

Athens City Council
Regular Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2020
Zoom Meeting ID: 825-300-3670 / Password: Apr9Athens

Mayor Bob Dowell opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. The Meeting was held via Zoom technology due to the COVID-19 Executive Order issued by Governor JB Pritzker. Clerk Cindy McFarland called roll. Those in attendance were Mayor Bob Dowell, Clerk Cindy McFarland, and Aldermen: Larry Buhr, Amy Chernowsky, Rachel Lantz, Butch Nichols, and Chris Reichert. Alderman Angella Thompson was absent. Police Chief Tim Becker was also in attendance. All stood, faced the flag provided by Mayor Dowell, and said the pledge.

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

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

Motion made by Alderman Nichols, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to approve sending the City of Athens 2020-2021 Budget to the attorney and then placing it on display for 30 days. All ayes. Motion passed.

Mayor Dowell explained that Alderman Reichert had asked last Thursday that a vote for a Small Business Stimulus Plan be added to tonight's relief agenda. Mayor Dowell had provided this information to the council on behalf of Alderman Reichert. Alderman Reichert then explained that his proposal, due to the economic impact imposed by the COVID-19 shut-down, is for a relief package for Athens' businesses that did not qualify for state and federal aid. Application would be available by calling the Mayor's office or downloading from the city's website. The deadline to submit applications would be May 28th, with distributions beginning the first week of June. A 3-person committee will review the applications and determine assistance. Funds will not exceed \$5000 and will be paid from the gaming fund. Each business can request up to \$1000. Alderman Reichert would be the chair, with Aldermen Nichols and Thompson completing the committee. Alderman Lantz will fill in as an alternate if needed. Motion made by Alderman Reichert, seconded by Alderman Buhr, to approve the Small Business Stimulus Plan for the City of Athens. All ayes. Motion passed.

The Mayor said he had a couple more items. First, he asked the council how they felt about opening the playground back up. Alderman Reichert had suggested adding hand sanitizer at the pavilion. We would also post social distancing guidelines and that use of the park would be at your own risk. Chief Becker said that the police would not be enforcing the state recommendations, as they are not laws. He also added that he would be in favor of opening the park and letting people use it at their own risk. The council was in agreement. There was also discussion about the basketball courts.

Mayor Dowell said that he would like to mention that this week is National Law Enforcement Appreciation week, and the week before last there was Office Personnel Appreciation day. He went on to say that we have the best police department and office personnel that we have ever had. The Mayor said that he really wants to make sure that they know how much they are appreciated. Mayor Dowell thanked Chief Becker for being a good leader and mentor of the police department.

The Mayor thanked everyone and the meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.