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Today's News... This Morning

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Tuesday, February 14, 2023

Athens, Tennessee

Athens City Council Study Session

The Athens City Council held its monthly study session last night. The council does not take any votes during the study session but places items on the agenda for their formal meeting next Tuesday when votes will be taken. Items discussed for the agenda included: The termination of the contract for the new public works and humane shelter with Roberts Construction Company in Chattanooga and awarding the contract with Keith Wilson Construction of Athens. Replacement of 24 year old playground equipment for the Parks Department at Cook Park. Changes in inspection and permitting fees for codes enforcement in the Community Development Department. Placing the city council meeting agenda by the city council instead of by the city manager as was done previously. Appointments to several citizens committees by council members. Possibly changing the terms where a police officer can drive a patrol car to their home, even if their home is in a surrounding county in order to be competitive with other area law enforcement agencies in recruiting. There are currently 11 openings in the Athens Police Department with a possibility of 6 new officers being hired. Parking problems downtown primarily along Washington Ave. from Highway 30 to the traffic light on North Jackson Street. The city manager search committee has received 44 resumes and will narrow those down to 4 for the council to consider. A revised city manager contract was presented to each council member by Mayor Sherlin to take home and evaluate for possible changes for the new city manager. And an invitation to visit the McMinn Senior Citizens Center which will reopen on March 10th after being repaired from significant water damage when pipes burst during the big freeze in December.

Community News You Can Use

- ✓ Women of The NEST networking and information session will be held on Wednesday, February 22nd at 8:30 a.m. at 3 West College Street. Ann Zack, Senior Business Advisor for Pathway Lending, will be the guest speaker. She will share "Funding Fundamentals" for your business.
- ✓ In Lieu of the regularly scheduled February McMinn County Commission Meeting, the Commission will hold their Annual Strategic Planning Session on February 24th at 6:00 pm. at the McMinn Higher Education Center on Denso Drive in Athens.
- ✓ TVA is lowering its fuel cost for March which will be great for AUB's customers. "It is important for all customers to understand that AUB's portion of the rate is unchanged from last month. TVA is lowering their fuel rate this month, which we welcome," said AUB's Wayne Scarbrough. AUB's portion of the rate for March is \$0.07244, exactly the same as it was in December, January and February. March 2023 will be the last of four months during the "winter" rate season. April and May will be what's called "transition" months, when AUB's power rate is the lowest of the year. All of this comes in the wake of TVA representatives testifying before Tennessee lawmakers on February 7 about the rolling blackouts that TVA enforced on local power companies on December 23 and 24. "Just before Christmas was the first time that we have ever had to take the step of actually cutting people's power off in order to save the TVA grid," said AUB's Wayne Scarbrough. "We believe that TVA should do what is necessary to avoid this type of event in the future. No question about that. And we believe they should, at least for this year, take a serious look at the bonuses they give out every November to the tune of \$160 million dollars and more instead of leaning on ratepayers to make up any shortfall," said AUB's General Manager Eric Newberry."AUB has had less than an eight percent increase in its power rate in more than 25 years. But TVA has increased their power rate, which just pour over on our ratepayers, more than 60 percent in less time. We don't understand why TVA won't operate like a true public power provider," Scarbrough said.
About 83 cents of every dollar that AUB's power division collects go to TVA for wholesale power.

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Tuesday, February 14, 2023 Morning Fax@...Today's News This Morning Page 2 Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

◆ **Frankie Sue Winder Benton**, age 88, passed away Saturday, Feb. 11th at her residence surrounded by family. She was born and lived in McMinn County all of her life. She was a former hospice house-call volunteer, and avid volunteer at local nursing facilities. A funeral service will be Tuesday, Feb. 14th at 7 p.m. at East Athens Baptist Church with visitation Tuesday from 4 to 7 p.m. prior to the service. Burial will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15th at McMinn Memory Gardens following a processional from Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home of Athens is in charge of arrangements.

◆ **Christopher "Chris" Ray Webb**, age 57, of Athens, passed away Monday, February 13th at his home. He was a lifelong resident of McMinn County. He was a graduate of McMinn County High School and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He was an Eagle Scout and had served on the McMinn County E911 Board. He owned and operated A-Rentals in Athens for the past 34 years. A graveside service will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, February 15th at Cedar Grove Cemetery. Visitation will be on Wednesday from 12 to 1:30 p.m. prior to the graveside service at Smith Funeral Home. Family and friends will meet at Smith Funeral Home Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. and proceed to the cemetery for the graveside service. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is in charge of arrangements.

◆ **Christopher Eric Linn McCormick**, age 46, of Athens, passed away Sunday, February 12th. He was born and raised in Cleveland, and a resident of McMinn County for the past 20 years. No formal services will be held. Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah is in charge of arrangements.

Today In History

Today is Valentine's Day. Legend says Valentine was an early Christian martyr who was imprisoned by the Romans. In prison, his only comfort was his friendship with a blind girl who brought him food and delivered messages for him. On the eve of his execution, he wrote a farewell message to the girl and signed it, "From your Valentine." He died in AD 269. The Feast of Saint Valentine was established by Pope Gelasius I in AD 496 to be celebrated on February 14 in honor of the Christian martyr, Saint Valentine of Rome.

1859 - George Ferris was born in Illinois. He invented the Ferris Wheel, which was first presented at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892.

1939 - The famous German battleship, "The Bismarck," was launched. The Bismarck sank the British battleship "Hood" and was later sunk by the British Royal Navy after a massive chase.

MONDAY'S MARKET REPORT

Equity markets were sharply higher to start the week. Short-term government bond yields were higher. The 2-year Treasury yield climbed to around 4.55%. The technology-heavy Nasdaq outperformed, led by sectors like consumer discretionary and information technology. Oil prices also ended the day lower, with WTI crude oil below \$80. At the closing bell, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 376.66 to 34,245.93. The S&P 500 was up 46.83 to 4,137.29, and The Nasdaq Composite was up 173.67 to 11,891.79.

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United Way Annual Meeting

◆ The United Way of McMinn & Meigs Counties met recently for their annual meeting and awards luncheon. The awards were as follows:

The Spirit of the Community award: Shaw Industries, Athens Housing Authority, CapStar Bank and Warren Jackson CPA's. Joseph T. Frye Award: Kelley Webber. James H. Willson Award: Greg Moses. Meigs Volunteer of the Year Award: Megan Ballew. Dick M. Dyer Award: Chris Adams

Below and to the right are photos of some of the recipients. Photos submitted by Paige Zabo.



Joseph T. Frye: Chris Adams at left presenting award to Kelley Webber



James H. Willson: Jordan Curtis at right presenting award to Greg Moses



Meigs Volunteer of the Year: Tiffany Harris at right presenting award to Megan Ballew



Dick M. Dyer: Shane Sewell at left presenting award to Chris Adams