

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF MEETING

May 17, 2022

The Athens City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor Perkinson presiding. The invocation was given by Mayor Perkinson; and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Curtis, Pelley, Lockmiller, Perkinson

Council Member Witt-McMahan was absent due to illness.

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

- 1 -

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the April 19, 2022 regularly scheduled meeting were submitted and approved by unanimous consent.

- 2 -

COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

INGLESIDE SCHOOL UPDATE

Jill Swafford, Principal at Ingleside School, was present at the meeting and thanked the City for its continued support.

- 3 -

PRESENTATION OF VIVID AWARD

Mayor Perkinson presented the Very Important Volunteer Individual (VIVID) Award for May 2022 to William "Skip" White in recognition of his dedication and devotion to others.

- 4 -

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Perkinson acknowledged receipt of a thank you letter from Larry Hougueisson visiting from Valley Center, CA to Chief Ainsworth and his crew led by Captain Roach for their professionalism and the great job they did providing patient care and managing the scene when one of the players at a Tennessee Wesleyan baseball game ran into a brick wall while chasing down a fly ball.

- 5 -

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Perkinson advised that the following items were discussed during the recent study session and are presented as part of the Consent Agenda. The recording clerk read the following items into the record:

- a.) Reappoint John Proffitt to the Board of Zoning Appeals, term expires June 30, 2027.
- b.) Reappoint Johnny Coffman and Larry Rhodes to the Recreation Advisory Board, terms expire June 30, 2026.
- c.) Reject all bids for construction and installation of Public Safety Training Facility's Prefabricated Fire Training Tower with Foundation and reissue formal solicitation.
- d.) Approve Resolution No. 2022-10 to extend contract with TDOT for maintenance of state rights-of-way within the City limits.
- e.) Approve Athens City Schools Budget Amendment No. 1 (General Purpose) for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.
- f.) Approve recommendation to declare Mobile Command Post Trailer (Asset # 3406) as surplus property and sold on GovDeals.
- g.) Approve Resolution No. 2022-11 to apply for and accept funding for a Multimodal Access Fund Grant for the Historic Downtown Transportation Alternatives (HDTA) project.

- h.) Approve Health Insurance Renewal as submitted by VERIS Benefits Consortium for year beginning July 1, 2022.

Mayor Perkinson advised the Council that there was a memo from James Gallup in their folders requesting item c.) be removed from the agenda. **Council Member Curtis moved, Vice Mayor Lockmiller seconded, that the Consent Agenda with item c.) being removed be approved.** Roll call vote:

AYES: Curtis, Pelley, Lockmiller, Perkinson
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Witt-McMahan

- 6 -
ORDINANCES

None

- 7 -
OLD BUSINESS

None

- 8 -
NEW BUSINESS

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN UPDATES

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-12

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE.

The caption of Resolution No. 2022-12 was read by the recording clerk. **Council Member Curtis moved, Vice Mayor Lockmiller seconded, to approve Resolution No. 2022-12. Council Member Pelley moved, Vice Mayor Lockmiller seconded, to amend the motion to remove the Communications Coordinator position.** Council Member Pelley stated he did not believe a city the size of Athens needed this position. Vice Mayor Lockmiller stated he was inclined to agree with Council Member Pelley. Council Member Curtis noted that the City would be using part of the lodging tax revenue to support this position because this individual will assist with tourism. Tourism development will bring people into our community to help continue to grow our sales tax revenue base. This will be a multitasking position that will have a tourism component and a general communications component to it. This position will support all the City departments with concise communication, both written and verbal. The City can afford to add this position given the growth of our budget over the past several years and that we have a dedicated stream of revenue that is in part designed to pay for things like this. Upon conclusion of the discussion, the motion to amend the Classification and Compensation Plan failed on the following tie vote:

AYES: Pelley, Lockmiller
NAYS: Curtis, Perkinson
ABSENT: Witt-McMahan

Roll call vote on the original motion to approve Resolution No. 2022-12:

AYES: Curtis, Lockmiller, Perkinson
NAYS: Pelley
ABSENT: Witt-McMahan

- 9 -

PROPOSED ATHENS CITY SCHOOLS BUDGET FOR FY 2022-2023

No action was necessary on this item as the Athens City Schools budget for FY2022-2023 was included in the proposed Budget Ordinance for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

PROPOSED BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023

ORDINANCE NO. 1109 – FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT A BUDGET AND SET THE TAX RATE ON TAXABLE PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023.

The caption of Ordinance No. 1109 was read by the recording clerk. **Council Member Curtis moved, Vice Mayor Lockmiller seconded, to approve Ordinance No. 1109 on first reading.** Council Member Pelley asked whether the proposed budget included a five percent (5%) across-the-board raise. Mayor Perkinson responded that it was included in the budget. **Council Member Pelley moved to amend the motion to give a five percent (5%) raise to hourly employees and not to Department Heads and the City Manager.** The motion died for lack of a second. Council Member Pelley asked whether the proposed budget included a three percent (3%) raise for the Library. Mayor Perkinson responded that it did. **Council Member Pelley moved to increase the raise for the Library employees to five percent (5%).** The motion died for lack of a second. **Vice Mayor Lockmiller moved, seconded by Council Member Curtis, to remove the three percent (3%) pay increase for the E.G. Fisher Library employees from the budget.** Vice Mayor Lockmiller stated that the City is giving its employees a five percent (5%) raise. As much as he would like to help the employees of the Library, they are not the City's employees. He did not want to increase the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) with the Library at this point, which would happen if the pay increase were approved. Council Member Curtis stated he felt they needed to keep the budget moving forward and would vote for the amendment so they could talk about this issue more at the next Study Session. He expressed how important he felt the Library was to the community and the need to stay competitive with wages. A lot of people have invested in the Library and he felt that the City had an obligation to make sure that it is maintained and that includes proper staffing and proper compensation. Council Member Pelley stated that he would vote against the amendment because while they are not City employees, they are employees in the City. When you look at the salaries of those employees, the City needs to do everything it can to help them get and keep good staff. Mayor Perkinson stated in his judgment the Library needed to have a pay increase, which will increase the MOE. To have further discussion at their next Study Session on this pay increase, he was also going to vote for the amendment. Upon conclusion of the discussion, the motion to remove the three percent (3%) pay increase for the E.G. Fisher Library employees from the budget passed by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Curtis, Lockmiller, Perkinson
NAYS: Pelley
ABSENT: Witt-McMahan

In reference to the amended ordinance, Council Member Pelley stated he still had an objection to including fines in the General Fund because it encourages quotas. Mayor Perkinson stated this issue has been brought up several times over the years. They have researched other cities and have not found another city that does what Council Member Pelley is requesting. The revenue needs to be accounted for in the budget. Council Member Pelley felt they could be innovative and create a model to use those funds without putting them in the General Fund. There were no further comments. Roll call vote on the motion to approve Ordinance No. 1109 as amended on first reading:

AYES: Curtis, Lockmiller, Perkinson
NAYS: Pelley
ABSENT: Witt-McMahan

Council Member Pelley called for a Point of Personal Privilege to share a prepared statement regarding his request to have the slanderous charges made against him by City Manager Sumner investigated independently. After his statement, Council Member Pelley asked to make a motion to terminate the City Manager. Mayor Perkinson stated that the issue was not on the agenda and would not be discussed.

REPORTS

FINANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Finance Director Mr. Mike Keith presented the Finance Department Report for April 2022. The report was accepted as presented.

- 12 -

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Brandon Ainsworth presented the Fire Department Report for April 2022. The report was accepted as presented.

- 13 -

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Fred Schultz presented the Police Department Report for April 2022. The report was accepted as presented.

- 14 -

REQUESTS FROM CITIZENS

Glenn Whiting, 237 County Road 655, made comments regarding the City Manager, City staff, and members of the Council but did not make a request. Dick Pelley, 155 Morning Pointe Lane, read from a written statement and requested that the Council look into what they need to do to change the outward look that they are leaving on the citizens who are watching our meetings. He asked that citizens watching the meetings be allowed to make comments again.

- 15 -

REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Sumner reviewed the monthly report including the various Parks and Recreation and Public Works projects and activities going on throughout the city.

- 16 -

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the meeting and upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.


C. SETH SUMNER, City Manager


WILLIAM BO PERKINSON, Mayor