MINUTES

The Athens Borough Council met in regular session on December 11, 2023 Council Chambers, Athens Borough Municipal Building.

Present: President Scott Riley, Vice-President Scott Molnar, Pro Tem Sharon Sporn, Council members Walter Chaykosky, Joanne Polzella, Robert Williams and Mayor Francis Roupp III.

Absent: Council member Anthony Smith

Mayor Roupp led in the Salute to the Flag.

President Riley called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

President Riley stated that this meeting is being tape recorded to assist the Borough Secretary in the preparation of the Minutes. When approved by Council the tapes will be reused and not preserved. If you have a recording devise please announce so at this time.

PRESS

No one present.

PUBLIC

Andrea Gentile, 201 Maple Street addressed Council with concerns regarding the Dependable Disposal Company that is located at 205 S Main Street (former Williams Auto). Ms. Gentile stated her issues are with the noise, appearance, animals in dumpsters and the smell. Ms. Gentile stated the appearance of the blue tarps on the fence is terrible to look at and the vehicles starting up between 5:00AM – 6:00AM are too loud for the quiet neighborhood. Ms. Gentile stated that the garbage company has no respect for the residential community.

Marsha Rounds, 105 Ferry Street addressed Council with similar concerns regarding the garbage company. Ms. Rounds is concerned with the smell in the summer months, the blue tarp looks trashy and the backup beeping on the trucks is too loud in the early morning and later in the evening. Ms. Rounds explained that she has witnessed the dirty trucks being hosed down with the water going into the storm drains and is concerned with full dumpsters being left on-site for animals to occupy. Ms. Rounds also stated the value of the residential structures is decreasing due to the appearance of Dependable Disposal.

Dustin Bishop, property owner of 201 Ferry Street and 203 Maple Street questioned what the Commercial Zoning definition is and wondered why Council would allow a garbage company to locate near residential property. Mr. Bishop stated this is a disgrace to the people of this town.

Brad Northrup, 104 Paine Street, stated he would like Council to come up with a plan moving forward in taking each and every concern into account. Mr. Northrup also questioned who authorized allowing a garbage company in Athens Borough.

The Borough Manager stated that the Code Officer had already reached out to Dependable Disposal with the concerns from Ms. Gentile's phone conversation weeks prior to this meeting. He stated that the concerns were rectified without a problem from the company. He also stated he and the Code Officer will reach back out to the company with these additional concerns.

Mayor Roupp stated that he believes having this detailed list of concerns will help Council when looking at possible changes needing to be made to the ordinance.

Brandon Hoff, Reginal Operations Director, River Rock Academy, addressed Council with his proposal to occupy a portion of the Phoenix Industries building located at 101 N Main Street. Mr. Riff explained that River Rock Academy is a private school that provides regular education, special education and offers social skills instruction, IEP help, and counseling for students with behavioral problems such as weapons violations, disregard for school authority, controlled substance violations, violent or threatening behaviors, and repeated misconduct. Mr. Hoff stated the academy's goals are to provide students with a highly structured and safe environment, build relationships, offer a regroup/reconnect room and have behavioral coaches available to students. Mr. Hoff explained there'd be up to 40 students with a 1 to 5 ratio of staff on site. Mr. Hoff advised the academy has a site currently in one of the Troy schools and would like to move into the Phoenix Industries building as soon as possible. Mr. Hoff has requested that Council look at amending the zoning to allow the for educational purposes.

PRESIDENT RILEY

MONTHLY BILLS

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Chaykosky that the December 2023 monthly bills be approved as follows:

General Fund **$52,856.01**
Sewer Fund **$1,542.16**
Fire Fund **$577.36** – Loan Payment #48

AYES: Chaykosky, Molnar, Polzella, Sporn, Williams, Riley
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Smith
Motion carried.

MINUTES

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Sporn that the minutes of the regular meeting on November 13, 2023 be approved as written. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 726 2024 TAX RATE

It was moved by Williams and seconded by Molnar that the ordinance setting the tax rate for fiscal year 2024 as advertised on November 18, 2023 be adopted. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 726

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF ATHENS FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024.

SECTION NO. 1

That a tax be and the same is hereby levied on all property within the Borough of Athens subject to taxation for the Borough purposes for the fiscal year 2024 as follows:

General Purposes..... 18.75 mills

Library Purposes..... .25 mill

Fire Equipment Purposes..... 1.00 mills

Making a total tax rate of 20.00 mills for all Borough purposes on each dollar of assessed valuation.

ADOPTED THIS ____ DAY OF DECEMBER 2024

ORDINANCE NO. 727 2024 POLICE PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

It was moved by Molnar and seconded by Williams that ordinance discontinuing the contributions by either the Borough of Athens or the Police Forse for the calendar year 2024 based on the Actuarial Valuation Report of the Police Pension Fund as advertised on November 18, 2023 be adopted. Motion carried.

BOROUGH OF ATHENS
ORDINANCE NO. 727

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 22, POLICE PENSION FUND, OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF ATHENS, COUNTY OF BRADFORD, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The Borough of Athens hereby ordains and enacts as follows:

Under Section 22-4, Contribution Rate of the Code of the Borough of Athens hereby deletes the following:

No contribution shall be required by either the Borough of Athens or the Police Force for the calendar year 2023 based on the Actuarial Valuation Report of the pension of the Police Pension fund.

Under Section 22-4, Contribution Rate of the Code of the Borough of Athens, hereby adds the following:

No contribution shall be required by either the Borough of Athens or the Police Force for the calendar year 2024 based on the Actuarial Valuation Report of the pension of the Police Pension Fund.

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

WILES VALLEY WEATHER SERVICE AGREEMENT

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Polzella that the Wiles Valley Weather LLC service agreement with term ending September 30, 2024 be approved. Motion carried.

2024 REORGANIZATION MEETING

The 2024 Reorganization meeting of the Borough Council is scheduled for 7:00PM, Tuesday, January 02, 2024.

2024 ATHENS BOROUGH PENSION FUND MEETINGS

The Pension Fund Board will meet on March 07, 2024 and September 05, 2024 at 2:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

The Civil Service Commission will hold their reorganization meeting on February 07, 2024 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building.

AMENDMENT TO SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF TAX COLLECTOR ORDINANCE

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Polzella that Solicitor Foster be authorized to advertise the amendment to Salaries and Compensation of the Tax Collector ordinance increasing the compensation from 1.5% on paid taxes to 1.75%. Motion carried.

BOROUGH OF ATHENS ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER NO. 102, SALRIES AND COMPENSATION, ARTICLE II TAX COLLECTOR OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF ATHENS, COUNTY OF BRADFORD, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The Borough of Athens hereby ordains and enacts as follows:
Under Article II Tax Collector, Section 102-2 Compensation of Tax Collector of the Code of the Borough of Athens hereby deletes the following:

The compensation to be paid to the Real Estate Tax Collector of the Borough of Athens for the collection of any Borough taxes shall be paid on a commission basis only consisting of 1.5% on taxes paid on a current basis and on a delinquent basis.

Under Article II Tax Collector, Section 102-2 Compensation of Tax Collector of the Code of the Borough of Athens hereby adds the following:

The compensation to be paid to the Real Estate Tax Collector of the Borough of Athens for the collection of any Borough taxes shall be paid on a commission basis only consisting of 1.75% on taxes paid on a current basis and on a delinquent basis.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – 7

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Chaykosky that Resolution No. 2023 – 7 in support of the Bradford County Library be adopted. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – 7
Resolution of Support for the Bradford County Library

AND NOW, this 11th day of December, 2023, the Borough of Athens at a duly advertised meeting of the Borough Council adopts the foregoing Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Bradford County Library provides necessary library services for citizens of Athens Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Bradford County Library provides the bookmobile, interlibrary loans, programming, historical records, books, magazines, DVDs, audiobooks, digital services and other materials; and

WHEREAS, the Bradford County Library is the only nationally certified Family Place Library located in Bradford County; and

WHEREAS, the loss of the Bradford County Library would be detrimental to Athens Borough's residents' access to quality library services; and

WHEREAS, the Bradford County Library is the system headquarters for all nine libraries; and

WHEREAS, the Bradford County Library is the only library open 65 hours a week in Bradford County; and

WHEREAS, the Bradford County Library provides a flat-level parking lot with handicap accessibility for all residents of Bradford County; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Athens Borough supports the Bradford County Library staying in its current format and service areas.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Athens Borough Council on December 11, 2023 approves the foregoing Resolution.

CALL FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Riley called for an Executive Session to discuss personnel.

POLICE COMMITTEE

President Riley took a moment to thank Vice-President Scott Molnar for his time and dedication as a Council member for Athens Borough.

SALE OF 2013 CHEVROLET TAHOE

It was moved by Williams and seconded by Molnar to reject the highest bid of $5,200 received on Municibid for the sale of the 2013 Chevrolet Tahoe.
AYES: Molnar, Wiilliams
NAYES: Chaykosky, Polzella, Sporn
Motion died.

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Sporn that the highest bid of $5,200 received on Municibid for the sale of the 2013 Chevrolet Tahoe be accepted.
AYES: Chaykosky, Polzella, Sporn
NAYES: Molnar, Williams
Motion carried.

Vice-President Molnar stated:

The Police Chief's monthly report was made available to Council on December 05, 2023.

Monthly Report

Month of November		Total for the Year
104	Total Number of Calls:	1523
1	Felony Arrests:	9
12	Misdemeanor Arrests:	36

13	Non-Traffic Arrests:	36
0	Traffic Citations:	11
9	Traffic Reports:	148
4	Truancy Reports:	53
0	Parking/Tickets Warnings:	1
1	PFA Violations	8
	Mileage:	
40	2013 Tahoe	107,643 Overall
142	2017 Tahoe	83,237 Overall
253	2019 Tahoe	45,790 Overall
626	2023 Tahoe	2139
	District Court:	
23	Total Cases:	128
5	Criminal Cases:	27
1	Traffic Cases:	14
8	Non-traffic Cases:	29
9	Truancy	58

COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

President Pro Tem Sporn stated:

The Shade Tree Commission met on November 15, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building. There is no meeting is December.

The 2024 meetings will be the third Wednesday each month.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Council Member Williams stated:

The Public Work's Department report was made available to Council on December 01, 2023.

CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

Council member Polzella stated:

The Zoning Officer's monthly report was made available to Council on December 04, 2023.

Zoning Permits Issued: 0
Zoning Permits Denied: 0
Zoning Permits to Date: 26

Property Maintenance Violation Notices Issued:

Total to Date (2023): 49

Contractor Permits through 11/30/2023:

Issued: 110 Pending: 4 Void: 0

P&Z MEETING

The Planning and Zoning Commission will meet on December 12, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building.

The 2024 meeting dates have been set as follows:
January 10, 2024, February 14, 2024, March 13, 2024, April 10, 2024, May 08, 2024, June 12, 2024, August 14, 2024, October 09, 2024 and December 11, 2024. The P&Z Commission will also meet if needed per request.

ALLOWING EDUCATION IN THE MANUFACTURING DISTRICT

President Riley stated the community and school districts would benefit considerably as the idea of a private school is definitely needed in this area.

Solicitor Foster stated Council would have to look into amending the current zoning ordinance to allow a school in the Manufacturing District.

This topic is tabled until the January meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Council member Chaykosky stated:

PARK PAVILIONS

The construction of the two pavilions at the Valley Playland have been completed.

FIRE COMMITTEE

President Riley stated:

The Fire Department's monthly report for November was made available to Council on December 05, 2023.

SOLICITOR

The Solicitor's report was made available to Council on December 08, 2023.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

START – 7:59PM
STOP – 8:55PM

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 - 6

It was moved by Williams and seconded by Sporn that Resolution No. 2023 – 6, the County EMA Plan be adopted. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 - 6
ATHENS BOROUGH
BRADFORD COUNTY
2024 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
Athens Borough, Bradford County, Pennsylvania

WHEREAS, Section 7503 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, 35 PS C.S Section et. Seq mandates that all municipalities prepare, maintain and keep current an emergency operations plan for the prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by a major emergency or disaster within the municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency will allow individual municipalities to agree to use the Bradford County Emergency Operations Plan as their own plan to provide prompt and effective emergency response guidelines to be followed in the event of a major emergency or disaster.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Borough Council do hereby approve and adopt the Bradford County Emergency Operations Plan.

CIVIL SERVICE PROCESS FOR NEW HIRE

It was moved by Molnar and seconded by Sporn that the Civil Service Commission be authorized to start the Civil Service Process to hire a Full time Patrol Officer. Motion carried.

RESCIND MOTION TO HIRE APPLICANT A

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Polzella that Council rescind the motion made on October 09, 2023 to hire Applicant A for the position of Full Time Patrol Officer contingent upon the successful completion of a medical examination and psychological examination. Motion carried.

NEW HIRE – FULL TIME PATROL OFFICER

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Polzella that Applicant B be hired for the position of Full Time Patrol Officer contingent upon the successful completion of a medical examination and psychological examination. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Williams and seconded by Sporn that the meeting be adjourned at 8:57PM. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

_____
Tara R. Campbell, Secretary