

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 16, 2020

The Athens City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor Burris presiding. This meeting was held pursuant to Governor Bill Lee’s Executive Order # 16, allowing the virtual attendance of council members, and CDC/White House guidelines limiting the number of the group present. The City of Athens upholds its citizens right to witness their legislative body in action and provided this meeting by livestream and the ability to physically attend. The invocation was given by Vice Mayor Perkinson; and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Coker, Lockmiller, Pelley, Perkinson, Burris

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 May 19, 2020 regularly scheduled meeting and the May 27, 2020 called meeting were submitted and approved by unanimous consent.

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COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF ATHENS AREA YOUTH COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS FOR 2019-2020

Brianna Hanson, Program Coordinator, along with Derek Phillips, Assistant Program Coordinator, from Parks and Recreation presented the Athens Area Youth Council Scholarship Awards for 2019-2020 to Ashlyn Bates and Katie Derrick. Ashlyn, an underclassman with the most cumulative hours during May 2019-April 2020, was presented with a \$50 Scholarship Award. Katie, a senior with the most cumulative hours, was presented with a \$250 Scholarship Award.

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MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Burris acknowledged receipt of a thank you letter from Carolyn McNicholas expressing her sincere thanks to the Athens Police Department and to Corporal Regis Nicholas, Officers Alex Eckert, Sarah Gray, Jalen Smith, and Alex Cleary, and Canine Officer Darrell Wright for responding to her call for help. Ms. McNicholas was transporting rescues going from Alabama to their forever homes in Vermont when they stopped at a closed candy store to let the dogs relieve themselves. A very shy Dalmatian mix “Radar” slipped out of her halter and they could not catch her. These officers went above and beyond the call of duty, some even staying past their shift, to catch her. The officers were kind, polite, professional, and sympathetic to their situation.

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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. The recording clerk read the following items into the record:

- a.) Reappoint Becky Simpson and Victoria White to Friendly City Sister Cities Committee, terms expire July 17, 2023.
- b.) Approve extension of contract with TRIO M Rentals & Sales LLC for equipment rental through April 30, 2021.
- c.) Approve extension of contract with Mobile Container Services for refuse container repair through April 30, 2021.
- d.) Approve extension of contract with Sequatchie Concrete for concrete services through April 30, 2021.
- e.) Approve extension of contract with Huggins Lawn Care for mowing and maintenance of Athens parks through March 30, 2021.
- f.) Approve extension of contract with Total Lawn Care for mowing and maintenance of Athens cemeteries through April 30, 2021.

- g.) Approve bid as submitted by NABCO Electric for Bid #1713 - Traffic Vehicle Detection System Upgrade.
- h.) Approve proposed Athens Utilities Board budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.
- i.) Approve Athens City Schools Proposed Budget Amendment #2 (General Purpose) for FY 2019-2020.
- j.) Approve Athens Board of Education Appropriation Resolution regarding fund balance amounts at year end that will be committed or assigned for specific purposes.
- k.) Approve Athens Board of Education Appropriation Resolution stating the Athens City Schools Federal Projects Fund shall be the budget approved for the separate projects within the fund.
- l.) Approve City of Athens Budget Amendment No. 3 for Fiscal Year 2019-2020.
- m.) Approve Resolution No. 2020-24 amending the Classification and Compensation Plan for the employees of the City of Athens Tennessee.

On motion by Council Member Pelley, seconded by Council Member Lockmiller, the Consent Agenda as stated above was approved by the following roll call vote:

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

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CITY OF ATHENS BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021

PRESENTATION OF BUDGET

City Manager Sumner shared his priority driven budgeting philosophy and an overview of capital items and changes in the 2020-2021 budget. He reviewed the items funded last year for accountability.

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ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 1088 – SECOND/FINAL READING – PUBLIC HEARING

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, 2020 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021.

The caption of the above-described Ordinance was read by the recording clerk. Mayor Burris opened the public hearing. There being no one present wishing to discuss the Ordinance, Public Hearing was closed. **A motion was made by Council Member Coker, seconded by Vice Mayor Perkinson, to approve Ordinance No. 1088 on Second and Final Reading. Council Member Pelley moved to amend the motion to include the 8-cent property tax increase in the budget.** The motion died for a lack of a second. Council Member Pelley stated that if they passed the property tax increase with the budget it would not impact the citizens until March of next year. In his opinion, the budget was prepared to satisfy city leadership, not its regular employees. Vice Mayor Perkinson clarified to Council Member Pelley that if someone paid in March, they would be late. Council Member Pelley did not offer suggestions for the budget except to raise property tax. The budget includes two new positions – a deputy fire chief and a detective but no salary increases. Several members of the Council and City Manager indicated they would address staffing needs and salary increases later in the year when the financial effects of the COVID-19 shutdown become clear. Council Member Lockmiller remarked that they were blessed to have money set aside that can take care of the debt service this year, but they must seriously think about a property tax increase in next year’s budget. At the conclusion of the discussion, the motion to approve Ordinance No. 1088 was approved by the following roll call vote:

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

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OLD BUSINESS

None

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NEW BUSINESS

TELLICO AND RAILROAD AVENUES – LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-25

A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING THE SUCCESSFUL INSTALLATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF A SIGNAL SYSTEM LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF RAILROAD AVENUE & TELLICO AVENUE.

The caption of Resolution No. 2020-25 was read by the recording clerk. **Motion was made by Council Member Lockmiller, seconded by Council Member Coker, to approve Resolution No. 2020-25.** Upon roll call, the resolution was approved by the following vote:

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

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2020-21 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GRANT AWARD

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-26

A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AWARD OF A COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GRANT THROUGH THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TDOT) AND AUTHORIZING SELECTION OF A CONSULTANT AND NEGOTIATING PROPOSALS.

The caption of Resolution No. 2020-26 was read by the recording clerk. **Motion was made by Council Member Coker, seconded by Vice Mayor Perkinson, to approve Resolution No. 2020-26.** Upon roll call, the resolution was approved by the following vote:

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

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL FOOD BANKS

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-27

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL FOOD BANKS.

The caption of Resolution No. 2020-27 was read by the recording clerk. **Motion was made by Council Member Coker, seconded by Vice Mayor Perkinson, to approve Resolution No. 2020-27.** City Manager Sumner commented that the contributions to the local food banks is in response to the need they have had to fulfill in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. If passed, the \$10,000 would be divided up among seven feeding programs in Athens. Each of the programs would get at least \$1,000. Anyone meeting certain criteria based on the volume of meals they provided during that time would receive an extra amount over that \$1,000. Athens-McMinn Family YMCA would receive \$3,500 as they have provided approximately 800 meals per week. Coordinated Charities of Athens would receive \$1,400 as they provided 300 meals per week. Grace and Mercy Ministries would receive \$1,100. Love Thy Neighbor, St. Mark AME Zion Methodist Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and The Better Living Center would receive \$1,000 each. Vice Mayor Perkinson recognized Dr. Miller and Athens City Schools for providing approximately 141,000 meals to children since March 16, 2020. Council Member Pelley felt the \$10,000 should have been distributed equally to each of the seven feeding programs. Upon roll call, the resolution was approved by the following vote:

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

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REPORTS

ATHENS CITY SCHOOLS QUARTERLY REPORT

Dr. Melanie Miller, Superintendent of the Athens City Schools, presented the City Council with her quarterly update. This was Dr. Miller's last quarterly report as she would be retiring at the end of the month. The City Council and City Manager expressed their appreciation and extended best wishes.

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FINANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mr. Mike Keith, Finance Director, presented the Finance Department Report for the month of May 2020. The report was accepted as presented.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Ainsworth presented the Fire Department Report for the month of May 2020. The report was accepted as presented.

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POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Police Chief Cliff Couch presented the Police Department Report for the month of May 2020. The report was accepted as presented.

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REQUESTS FROM CITIZENS

Lisa Dotson, Director of Main Street Athens, along with Frances Witt-McMahan were present representing Ann Boyd. On June 11, 2020, the City came together with them in support of being proactive in our community to keep down the fires and to keep down the protests and riots that were happening in other places throughout the country and world. She came before the Council because they allowed them to come to the City and say they would like to have a conversation with the community. Every person in the City departments supported them. This was a mark in history for the City of Athens because it came together – black people, white people, Hispanic people, and whatever diverse person choose to come to J.L. Cook Memorial Park. Ms. Dotson stated she was proud to be a citizen of Athens, proud to be a black citizen of Athens, and proud to be able to stand alongside of the City and work with us to make our community better. The June 11th event was not just a one-time conversation. Ms. Witt-McMahan stated that someone at last week's event had posed the idea of having a Citizens Advisory Group where they could come together and discuss issues to help bridge the gap between all ethnic diversities. Several members of the NAACP decided to bring a group of African leaders together to sit, discuss, and strategize a plan for moving forward. Ms. Dotson and Ms. Witt-McMahan have a meeting scheduled with City Manager Sumner to discuss things they are hoping to accomplish and then have a meeting with the group that set up the event last week. It was Ms. Witt-McMahan's wish that the community would come along with them in this undertaking.

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REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

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


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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 8:03 p.m.



C. SETH SUMNER, City Manager



CHARLES T. BURRIS, II, Mayor