

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF MEETING

February 20, 2024

The Athens City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, February 20, at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Sherlin presiding. The invocation was given by Vice Mayor Eaton; and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.

The following decisions were made and ordered made a part of the records of the Athens City Council.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 23, 2024, City Council Regular scheduled meeting were submitted and approved. **Council Member Curtis moved; Vice Mayor Eaton seconded.**

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin

NAYS: None

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COMMUNICATION AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Athens City Middle School Updates- Dr. Trey Ivins

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REQUESTS FROM CITIZENS

Mayor Sherlin addressed the audience and Council. He provided clarification based on the last Council Meetings previous policies. The "Request from Citizen", to Citizen Comment" will change if passed during the New Business. Citizens will also have 5 minutes for discussion if the new policy is passed.

Ten (10) individuals addressed the Council expressing concerns about the Education Freedom Scholarship Act, Regional Park, Time Change, and recent new developments.

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CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sherlin advised the recording clerk to read the following items into the record:

- a) Acceptance of Comprehensive Financial Audit (City/AUB/ACS).
- b) Approve Athens City Schools FY24 Budget Amendment #2.
- c) Approve proposal from MaidPro for Janitorial Services for a period of six months.
- d) Authorize Public Works radio upgrade to 800 MHZ utilizing state bid pricing.
- e) Approve Resolution 2024-04 Closure and Abandonment of Six Alleys Throughout the City
- f) Approve Resolution 2024-05 to accept Multi Modal Access Grant.
- g) Appoint Shawn Mckeehan to Historic Preservation Committee term expires October 1, 2024.
- h) Appoint Carol Freeman to Athens Housing Authority term expires March 6, 2025
Revision was read, term expires March 6, 2029.

Mayor Sherlin asked for a motion. **Council Member Curtis moved, Vice Mayor Eaton seconded, that the Consent Agenda as stated be approved.** Roll call:

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.
NAYS: None

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ORDINANCES

Mayor Sherlin discussed that we do have an adjusted Ordinance that was posted online. The City Clerk announced the Ordinance was listed under item D in New Business. Mayor Sherling agreed the Ordinance could be read under New Business item D.

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OLD BUSINESS

None

- 7 -

NEW BUSINESS

Recommendations from Planning Commission

- a) . Approval of the rezoning request by Christopher S Lingerfelt to change a parcel located at 1304 North Jackson Street from I-1 (Light Industrial District) to R-2(Medium-Density Residential District).

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important. Mayor Sherlin advised the Council that the Citizen Input Change has nothing to do with Mr. Whiting and it's the legality to follow State Laws. The question was called.

Roll Call:

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Eaton, Sherlin, Pelley

NAYS: None

Upon conclusion of the original motion, Mayor Sherlin called motion to change time from 5 minutes to three minutes:

Roll Call:

AYES: Witt-McMahan, Sherlin

NAY: Curtis, Pelley, Eaton

Mayor Sherlin read the Civic Rule of Engagements. **Mayor Sherlin made the motion to accept the Civic Rules of Engagement, Council Member Witt-McMahan seconded.**

Roll Call:

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Eaton, Sherlin

NAY: Pelley

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Motion to change Item 7 of the City Council Agenda Order of Business from "Requests from Citizens" to "Citizens Comments".

Mayor Sherlin made the motion to remind everyone this is an Ordinance 1st reading. To change the wording in the ordinance to "Citizen Comments". **Council Member Witt-McMahan seconded** to approve the Ordinance.

Roll Call:

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin

NAY: None

Vice Mayor Eaton made a motion to appoint John Duggan to his Advisory board. Mayor Sherlin Seconded.

Roll Call:

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Witt-McMahan, Eaton, Sherlin

NAY: None

Council Member Witt-McMahan made a motion to appoint Linda Long to the Park and Recreation Advisory board. Council Member Curtis Seconded.

Roll Call:

Mayor Sherlin asked for a motion. **Council Member Curtis moved approval. Council Member Witt-McMahan seconded to approve rezoning request at 1304 North Jackson Street.**

Roll Call:

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.

NAYS: None

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Motion regarding purchasing of Patricia Parker Property next to Athens Regional Park.

Council Member Jordan Curtis moved to allow the Mayor, City Manager, and City Attorney to negotiate the potential purchase of the property for consideration by the full Council. Vice Mayor Eaton disagreed on the purchase and talked about negotiations because they don't know the price. Council Member Pelley spoke in regard to waiting on forensic evidence to prove the will is legitimate. Mayor Sherlin asked for a motion. **Council Member Curtis moved, there was no second. Vice Mayor Eaton made a motion to allow the Mayor, City Manager and City Attorney to be in negotiation for the purchase of the property with the understanding it comes back to the full City Council for a vote. Council Member Witt-McMahan seconded. Council Member Pelley made another motion to table the motion and wait on forensics, there was no second. Motion did not carry.** Mayor Sherlin opened for discussion. The City Attorney spoke for clarification that the motion pending is for City Attorney, Mayor and City Manager to make negotiations and due diligence on this purchase. Council Member Pelley made a motion to table. There was no second. Mayor Sherlin opened for discussion. **Council Member Witt-McMahan called for the question, Vice Mayor Eaton Seconded.** Roll Call on question:

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Eaton, Sherlin

NAYS: Pelley

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Motion for policy change of Citizen Input from five minutes to three minutes.

Council Member Witt-McMahan made a motion to change Citizen input to three minutes. Mayor Sherlin read is there a second and noted this is for the whole policy. **Mayor Sherlin seconded** and opened for discussion. Council Member Witt-McMahan spoke in regards of the policy change from five minutes to three minutes. Vice Mayor Eaton gave remarks. **Council Member Pelley made an amendment to the motion to limit Mr. Whiting to three minutes. There was no second. Mayor Sherlin asked for an amendment to the Motion. There was no second.** Council Member Curtis spoke regarding the bulk of the rules and focus on what is

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Witt-McMahan, Eaton, Sherlin

NAY: None

Council Member Pelley made a motion that they rescind the fact that Council Members can carry guns at the Council Meeting. No second.

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REPORTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY BUILDING REPORT

Community Development Director Anthony Casteel presented the building permit quarterly/annual report for the City of Athens. The report was accepted as presented.

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FINANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Finance director Mike Keith presented the Finance Dep Report for January 2024. The report was accepted as presented.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Brandon Ainsworth presented the Fire Department Report for January 2024. The report was accepted as presented.

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POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Police Chief Fred Schultz presented the Police Department Report for January 2024. The report was accepted as presented.

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REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Deb Wallace presented an update on various projects and programs taking place. The report was accepted as presented.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Council Member Curtis moved, Council Member Witt-McMahan seconded, for the meeting to be adjourned.

AYES: Curtis, Witt-McMahan, Pelley, Eaton, Sherlin.

NAYS:



DEB WALLACE, City Manager



STEVEN S. SHERLIN, Mayor