

Athens City Council
Regular Meeting
Monday, February 10, 2020

Mayor Dowell welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7pm at Athens City Hall. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Clerk Cindy McFarland called roll. Present were Aldermen: Larry Buhr, Amy Chernowsky, Rachel Lantz, Butch Nichols, Chris Reichert, and Angella Thompson. Also, in attendance were Gary Richardson, Michael Lockwood, Linda Wasileski, and Rick Freer. All stood, and Alderman Buhr led the pledge.

Mayor Dowell said that he first would like to point out to the council the provided Badger meter warranty information that Robbie Bluett had gathered. Also, Mayor Dowell had researched the city employee wage costs associated with the extra meter rereads each month and found the cost to be approximately \$21,000 per year. The purchase of the new meters could pay for itself in two years. We will also talk to Badger Meter about them taking back the sixteen meters that we currently have on hand.

The Mayor went on to say that he had a couple items before we begin voting. For the first time, a vehicle was towed due to an ordinance violation. It was cited for expired plates and impounded on city property. The owner must pay for the violation, towing, and daily storage fee. The next two vehicles to be towed are just right of the tracks. Mayor Dowell said that hopefully this will be an eye opener and people will see that we are taking this seriously and getting some things cleaned up. Next, the Mayor said he would like to talk about a new program in which a dog would be chosen periodically from the pound and brought up to City Hall. Photos and information about the dog would be posted on social media in hopes that the dog would be adopted. There would be no cost to the city.

Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Thompson, to approve the police, treasurers', water and wastewater, streets and alleys, cemetery, fleet maintenance, and office manager's reports. Ayes: Buhr, Chernowsky, Lantz, Nichols, Reichert, and Thompson. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Lance, to approve the January council meeting minutes and the payment of the January bills. All ayes. Motion passed.

Motion made by Alderman Chernowsky, seconded by Alderman Thompson, to approve the purchase of 260 Badger M-25 meters from Midwest Meters for \$40,300 to be paid by a loan from the Meter Deposit fund. The repayment will be monthly \$1000 payments with no interest. All ayes. Motion passed.

Last was the raffle drawing for the weather radio. Anthony Bolton was the winner.

The Mayor asked if anyone had anything else. Rick Freer rose and approached the podium. He said that he is still having problems with his next-door neighbor. The neighbor is a junk dealer and has a trailer of junk that has been parked on Jefferson street in front of his house for a month. The neighbor's yard is full of junk and his dog runs loose. Mr. Freer hopes the city can assist with this issue. Linda Wasilewski next approached the podium and asked the council if they could help the Long 9 Museum stay open this summer. Mayor Dowell asked how help could be provided and Linda replied that volunteers are needed. Linda went on to say the mowing contract for the cemetery has expired and the person mowing currently hopes to renew. The Mayor said that we will advertise for

sealed bids in March. Linda also suggested that Shirley Hall be the Grand Marshall for the Fall Festival parade this year for all her service to our city.

Alderman Lantz said that she would like the city to have another spring clean-up and asked about the cost for this service. There are several properties around town that could really use a clean-up. Mayor Dowell asked that the council take a look at the budget and see if we kind find a way to pay for a spring clean-up. Alderman Lantz said that some people have asked her about available internet providers for outside of the city. Some suggestions discussed were HughesNet, Rise Broadband, and Cass Communications. Alderman Buhr asked about the junkyard South of the Food Bank. Mayor Dowell said that he is working with the owner to get that are cleaned up. Alderman Chernowsky said that she has a list of things that the community wants like a bowling alley. She will type up the list for the council and have it available on her Facebook page. Also, Alderman Chernowsky said that she has noticed a problem with people parking in the yellow zone in front of the Post Office. The council discussed ideas to improve safety, parking, and accessibility regarding the Post Office.

The Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Alderman Buhr, seconded by Alderman Lantz to adjourn at 7:30pm.