

Approved Minutes

## Regular City of Athol City Council Meeting

Held in the Council Room in City Hall

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

### Council Meeting

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 February 2026 report; Lori read the ending STCU Checking account balance on the report was \$63,698.45; the ending Savings/Money Market account was \$92,308.59; and the ending LGIP account balance was \$1,775,139.49. The P1FCU Money Market was \$100,083.72 and the savings was \$61,208.03.

**WATER REPORT**- Lori submitted a written report. Lori shared the February usage was 2,613,053 gallons; coin haulers were 182,800 gallons. February billed utilities were \$25,376.00, overage \$416.00, and monies collected were \$26,617.00. Lori said she felt there were still quite a bit more than normal, so she hadn't charged fees yet, they were going to give it one more day.

**PLANNER REPORT** – Rand submitted a written report and recapped: Area of Impact- the county has acknowledged they have received our response of looking to have a workshop and said they will let us know. Rand would like this workshop to be just with Athol and not a mix of other cities he will move forward with general communication after a sufficient amount of time has passed without letting the county continue to delay. Sign code amendments workshop later this week. Developments: Coltn Acres and other potential Annexation request touching base again looking for updates and minor discussions, not sure if any action will result. Sheep Springs Road- Rand shared his slow progress still waiting on agreements. Area of Impact Project – Heiberger Storage – This project has been working with the county for a conditional use permit, and the city has previously provided a comment letter to the county last September. This request is back in front of the council set for later on tonight's agenda. Highway 54/Railroad Grade Separation – ITD and BNSF has had 1 meeting last month with stakeholders to discuss funding opportunities for the project, another meeting is scheduled for this month, but this will be slow going before we really know much.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

##### 1) APPROVAL OF THE March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes:

**Motion by Porter**, that we approve the meeting minutes for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> with the one noted amendment. **\*DISCUSSION\*** Porter asked that under announcements "it reads HB626 was setback requirements" and it was Jail Impact fees. All in favor-any opposed. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

*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.*

- 2) **APPROVAL OF BILLS AS SUBMITTED: Motion by Kramer that we approve paying the March/April bills as submitted without amendments.** \*DISCUSSION- Lori briefly shared a few uncommon bills. All in favor-any opposed. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**
- 3) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL Regarding the County Conditional Use Permit for Heiberger Storage Rand** gave a brief reminder timeline of the progress to date, then shared the new circumstances and then asked how the council felt about it and what they want to recommend he respond with. After a short discussion the following motion was made: **Motion by Devine, to recommend directing staff, Rand, to negotiate with the county the just discussed proposal; recommending the full 240 feet be paved and then offer the condition that the city would take over all maintenance after that.** \*DISCUSSION Roll Call Vote: Devine-yes; McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Porter-yes. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**
- 4) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to purchase Fertilizer for the parks.** Pete shared this is an annual expense it is just over the allowed staff spending limits. He provided 2 quotes then the following motion was made: **ACTION ITEM Motion by Devine, to approve the purchase of fertilizer; not to exceed \$650.00.**\*DISCUSSION NOTE- Roll Call: Kramer-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine-yes; **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**
- 5) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL related to Code Enforcement for the address located at: 29876 N 1st St.** City Attorney, Nick, reminded council that everything we spoke about at the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting was in executive session and further to reference the 3 options as #1 his recommendation of action that you all agreement with #2 alternate enforcement or #3 do nothing on this matter. He also asked the council when drafting their motion to include giving the Mayor contract authority to lessen the delay in the desired action. This was more related to money and logistics of finding a company to do the work. **Motion by McDaniel, to approve moving forward related to code enforcement for the address located at: 29876 N 1<sup>st</sup> street, with option #1 pursuant to advice from Legal Counsel and to authorize giving the Mayor contract authority.** \*DISCUSSION Roll Call Vote: Devine-yes; McDaniel-yes; Kramer-yes; Porter-yes. **Motion passed. ACTION ITEM**

**DISCUSSION ITEM:**

- 6) **Discussion about a City Ordinance regarding Homeless Camping (Does the council want to consider adding language in the code to regulate.)** Councilman McDaniel shared the various other city's languages, and he likes the county's language best. But he feels it's important for the city to get a drafted ordinance to address this matter. Councilwoman Porter – questions that if Idaho code already applies then why do we need to pass one for the city? In the recent matter feels it was delt with questions about why we would need to adopt one, as it would be redundant. Public Works, Pete – shared the most recent incident over the past couple of weeks and that we are bringing this forward because the deputy recommended the city adopting something. Pete also added that he believes the state code only applies to larger sized cities and doesn't cover Athol. After a bit of debate on interpretation of the state code and the attorney explaining his understanding; three of the four council members were interested in directing staff to draft up a basic ordinance to consider adding to the city code. Councilwoman Porter wanted to state that she doesn't support the city having a homelessness camping ordinance; City of Post Falls doesn't have one and they are much bigger than Athol. Councilman McDaniel doesn't care what other cities have he wants to give our staff the tools to address these matters if or when the circumstances come up. Councilwoman Kramer- would like to add that she would like to see some basic language and doesn't want to see a bunch of rules in this ordinance.

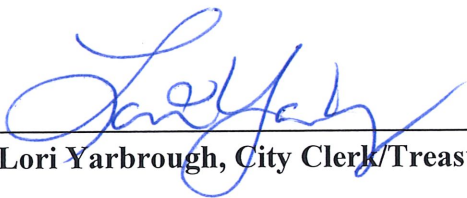
- 7) **AIC District Training – Tuesday April 14<sup>th</sup>** - last chance to tell Lori if you want to attend. Cindi, Lori and Amanda are the only three interested as of now.


**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** **City Council Councilwoman Devine-** Asked if staff was doing anything about the fire district parking on that side lot again. Lori shared that Pete hadn't been told about it, but we did get a citizen comment regarding it as well; she will share that permit and agreement with Pete so he can be aware and watch for this. **Councilwoman Porter-** Wanted to ask about her concerns over the stop sign that was moved on Menser closer to highway 54. There was a short discussion and the city attorney weighed in that he thinks where it was, is probably more liability on the city than where it was now moved to. But he would also encourage the city to have a study done to have a valid basis on where and when stop signs should be; just the council giving their opinions may not be defensible. A study is done by experts in those areas or fields. **Pete-** shared when and why the sign got moved and stated that moving the sign to the new location now meets the manual of uniform traffic safety code recommendations. **Councilwoman Kramer-** knows that it's been discussed before, but she was interested in having public comments both in the beginning of the meeting as well as the end of the meeting. After a short discussion the Mayor said he would consider doing this on a case-by-case basis. / **Mayor – none.** / **Staff Lori-** 1) She shared there is a NIMS training on April 7<sup>th</sup>, she will forward you the specifics if you are interested it is 4 hours long. 2) Thursday City Hall will be closed for District Clerks meeting in Spirit Lake. 3) Lori also wanted to share Pete had his 1-year anniversary with the city. **Pete-** 1) Shared that Macy will be leaving us at the end of the month, and Scott is feeling good and wants to come back again this summer.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: none**

**ADJOURNMENT at 7:40pm**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Lori Yarbrough, City Clerk/Treasurer**

  
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**Steven Ruch, Mayor**

Approved at Council on 4/7/2026

