

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of ATHENS CITY COUNCIL (REG. SESS.)

Meeting

BARRETT BROTHERS - DAYTON, OHIO

Form 6101

Held FEBRUARY 19, 2024

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL: REGULAR SESSION, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024, 7:00 P.M.

Athens City Council met in Regular Session at the above hour with the following members present: Clodfelter, Spjeldnes, Swank, Thomas, and Wood.

Also present: Acting President Pro Tem McCarey, Acting Mayor Crowl, Law Director Eliason, Auditor Hecht, and Service-Safety Director Stone.

McCarey moved to Amend the Agenda to position Item 8 prior to Item 7 due to the number of attendees that would like to speak; Swank seconded. The Amendment was approved unanimously.

Clodfelter moved to further Amend the Agenda to add R-01-24 for consideration of removing from the table; Thomas seconded. The Amendment was approved unanimously.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

Swank moved approval of the minutes of the Regular Session of Council held February 5, 2024; Thomas seconded. The minutes were approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Acting President Pro Tem McCarey read communications he received from Brian Stephens, on behalf of several other community members, and Brandon Thompson (see attached). He also shared a communication he forwarded to Council Members and City Administration (see attached).

Council Member Wood has received over 35 emails in support of R-02-24, two opposed, and one advising caution.

Acting Mayor Crowl read the following communication from the Athens Environment and Sustainability Commission: The Athens Environment and Sustainability Commission supports the creation of a Council of Governments (COG) for the core purpose to implement solid waste collection, processing and diversion, and urges the City of Athens' Administration to enter into a timely and productive negotiation with the Athens Hocking Solid Waste District and other relevant entities. This was unanimously passed by those members in attendance.

Crowl is happy to report that the City Administration is involved in those negotiations.

He also acknowledged approximately 38 messages from community members regarding the Middle East Resolution. He appreciates the citizen input.

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Service-Safety Director Stone updated Council on the Beasley-Mills fire on West Union Street that occurred over the weekend. The majority of the damage to the building was from water, and there was a significant displacement of residents, with thirty-seven of the thirty-one apartments occupied. The City set up a section of the Athens Community Center as an emergency shelter, and the Red Cross staffed the shelter with volunteers. These residents will be relocated into longer term housing until the building damage is remediated.

The City is in receipt of a communication from the City's liability insurance carrier. On September 30, 2023, damage occurred at the State Side Technology Park in which Quidel is a tenant. The Athens Fire Department was conducting training exercises with other local volunteer departments related to water movement. This included relay pumping, drop tank and drafting, and large stream applications. The other fire departments on site were Richland Area, Chauncey, Waterloo, and The Plains. On September 28, the City received permission to conduct this training from the tenants, and this is a location where training has occurred before. Toward the end of the exercises a water hammer or similar event caused high pressure in an 8-inch line feeding the fire suppression system in the building, causing a line rupture and water to flow in and throughout the building through a fire suppression riser. Once recognized, the Fire Department and other staff helped Quidel staff, and the building owner turn off the water and clean up what they could in and around the building. On October 3, the City was contacted by the property owners' insurance company and filed a claim on the same day with the City's carrier, the Public Entities Pool of Ohio (PEP), and was assigned a claims agent and attorneys to handle the matter. The damages are estimated to be significant, and costs are likely to be in excess of \$1 million, with claims both from the tenant and the property owners. On October 10, 2023, PEP retained outside legal counsel due to the complicated nature of the claims since the parties include the building owners', the tenants, the Athens Fire Department and the several volunteer fire departments. They conducted an extensive investigation and review of insurance coverage of all parties. The City is taking this matter seriously and has been communicating with all parties on a regular basis. The status, at this time, is that all parties have agreed to mediation. The attorney from the law firm is coordinating the mediator, dates, and venue. All inquiries on this situation should be referred to our Law Director's Office. Due to the nature and size of such a claim the City is compelled by its policy that all communications must happen through our insurance and retained attorneys.

ONE-READING RESOLUTIONS

R-02-24

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE DE-ESCALATION AND CEASEFIRE IN ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED PALESTINE.

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Wood believed that resolutions are a way for the Council to effectively voice their opinion, so why not use that opinion for peace, being the loving, progressive community we inspire to be. We can be the one facet of government that our citizens can interact with and give voice to their issue.

Wood moved for Adoption; Thomas seconded. Discussion: Thomas agrees this puts actions behind words for our City.

Spjeldnes thanked supporters here this evening for being so passionately interested in caring about human rights, here and throughout the world. She takes this situation very seriously and appreciates the interest expressed. However, she truly believes the majority of residents in Athens do not want the City Council to be involved in this kind of effort, as it is divisive and compromises inclusion and harmony. It sets a precedent that does not advance the City's best interest. She worries that this will cause more harm than good on the local level. She feels these efforts need to be addressed at the national and international level.

Swank, too, appreciates the public participation on this issue. He agrees that what is happening in the Middle East is condemnable and wrong. He respects the opinion of the Law Director's Office that this issue isn't really about the legislative duties and responsibilities of the City Council. He, too, is afraid this Resolution may do more harm than good, and he fears it may set a precedent, not so much acting on resolutions, but dealing with issues that might be handled better in a different environment.

Clodfelter thanked those citizens who have come to our last three City Council meetings to voice their thoughts. She shared that the City Council of Cleveland did a very similar Resolution and understands they have been swamped with requests to deal with other national and global issues. They are now finding it difficult to keep up with the business of Cleveland. Like Spjeldnes and Swank, she is concerned about future ramifications.

Barbara Lyons, Home Street, represents Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), urging the Council to join over 50 U.S. cities in support of a ceasefire resolution. Adding our public officials' voice demanding a ceasefire, our community can take a small, crucial step.

A Palestinian resident of Richland Avenue asked the Council to support this ceasefire Resolution.

Aya Syuo, United Lane, Athens County, shared updates of the worsening conditions of medical care during the last seven days in Gaza. City Council should support this Resolution.

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City resident Nancy Epling challenged the Council to do whatever it can to stop this injustice.

Selina Wilkinson, Grosvenor Street, is appalled that the State of Ohio would invest so heavily in the actions of Israel. She supports this ceasefire Resolution and hopes that it quickly becomes a move to return our tax dollars out of Israeli bonds and back into our community. She asked that Council listen to their impassioned constituents and do what they can to stop the devastation in Palestine.

Shelly Stark, Amesville, questioned how one could not support an immediate ceasefire.

Heather Cantino, Cable Lane, too, questioned why the Council wouldn't do what it can to support this ceasefire.

Nicole Adams, Shafer Street, a local teacher, implored the Council to use their voice and their power to support a ceasefire. "Stand up for what is right."

Drake Chamberlain, Amesville, asked the Council to support this Resolution so the voices of Athens can be heard.

A resident of Athens believes our local voice does matter and support of this Resolution is needed.

Ellie Hamrick, Jacksonville, thinks it is clear that the Council has influence that the citizens speaking tonight do not have.

An Ohio University Jewish student supports this ceasefire Resolution.

Tom Hayes, Columbus resident, believes supporting this Resolution should be a simple decision for the Council.

Paul Wood, Glouster, Athens County, sees this issue as a community crisis. It would be a devastating outrage to witness or read about how our local leaders failed to amplify our voices for peace. This ceasefire Resolution is a chance for a deeper unity in our community.

A resident of Maple Street stated that a Resolution is just one of many methods to take a stance in showing international support. "Our community must speak out." As a constituent, and a voter, she urged the Council to join dozens of other cities and vote yes on this Resolution.

A citizen urged Council to consider all who have come to speak tonight and to stand up for Athens and support this Resolution.

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Adoption was approved by a 4/2 vote, with Spjeldnes and Swank voting in opposition.

Clodfelter moved to Remove from the Table, Resolution 01-24; Wood seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

R-01-24

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TENTATIVE AWARD OF CONTRACT(S) FOR CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING OF THE CITY SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT #330. Discussion: Service-Safety Director Stone reported that a good bid was received last Wednesday from the Ohio West Virginia Excavating Company with a bid amount of \$1,791,000. Swank moved for Adoption, Spjeldnes seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING:

0-02-24

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 05-22 AUTHORIZING A CITY FIBER NETWORK, PROJECT 347. McCarey moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-03-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES FOR THE RICHLAND AVENUE PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROJECT #368. McCarey moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-05-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE COLUMBUS ROAD SHARED USE PATH PROJECT #365. Clodfelter moved for Adoption; Wood seconded. Discussion: Swank asked for clarification on the length of the path.

Stone responded that it will extend from Theater Lane through a limited access right of way to the bike path spur at the end of Columbus Circle to the Hockhocking Adena Bikeway.

Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-06-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING DISPOSAL OF A VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT NO LONGER NEEDED FOR A MUNICIPAL PURPOSE. Spjeldnes moved for Adoption; Thomas seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

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0-07-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING UNNEEDED OR OBSOLETE MUNICIPAL PERSONAL PROPERTY TO BE SOLD BY INTERNET AUCTION. Thomas moved for Adoption; Spjeldnes seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-08-24

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 50-23 AUTHORIZING WASTEWATER REMOTE SITE TELEMETRY IMPROVEMENTS, PROJECT #339. McCarey moved for Adoption; Spjeldnes seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING:

0-11-24

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2024 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 130-23, AND AUTHORIZING INTERFUND TRANSFERS. Discussion: Swank moved to amend to remove Section II until such time as an official from Municipal Court can attend to discuss their request; Thomas seconded. The amendment was approved unanimously. Swank moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to make our February debt payment; McCarey seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Swank moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

McCarey recommended a representative from Municipal Court be invited by Council President Crowl to attend Council's Committee of the Whole meeting next Monday.

0-12-24

AN ORDINANCE CONVEYING CITY-OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 83 COLUMBUS ROAD, TO THE ATHENS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION (ACIC). Swank moved to Amend to delete Section II; Clodfelter seconded. The amendment was approved unanimously.

0-13-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ANNUAL PURCHASE OF WATER SOFTENING SALT FOR THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT.

0-14-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE AND ACCEPT BIDS, WHERE NECESSARY, AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR THE EAST STATE STREET SIGNAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (#367); AND AUTHORIZING THE AUDITOR TO MAKE AN INTERFUND TRANSFER.

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0-15-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO CLOSE STREETS IN THE UPTOWN AREA FOR SPECIAL EVENTS DURING THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR, AND TO CHANGE REQUESTED DATES OR CANCEL EVENTS AS NECESSARY.

0-16-24

AN ORDINANCE SUSPENDING THE ENFORCEMENT OF ATHENS CITY CODE CHAPTER 11.04, VENDING, PEDDLING AND SOLICITING, TO ALLOW VENDING IN DESIGNATED EVENT AREAS.

0-17-24

AN ORDINANCE SUSPENDING THE ENFORCEMENT OF ATHENS CITY CODE TITLE 13, GENERAL OFFENSES, CHAPTER 13.04, OFFENSES AGAINST PUBLIC PEACE, SECTION 13.04.10, UNNECESSARY NOISE, IN DESIGNATED EVENT AREAS.

0-18-24

AN ORDINANCE SUSPENDING ATHENS CITY CODE SECTION 7.05.03, CONTINUOUS PARKING IN THE SAME LOCATION, FROM, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024, THROUGH MIDNIGHT ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2025.

0-19-24

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO SUSPEND, TEMPORARILY, THE FEE FOR PARKING AT METERED SPACES IN THE MUNICIPAL PARKING GARAGE.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

0-20-24

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING PERMANENT BIKE PATH AND UTILITY RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENTS FROM THE ATHENS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

0-21-24

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THEN-AND-NOW CERTIFICATES FOR PAYMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. McCarey moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to pay invoices in a timely manner; Swank seconded. Discussion: Wood asked for clarification on the need for Then-And-Now Certificates.

Auditor Hecht responded that a certificate is needed when a bill is received for supplies/services in an amount greater than \$3000, with no purchase order in place.

Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously.

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Swank moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-22-24

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2024 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 130-23, AND AUTHORIZING AN INTERFUND TRANSFER. Clodfelter moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to ensure timely payment of February medical bills; McCarey seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Discussion: Clodfelter asked about any shortfalls this may cause in the General Fund.

Auditor responded that it will not.

Swank asked for a recap on the need for these additional medical funds.

Stone explained that the City is self-insured. With any catastrophic claim, larger than \$110,000 in a given year, the City's Stop-Loss insurance kicks in. For a work force our size a typical number of catastrophic claims would be 3-4. In 2023 the City had 8 catastrophic claims. He's hopeful 2024 will return to a more normal year.

McCarey moved for Adoption; Clodfelter seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

0-23-24

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 135-23; REALLOCATING REVENUES FROM THE CITY INCOME TAX; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. McCarey moved for Suspension of the Rules in order to begin posting revenue to the Medical Fund; Swank seconded. Suspension of the Rules was approved unanimously. Swank moved for Adoption; McCarey seconded. Adoption was approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS:

Swank moved to Accept the January 2024 Financial Reports; McCarey seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

McCarey moved to Accept the January 2024 Credit Card Transactions; Spjeldnes seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Clodfelter moved to authorize the Law Director to sign ballots on behalf of the City approving an Opioid Settlement Restructuring Plan; Thomas seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

McCarey moved to confirm the Mayor's appointment of Tristan Kinnison to the Shade Tree Commission; Clodfelter seconded. The appointment was approved unanimously.

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OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO SPEAK ON LEGISLATIVE ITEMS AND CITY SERVICES NOT COVERED ON THE AGENDA:

Brent Hayes and Tom Parfitt, owners of the former McBee Building, on East State Street, currently known as State Side Technology Park, explained that tenant, Quidel, has 183 employees with about a \$14 million payroll. He expressed concern that there has been no dialogue from the City with the tenant about the September 30, 2023, water break occurrence. There has been no conversation with the City, nor any agreement for mediation. The owners are requesting reimbursement of money they have paid out of pocket to local contractors. There is still a large outstanding bill to ServePro, \$550,000. He stressed that this is not their bill to pay; it is an Athens City bill. There are approximately two years left on the Quidel lease, and after that there is no guarantee that they will remain in Athens, Ohio. He feels they and Quidel have been very patient, but this needs to be settled, and it needs to be settled quickly.

State Representative Jay Edwards, as a member of the State Legislature, has been able to bring millions of dollars to Athens City, the Armory Project, the Southeastern Ohio History Center, Passion Works, the Ohio University Airport, and the Athens Fire Department Regional Training Facility. He is very proud of those investments, but he is in attendance tonight to talk about priorities. He questioned the priorities of the City Council. The State invests a lot of dollars in our region in the form of public sector jobs, Medicaid and Medicare, and for public assistance for needy families, and this should be factored in when considering our priorities. Hundreds of thousands of dollars come into this City from Quidel, and not one time has anyone been to that facility prior to the accident, nor since the accident. He questioned what message that is sending to this company. He has spoken with developers and business owners that have chosen to do business in the City of Athens that do business all over cities in the Midwest. There is one common denominator; because of the regulatory Athens has either created or sat on, i.e., Shade Tree Commission, Athens City is by far the worst place they have ever done business. He questioned when that is going to change. "When are the City's priorities going to change?" When he looks at the priorities of the City, he sees plastic bag bans. "Is that our priority? What is the City doing to bring economic development to our area? Government is about priorities. The Resolution passed tonight, yes, it appeased a lot of people in attendance, but is it going to affect one thing in the Middle East? Is that what you're spending your time working on? You're picking and choosing things to work on that do not benefit the residents of Athens." He questioned why the State is fighting so hard to get funds into this City when you're not even doing things for yourself. He questioned how the City would make up for the loss of tax dollars if Quidel left Athens. He wants to work with the City of Athens, but we need to do better.

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Richard Vedder, retired professor at Ohio University, echoed the comments made by Mr. Hayes and especially articulated by Representative Edwards. The Council spent an hour and a half this evening dealing with foreign policy. This is Athens and we need to concentrate on Athens, rather than worrying about foreign policy. He thinks the City needs to work to resolve this situation with Quidel.

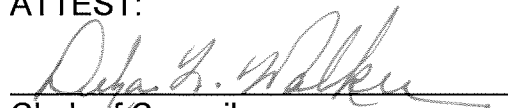
Brandon Thompson, Coventry Lane, would like to discuss improving the event street closure process and the use of mobile food vendors.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.



Acting President Pro Tem of Council

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council

On Union Street on December 10 three of our black female Ohio University undergraduate students overheard a group of mostly white males using anti-black racial slurs. According to the police report, the men “yelled at the individuals to challenge their use of the “N” word”, and then proceeded to follow the students while shouting racist obscenities at them. They then threatened our students with guns. We, the concerned community members of Athens, strongly condemn this incident of anti-black intimidation, and we call upon our friends and neighbors in the Athens community to join in denouncing this unacceptable behavior. Moreover, it is important to view this act of intimidation in a historical context. Black Ohioans have encountered instances of anti-black terror since the establishment of Ohio as a free state prior to the Civil War and into a contemporary moment when a sign advertising *Tablertown People of Color Museum* in nearby Stewart Ohio, was riddled with bullet holes. Unfortunately, knowledge about anti-black violence in our community is little known, and this is partly because of institutional silence and suppression. For example, the ability to be truthful about our shared Ohioan past and how it shapes today is under assault by legislation like Ohio Senate Bill 83. Novelist William Faulkner, one of the great chroniclers of race relations in the United States, wrote “the past is never dead. It is not even past.” Our black students that were threatened at gun point by white men hurling racial slurs at them surely understand this. With your help, we wish to build a community and a world where these students do not feel the debilitating weight of our past.

Dylan Vanover, AAUP Southeast Ohio Organizer

Cory Crawford, Associate Professor, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Ohio University

Dan Dennis, Associate Professor, Department of Theater, Ohio University

Loren Lybarger, Professor, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Ohio University

Courtney Koestler, Assistant Professor, Department of Teacher Education, Ohio University

Matt deTar, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Studies, Ohio University

Eddith Dashiell, Professor and Chair, Department of Journalism, Ohio University

Neil W. Bernstein, Professor, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Ohio University

Janet Duerr, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Ohio University

Katherine Jellison, Professor, Department of History, Ohio University

John Cotton, Associate Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Ohio University

Pam Kaylor, Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, Ohio University

Rachel Terman, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Ohio University

Charlie Morgan, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Ohio University

Patrick O'Keeffe, Associate Professor, Department of English, Ohio University

Robert Briscoe, Professor, Department of Philosophy, Ohio University

Jen Lisy, Assistant Professor, Department of Teacher Education, Ohio University

Cassidy Brauner, Professor, Department of Art & Design, Ohio University

Gaby Castaneda, Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, Ohio University

Myra Waterbury, Professor, Department of Political Science, Ohio University
Andi Bender, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Fitness & Wellness, Ohio University
John O'Keefe, Associate Professor, Department of History, Ohio University
Lindsey Martin, Assistant Professor, Department of Film, Ohio University
Nicole Reynolds, Associate Professor, Department of English, Ohio University
Julie White, Professor, Department of Political Science, Ohio University
Joe McLaughlin, Associate Professor, Department of English, Ohio University
Sarah Webb, Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, Ohio University
Bethany Lemont, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Ohio University
Uzoma Miller, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Instruction, Undergraduate Advising Coordinator, Provost Office Emerging Leader Fellow, Department of African-American-Studies, Ohio University

Gary Holcomb, Professor and Chair Department of African-American Studies, Ohio University

Marcquis Parham, Assistant Director of Career and Employer Engagement, Ohio University

Brian Stephens, Assistant Professor, Department of African-American Studies, IARTS, Media Studies, Ohio University

Debbie Walker

From: Micah McCarey
Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 6:18 PM
To: Debbie Walker
Subject: Fw: Please read at City Council on Monday Feb. 19

Dear Debbie,

I'm providing the email below to you for your reference since I will include it among communications I share during tonight's Council meeting.

Micah McCarey

From: Brandon Thompson <bfunk4prez@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 2:08 PM
To: Micah McCarey <mmccarey@ci.athens.oh.us>
Subject: Please read at City Council on Monday Feb. 19

Hi Micah,

Can you ask that this is read at city council tonight during the communications section? Thank you!

-Brandon

In accordance with Resolution R-06- 23 passed on August 21, 2023 by Athens City Council Reaffirming its commitment to oppose all forms of bigotry, prejudice, and racial injustice

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is committed to cultivating a space that centers and celebrates the diverse lived experiences of all members of our community...

I would like to remind the city of Athens that during Black History month there are two events happening this week that all citizens can attend that highlight and celebrate the lived experience of people of color residing in Athens.

Tomorrow, Tuesday February 20th at 6:00 pm

The 5th Annual Black History Month Community Celebration will occur in the Athens Middle School Auditorium with reception to follow in the cafeteria. Five years ago, a small group of eighth-graders worked to have Andrew Jackson Davison's, Athens's first Black attorney, portrait installed in the Athens County Courthouse next to the 1876 portrait of local attorneys that excluded him. To share this accomplishment with the community, a group of middle school students hosted the first community celebration for Black History Month in almost 30 years back in 2020! The AJD Club has grown to three chapters — The Plains Intermediate School, Athens Middle School and Athens High School. Expect food, performances, updates and opportunity for an increased community. All interested in preserving and celebrating the lived experiences of Black people in Athens are encouraged to attend.

Heroes in Color - A film series featuring people of color put on by two people of color, Gordon Briggs and Brandon Thompson at the Athena Cinema weekly on Thursdays at 7:00 pm throughout Black History Month. Each show will feature added content such as trivia, introductions on the importance of each film to the culture, raffles, themed drinks and more!

The series has featured Black Panther, Blade and Everything Everywhere all at Once and concludes with the final two screenings of

Feb. 22 SPIDER-MAN: ACROSS THE SPIDER-VERSE

Feb. 29 THE LAST DRAGON

more info available at <https://athenacinema.com/heroesincolor>

-Brandon

Brandon Thompson

DJ B-Funk

740-707-3681

<http://www.djbfunk.com>

"But there are more of us, Poe, there are more of us"

Debbie Walker

From: Micah McCarey
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 4:46 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Lisa Eliason; Steve Patterson; Lacey Rogers; Andy Stone; Andrew Chiki
Subject: Draft Resolution for Discussion by Committee of the Whole
Attachments: Draft 3 Resolution - Guidance for Global Crisis.docx

Dear City Council and Administrative Colleagues,

During our Committee of the Whole meeting on February 12, 2024, I proposed the possibility of a resolution focused on leveraging a partnership with the Strong Cities Network to respond to polarizing issues impacting the Athens community. I shared detailed resources about the Strong Cities Network with Council via email prior to and after the meeting. At time stamp 00:31:58 of the Committee Meeting recording from February 12, I suggest that such a resolution might be titled A RESOLUTION OFFERING GUIDANCE FOR NAVIGATING LOCAL IMPACTS OF GLOBAL CRISES.

Please find attached, a draft for A RESOLUTION OFFERING GUIDANCE FOR ADDRESSING LOCAL IMPACTS OF GLOBAL CRISES, which I will request as an agenda item for the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for Monday, February 26, 2024. I have received and addressed feedback from the city council president, law director, and from Strong Cities Network representatives. Included in an earlier draft of the attached resolution were a list of eight benefits of partnership with the Strong Cities Network which I have now extracted from the draft for brevity and included below for your information.

With thanks for your consideration,

Micah McCarey
Athens City Council Member-at-Large

The benefits of the Strong Cities Network membership the City of Athens will hold will include:

1. Access to a growing network of more than 226 cities around the world united in efforts to address hate, extremism, and polarization through an inclusive, peer-learning model.
2. The diversity of our members is among the Network's greatest strengths: whether urban or rural, big or small, mayors and cities will find peers facing similar challenges and implementing approaches that can be tailored to local contexts and dynamics.
3. Participation in Strong Cities Global Summits, workshops, conferences, roundtables, webinars, and trainings (both virtual and in-person) to facilitate the sharing of experiences, lessons learned, practical approaches and innovations.
4. Cities in North America and Europe can also participate in our Transatlantic Dialogue Initiative, which provides opportunities for local leaders and cities on both sides of the Atlantic to exchange approaches and perspectives on a range of shared challenges.
5. Access to Strong Cities guides, tools, and our growing library of City Spotlights housed in our Resource Hub, as well as resources from Strong Cities' many partners at the national, regional and international levels.

6. A platform through which to showcase and share Athens' work on prevention and response – whether during Strong Cities convenings or through written/multimedia case studies in our living resources for mayors and cities.
7. A key pillar of the Strong Cities mission is to also elevate the voices of mayors and other local leaders so that the priorities and experiences of cities will be reflected in national, regional and international policy-making.
8. Possible introductions to federal entities, the UN and other international organizations, civil society groups and non-government organizations to further support the multi-actor, whole-of-society approaches required for effective and sustainable prevention and response to challenges.

A RESOLUTION OFFERING GUIDANCE FOR ADDRESSING LOCAL IMPACTS OF GLOBAL CRISES

Introduced by Councilmember McCarey (or by All City Council Members, TBD)

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is devoted to cultivating a City that ensures all members of the community are supported; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is committed to creating a future where community members of all diverse race, age, religion, ethnicity, citizenship status, gender identity, and sexual orientation, are welcomed and can thrive in an intersectional democracy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens acknowledges the work of Council by declaring racism a public health crisis in Athens City Resolution 10-20; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens condemns anti-Blackness, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and all forms of racism; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens acknowledges the devastating effects of global crises including but not limited to war, genocide, racism, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens understands citizens' requests both in support of and in opposition to local elected officials using their leadership positions to amplify citizens' international concerns to state and federal policymakers; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens acknowledges receipt of citizens' requests both in support of and in opposition to Athens City Council adopting a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and opposing genocide and other war-related humanitarian crisis confirmed by the United Nations International Court of Justice; and

WHEREAS, at least 47 U.S. cities have passed resolutions calling for a ceasefire, including Akron and Dayton; and

WHEREAS, the Strong Cities Network's publication, *Navigating Local Impacts of Global Crises: Ten Considerations for Mayors and Cities – Lessons from the Israel-Gaza Crisis* indicates "City leaders and councils will need to consider and balance whether such resolutions and debates can achieve their desired ends or whether they will simply stoke division within their communities"; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens acknowledges local concerns that Ohio citizens are indirectly supporting the war in Gaza through the Ohio Treasury's confirmed purchase of Israeli bonds; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens has received an opinion from the Athens Law Department advising against the City Council adopting a ceasefire resolution because "Council has never adopted a resolution calling for a ceasefire in an active armed conflict" and because "Council resolutions should be within the scope of issues that arise in local government. Adopting a resolution of this nature opens the door to similar resolutions with tenuous connections to the daily affairs of running local government"; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens supports strengthening local efforts to promote peace and social cohesion; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is committed to investing in public safety and in services that ensure all community members' safety, health, and well-being are centered; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is one of six North American cities working with the Strong Cities Network over a two year period ending September 30, 2025 to develop and implement strategies for preventing and responding to hate, extremism and polarization; and

WHEREAS, due to their understanding of local communities, mayors and other local leaders are well-placed to identify the priorities of their residents and develop innovative approaches to identify and address feelings of exclusion, injustice and marginalization before they manifest in violence and to mitigate the social and economic consequences if they do; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Strong Cities Network is to provide a global platform through which cities can share and exchange practical, impactful approaches to addressing rising hate, extremism and polarization that threatens social cohesion worldwide; and

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, OHIO:

SECTION I: The City of Athens hereby confirms its commitment to supporting the work of the City's Athens Community Relations Commission, which is charged with reducing intergroup tensions, promoting tolerance and goodwill, and ensuring equality of treatment and of opportunity of all person regardless of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin or ancestry, marital or familial status, religious belief, age, or disability.

SECTION II: The City of Athens hereby confirms its commitment to building a long-term community cohesion and resilience framework so that partnerships can be drawn on as part of a whole-of-city response when/if hate or extremism emerges or polarization rises, or in support of ongoing efforts to address discriminatory historical or structural legacies or injustices.

SECTION III: The City of Athens hereby confirms its commitment to promoting transparency and pursuing open dialogue between city officials and the Greater Athens Community to understand peoples' lived realities and aspirations, partnering with other organizations to create safe spaces for difficult conversations (including about racism, injustice, and hatred) among cross-sections of the local population.

SECTION IV: The City of Athens hereby confirms its commitment to investing in and supporting data- and evidence-based policies and analysis thereof, which allows our city to better understand threats to social cohesion in our community and builds capacity to collaborate around frameworks that effectively address local grievances and remain responsive to a continuously changing and increasingly interconnected and dynamic threat environment.

SECTION V: The City of Athens hereby confirms its commitment to partnering with the Strong Cities Network and with local organizations to explore the concerns and opportunities identified within this resolution.

SECTION VI: This Resolution shall be in full force and effect at the earliest moment permitted by law upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.