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City of Athens Seeks Answers Following Main Street Director Termination



The City of Athens is requesting an immediate review of the termination of Sandra Kinney, raising concerns about how the decision was carried out by the Main Street Athens Board of Directors.

In a March 20 letter, Mayor Larry Eaton and City Manager Randall Dowling said the city was “deeply concerned about the way the forced termination was conducted,” including whether proper bylaws and procedures were followed. The letter notes the termination occurred “without much public notice” and could place the city in a difficult position regarding oversight of grant-funded projects tied to the Main Street program.

City officials emphasized that, as the primary funding source and a signatory to the Tennessee Main Street agreement, they must ensure accountability and continuity. “Without a seasoned Director and continuity of leadership, compliance, reporting, and operational oversight of the grants are not guaranteed and [are] in jeopardy,” the letter states.

The city has requested extensive documentation from the board, including how the meeting was called, whether proper notice was given to the public and press, quorum and voting records, and any personnel documentation supporting the termination. Officials also asked for clarification on potential conflicts of interest and plans for leadership transition moving forward.

Pending the review, the city has directed the board to refrain from additional personnel or operational actions and stated it continues to recognize Kinney as director. The board was asked to submit documentation by March 24, with further discussions expected before a March 31 deadline tied to the organization’s state agreement. *Source: City of Athens*

• Monday: Closed

- Tue: Madisonville Wil Sav 10:30 - 2
- Wed: Etowah Across from Johnsons-10:30 - 2
- Thu: Athens Family Dollar 10:30 - 2
- Fri: Sweetwater Little Drugs-10:30 - 2:30

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Monday, March 30, 2026 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2 Athens, Tennessee

Cleveland State Mass Casualty Simulation



Cleveland State Community College recently completed a Mass Casualty Simulation on the main campus in Cleveland. The simulation involved the aftermath of a multi-vehicle crash due to fog on the interstate. The interdisciplinary simulation included students in emergency medical services (EMS), paramedics, nursing, medical assisting, computer information technology and social work fields. Pictured: Nursing student, Julian Valenzuela, treats a simulation patient during the exercise.

Source: Andrea Byerly, Cleveland State Community College

Athens Chamber Welcomes Edward Jones

A ribbon cutting was celebrated recently for new Athens Area Chamber of Commerce member, Edward Jones-Elizabeth Loftis, located at 211 E Washington Ave., Athens.



Chamber friends joining the celebration and pictured here left to right are: Wesley Skinner (Chamber Diplomat), Toni Leverett (Chamber Board), Jim Nelson, Elizabeth Loftis (Edward Jones), Jeremy Loftis (Edward Jones), Harry Loftis, Kaylee Brady (Edward Jones), Leslie Hicks (Edward Jones), Shannon Willis (Athens Chamber). Back: Aaron Anderson (Chamber Board), Rob Preston (Chamber President/CEO), Jessica Casteel, Darren Casteel, Garrett Frye (Field Rep. - Fleischmann), Joseph Ladner (Edward Jones), Athens City Mayor Larry Eaton, Brett King (Chamber Diplomat), Lindsey Ferguson, Stephanie Devine, Hugh Willson (Chamber Diplomat).

Source: Julie Simbeck, Athens Area Chamber of Commerce

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Monday, March 30, 2026 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3 Athens, Tennessee

Brush Fire Burns Acre in Etowah Area



Fire crews responded to a brush fire on County Road 805 in Etowah after a resident burning boxes lost control of the flames when wind carried debris into a nearby wooded area.

Approximately one acre was burned before the fire was contained by responding agencies, including Englewood Rural Fire Department, Claxton Fire Department, and the Tennessee Division of Forestry. Officials said Englewood Rural Fire Capt. Josh Roach was in command of the scene.

Photo provided by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural FD

Kim's Resumé Redesigns Ribbon Cutting



A ribbon cutting was celebrated recently for new Athens Area Chamber of Commerce member, *Kim's Resumé Redesign*. Kim is a professional resumé writer. Get a professionally crafted resumé that highlights your skills and stands out to employees. Shown here are chamber and business representatives, and Kim Ealy owner of *Kim's Resumé Redesign*.

Source: Julie Simbeck, Athens Area Chamber of Commerce



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MCMINN COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

Monday, March 30, 2026 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4 Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

March 26, 2026

Rebecca Cowper, 53 of Madisonville, charged with theft of property under \$1,000, Bond \$1,000.

Yolanda West, 43 of Niota, charged with three counts of child support, Bond \$4,526.

Kimberly Tennell, 41 of Athens, charged with violation of state probation for a fraudulent use of a credit card, and failure to appear for driving on a suspended license.

William Keller, 29 of Madisonville, charged with violation of probation for possession of paraphernalia, failure to have insurance, failure to have a headlight on equipment, and driving on a suspended license, Bond \$3,261.

Rocky Green, 62 of Niota, charged with failure to appear for driving on a suspended license second offense, and violation of probation for driving on a suspended license, Bond \$6,528.

Eric Ratledge, 41 of Athens, charged with public intoxication, and indecent exposure, Bond \$3,000.

March 27, 2026

Rachel Heiser, 51 of Athens, charged with drug paraphernalia, possession of schedule 2 meth for resale, driving on a revoked license, failure to have insurance, and violation of registration laws, Bond \$34,000.

April Johnson, 29 of Athens, charged with state violation of probation for felony evading.

John Hayes, 37 of Flowery Branch, Georgia, charged with DUI and violation of implied consent, Bond \$3,000.

Jacob Davis, 25 Philadelphia, charged with DUI, and driving without due care, Bond \$2,000.

April Angel Woody, 48 of Athens, charged with theft of property and illegal possession of a credit card, Bond \$21,000.

Brian Mosier, 41 of Sweetwater, charged with two counts of child support, Bond \$2,200.

**Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
 Information gathered using public sources.**



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April 11th 2026
 2 PM to 4 PM

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Monday, March 30, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 5

Athens, Tennessee

TVFCU Opens Public Voting for Idea Leap Grant Competition

Tennessee Valley Federal Credit Union is inviting community members to participate in its annual Idea Leap Grant Competition by voting for People's Choice finalists in each region.

Voting opens today, March 30 at 8 a.m. and closes April 3 at 5 p.m. ET. Participants can cast their votes online by selecting a regional competition, viewing semifinalist entries, and submitting one vote per region using a valid email address. All finalists, including those selected through public voting, are guaranteed at least \$10,000 in funding to support their businesses.

According to Dionne Jenkins, the competition highlights entrepreneurs bringing innovative ideas to the region, and community participation plays a key role in supporting small business growth.

In total, 15 grants valued at \$225,000 will be awarded, with top regional winners receiving \$30,000, second place earning \$15,000, and additional finalists each receiving \$10,000.

For full list of semifinalists, go to:

<https://www.tvfcu.com/vote/>

Obituaries

Sophia Darlynn Benavides Beene, 77, passed away recently. Her calling into missionary work began in 1984 alongside her husband, Jeff. Together, they worked in Mexico and throughout Central and South America, traveling to remote regions—including deep within the Amazon jungle—to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Visitation was held Saturday. A graveside service will be announced at a later date. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home is in charge of local arrangements.

Imogene Trusley Rinehart, 86 of Decatur, went to be with her Lord and Savior on Saturday, March 28. She found joy in various activities, including bowling with her team and passionately supporting the Tennessee Volunteers in both football and basketball. Imogene cherished the simple pleasures of life, such as feeding ducks, playing with her beloved animals, and working in her flower garden. A funeral service will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31 in the Chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Interment will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, April 1 in the Ingle Cemetery (Calico Rd, Decatur). The family will receive friends from 5 - 7 p.m., prior to the service on Tuesday. Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to serve the Rinehart family.

MCMINN REGIONAL HUMANE SOCIETY PRESENTS

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5:00pm Doors Open, Silent Auction to follow
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