



**Approved Minutes**

## **Regular City of Athol City Council Meeting**

Held in the Council Room in City Hall

**Tuesday, January 20, 2026**

### **Council Meeting**

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**Mayor Ruch called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.**

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Mayor Ruch; Councilwoman Devine; Councilman McDaniel; Councilwoman Porter; Councilwoman Kramer; City Clerk/Treasurer-Lori Yarbrough; Public Works-Pete Weigman; Nick Peterson, Attorney and Rand Wichman, City Planner. Not Present: 0.

#### **REPORTS:**

**TREASURY REPORT** – Lori submitted the December 2025 report; Lori read the ending STCU Checking account balance on the report was \$174,007.45; the ending Savings/Money Market account was \$42,243.71; and the ending LGIP account balance was \$1,704,576.17. The P1FCU Money Market was \$80,860.44 and the savings was \$57,888.70. Lori also shared the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter financial statement was available now and it looks like we are right on track. She briefly shared the percentage of revenue and expenses to date for the general fund and water fund.

**WATER REPORT**- Lori submitted a written report. Lori shared the December usage was 3,877,095 gallons; coin haulers were 242,000 gallons. December billed utilities were \$23,508.00, overage \$450.00, and monies collected was \$24,270.50. Lori said there were 40 late accounts this month and she thought they were maybe 3 or 4 shut off notices. Pete added he has been flushing hydrants to get the water back to normal faster, and he thinks it is all good again we are getting good reports back. The mayor shared his appreciation to Pete for the great recovery in how he handled the issue overall. Pete added that if or when there is a next time the city will be prepared for it and it shouldn't cost so much.

**PLANNER REPORT** – Rand submitted a written report and recapped- the Area of Impact- Rand attended the county's meetings but said he thinks the county is going to take the position that they will closely scrutinize the various request for Areas of Impact to be discussed further tonight in an action item. Sheep Springs Road- Rand has completed its research with the title company over access easements across Tallant's property from the existing approach onto Highway 54 to the city's cemetery property. No such easement exists at this time, so we will need to make sure we include the right to use ITD's right of way for access in our discussion about relinquishing the Sheep Springs approach. Development Projects – Rand has had a few discussions with prospective buyer of the property east of Robert's road, just north of the Crossings development. They may seek the Council's opinion on a potential annexation of the property through the annexation consideration process. The same property was looked at by a different prospective buyer last June.

**PUBLIC WORKS REPORT** – Pete submitted a written report and highlighted it with the council. He's done some friendly reminders, but one has fixed their violations. He will update council next month on where that goes. A new code violation that just popped up today for a violation of living in an RV in the commercial zone and has spoken to the property owners who were considering leasing out the property to a towing company and the concerns for getting the property up to compliance for that nature of use; also addressed that living in a RV is not allowed. Pete also wanted to share the equipment needs list that was in their council packets, though he's not ready for a discussion yet, he

*NOTE: The City will make reasonable accommodations for anyone attending this meeting who require special assistance for hearing, physical or other impairments. Please contact the City Clerk at (208) 683-2101 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting date and time.*

wanted to share some thoughts or possible directions he will be needing from the council in the near future. But it is related to getting the last 90 water meters swapped out and the process in which we do it.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1) **APPROVAL OF THE December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes:**

**Motion by Kramer, that we approve the meeting minutes for the 16<sup>th</sup>, without amendments.**

**\*DISCUSSION \* All in favor-any opposed. Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

2) **APPROVAL OF BILLS AS SUBMITTED: Motion by Kramer that we approve paying the December/January bills as submitted without amendments.**

**\*DISCUSSION-** Lori shared she did purchase more envelope with the city logo on them; we also incurred a \$25 bank fee because of needing copies of items older than 6 months for audit purposes. And finally, she shared she ordered more checks; we generally only need to purchase every two years or so, should be right around \$500.00. Lori also shared there was more bills listed than normal since we cancelled the last meeting due to the holiday. All in favor-any opposed. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

-----**SWEARING IN OF NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS**-----

Mayor swore in Council members, Cindi Devine and returning Council member, Shane McDaniel.

3) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL of the council to select a council president for a 2-year term.**

**Motion by Devine, to recommend Shane McDaniel to serve as the council president and be the 3<sup>rd</sup> signer on the city bank accounts (STCU & PIFCU).** **\*DISCUSSION** Roll Call Vote: **Devine-yes; McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Porter-yes. Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

4) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to purchase 2 Meter Box Sampling Stations.** Pete shared he thinks going forward all new subdivisions should be required to provide one of these, he then shared with the council the logic as to how or why he wanted to purchase two of these sampling stations that will help with monthly testing. After a brief discussion the following motion was made:

**ACTION ITEM Motion by Porter, to approve the purchase of 2 new Meter Box sampling stations; not to exceed \$1,500.00.** **\*DISCUSSION-** Roll Call: **Kramer-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine-yes. Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

5) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to allow the Athol/Spirit Lake Grandmother's Club use of the Community center for another year, at no cost. Motion by Devine, to approve another year of use by the Grandmothers club for free.**

**\*DISCUSSION-** Pete shared he loves how the grandmothers club decorates for the various holidays and it really shows the small-town pride. Roll Call Vote: **Devine-yes; McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Porter-yes. Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

6) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL of the annual city alcohol license renewals.** Lori shared

nothing new just asking for the approval of all the existing license upon them coming in with their new state and county license and then paying the appropriate fee. She added as a reminder if there are any transfers or new applications; those will still be brought to the council at a meeting. Then the following motion was made: **Motion by Devine to approve the city clerk to renew all the alcohol licenses as listed; each as they bring their current new state and county licenses and payment of the fees.** **\*DISCUSSION** Roll Call: **McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine-yes; Kramer-yes. Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

7) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to consider a new recommendation to the county for the Area**

**of Impact map.** - Rand gave an update of what has happened with the 4 big cities and the council regarding their negotiations on their maps. He shared that the county has now just decided to stick to the law with not more than 660 feet from the current boundary nor splitting property with no additional standards. Rand shared he basically needs to know if the city is ok with the map as shown now with those parameters; if not then he will need to schedule a workshop. After a short discussion the council wants to table it for a month and will think on that and or reach out to a county commissioner to have a discussion before they decide as a city. **No Motion, item was tabled.** \*DISCUSSION only.

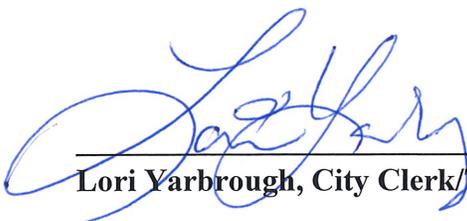
**NO ACTION TAKEN**

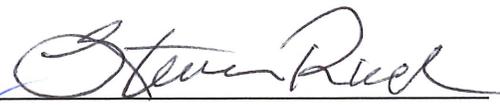
**ANNOUNCEMENTS: City Council Porter-** Wanted to know if there was anything more happening regarding ITD dumping more traffic out onto the frontage road from Parks road in front of the elementary school. She knows that Silverwood has now been sold and hears they have plans for a 300-room resort. The only response was that no-one else felt there was anything further to do regarding the matter, ITD already had their open house to make comments. Lori did remind the council that it was mentioned to us to be sure to update our comprehensive plan or other related plans so they can know what desires of the council for future growth and use are. **Councilman McDaniel** – Shared that he met a few times with the Tallents and has been working with them and the city engineer to address the cemetery survey property lines concerns. He gave a brief rundown of history and what he found tracing the steps to where we are today and what we need to do to correct the errors. This was just a discussion of his sharing and for the next council meeting we will have an agenda item to agree to pay the engineer a bit more to get the documents all corrected and to draft out the easements to ensure the city has the correct access to the cemetery moving forward. / **Mayor – none.** / **Staff Lori-** 1) She shared a new Deputy Clerk, Amanda Clark, has been hired and started on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January. 2) She also shared the flyers in the council packets for the upcoming US-95 Corridor Safety Workshop- didn't know much more about it but just a reminder. 3) Lori put in the information on the Wildfire Mitigation Plans for Avista and KEC in case any council was interested. 4) ITD has reached out regarding the BNSF railroad showing interest in getting crossing elimination grants for the Hwy 54 railroad crossing; there may be a future workshop on that since the railroad is showing interest, she will keep the council informed as she hears more. **Pete-** 1) Hired another winter seasonal part-time as the first guy didn't work out; her name is Macey and she also started on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: none**

**ADJOURNMENT at 8:10pm**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Lori Yarbrough, City Clerk/Treasurer**

  
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**Steven Ruch, Mayor**

Approved at Council on 2/3/2026

