

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL: REGULAR SESSION, MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014, 7:00 P.M.

Law Director Lang administered the oath of office to City Treasurer Mary Ann McClure, City Council President Jim Sands and City Council Members Kent Butler, Jennifer Cochran, Chris Fahl, Chris Knisely, Michele Papai, Steve Patterson and Jeff Risner.

Athens City Council met in Regular Session at the above hour with the following members present: Butler, Cochran, Fahl, Knisely, Papai, Patterson and Risner.

Also present: President Sands, Mayor Wiehl, Law Director Lang, and Treasurer McClure.

Butler moved to appoint Debra Walker as Clerk of Council; Fahl seconded. Appointment was approved unanimously.

Papai moved the selection of Kent Butler to serve as President Pro Tem and Chris Knisely to serve as Acting President Pro Tem; Patterson seconded. Selections were approved unanimously.

Knisely moved to designate Patrick Lang as Parliamentarian; Papai seconded. Designation was approved unanimously.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

Fahl moved approval of the minutes of the Regular Session of City Council held on December 16, 2013; Knisely seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS:

COUNCIL MEMBER PATTERSON announced that the Athens Community Center will be open for a warming station as the temperatures drop below zero. The warming station will be open from 6:00 a.m., every day through Wednesday evening, closing at 9:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBER KNISELY announced that the Finance Committee Members meet from time to time with the Mayor and Auditor, typically on Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m. She will report further if that day and time changes.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS:

MAYOR WIEHL noted that the warming station at the Athens Community Center plans to close at 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, as a warming trend is expected. If there are power outages in the community the date may be extended.

PRESIDENT SANDS passed along to Members the new standing committee assignments for this term of Council.

LAW DIRECTOR LANG provided City Council with a brief annual report from his office. His office continues to employ three full-time prosecutors and two full-time legal secretaries, tasked with the responsibility of maintaining the criminal docket in Municipal Court, handling a very large caseload for not only the City, but the entire unincorporated area of the County.

Civil litigation currently pending:

1. Federal Court case, Stotts vs. Pierson, the City of Athens and Board of Zoning Appeals are also named as defendants in this case, regarding the adult oriented business permit dating back to 2007, will be scheduled for trial in the upcoming weeks;

State Court cases:

2. Jeffrey Dill et.al. vs. the City of Athens and Integrated Services, a business operating on the City's east side – the City filed for dismissal of the taxpayer lawsuit associated with this case which was dismissed at the trial court level, appealed, and subsequently the dismissal was upheld by the 4th District Court of Appeals, and is successful, pending any further appeal;
3. Laries, Inc. vs. the City of Athens, infrastructure case involving business offices on Columbus Road suffering damages as a result of flood waters and backed up storm drains;
4. Matter vs. the City of Athens, infrastructure case – the City prevailed at trial court and is currently under appeal by the plaintiffs; and

5. Sean Jones vs. the City of Athens, a mandamus case in which a Columbus Road property owner is alleging that the value of his property has suffered some diminution in value involving a drain pipe that is a few feet outside of the City's right-of-way and on his property.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS:

Michele Papai announced the standing Transportation Committee meeting tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. at the EPW Department.

The following committees will meet next Monday, January 13th:

- Transportation
- Finance & Personnel
- City Services

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20 p.m.

President of Council

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council