



## **ATHENS CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION**

The Athens City Council met in regular session on **Tuesday, May 19, 2026**, at 6:00 p.m. in the Athens City Hall Council Chambers, with Mayor Eaton presiding. Councilmember McCowan led the invocation. Councilmember Sherlin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Roll call:**

**PRESENT: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**ABSENT: None**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Tuesday, April 21, 2026 – Regular Session

B. Wednesday, April 22, 2026 – Special Called Session

**Council approved the minutes of the April 21, 2026 Regular Session and the April 22, 2026 Special Called Session as presented.**

### **APPROVED**

#### **Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Kendra Johnson, Assistant Principal of Athens City Primary School, appeared before Council and presented a summary of school activities and events from the past several months.

### **CITIZENS COMMENTS GERMANE TO THE AGENDA**

- Glenn Whiting commented on the new city branding design, and Charter amendment regarding compensation of the Mayor and Councilmembers.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approve Athens City Schools FY 2026-27 Budget
- B. Approve Marketing, Branding, and Signage Design for the City and Authorize Trademark Protection for the City of Athens Logo.
- C. Approve Resolution 2026-16, a Resolution Authorizing the City of Athens, Tennessee, to Apply for Funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Through the Safe Streets For All (SS4A) Grant Program for Improvements to the Congress Parkway and Decatur Pike Intersections and Adjoining Corridor.

**Council approved the Consent Agenda as presented on motion by Vice Mayor Curtis and second by Councilmember Duggan.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

**ORDINANCES**

- A. Second Reading and Public Hearing for Ordinance 1151, an Ordinance of the City of Athens, Tennessee, Amending Title 8, Chapter III (Beer), to Add "Craft Beer Restaurant" as a Classification of Beer Permit and Amending the Athens Zoning Ordinance to Add a Craft Beer Restaurant Land Use and to Permit Accessory On-Site Beer Manufacturing in Certain Business Districts Subject to Standards

A public hearing was opened at 6:13 p.m. No one spoke, and the hearing was closed.

**Motion to approve Ordinance 1151 as presented was made by Vice Mayor Curtis and seconded by Councilmember McCowan.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- B. Second Reading and Public Hearing for Ordinance 1154, an Ordinance of the City of Athens, Tennessee, Amending the Municipal Zoning Ordinance of the City Of Athens, Tennessee, Section 4.03.03, Commercial Land Uses (Minimum), and Section 4.03.07, Commercial Land Uses (Maximum), to add Off-Street Parking Requirements for a Drive-Thru Oil Change Facility with Minor Auto Service Without Overnight Storage of Vehicles

A public hearing was opened at 6:15 p.m. No one spoke, and the hearing was closed.

**Motion to approve Ordinance 1154 as presented was made by Councilmember McCowan and seconded by Councilmember Duggan.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- C. Second Reading and Public Hearing for Ordinance 1155, an Ordinance to Amend the Budget for the City of Athens, Tennessee, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026

A public hearing was opened at 6:16 p.m. No one spoke, and the hearing was closed.

**Motion to approve Ordinance 1155 as presented was made by Councilmember Sherlin and seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**-None-**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Proclaim Approval or Non-approval of Private Chapter No. 46, House Bill No. 2637 / Senate Bill No. 2699 Relative to the City of Athens Charter Provision Concerning Compensation of the Mayor and Councilmembers.

**A motion to proclaim approval for Private Chapter No. 46 was made by Councilmember Sherlin and seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- B. First Reading of Ordinance 1152, an Ordinance to Amend Title 17, Chapter II, Sections 17-43 and 17-44 per the Athens City Code Relative to Refuse Collection and Disposal Service Charges and the Method of Collecting Service Charges.

**A motion to postpone Ordinance 1152 indefinitely was made by Councilmember Sherlin and seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- C. First Reading of Ordinance 1156, an Ordinance to Amend Title 9, Chapter V of the Athens City Code by deleting the existing Chapter V, "Wrecker and Towing Service," in its Entirety and Replacing it with a New Chapter V, "Towing Services"; to Establish Regulations, permitting requirements, rotation procedures, insurance requirements, Fee Limitations, Recordkeeping Requirements, and enforcement procedures for towing services requested by the Athens Police Department.

**A motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 1156 was made by Councilmember Duggan and seconded by Councilmember Sherlin.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- D. First Reading of an Ordinance 1157, an Ordinance to Amend 'The Zoning Ordinance of The City of Athens, Tennessee, so as to Amend The Official Zoning Map to Rezone A 3-Acre Parcel Created from the 50-Acre Developed Parent Tract Shown as Tax Map 046 Parcel 049.00 Located on Denso Drive and George R. Price Boulevard From I-2 (Heavy Industrial District) To B-3 (Intensive Business District), Said Area Being Located Within The Corporate Limits of Athens, Tennessee.

**A motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 1157 was made by Vice Mayor Curtis and seconded by Councilmember Duggan.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- E. Proposal from Gresham Smith Engineers to Design and Prepare Construction Documents to Complete the Sidewalk Loop Around McMinn County High School

**A motion to approve the proposal was made by Vice Mayor Curtis and seconded by Councilmember Duggan.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- F. Recreation Advisory Board Appointments for Three Expiring Terms

**A motion was made to reappoint Ron Starr, reappoint Larry Rhodes, and appoint Addison Butler with their terms expiring in June 2030 by Vice Mayor Curtis and seconded by Councilmember McCowan.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- G. Amendments to Ordinance 1158.

**A motion was made by Mayor Eaton and seconded by Councilmember Sherlin to make the following amendments to Ordinance 1158, the proposed annual budget for fiscal year 2026-2027:**

- 1. Reduce Fleet fund transfer by 10%.**
- 2. Reduce all outside agencies by 10%.**
- 3. Reduce transfer from General Fund to Debt Service Fund by \$100,000.**
- 4. Remove \$16,000 in expenses for the soap box derby program.**
- 5. Remove \$16,800 in expenses for all auto allowances.**
- 6. Remove \$60,000 salary for Stormwater Engineer.**
- 7. Remove \$11,000 furniture expenses for Stormwater Engineer.**
- 8. Add \$230,000 in expenses for salary and benefits for three new firefighters.**
- 9. Approve changes to the fee schedules for Parks and Recreation program and event fees, park fees, and Police Department city-requested towing fees.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- H. Request permission to post bids before July 1, 2026 for some fiscal year 2026-2027 projects.

**A motion to allow bids to be posted before July 1, 2026 was made by Councilmember Duggan and seconded by Vice Mayor Curtis.**

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

- I. First Reading of Ordinance 1158, 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, 2026 Through June 30, 2027.

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION  
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A motion was made by Councilmember Sherlin and seconded by Councilmember Duggan to approve the first reading of Ordinance 1158, as amended, with no change to the tax rate for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

**APPROVED**

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

**REPORTS**

- A. Finance Department Monthly Report
- B. Fire Department Monthly Report
- C. Police Department Monthly Report

**REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

- A. Program of Work

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

- Terry Huskins commented on dilapidated property that he owns on Central Avenue.
- Charlie Senn commented on the civil rights movements in 1950's - 1970's.
- J.P. Bush commented on the former North City School property.
- Richard White commented on the need for funding of the McMinn Warming Center.
- Glenn Whiting shared his opinions about certain city officials and employees.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Eaton moved to adjourn the meeting and requested roll call.

**Roll call vote:**

**YEAS: McCowan, Duggan, Sherlin, Curtis, Eaton**

**NAYS: None**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

  
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Bridget Roberts, Interim City Manager

  
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Larry Eaton, Mayor