MINUTES

The Athens Borough Council met in regular session on November 13, 2023 Council Chambers, Athens Borough Municipal Building.

Present: President Scott Riley, Pro Tem Sharon Sporn, Council members Walter Chaykosky, Joanne Polzella, Anthony Smith and Mayor Francis Roupp III.

Absent: Vice-President Scott Molnar and Council member Robert Williams

President Riley 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

Todd Babcock, CEC Inc, 227 S Main Street, Athens was present to discuss the Soper Subdivision on S Main Street.

President Riley stated the topic would be discussed in Executive Session.

PRESIDENT RILEY

MONTHLY BILLS

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

General Fund **$55,765.97**
Sewer Fund **$88,277.65**
Fire Fund **$596.61** – Loan Payment #47

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

MINUTES

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Smith that the minutes of the regular meeting on October 09, 2023 be approved as written. Motion carried.

VALLEY JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY CLEANING TRUCK AGREEMENT

It was moved by Smith and seconded by Chaykosky that the amended Valley Joint Sewer Authority Cleaning Truck be approved. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT – CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

It was moved by Smith and seconded by Sporn that Vincent Whyte, 418 Church Street be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Civil Service Commission. This term expires on December 27, 2023. Motion carried.

2024 TAX RATE ORDINANCE ADVERTISEMENT

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Chaykosky that the Borough Manager be authorized to advertise the ordinance setting the 2024 tax rate. Motion carried.

2024 POLICE PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS ADVERTISEMENT

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Sporn that the Borough Manager be authorized to advertise the 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. Motion carried.

VETERAN'S EXEMPTION – 234 LAUREL AVENUE

It was moved by Smith and seconded by Chaykosky that the Veteran's Exemption request of Anthony J Gower, 234 Laurel Avenue be approved effective July 31, 2023. The Bradford County Commissioners granted this request at their meeting on September 14, 2023. Motion carried.

RESIGNATION – ZONING HEARING BOARD

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Polzella that the resignation request of Jude Platukis from the Zoning Hearing Board be accepted. This term expires on December 31, 2023. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT – ZONING HEARING BOARD

It was moved by Polzella and seconded by Chaykosky that Ken Owens, 228 North Street be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board with the term expiring on December 31, 2023. Motion carried.

CALL FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Riley called for an Executive Session to discuss real estate and personnel.

POLICE COMMITTEE

President Riley stated:

The Police Chief's monthly report was made available to Council on November 07, 2023.

COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

President Pro Tem Sporn stated:

The Shade Tree Commission met on October 18, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building. Their next meeting is scheduled on November 15, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building.

The Shade Tree Commission with the help of the Public Works Department planted 20 Shade trees on November 02, 2023 that were obtained through the Tree Pennsylvania 2023 Bare Root Grant.

SUSQUEHANNA RIVERBANK FEASIBILITY STUDY

It was moved by Chaykosky and seconded by Smith that Resolution No. 2023 – 5, designating officials to execute all documents and agreements between the Borough of Athens and the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the requested grant funding for the Susquehanna Riverbank Feasibility Study. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 - 5
APPENDIX II – AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Athens, Bradford County, PA hereby request a Statewide Local share Assessment grant in the amount of $1,000,000.00 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the planning, consulting and design cost related to the Susquehanna Riverbank Feasibility Study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Applicant does hereby designate Mark G Burgess, Borough Manager and Tara R Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer as the officials to execute all documents and agreements between the Borough of Athens and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

President Riley stated:

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

SEWER TAPPING CONNECTION FEE

The Borough Manager and Council held a brief discussion on changing the current sewer tapping connection fee of $500 to the lowest of three contractor quotes.

It was moved by Sporn and seconded by Smith that Solicitor Foster be authorized to amend the current Ordinance to reflect the changes that were discussed. Motion carried.

CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

Council member Polzella stated:

The Zoning Officer's monthly report was made available to Council on November 03, 2023.

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

Property Maintenance Violation Notices Issued:

Total to Date (2023): 31

Contractor Permits through 10/31/2023:

Issued: 104 Pending: 3 Void: 0

P&Z MEETING

The Planning and Zoning Commission met on October 11, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Area School Administration Building and set their meeting dates for the 2024 calendar year.

The Planning and Zoning Commission met on November 08, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building and provided the Zoning Hearing Board with a recommendation to approve the Special Exception / Special Use request for a double-wide trailer to be placed on the vacant lot at 124 Willow Street.

Their next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Athens Borough Municipal Building.

ZONING HEARING

A Zoning Hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at 5:00PM to review and discuss the Zoning Hearing request for a Special Exception / Special Use submitted by James Rymell to erect/place a double-wide trailer on the vacant lot at 124 Willow Street.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Council member Chaykosky stated:

INSTALLATION OF GARBAGE CANS IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

Council held a discussion for the placement of garbage cans in the Business District. The Borough Manager will be ordering 2 black and 2 silver Mini Hex Commercial 30 gallon trash containers to place downtown to be maintained by the Public Works Department.

FIRE COMMITTEE

Council member Smith stated:

The Fire Department's monthly report for October was made available to Council on November 13, 2023.

SOLICITOR

The Solicitor's report was made available to Council on November 13, 2023.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

START – 7:22PM
STOP – 9:45PM

INCREASE PAY FOR REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTOR

It was moved by Polzella and seconded by Chayksoky that Solicitor Foster be authorized to amend the ordinance for the Real Estate Tax Collection Compensation to reflect an increase in the compensation to 1.75%. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Polzella and seconded by Smith that the meeting be adjourned at 9:47PM. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

_____
Tara R. Campbell, Secretary