

Approved Minutes

City of Athol Budget Workshop & Regular Council Meeting
Held in the Council Room in City Hall

Tuesday, July 7, 2026
5:00pm & 6:00pm Regular Council Meeting

FY2027 Budget Workshop#2 began at 5:09pm. Lori shared the updates in the draft FY27 budget and staff shared a few projects they would like to have considered in the updated draft. Projects in the office centered around getting the software to accommodate e-billing, scanning, electronic permitting, code enforcement tracking, and on-line payments. Public Works projects were related to the purchase of a new tractor; the discussion led to the idea to surplus several other vehicles/items to help offset the cost of a new tractor. Additional money was allocated towards the cemetery updates, road improvements, and park improvements. Councilwoman Porter shared her interest in the city looking into generators to run the community center in the event of major emergencies. The workshop ended at 5:58pm.

Mayor Ruch called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

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

REPORTS:

PUBLIC WORKS: Pete submitted his written report and he noted that he is getting quotes for road repairs as well as quotes for the fence at the cemetery. Councilwoman Porter noticed on his report that the new spring rider toy in the park has gotten broken already. She commented that is why she thought we should have gone with a more durable rider toy than we did because it's only been a year and it already been broken. Pete shared the problem is that large people are using them, and the toys aren't built for that.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) **APPROVAL OF THE June 16th MEETING MINUTES:** Motion by Kramer, that we approve the meeting minutes for June 16th, without amendments. *DISCUSSION * All in favor-none opposed. Motion passed. **ACTION ITEM**
- 2) **APPROVAL OF BILLS AS SUBMITTED:** Motion by Kramer, that we approve paying the June/July bills as submitted without amendments. *DISCUSSION- Lori briefly pointed out a few that were not regular bills. All in favor-none opposed. Motion passed. **ACTION ITEM**
- 3) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL of Catering Permits for Athol Daze:** Lori explained to council that this year Sweet Lou's and American Legion would both like to be allowed to sell hard alcohol, like Sweet Lou's did last year. She added that the Pastime Bar would also like to be included, but she wasn't sure the event or the council would support 4 total beer gardens; Council agreed 3 was enough. Iron Pizza was already approved for beer and wine. After a short discussion the following motion was made: Motion by Devine, to approve the two catering permits (#2026-05 & #2026-06) for Athol Daze as requested; both for beer, wine & liquor. *DISCUSSION – Porter wanted it noted that last year she did not support the hard alcohol request, it did appear to go fine; but this year she just doesn't

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.

feel like we need two of them, so she is voting no. **Roll Call:** Porter-no; McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Devine-yes. **Motion Passed. ACTION ITEM**

- 4) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for Electrical Work for the new Park Restroom:** Pete explained that since it had been about nine months since the bid the electrician needed to update his bid due to cost of materials increasing. We didn't think this project would take as long as it has. So, Pete went back to the lowest bid that was accepted by council and got an update, with additional request by staff to extend electrical to the stage to prevent extension cords lying on the ground. This addition and price update adds about \$1,600 more to the project and that new price of \$4,150.00 still beats the previous bids, who haven't even updated their prices. Therefore, Pete didn't go back and get any other updates and is just recommending the council approve the bid from Rickel Electric. After a brief discussion the following motion was made: **Motion by McDaniel, to approve an updated electrical bid for the new park restroom; not to exceed \$4,200.00.** *DISCUSSION – This would be paid for through the general fund park improvement account #6472. The estimated date for delivery is now the 3rd week of July, so maybe in time for Athol Daze. **Roll Call:** Porter-yes; McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Devine-yes. **Motion Passed. ACTION ITEM**
- 5) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL of the Fiscal Year 2026 Audit Engagement Letter with Alpine Summitt CPAs.** Lori shared the engagement letter and the cost, while it does keep going up she reminded the council that last year we did try asking around to other cities and our audit cost is still better than many other cities; therefore, she recommended the city stay with Alpine Summit CPA. After a short discussion, the following motion was made: **Motion by Devine to approve using Alpine Summit CPA's for the Annual 2026 Fiscal Year Audit and authorize the mayor's signature on the engagement letter; not to exceed \$19,815.00.** *DISCUSSION **Roll Call:** McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Devine-yes; Porter-yes. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**
- 6) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to accept a new Beer license at Buckshot Barber (in the old little town market building.)** Lori shared they are currently licensed at their Rathdrum location and now would like to do it here in Athol. She has gotten approval from the state and county. **Motion by McDaniel, to approve a new beer license at 6101 E Highway 54 C, for Buckshot Barber.** *DISCUSSION- **Roll Call:** McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Devine-yes; Porter-yes. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

DISCUSSION:

- 7) **Regarding the Draft Ordinance pertaining to Kratom in the City:** Councilwoman Porter requested this to be a discussion item and lead the conversation. She asked the Clerk to include the draft ordinance that the county is considering, and she stated she would like to see the city pass a similar ordinance. The ordinance is regarding not banning all Kratom, but rather the 7-OH and adding some regulation on sales of natural leaf kratom. She ultimately wanted to know if the rest of the council was open to listening to a presentation with the county regarding this topic. After a short discussion on what a regulation or ban might look like and considering that the state is likely to pass some legislature on it eventually, the council was open to listening to a presentation with the county.

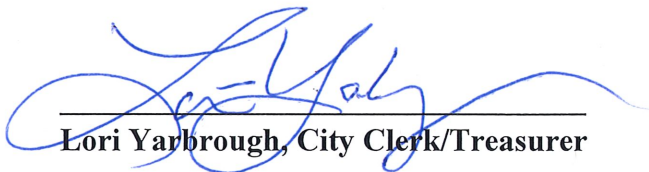
ANNOUNCEMENTS: City Council – Councilwoman Kramer asked if we knew how long the construction on Highway 54 will last, the light at Meadow has really gotten traffic backed up. / **Mayor** - none. / **Staff** – Lori 1) Shared the Athol Daze committee's recommendation of the Cutlers for Citizens of the Year and there were no objections. 2) Shared that the America 250 celebration in the park on July 3rd was well attended and sounds like everyone had a really great time. The music was great, Iron Pizza was there and the American Legion cooked 280 hamburgers and 100 hotdogs. 3) There was a fire at city hall in one of the trashcans next to the front doors on July 4th; a couple was here at about 11:30pm lighting off

fireworks in the joint parking lot with the library. They put their trash here in the garbage can and it caught fire. Lori received a call from the sheriff's department just after they got it put out. Thankfully a passerby saw it and called it in before it caught the building on fire. Pete looked up the security footage, and we don't believe it was intentional, more just carelessness. Pete 1) Wanted to thank the Mayor and Councilwoman Porter for aligning with the governor and giving the staff the extra paid day off for the American 250 celebration.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 1) Gina Rogers of Rathdrum, ID – She is a local small business owner in Rathdrum and she appreciates the council having a discussion on public safety importance and the use of Kratom. Days ago, the DEA announced its intent to schedule concentrated chemically produced products 7-OH. These are synthetic products that have generated a lot of recent headlines and concerns about safety. For years these products in question have been marketed under the name Kratom, even though they are different from traditional kratom leaf which creates confusion when trying to regulate it. Natural kratom only contains trace amounts of 7-OH. The DEA's announcement is important because it recognizes the difference between the chemical products and the traditional/natural kratom products. The federal government is now trying to define and determine which products should remain on the market. She asks the council to adopt an ordinance that bans synthetic products and sets guidelines for the sale of the traditional/natural leaf kratom or at least pause the subject for 30 days as she believes the federal government will pass something soon. As a business owner she would support strong regulations on natural leaf and support removing the highly synthetic products from the market. She doesn't want to see a full ban on natural leaf products as there have been a lot of responsible users who rely or depend on the benefits of the product. 2) Aly Mathes of CDA, ID – She is 24 years old and wants to share a testimony in support for responsible regulation of the uses of natural Kratom. She shared how it impacts the quality of her life, so she doesn't want the natural stuff banned; but would approve of having safeguards and safe access for the natural leaf. She believes there is a difference between the chemically produced Kratom/7-OH and the natural leaf, and she believes they should not be lumped together. 3) Mason Valdez of CDA, ID – He is 22 years old and wanted to share his voice for Kratom regulations same as Aly. Many people use the natural Kratom for pain relief. The traditional natural leaf is different than the chemically altered version of 7-OH or Kratom. He feels the DEA made it clear they are not targeting the natural Kratom, but the synthetic version, so that is what he's asking the council to consider doing the same.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:01pm

ATTEST:



Lori Yarbrough, City Clerk/Treasurer



Steven Ruch, Mayor

Approved at Council on 7/21/2026

