

ATHENS COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ATHENS COUNTY, OHIO

MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 9, 2023 MEETING

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

ATHENS COUNTY: Neal Reynolds, Warren Jeffers, Boone Troyer, Jen Siefert

ATHENS COUNTY ENGINEER – Jeff Maiden

ATHENS CITY/COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT – Jack Pepper

ATHENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

ATHENS CITY: Steve Patterson, Rob Delach, Solvieg Spjeldnes

CITY OF NELSONVILLE –

VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVE: -Gary Goosman

TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVE: - Steve Pierson

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Drew Daniels, Mollie Fitzgerald, Jeff Jenkins, Amy Lipka, Melissa Blank

CALL TO ORDER:

Upon determination that a quorum of at least nine (9) voting members was present, President Warren Jeffers called the November 9, 2023 meeting of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission to order at 8:03 AM. The meeting was held at the ACEMS Station #51, 21 Kenny Drive, Athens, OH 45701.

GUESTS PRESENT: John Hensler, ODOT Office of Job and Commerce

MINUTES:

Motion Neal Reynolds by seconded by Jack Pepper to approve as presented the meeting minutes of the August 10, 2023 Athens County Regional Planning Commission. Jen Siefert abstained; all others approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- On Tuesday, Jen Siefert was appointed as a county member of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission
- John Hensler introduced himself as the new District 10 Office of Job and Commerce Director. He informed the group that if they have projects regarding job creation/retention that qualify, ODOT has money to assist.

NEW BUSINESS:

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OLD BUSINESS:

-

CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS

- **City/County Sewer Expansion Project- Jack Pepper**
 - A lot of the SR56 section towards New Marshfield is wrapping up
 - No significant setbacks
- **Athens County Land Bank-**
 - Ric Wasserman has announced he will not be running for treasurer again
- **Broadband Expansion and Access-Jeff Jenkins**
 - ARC wanted a resubmission of the Amesville application over a month ago and an updated budget. There is still no news.
 - The State is doing workforce development activities for broadband, HAPCAP and Laurie McKnight at Ohio U as well as Hocking have an opportunity to request funds.
- **Age Friendly Athens County (AFAC)- Amy Lipka**
 - Amy Lipka has been attending different meetings and events around the county as well as visiting each of the senior groups. Through those outreach activities, a couple of community identified priorities have emerged: housing, transportation, and community health services.
- **SR 682 Corridor-**
 - Core drilling has happened at the SR682/56 intersection
 - Athens City applied for Safe Routes for All funding at the 682/56 corridor to Morrison which was denied. They were encouraged to apply for a planning grant which was awarded. The hope is for this to strengthen the ask for Safe Routes for All in the future.
- **Appalachian Community Grants-**
 - Continues to be a confusing process.
 - \$420 million next year in funding for transformative projects.

PLANNER'S REPORT: Laura Olbers

- Athens County Planning Office submitted an LOI for Transportation Alternatives funding for sidewalks in the Hockingport area.

CITY, VILLAGE, TOWNSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:

- **Athens County Auditor's Office**
- **Village of Amesville-Mayor Goosman**
- **Athens City County Health Department**
 - The County received a \$458,000 aging grant this week.
 - Dr. Gaskell retired this month. Dr. Ortman has filled his role
 - Vaccines are still available but the health dept. is booked out until Dec. 1.
 - Our area is facing lots of disease we haven't seen in many years: Mumps, Syphilis, vector borne diseases, etc.
- **City of Athens-**
 - A new pedestrian accessibility task force has been created. Education is a large part of their goals.
 - Broke ground on the Armory renovations
 - The foundation is in place for the new fire station headquarters
 - The City is sending their Director of Code Enforcement to go through trainings with the hopes of having a Building Code Office within the City.
 - The Safe Routes for All planning is happening.

- John Glaser hosted a meeting of all the mayors and Commissioners. Out of that meeting rose a desire to continue bringing all those players to the table on a more regular basis.
- **Athens Township- Steve Pierson**
 - County Commissioner Eliason, County Engineer Jeff Maiden, Athens Twp. Trustees Ted Linscott and Steve Pierson met with representatives of Columbia Gas/NiSource to discuss use of right-of-way requirements on township and county roads and specifically the placement of a gas rectifier at the end of E. Bentbrook Lane, a township road located on land owned in fee simple by the county.
 - The Athens County 911 Call Center and Hopewell Healthcare campus are well under construction on The Plains.
 - The Township is working with the Landbank for properties located on The Plains at 26 N. Clinton and 21 E. 1 st Street for possible demolition.
 - Trustee Linscott met with Engineer Maiden and Planner Olbers at the terminus parking lot of the bikeway spur on Johnson Road to conduct a site review for application to ODOT for a construction grant for a sidewalk from Athens High School to SR 682.
 - Engineer Maiden has distributed ODOT road inventories to all townships for verification of roadway lengths and conditions.
 - Trustee Pierson will be meeting with representatives of Rome Township, Lawrence County, to discuss the use of the Athens Township Zoning Code as a template for their local adoption of land use regulations.
- **Village of Albany – Neal Reynolds**
- **City of Nelsonville-**
- **Athens County Engineer’s Office- Jeff Maiden**
 - Put an LOI together for Transportation Alternatives funding for sidewalks along Johnson Road. This is a project that has been desired for years and has been pushed by community members.
 - Oakdale Road bridge project is complete
 - Other bridges are still in the works, a lot of the work is happening in house.
- **Athens County Commissioners-Chris Chmiel**
- **New Leaf Justice Enterprises**
 - Working to complete the recovery village in Nelsonville and create one in Glouster and Athens
 - In Glouster, they will build three triplexes, one of which will be 3D printed pending obtaining state approved plans
 - Two 3D printing enterprises will be launched in the region
- **Athens County Economic Development Council- Mollie Fitzgerald**
 - Norfolk Southern is offering funding that is available to smaller villages. Applications are due next week.
 - Albany’s industrial park access road is in the works
- **Athens County Visitors Bureau**
 - Boone Troyer asked about a project of Artists in Residency in Glouster.
- **Village of Chauncey-**
 - Working on the ordinances to deal with blight and abandoned houses
 - Working through a rental registration ordinance, which is already included in the zoning code. This would put a cap on short term rentals in the Village

- Chauncey applied for a flood mitigation grant through the Army Corps of Engineers
- Restarting Mayors Court to assist with the process of getting back in the National Flood Insurance Program
- **Athens County EMA**
 - Melissa Blank has been hired as the Deputy Director of EMA
 - The Hazard Mitigation plan is coming due. The plan is due 2025.
 - Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities is a FEMA grant that has a \$2 million dollar cap per project and is open until Nov. 20.
- **HAPCAP-Jeff Jenkins**
 - Glouster Village Hall work has started on November 1st. The goal is to have that completed by December 14.
 - The Glouster Fire Department is getting a new roof.
 - The Chauncey Sewer Project is in motion and an application for more funding has been started.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

There being no further business to come before the Commission and no additional comments for good of the order, on a motion by Jack Pepper, seconded Gary Goosman adjourned the meeting at 9:10 AM.

The December 14, 2023 meeting of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission is anticipated to be conducted at the Athens County EMS Station 51, 21 Kenny Drive, Athens, Ohio at 8:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted by Laura Olbers, Director, Athens County Regional Planning Commission

Approved by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____