

# ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF MEETING

August 21, 2018

The Athens City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, August 21, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor Burris presiding. The invocation was given by Mayor Burris; and upon roll call, the following members were present:

Pelley, Perkinson, Raper, Burris

*Mayor Burris noted the absence of Vice Mayor Coker who was out of town.*

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 July 17, 2018 were submitted and approved by unanimous consent.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

### PRESENTATION OF SOAP BOX DERBY PROCLAMATIONS

Council Member Raper presented a proclamation honoring Zeke Hembree (Local Stock Car Champion), Council Member Pelley presented a proclamation honoring Nathan Turner (Local Super Stock Car Champion), Mayor Burris presented a proclamation honoring Madison Woods (Super Kids Champion), and Council Member Perkinson presented a proclamation honoring Haylee Rodgers (2017 World Champion in the National Super Kids Classic and defending Champion), for their participation in the 2018 All American World Championship Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio.

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### PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

City Manager Sumner announced that the City had received the Government Finance Officers Association "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" for fiscal year ended June 30, 2017. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by government and its management. This marked the 26th consecutive year the City has received this award. Mike Keith, Finance Director, thanked the City Council and departments for their support of the Finance Department and the City auditors, Neal, Scouten & McConnell, who audit the City's books and prepare the financial statements as well as work with the Finance Department to make sure things are done correctly. He extended a special thanks to his ladies in his department because they are the ones that make sure the City tries to collect every dollar it is due and try to make sure it is spent properly. Mr. Keith expressed how much he appreciated the work they do and how they make his job easier.

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### MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Burris acknowledged receipt of a note from Lauren Brown Shepherd, Executive Director of the Athens Area Council for the Arts, thanking the City for continuing to appropriate funds for the AACA in its budget.

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PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Mayor Burris read the following statement before opening the meeting for petitions and requests from the audience. "Citizens wishing to make a request of the City may now be heard. Please state your name and address for the record. Please address your request to the Mayor as individual Council Members or staff may not be addressed. Please keep your remarks civil and to less than five minutes."

REQUESTS FROM CITIZENS

Glen Whiting, 237 County Road 655, spoke about several issues he had with the Athens Police Department. Kristine Walden, 409 East Madison Avenue, thanked the Police and Fire Departments for keeping the children, teachers and staff safe. Ms. Walden also thanked the City Council for their support of Athens City Schools. Elvia Gossett and her son, Matthew White, of 137 Linwood Drive, Sweetwater, asked the City Council not to let their house located at 310 Hill Street be demolished. The City had condemned this property prior to it being purchased by Mr. White. After Mr. White had purchased the home, the City notified Mr. White that it was not suitable for habitation. An administrative hearing was held and Mr. White was given a specified amount of time to bring the house up to Code or it would be demolished. The improvements were not made and the house was scheduled for demolition. Mayor Burris suggested that Mr. White and his mother contact Community Development to discuss their options, if any.

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REPORTS

Mr. Joel Riley, on behalf of the McMinn County Emergency Communications District Board of Directors, presented their first quarterly report on what was happening at 911. Mr. Riley stated they were financially secure. Currently they have between \$1.1 and \$1.2 million dollars in reserves. The State has told them that they would like the Board to have approximately \$1.5 million dollars in reserves. Their budget is approximately \$1.5 million dollars. They have a new building that should last them for the next forty years. The building is also outfitted with new equipment, so they feel they will be in good shape for many years. There are fourteen full-time and three part-time dispatchers with three dispatchers on a shift around the clock. At the direction of the Board's Chairman Mike Jones, they felt they had an extra \$80,000 this year that could be applied towards dispatching to lower what they had to charge. Each day they handle approximately 200 CAD, 100 911 and 200 administrative calls. In addition, they have judicial commissioners that will sign warrants and affidavits when a judge is not available. Highway Patrol takes advantage of that service more than anyone else. Mr. Riley stated they feel they have been lax in their communication and they want to correct that. They are looking at three levels to correct the problem. The first level would be the Board coming to the City Council on a regular basis to keep the Council informed on what they are doing so in two years when everyone sits down to renegotiate the contract there will be no surprises. The second level involves the User Committee. Tom Trotter, McMinn County Emergency Management Director and newly appointed Chairman of the User Committee, stated they planned to redo the User Committee. All of the first responders need to have representation on the Committee and the Committee is going to be a conduit between the Users and the Board. The last level of communication the Board wants to address is dispatchers communicating with the people on the ground. Marvin Kelley stated there has been a lot of turnover at 911 and there has been a disconnect with first responders. He wants to hold an event to get dispatchers together with emergency personnel so that dispatchers can meet the individuals they are dispatching calls to. A public safety consultant will be coming to the 911 in September to work with the dispatchers on how to handle calls like they were a member of their family. Mr. Riley closed by saying he pledged to the Council that they will do everything they can to make the first responders' job easier and to provide the best protection to the users.

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FINANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

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

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POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Police Chief Couch presented the Police Department Report for the month of July 2018. 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 July 2018. 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. The following items were read into the record:

- a.) Appoint Bryan Thomas to fill vacancy on Council Advisory Committee (Council Member Raper's appointment), term expires March 21, 2021.
- b.) Appoint Lucas Shepherd to fill vacancy on Keep McMinn Beautiful, term expires March 6, 2020.
- c.) Approve recommendation to declare duty handgun as surplus property and to authorize donation to retiring Officer Randy Hamilton.
- d.) Approve Resolution No. 2018-25 authorizing the application for and the acceptance of a Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for Fiscal Year 2018.
- e.) Approve Resolution No. 2018-26 authorizing the Mayor to execute an Interlocal Agreement with McMinn County.

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

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

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NEW BUSINESS

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 Sister Cities, a Wi-Fi grant for downtown that would provide free Wi-Fi for all of downtown, and MTSU surveying the City's historical assets as part of a grant the City received.

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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 7:37 p.m.



C. SETH SUMNER, City Manager



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CHARLES T. BURRIS, II, Mayor