

Advisory Meeting April 28, 2025

Attendance: 14 members

Anne Marie Shaffer
Barbara Peck
Bill Wilson
Shawn McKeegan
Elaine Newman
Geoffrey Smith
Hugh Willson
James Fries

Jo Lundy
John Proffitt
Patti Greek, Chair
Perry McCowan

New Members:

Amy Sullins

Frances Witt-McMahan

Absent:

Bob Roseberry
Don Frank
Moises Contreras

Reita Witt
Sherry Richmond Frank

Topic:

TO DISCUSS THE COORDINATION OF A CITIZEN SATISFACTION SURVEY TO BE CONDUCTED BY A PROFESSIONAL COMPANY

The committee understands the City Manager would like to ask POLCO or a similar company to gain viable information from the citizens on growth, changes and direction for the city of Athens.

We went page by page—question by question that was used in the City of Franklin.

Here are a few thoughts that were expressed:

- It will be interesting to see how Franklin receives this information.
Apparently, this polling is continuing to the end of May.
- Franklin will be mailing out postcards—the committee said this would be a waste of time and money for Athens.
- The questions need to only go to Athens residents—not people who work in Athens.
- If they email this questionnaire, do they have a way of knowing the responses cannot be entered in more than once.
- How to get as many people as possible---

Would you like the Advisory Committee members to go to different groups/non-profit meetings and distribute the questionnaires? Attend the School system meetings and make sure that all families know how they can answer these questions. Have Bi-lingual options.

- We thought the survey was too long. What if the first 15 questions have the most important information for the City Council, then on the screen ask, “can you answer 15 more questions?”
- We all felt that we want to get all the information needed for 1 to 3 to 5-year plans.

Special points:

- Only City of Athens residents answer the questions.
- All of the Parks should be updated—have specific questions for each park and a plan for each park.

Cook Park	Market Park
Eco Park	Prof Powers/ aka Knox Park
Eureka Trail	Regional Park
Fisher Field	Veteran’s Park
Heritage Park	
Ingleside Park	
- Several committee members made the statement that we currently have a great EDA team that focuses on industry. We need to have more housing options, middle management jobs, restaurants—not more “fast food”. Athens needs to have a 5-year plan, how do you want the neighborhoods to grow--- what about zoning—we do not want to end up looking like other cities that have grown *without a plan*.
- We need a plan that brings people to Athens that want to live here, not just work here—yet feel they need to live in Cleveland, Lenoir City or Loudon.

This committee is 100% for this project. We want to help with questions and distribution of this questionnaire.

We will wait to see how much this will cost and how we can help.

Thank you for this opportunity!