



**Regular City of Athol City Council Meeting**  
Held in the Council Room in City Hall

**Tuesday, May 19, 2026**  
**Council Meeting**

**Mayor Ruch called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.**

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

**REPORTS:**

**TREASURY REPORT** – Lori submitted the April 2026 report; Lori read the ending STCU Checking account balance on the report which was \$40,487.88; the ending Savings/Money Market account was \$92,408.89; and the ending LGIP account balance was \$1,843,623.50. The P1FCU Money Market was \$100,291.58 and the savings were \$66,223.51.

**WATER REPORT-** Lori submitted a written report and also gave the council an amended report because staff noticed an error in the water usage in gallons. Lori shared the March usage was as 2,599,737 but is actually 2,613,053 gallons; coin haulers were 237,082 but is actually 182,800 gallons previously reported. Lori shared the April usage was 3,042,270; and coin haulers were 241,220 gallons April billed utilities were \$25,376.00, overage \$464.00, and monies collected were \$28,869.38. Lori said she felt there were about 37 accounts with late fees charged, and about 5 accounts that will get the 7-day shut off notice.

**PLANNER REPORT** – Rand submitted a written report and recapped: Area of Impact- the county has set a workshop date for June 11<sup>th</sup>; he is not as hopeful that it will be very productive as it will be with the other cities and they plan to also share their comprehensive plan updates at this same meeting; he would have liked it to be just our city with the county. Sign code amendments - The March 19<sup>th</sup> workshop didn't have much to it as Council members Porter and Kramer will work on re-writing the next draft. Developments: We have received a new subdivision application for a 2-lot subdivision on 5960 E. Menser from Roberta Watson. No other updates on other development projects. Cemetery Boundary line Adjustment- Rand shared he has a plan for completing the boundary line adjustment between the cemetery property and the Tallents. He is working with the attorney to get a legal opinion on a few items but hopes to see some movement in the next month. Highway 54/Railroad Grade Separation – ITD, Idaho Forest Group, BNSF and UP all met again with stakeholders to continue to discuss funding opportunities for the project. BNSF appears to be serious about making a meaningful contribution to the required local matching funds. ITD is trying to find some money to assist but is having difficulty in light of recent budget cuts but will match with in-kind (staff -time) donations. UP and IFG do not appear to be willing to help fund the planning grant. IFG may oppose the whole project if they don't get their preferred alternative. The city will also be asked to make a contribution. Another meeting will be scheduled for next month.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

*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.*

- 1) **APPROVAL OF THE May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes: Motion by Devine, that we approve the meeting minutes for the 5<sup>th</sup> with the amendment. \*DISCUSSION Lori shared there was an error on #6 in the minutes the vote for Porter should be a no instead of a yes. All in favor-any opposed. Motion passed. **ACTION ITEM****
- 2) **APPROVAL OF BILLS AS SUBMITTED: Motion by Devine that we approve paying the April/May bills as submitted without amendments. \*DISCUSSION- Lori briefly shared not many bills this time. All in favor-any opposed. Motion passed. **ACTION ITEM****
- 3) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL of Resolution 2026-03 04 the Adoption of the Kootenai County All Hazard Mitigation Plan (AHMP) This renewal is required to be reviewed every 5 years; this would be the city's 3<sup>rd</sup> term in doing so. Lori previously sent an email with the link; it was tabled on April 21<sup>st</sup> for more time to review. No discussion, the following motion was made: Motion by McDaniel to recommend approving Resolution 2026-04 the AHMP and direct the Mayor to sign and Lori to submit it back to Kootenai County Office of Emergency Management.\*DISCUSSION Roll Call Vote: Devine-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes. Motion passed. **ACTION ITEM****


**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

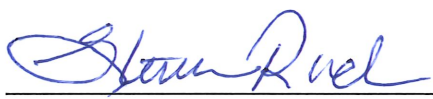
- 1) **Discussion regarding the city park's future for trees and the septic tank drain field area –** Lori shared several photos of ideas that staff had for improvements in the park; they want the council to begin thinking about what they want the park to look like and if they would consider approving some of these if they got bids for them. Overall, the council liked the bigger boulders the best to block parking from the septic drainfield that is now located directly behind the park stage. Though they noted it will likely be too expensive, they can guarantee they will approve it. Staff will do some research on costs or see if they can get donations to help offset the costs. Pete also shared a few pictures of two specific trees in the park that he thinks need to be cut down because of their health; if they remain they will likely continue to drop large branches in the park. He is afraid they are a danger to the public. He spoke with a local arborist it was his opinion they need to be removed also. He isn't asking for approval at this time but would like the council to look at the two trees in question and talk about it again in the future.
- 2) **Discussion regarding any interest in addressing a Kratom Ordinance –** This was a request by Councilwoman Porter. She shared her knowledge regarding this herbal substance and how it's being used; and that local government entities are beginning to ban/regulate it because it is a concern for communities. It is being sold in Athol businesses currently and she thinks we should consider hosting a town hall on the subject. There was just a brief discussion, no action taken, and no direction or interest by the rest of the council at this time, as there is belief that the state will likely act on it in the future.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS: City Council – Devine-** shared the news she heard about her neighbor's dog being drugged with marijuana after his regular walk, which is here in town. Also, of significance to note was what the vet told him; they are getting at least 5 of these a week now. / **Mayor – none.** / **Staff – Lori –** 1) Jeni Cook has been hired for the part-time temporary Athol Daze help. 2) They are trying to get a status update when the park restroom building arrives, not date yet. **Pete –** He is working on getting bids to replace the baseball field park fence as it is pretty old and falling in places.

**ADJOURNMENT at 6:33pm**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Lori Yarbrough, City Clerk/Treasurer**  
 City Council Minutes for May 19, 2026

  
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**Steven Ruch, Mayor**

Approved at Council on June 2, 2026