Unapproved Draft Minutes

Regular City of Athol City Council Meeting

Held in the Council Room in City Hall

Tuesday, September 1, 2026
Council Meeting

Mayor Ruch called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M.

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

REPORTS:

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – Pete submitted a written report and made only one comment on a type-o. #5 July should be August. No other questions or comments made.

ACTION ITEMS:

1) **APPROVAL OF the August 18th meeting minutes. Motion by Devine, that we approve the meeting minutes for the August 18th regular meeting with the one type-o amendment.** *DISCUSSION * All in favor-none opposed. **Motion passed**. ACTION ITEM

2) **APPROVAL OF BILLS AS SUBMITTED: Motion by Devine that we approve paying the August/September bills as submitted without amendments.** *DISCUSSION- Lori shared a few bills that are not normally on the list like the semi-annual ICRMP payment, and a couple related to the new park restroom building. All in favor-none opposed. **Motion passed**. ACTION ITEM

PUBLIC HEARING:

FY2027 Annual Budget Appropriation Ordinance #452 Mayor opened the hearing at 6:10pm to take and consider public comment on the adoption of ORDINANCE #452 the FY2027 Annual Budget Appropriation. The Mayor asked if there was anyone wishing to speak, now is the time, speak loud and clear because it is being recorded. He asked once more if anyone wants to speak now is the time to come forward; hearing none, he closed the public hearing comments at 6:11pm. He then invited the council to deliberate or make a motion. City Clerk, Lori shared with the council after getting the L-2's and numbers from the county she only made about $1500 difference in the budget to adjust for new construction/property tax max values. She felt pretty good about being so close in her predictions and said no other changes were made since the last draft.

3) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to Suspend the Reading of the Rules for the FY2027 Annual Budget Ordinance Motion by McDaniel to approve suspending the rules requiring a first and second reading of the order and move for its adoption by title only.** *DISCUSSION- Roll Call: Porter-yes; Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes. **Motion passed/failed.** **ACTION ITEM**

Mayor then read the proposed ordinance by title: ORD #452 - AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR

***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.*

BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2026, APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF $ 1,201,743.00 TO DEFRAY THE EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES OF THE CITY OF ATHOL FOR SAID FISCAL YEAR, AUTHORIZING A LEVY OF A SUFFICIENT TAX UPON THE TAXABLE PROPERTY, DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO FILE CERTIFIED COPIES OF THIS ORDINANCE WITH THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND IDAHO SECRETARY OF STATE AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

4) MOTION by Devine, to approve the passing of ORDINANCE #452 while under the suspension of the reading of the rules, this is the FY2027 Annual Budget Appropriation as presented and to direct the clerk to publish by summary only incorporating the title as to the body of the summary and authorize the Mayor's signature on the 2026 L-2 Property Tax Levy documents. *DISCUSSION **Roll Call Vote:** Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes. **Motion Passed.** ACTION ITEM

5) DISCUSSION/APPROVAL the Fiscal Year 2027 Annual Regular Meeting Dates: Lori lead discussion and review of council meeting dates for FY2027. Overall, there were 3 dates she asked council to cancel based upon a holiday or Athol Daze. After a short discussion the following motion was made: **Motion by Devine to accept the new Fiscal Year Regular Meeting Dates with the 2 additional cancelations and direct the clerk to post for the year. *DISCUSSION Roll Call:** Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-no; Devine-yes. **Motion passed**. ACTION ITEM

PUBLIC HEARING: Vacation Request by Justice Owens of East Freemont Street- to take public comment and consideration of the request for road vacation. The Mayor opened the public hearing at 6:19pm City Planner, Rand Wichman, introduced the request, then encouraged the applicant to be allowed to speak after him. Rand shared the applicant just recently purchased the property and had torn down the old Engles house that was previously onsite. He then made a lot line adjustment with the county realigning the 3 easternmost lots from a north-south direction to 3 east-west lots so that each lot now faces Pastime Street and that makes them buildable as is. The reason for the vacation request is to gain access to the 3 westernmost lots to make them buildable. As is a road would need to be constructed, and the water brought down to get them street frontage. The Freemont road right of way is 60 feet wide. Public notice was posted and sent out according to Idaho Code 50-311 and there were 2 written comments received and were included in the council packets and added to the file. Both of those comments were from the property directly north and are in favor of the road going to the applicant instead of split between them. Applicant, Justice Owens, thanks Rand for such a good job explaining the request and only wanted to add that he thought the city might feel that leaving the property "as is" might be a fire hazard, since there is a lot of wood and debris. The mayor opened the floor for public comment and asked twice if there was anyone wishing to speak and with no response from the audience, he officially closed the public hearing at 6:44pm. Then he encouraged the council to begin their deliberation and make a motion.

6) DISCUSSION/DECISION of the Freemont Road Vacation by Justice Owens
Motion by McDaniel to approve the request to vacate the city Freemont Street road right of way granting all of the right of way to the applicant with the condition 6.01 as recommended in the staff report. *DISCUSSION **Roll Call:** McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes. **Motion passed**. ACTION ITEM

7) DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to Switch from Ednetics to our own UniFi Network System
Lori shared that Ednetics (Cisco/Meraki Equipment) sent their notice of the upcoming end of the current licensing contract and a new annual renewal contract. The rate was $7,180.55 for just this year, and this will be an annual contract to keep licensing for the current network. This was not something on her or anyone's radar; as the first 5 years were paid with the Broadband Grant (2020/21)

with Fatbeam. Lori being unaware of this contract ending as well as being concerned with the high costs, inquired with Jens at Sandpoint Computer about the issue. He evaluated what the city currently has and then made a recommendation of leaving Ednetics and switching to our own Network System, he can help set up and monitor it at less cost this year and years in the future, with no annual license needed. Jens was available to better explain and answer questions. Council asked him a few questions and after a short discussion the following motion was made: **Motion by Devine to approve the Sandpoint Computer proposal for the City's own UniFi Network System; not to exceed the one-time cost of $6,500 and therefore discontinuing our licensing need with Ednetics.** *DISCUSSION – This would be paid from account #6313 IT Support 50/50split. **Roll Call:** Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes.
Motion Passed. ACTION ITEM

8) DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for the Purchase of a Network Storage Device: Lori shared the purpose of making this change is to begin/better scan invoices, files, and records making them electronic, searchable, and better organized. This allows for easy records retention compliance, streamlined public records requests compliance, simplifies internal office processes, and opens accessibility for staff. In addition, state compliance reporting and the auditors are asking for files to be made electronic when providing information to those outside entities. The office is currently operating at 80% or more in paper. In previous years staff had mentioned using Laserfiche; however, in staff's research it was discovered that we no longer believe Laserfiche is necessary and would like to set up an internal system with Sandpoint Computers at much less cost. Roughly comparing Laserfiche (approx. $4,000 annually) (paying per user, per scanner) to internal processing (for less than $1,000). Our support contract with Sandpoint Computers covers training and set-up for this, and he will help monitor for updates in the software in the future. Jens was available for questions, council had a short discussion and then the following motion was made: **Motion by Devine, to approve the recommended purchase of a Network storage device (4TB) as presented; not to exceed $1,000.00.** *DISCUSSION – This would be paid from account #6313 IT Support 50/50split. **Roll Call:** Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine-yes. **Motion Passed.** ACTION ITEM

9) DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for the Purchase of Snapscan Scanner(s): Lori shared this is related to the last discussion. These are the scanner(s) needed to carry out the internal replacement of an external system like Laserfiche.. The bid shows the cost of 1 scanner; but 3 in total for the city would be preferred, each of the 3 employees would have it at their desks to quickly scan. **Motion by Devine, to approve the purchase of 3 snapscan scanners as presented; not to exceed $1,500.00.** *DISCUSSION – This would be paid from account #6452 equipment/computers 60/40 split. **Roll Call:** McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes. **Motion Passed.** ACTION ITEM

10) DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for an Administrative Platform for Permitting and Code Management: This was a previously discussed item from a past meeting, council asked Lori to get more answers to their questions and provide a contract in writing. Attached is that information as requested. Staff requests approval of the contract with Civic-Review. Civic-Review is a software that handles all kinds of government forms including permitting, licensing and aids in the workflows of those permits and licensing. Civic-Review is one price $6,000 annually for all components used or unused (compared to pay per component with iWorQ was $5,500 annually for just the Community Dev Pkg - permitting, the $1,800 was permitting only internal use); while the city may not use all of the components initially or ever, the extra cost of $500 to have it all if/when the city needs it makes more sense. The additional components are Cemetery, building rentals, park rentals, business licensing, alcohol license & renewals, custom creation of forms. Staff and Jens are available for questions. **Motion by Porter to approve an annual contract with Civic-Review and authorizing the mayor's**

signature on the contract; not to exceed $6,000.00. *DISCUSSION This would be paid for with account #6313 50/50 split G/W. If tight this year can also use 6315 other professional. **Roll Call:** Porter-yes; Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes. **Motion passed.** ACTION ITEM

11) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for New Computer Screen Monitors:** Lori explained that staff will also be creating an overall plan for the city to adopt a policy regarding the life of computers so that budgeting is easier and risk is lower to the city for hacking etc. In addition, the auditors are also asking for a policy regarding city assets and the life cycle of city property. Staff will begin working on these policies to present at a future meeting. The monitors being requested have been recommended by Jens. Jens also added a set replacement schedule helps with budgeting and replacement that overall saves in recovery costs if something does ever happen (think of it as a Disaster Plan for IT). **Motion by Blackwell, to approve the purchase of 4 Dell Monitors; not to exceed $900.00.** *DISCUSSION**-** This would be paid for with account #6452 equipment/computer 60/40 split. **Roll Call:** Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes**. Motion passed**. ACTION ITEM

12) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL to Purchase an ACV for the Coin Hauling Station** Pete lead this discussion and shared the problems being encountered with the coin hauling station. Two problems happened, the coin acceptor was jamming up, and the water was not shutting off and that is related to a valve sticking and clinoid. He shared that the clinoid might not be replaceable and then we would still need to replace the parts and valve, he recommends we just replace them now. After a short discussion the following motion was made: **Motion by Porter, to approve the purchase of an ACV for the Coin Hauling Station; not to exceed $2,300. *DISCUSSION-** This would be paid from account #6455 Water maint/repairs 100%W. **Roll Call:** Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes; Porter**-yes;** Devine**-yes. Motion passed.** ACTION ITEM

13) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for Park Improvements from Athol Daze Proceeds** Lori provided a recap of Athol Daze income/expenses and proposed purchases. Options: 2 or more picnic tables $2500+ matching the 2 blue ones we purchased last year for under the shelters in the park; apply/save it to the park stage expansion costs (unknown working on finding contractors$5k?); green temporary turf cover for the baseball field for Athol Daze $550; removal of the 2 trees in the city park stage area (under $4kish?); account for payroll for part-time staff help for Athol Daze, or any combination**.** After a discussion of the various options the following motion was made: **Motion by Blackwell, to approve using Athol Daze proceeds from this year's event for the purchase of the green turf, the removal of one tree, the two picnic tables, one 14ft bleachers, and any of the remaining funds to be used towards the stage expansion.** Pete will work on getting bids for the stage and that will come back for council approval. And going forward $4,000 shall be added to the expenses of Athol Daze. This is half of the current cost of hiring a part-time employee to help with Athol Daze. Roll Call: McDaniel-yes; Porter-yes; Devine (left early) Blackwell-yes. **Motion passed.** **ACTION ITEM**

14) **DISCUSSION/APPROVAL for a New Fence for the Mountainview Cemetery**
Pete received 3 bids and was available to answer questions. He said this is work that can be done in this fiscal year, using cemetery expense acct #6473 general fund**.** Then the following motion was made: **Motion by McDaniel to approve a new fence at the Mountainview Cemetery; not to exceed $7,000.00 to use either bid A or D, whomever can get to the work first at Pete's discretion between the two..** *DISCUSSION Roll Call: Porter-yes; Devine-yes; Blackwell-yes; McDaniel-yes. **Motion passed.** ACTION ITEM

ANNOUNCEMENTS: City Council – Councilwoman Porter 1) Asked the council again how they felt about her asking Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Dr Duke Johnson the (Coroner) to come speak at the next regular meeting regarding Kratom. She felt Councilwoman Blackwell hasn't heard what they have to say and since the council is considering an ordinance regarding the matter, she would like to have everyone hear from them and what the county is doing on the matter. The rest of the council agreed to having them come speak. 2) She told Pete thank you for providing the information on the tires in her packet. **Mayor – none.** / **Staff – Lori –** 1) Reminder of the III-A Wellness visits on Thursday Sept. 10th. 2) Lance Sayers with AIC would like to meet for a workshop with the council on Sept. 15th before the regular city council meeting. Lori shared he could do some basic roles and responsibility reviews and have some discussions on impact fees and the matter of Area of Impact. 3) Oct 6th is the district AIC workshop if anyone wants to attend let her know and she will register them. 4) Park Restroom Improvements **-** In trying to use the remaining ARPA funds, we have talked about a few add on's; rocks and locks on the doors have been made. A few other ideas or additions are a roof or awning over the walk path, or a water fountain/water bottle. Pete used AI and drafted a couple of pictures as options; options #2 & #4 were more favorable, but we won't really know any costs until we get bids. This will come back to the council for their approval once bids are obtained. Pete added that there have been some obstacles for the building and we have not yet taken possession of the building; hoping to get them remedied soon.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:22pm

ATTEST:

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Steven Ruch, Mayor

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Lori Yarbrough, City Clerk/Treasurer

Approved at Council on