



~ ATHOL CITY NEWSLETTER ~ & WATER UTILITY BILL January 2018



Athol, A New Direction

City Hall will be closed this month for the following:

Monday Jan. 15th, 2018

Martin Luther King Jr. Day



“Senior Meeting and Lunch”

The Athol senior group will be meeting at noon on Monday, January 8th. Anyone who is 50 or older is welcome. Please bring a food item to share.



AARP TAX HELP

Will be available again this year, every Monday beginning Feb 6, 2018 through April 10, 2018; at the Athol Community Center.

You must call first and schedule an appointment. **NO WALKS-IN's.** Please contact Janet at 208-683-2407.

Tax-Aide services low to moderate income taxpayers of any age. You don't have to be a member of AARP to use this service.



For questions and sign up for Circuit Breaker Applications/Energy Assistance, please call 208-664-8757, they will all be handled by phone.

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

@ 7:00 PM 1st & 3rd Tues.

CITY HALL - 30355 3rd

208-683-2101

Clerk/Treasurer Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00-4:30pm

Fridays 8:30am- 12:30 pm

Future Council Meeting Dates:

January 2, 2018

January 16, 2018

February 6, 2018

February 20, 2018

March 6, 2018

March 20, 2018

April 3, 2018

April 17, 2018

May 1, 2018

May 15, 2018

City website:

www.cityofathol.us

Mayor:

Bob Wachter

City Council:

Mary Zichko

Bill Hill

Shane McDaniel

Josh Spencer

City Attorney:

John Cafferty

City Clerk/Treasurer:

Lori Yarbrough

Public Works/Water Operator:

Mark Mitchell



Timberlake Fire District winter driving tips:

- Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the gas slowly to accelerate is the best method for regaining traction and avoiding skids. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on ice and snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, turning – nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- The normal dry pavement following distance of three to four seconds should be increased to eight to ten seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- Know your brakes. Whether you have antilock brakes or not, the best way to stop is threshold breaking. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- Don't stop if you can avoid it. There's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- Don't power up hills. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill as slowly as possible.
- Don't stop going up a hill. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road.
- Stay home. If you really don't have to go out, don't. Even if you can drive well in the snow, not everyone else can.
- Keep headlights on for safety.



Stay calm if stranded:

- Pull off the roadway, if possible, turn on your hazard lights or light road flares.
- Call 911 if you have a phone and describe your location as precisely as possible.
- Remain in your vehicle so help can find you.
- Run your vehicle's engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. Open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and clear snow from the exhaust pipe to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Exercise a little to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion and sweating.
- Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Conserve your vehicle's battery. Use lights, heat, and radio sparingly.



*The Food Bank wishes to Thank you for giving!
200 Food Boxes went out each, for Thanksgiving & Christmas*



There were over 212 kids who received gifts this year through the Sharing Tree. Thanks to the generous donations provided by countless clubs, groups, businesses and local individuals.



Did you know . . . that Winter has arrived, please take a few minutes to remove any personal items left in the city right-of-way. Items left in the right-of-way are there at your own risk. Cars, trucks, boats, trailers, misc. items, all need to be removed for the plowing.

Mayor Wachter, "Looking Forward in 2018"



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As we enter the new year we, here at the City, are busy working hard in many areas.

Addressing things that need updating such as the Comprehensive Plan.

❖ An updated Comprehensive Plan will help to identify a desired vision for the city's future, identify priorities, and articulate strategies to address those community priorities. The Comprehensive Plan is anticipated to be a key policy and action document for the City of Athol, to be used by staff, government agencies, economic development entities, elected officials, boards and commissions, developers, property owners, and residents as a guide for future land use development, capital investments, and growth management decisions over the next 20 years and beyond.

We have also applied for a \$50,000.00 grant to conduct a Transportation Plan.

We will be notified sometime in March if we were selected, and if awarded, this grant is 100%, no matching funds from the city are necessary.

❖ A Transportation Plan will allow us to inventory our existing system including pavements, signs, and pedestrian facilities; evaluate existing and future needs; and then prioritize those needs into a capital improvement plan. The education we will receive from creating this plan will help us utilize funding sources not currently available to us, and better understand our transportation needs. This will allow us to take better care of ourselves, our neighbors through continued cooperative interaction, and our community.

In June 2016, the City was approved for a 50% Match grant from Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to have a Water Master Plan done. That plan is now nearing completion and should be ready for a public hearing and the city council approval, hopefully this February 2018. After that, the council will need to decide what the next steps will be to improve the aging infrastructure. In addition, we are having a rate study done by the Idaho Rural Water Association, to help us best decide where the city water rates need to be going forward.

❖ The Water Master Plan will help to identify and address a list of water system deficiencies and problems which includes evaluation of the Cemetery Tanks for possible repair or replacement, replacement of aging well equipment at both well facilities, and thousands of feet of 4-inch water main that may need upsizing. The City needs a water facilities master plan, because it will address the system, as well as its parts.

This Spring we will once again begin planning for the upcoming Fiscal Year (2019) budget. This is a time when every line item in the budget gets reviewed and decisions are made as to if we can decrease our spending in anyway. We also try to plan or anticipate for any upcoming spending needed for various repairs or improvements. We then meet a number of times to review this information with the full council. Ultimately there is a public hearing in mid to late summer and then the council will pass the budget.



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Around February we will begin preparations for planning for some annual city events, such as Beautification (tentatively set for May 19th) and Athol Daze (Saturday, August 11th) We are always looking for volunteers to help out and watch the city newsletters for upcoming monthly planning meetings on these events.

The City has been spending a huge amount of time and money working with the contracted City Planner and Attorney to handle annexation requests, building location permits, and code enforcement.

- ❖ While the annexation for Super 1 Foods has been completed there have still been other inquires and additional applications that are being discussed. We believe we are beginning to get a handle on the building location permits and efforts are on-going with the code enforcement and violations. There is a lot of cost to the city to write letters and correspond with various property owners, as well as, communicating the nature of violation and to help mediate possible remedies for the violation. We now issue “Friendly Reminders” as we notice or receive a complaint of a possible code violation. The intention of this is to begin raising awareness of city code in the most helpful manner possible; these friendly reminders allow a property owner to become aware of a possible issue and inquire by either going on-line to the city website and looking at the city code or giving the city planner or city hall a phone call. It’s progress, but it is slow. We encourage our community to be a courteous neighbor; it’s costly for the city to pursue code violations.

Lastly, the staff will be eagerly working towards updating the city records retention policy. The city’s records were swept under the rug, so to speak. We will be identifying, sorting, and cleaning out all types of documents.

- ❖ Record Retention and the management of public records is a vital function of the city. The Idaho law, along with a city resolution, governs the types of records and the length of time each record is kept. Establishing a list of permanent, semi-permanent, and temporary categories for the various types of records allows for a more orderly and efficient way to manage city records. Doing so identifies and protects the history of our city.

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Winter has officially arrived and along with that comes snow plowing.

Just a few reminders to help make winter a happier time for all of us. Items left in the right-of-way are left there at your own risk and could be struck by a snow plow during plowing. If there is damage to a snow plow or other city equipment caused by items that have been left in the right-of-way you could be subject to reimbursing the City the cost of that damage.

Cars, trucks, boats, trailers, misc. items all need to be removed for the plowing. When removing snow from your driveway do not snow blow or plow snow into the street.

We make every effort to NOT leave a berm in your driveway but occasionally during a heavy snow event this is not always possible. Please cooperate with our Public Works and/or his crew, if any, for the plowing of the city streets.

Thank you in advance and have a great winter.

If you have any questions, please call city hall 208-683-2101.





Tree Lighting Festival Huge Success

Nearly 400 people packed the gymnasium to share in 18 gallons of Chili, 280 hotdogs, 45 pies, 300 sugar cookies, 100 cups of coffee, 80 cups of cocoa, 5 gallons of water and 12 pounds of Christmas candy, what a SPECTACULAR festival.



The Blakely family snaps a photo with Mrs. Claus.

Athol Chamber of Commerce wants to extend a HUGE THANK YOU to our local businesses for their generous donations to the Chamber which funded the first annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting Festival. Together we created a Christmas gift of a fun-filled evening for many families in our extended 83801 community.

It takes a lot of people to coordinate such an event. Thank you to those donating homemade chili, to the ladies from the Grandmother's Club for serving food all night long and to Rob Harsh and daughter Nichole for running our kitchen. Chamber member Kathy Corder made the beautiful snowman bulletin board in the entryway. Rick Cameron for designing and building the "Athol Elf Mail" box and donating it to the Chamber. Marie Harsh made the

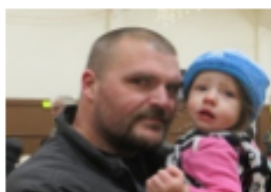
wreaths and fudge for the free raffles.

Thanks to all the different ones who decorated and worked in the booths; the City of Athol, Gates of Praise, Timberlake Fire Protection District, Athol Baptist Church, Athol Library, SME Software, Inc. and Mrs. Claus, and Maddie Robb, our face painter. Several pulled double-duty in more than one booth. A special thanks to Chamber guests for the evening, Denim and Diamonds 4-H Club. They worked with Santa's Letters and with their own Festival of Trees; making a generous donation to the ABC Food Bank of \$500.

The Community Christmas tree drew a crowd of its own; at the countdown, Doug Harms did the honor of plugging in the lights for the very first time. In the spirit of recognizing those in the community that give and give; the Chamber of Commerce donated Christmas candy to the ABC Food Bank for the Christmas Baskets in memory of Bob Pekar, who selflessly gave to the children of our community.



*Athol Elf Mail
by Rick Cameron*





<p>Sunday - (NEW) Compulsive Eaters Anonymous – Openness, honesty, and willingness (Every Sun) 4pm</p> <p>Monday – Fit n Fall Class (Mon, Wed, Fri) 10am-11am, Gym Grandmothers Club (3rd Monday each month) 10am-1pm Real Life Ministries Youth Group (every Mon) 6pm Senior Meeting (1st Monday of each month) 12 noon-3pm</p> <p>Tuesday – Food Bank (every Tues) 9am-12 noon & 1pm-3pm (Contact Charlotte Hooper at 683-3244) City Council Meeting (1st & 3rd Tues each month) 7pm Eager Beavers 4-H (2nd Tues each month) 6:30pm-7:30pm</p>	<p>Wednesday – Fit n Fall Class (Mon, Wed, Fri) 10am-11am, Gym Remington Water District (every 3rd Wed) 6:30pm Darla Dryer Dance Classes (every Wed) 3pm-6:30pm</p> <p>Thursday – Lady A’s (every Thurs) 9am-10am Athol Chamber of Commerce (3rd Thurs) 7pm</p> <p>Friday – Fit n Fall Class (Mon, Wed, Fri) 10am-11am, Gym</p> <p>Saturday – Big Book Recovery AA’s (every Sat) 5pm-6pm Farragut Flyers (ever 1st & 3rd Sat) 10am-noon</p>
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Upcoming: The next City Council Meetings for January 2018 are: Tuesday, January 2nd and again on Tuesday January 16th both at 7:00pm. **City Hall will be closed for the following days this month: for Martin Luther King Day on Monday, January 15th - which also means the water bills are due by Friday the 12th to avoid the fee!**



WATER BILL ↓

From the Athol City Hall - January 1, 2018



ATTN: Water payments due this month by Friday the 12th to avoid a late fee.