

The Coeur d' Alene Press
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Athol city clerk fired

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ATHOL - Athol's city clerk was fired Tuesday night amid allegations of embezzlement.

Council members unanimously voted to fire clerk Sally Hansen, said Councilman Lewie Miller. Miller and other elected officials would not release additional information on Wednesday.

"The sheriff (Ben Wolfinger) was at the meeting last night and all I can say is it's under investigation," he said.

Hansen could not be reached for comment. She had served as Athol's clerk since 2009.

The Kootenai County Sheriff's Office confirmed an investigation was underway and that an arrest has not been made, but declined to release further details Wednesday due to the active investigation.

Tamie Cunningham will temporarily act as clerk until a replacement is hired. Tuesday's meeting was not recorded and minutes were not immediately available for release.

An Athol resident, who wanted to remain anonymous out of fear of retaliation, said allegations that a city employee can't be trusted with taxpayer funds is upsetting.

The woman said she and other residents didn't receive a water bill last month.

"It's all a cluster ... " she said.

In the interim, Athol Mayor Darla Kuhman encourages residents to drop off the monthly base water rate of \$13.50 (\$27 for the two months) to be current on their bills. She said bills won't be sent this month, but should resume next month. She said the city will keep track of who has paid their bills last month and this month.

Kuhman said since the clerk generally handles details with Athol Daze, slated for Aug. 9 this year, volunteers and auction items are needed. Those interested should call 683-2101, 964-1077 or 964-1022.

"We're flying off the cuff and still looking for a band," Kuhman said.