday night.

The Mayor said that the Library had presented the city with a Certificate of Sponsorship for the 2018 Summer Reading program. The Mayor also provided to the council the Road District 13 final report, a lease termination notice from Rise Broadband, and a preliminary plan for the Dirks development east of town.

Next the Mayor asked the council and attendees if there were any items for discussion. Alderman Herman asked if some of the funds that had been donated to the park could be used for a building and concession stand. Mayor Dowell said that we could submit an application. Also, an application has been started for playground equipment.

Aaliyah Kissick, owner of AK Boutique, stepped forward to speak. She said that business is going well and thanked everyone for their support. She said that she plans to hold a fashion show on July 21st, from 5-7pm and she would like to ask the council if she could hold it here at the park building. Mayor Dowell directed Aaliyah to call Karissa in the morning to make sure the building is available on that date.

This ended the agenda for the evening. The Mayor thanked everyone and asked for a motion to enter into a short executive session. Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Canterbury, to enter into executive session at 8:00pm.

The council returned from executive session at 8:17pm, reviewed the bills, and adjourned at 8:20pm.