

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF MEETING

October 16, 2018

The Athens City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, October 16, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor Burris presiding. The invocation was given by Vice Mayor Coker; and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Pelley, Perkinson, Raper, Coker, Burris

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

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MINUTES

The Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of September 18, 2018 were submitted for approval. Council Member Pelley stated that at the end of the September 18th meeting he made a request to have the two letters the City Council received from the City Attorney placed on the October Study Session agenda. He did not see his request reflected in the September 18, 2018 minutes and asked that the minutes be corrected to include his request. **A motion was made by Council Member Perkinson, seconded by Mayor Burris, to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of September 18, 2018 as corrected.** After a discussion regarding the proper procedure for placing items on the agenda, the motion was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Pelley, Perkinson, Raper, Burris
NAYS: Coker

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COMMUNICATIONS

PRESENTATION OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Mayor Burris presented a Distinguished Service Award to five-year-old Braylan Swallows. This award was presented to Braylan for his bravery and knowledge to call 911 to get help for his grandmother in her time of need on September 15, 2018 and to watch his four-year-old sister until help arrived. Braylan was also presented with a gift certificate for ice cream at Mayfield Dairy Visitor Center.

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PRESENTATION OF VIVID AWARD

Council Member Perkinson presented the Very Important Volunteer Individuals (VIVID) Award for the month of October 2018 to Athens Utilities Board in recognition of the utility's volunteer spirit and capabilities and their efforts – locally and regionally – to protect us and restore vital services. James Lowry, Wayne McKeenan, Dickie Slack, Marcus Goforth and Matt Price, members of Athens Utilities Board linemen, traveled to North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Florence to restore power and were present to accept the award.

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PRESENTATION OF CHALLENGE COINS BY BLACKJACK PIPERS

Jack Pierce, a member of the BlackJack Pipers, a local group of bagpipers dedicated to serve veterans and public service men and women, briefly described the history of bagpipers in the United States. To honor our finest, members of the BlackJack Bagpipers presented Challenge Coins with their motto of "to honor, to serve, and to bind" to the firefighters and police officers present.

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PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION – 2018 SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Council Member Raper read a proclamation proclaiming November 24, 2018 as Small Business Saturday in Athens and urged the residents of our community, and communities across the country, to support small businesses and merchants on Small Business Saturday and throughout the year.

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VIDEO PRESENTATION IN REGARD TO FIREFIGHTERS THAT RESPONDED TO AID DURING HURRICANE FLORENCE

A video was presented of firefighters Chad Ramsey and Ron Nipper from the City of Athens, Tyler Bryson and Mike Moore from the City of Etowah, and Jonathon Parrott from the Town of Englewood who responded to aid during Hurricane Florence in North Carolina. City Manager Sumner thanked James Gallup, Public Management Fellow, and Chad Ramsey, Fire Lieutenant, for putting the video together to tell this story of public service. It was not just about firefighters fighting fires in Athens, it was about firefighters going out of state to help other firefighters.

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MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Burris acknowledged receipt of a card from Randy and Jenny Boyd telling us how much fun they had joining us in celebrating the Dog Park Dash Grant presentation at Prof Powers Park.

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PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

REQUESTS FROM CITIZENS

Glen Whiting, 237 County Road 655, stated he had received a letter from City Attorney Trew regarding a complaint he had filed with the City regarding Vice Mayor Coker and Council Member Perkinson and he wanted to respond to it. Based on his understanding of the letter, the Code of Conduct is a self-enforcing action and there is nothing legally binding about it. The letter states that the complaint against Council Member Pelley was handled differently than his because it was a workplace harassment and a sexual harassment charge. The City Attorney states in this letter that he did not find any merit to Mr. Whiting's complaints. Mr. Whiting stated he has never been able to present his argument to the City Council and did not feel the City Attorney should make the decision regarding the merit of his complaint.

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REPORTS

FINANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mr. Michael Keith, Finance Director, presented the Finance Department Report for the month of September 2018. The report was accepted as presented.

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POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Police Captain Rob Davis presented the Police Department Report for the month of September 2018. The report was accepted as presented.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Brandon Ainsworth presented the Fire Department Report for the month of September 2018. The report was accepted as presented.

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY REPORT

Mr. Anthony Casteel, Community Development Director, presented the Building Permit Quarterly Report for the City of Athens. The report was accepted as presented.

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CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Burris advised that the following items were discussed during the recent study session and are presented as a part of the Consent Agenda.

Council Member Pelley left the room at 7:30 p.m.

The following items were read into the record:

- a.) Approve Resolution No. 2018-32 accepting 2018 TDOT Community Transportation Planning Grant
- b.) Approve Resolution No. 2018-33 authorizing AECOM Technical Services, Inc. to provide an engineering-level analysis based on the Signal Timing and Operations Study to implement new signal timing plans for fourteen (14) separate intersections

On motion by Council Member Perkinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Coker, the Consent Agenda as stated above was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Perkinson, Raper, Coker, Burris
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Pelley

Council Member Pelley returned to the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

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OLD BUSINESS

FRIENDLY CITY GUIDE TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Coker, seconded by Council Member Raper, to accept the Friendly City Guide to Civic Engagement. Upon roll call, the motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Perkinson, Raper, Coker, Burris
NAYS: Pelley

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NEW BUSINESS

MCMINN COUNTY HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROPOSAL

Motion was made by Council Member Pelley, seconded by Council Member Perkinson, to approve sharing the cost of a McMinn County Housing Needs Assessment with McMinn County

and Etowah, matching the County dollar for dollar, not to exceed \$12,000, as discussed in Study Session. Upon roll call, the motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Pelley, Perkinson, Raper, Coker, Burris
NAYS: None

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ARC CDBG DOWNTOWN WI-FI GRANT

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-34

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AN ARC CDBG DOWNTOWN WI-FI GRANT

The caption of Resolution No. 2018-34 was read by the recording clerk. **Motion was made by Council Member Pelley, seconded by Vice Mayor Coker, to approve Resolution No. 2018-34.** City Manager Sumner noted this was a reiteration of a resolution as previously adopted by the City Council. In September 2018, the City was listed as an at-risk community which provides a 70/30 match. The City was upgraded economically to a transitional community which means the City now has a 50/50 match on this grant. City Manager Sumner contacted each Council member prior to the meeting about the change and, at least initially, all agreed that they wanted to move forward with the opportunity to potentially provide a Wi-Fi blanket over downtown. The commitment the City now has from Athens Utilities Board to support that access for five years bodes well for the application. This will be a new match rate because the City is doing so well economically. Upon roll call, the resolution was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Pelley, Perkinson, Raper, Coker, Burris
NAYS: None

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MANAGER’S REPORT

City Manager Sumner reviewed his monthly report including the various Parks and Recreation and Public Works projects and activities going on throughout the city including the Eureka Trail expansion and the splashpad at Regional Park. It was noted the City had received over 70 resumes for the new Technology Manager position. This is for the City’s first full-time IT professional. He spoke about the Athens Thrive team presentations at both the October Study Session and the Council Advisory Committee meeting. This team of individuals volunteer their time and skills to come together and talk about the hopes and dreams of the community. They work to bring the community together. City Manager Sumner stated that this is something he has been asking for since before he came to the City. They still need to focus more on the hopes and dreams of the people in the community and what they want to become in the next five or ten years. Athens Thrive focuses on those dreams for an Arts District, Heritage District, and Discovery District. Public Works has been helping to map out those potential districts. City Manager Sumner spoke about Anne Montgomery’s recent presentation on the LITEhouse Project. Anne is from Tennessee Wesleyan and this entrepreneurial project is bringing together creative, innovative people throughout the community, not just students, but engaging the entire community including our churches, neighborhoods, and families. All being engaged and plugged in with resources that will be conveniently placed in downtown, hosted under the auspices of Tennessee Wesleyan University in partnership with the City with funding from the Lyndhurst Foundation and State of Tennessee. City Manager Sumner announced that DENSO had recently made a \$2,500 donation to the Friendly City Sister Cities Committee. He is also working with DENSO to invest in our veterans and to secure funding in a yet to be determined amount. City Manager Sumner reminded the community that the Community Survey for the Athens City Schools is linked on the City of Athens’ website and is also linked on the City of Athens’ Facebook page. He urged the community to use those venues, set aside approximately an hour to go through the materials to become educated on the options and then to take the survey. The survey is open until October 31st for individuals to voice their opinions on the most important decision the Council and School Board will have to make.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the meeting and upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.



C. SETH SUMNER, City Manager



CHARLES T. BURRIS, II, Mayor