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Monday, June 01, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

## Athens Council Calls Special Meeting on City Manager; Emails Detail Tensions



The Athens City Council will hold a Special Called Session at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 4, at City Hall to consider “any personnel or other matters relating to the City Manager position,” according to a public notice issued by the city. Citizens will be allowed to speak during public comment, with sign-in required before the meeting.

Mayor Larry Eaton also requested a separate 5:30 p.m. special called meeting the same day. In an email to Executive Assistant Bridget Roberts, Eaton said he and Councilman John Duggan wanted to address retail development matters and “concerns regarding executive sessions held on May 26, 2026 and possible June 4, 2026,” noting the discussion should be brief and was arranged after the city attorney advised the items could not be placed on the regular agenda.

The meetings come amid public discussion about potential leadership changes involving City Manager Dr. Randall Dowling, following a series of emails between city officials and a local resident.

On May 27, Tyler Boyd emailed the City Council urging support for Dowling and warning against his possible termination or resignation. Boyd, who said he works for McMinn County Schools and has long ties to Athens, cited prior leadership turnover in 2021 and 2022 and cautioned against repeating what he called a “laughing stock” scenario. He also argued any action against the city manager should be supported by documentation and handled transparently.

Mayor Eaton responded May 29, thanking Boyd and asking where some of the information originated, noting he had been told certain details may have been private. Boyd replied that his concerns stemmed from conversations with Eaton and Councilman Steven Sherlin. He said Eaton told him city staff were upset about the removal of vehicle allowances and that Dowling was receiving criticism. *Continued on Page 6 - “City Council Emails”*

	• Tue: Loudon: <b>OLD Food City Parking Lot Hwy 72</b> (Across from McGill Click Funeral Home) <b>10:30-2:00</b>
	• Wed: Madisonville: <b>The Sloan Center-Hwy 411</b> <b>10:30-2:00</b>
	• Thu: Athens: <b>Family Dollar by Ingles</b> <b>10:30-2:00</b>
	• Fri: Sweetwater: <b>Little Drugs/Sav-A-Lot</b> <b>10:30-2:30</b>
	• Sat: <b>Moofest: Downtown Athens</b> <b>10:00-5:00</b>

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**Driver Injured After Crash in Etowah**



A driver was injured Tuesday evening after losing control of a vehicle on a wet roadway and overturning in McMinn County, according to emergency responders.

The crash occurred around 8 p.m. May 28 at the intersection of County Road 609 and County Road 805, when a 2010 Toyota Corolla went around a curve, left the roadway, struck a culvert and overturned, officials said.

The driver sustained injuries but did not require transport to a hospital after being treated at the scene by AMR personnel.

Etowah Rural Fire Department and Claxton Fire Department responded to the incident. The Tennessee Highway Patrol investigated the crash, with Trooper Jaylon Skipper listed as the investigating officer. Authorities said wet pavement was a factor in the crash.

*Source: Englewood Rural FD*

**Community News You Can Use**


- The Etowah Carnegie Library is launching its Summer Reading Program this week, with programs beginning at 1:30 p.m. featuring crafts, storytime, and family activities throughout the summer. The library will also participate in the Athens YMCA Summer Feeding Program from June 1 through July 31, serving free weekday lunches at 1 p.m. for children and teens ages 18 and under (no meals on holiday closures). Families are encouraged to attend for a summer of reading, learning, and meals. For more information, contact the Etowah Carnegie Library.
- Due to lack of agenda items at their work session, the City of Athens Planning Commission Meeting, originally scheduled for Monday, June 1, has been cancelled.
- The “Gems of the Past” history series continues Thursday, June 4 at the Gem Theater in Etowah with Sheriff Joe Guy presenting on the 1946 Battle of Athens. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., with the program beginning at 7 p.m. The event, part of the Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association series and supported by TN250, is open to the public.
- McMinn Foster Care Association Foster Parent info meeting is tonight at 6 pm at 1007 Knight Rd. Suite A in Athens.

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Athens, Tennessee

## Athens Announces Multiple Street Closures for MooFest, Public Works Projects

The City of Athens Public Works Department has announced a series of upcoming street closures tied to the 2026 MooFest festival as well as ongoing infrastructure and maintenance projects, affecting several major corridors across the city.

For MooFest, downtown Athens will see the most significant impact, with closures scheduled from Friday, June 5 at 4 p.m. through Saturday, June 6 at 7 p.m. The affected area forms a grid around the city's central business district, primarily between College Street and Green Street, and from Church Street to Highway 30.

*Closures include Madison Avenue and Washington Avenue between Hill Street and Green Street; Hornsby Street between Church Street and Long Street; White Street between College Street and Bank Street; and Long Street between Washington Avenue and Madison Avenue. Additional closures include North Jackson Street from College Street to Highway 30 and Baxter Street from Washington Avenue to Highway 30.*

City officials say detours will be posted and motorists should expect delays, use caution, and allow extra travel time in the downtown area during the festival.

Separately, *Old Englewood Road will be closed from South Jackson Street to New Englewood Road/Highway 39 beginning Tuesday, June 2 at 8 a.m. through Wednesday, June 3 at 5 p.m. The closure is scheduled for fence repairs at Heritage Park.*

A third set of closures will affect *East Madison Avenue and Eastanallee Avenue beginning June 1, including a full-day closure of East Madison Avenue from Mayfield Lane to Forrest Avenue/Slack Road for drainage tile repairs, with flaggers maintaining limited access at the Forrest and Slack intersection. Additional intermittent lane closures between Highway 30 and the city limits/Tellico Avenue will begin June 3 for asphalt paving and continue until completion.*

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Athens, Tennessee

## Soap Box Derby Winners!



**Stock (left to right)** - Avera Gray 2nd place, Hannah Johnson 1st place, Kortlyn Teague 3rd place



**Super Stock (left to right)** - Titus Millsaps 2nd place, Raylen Hembree 1<sup>st</sup> place, Silas Millsaps 3rd place

## Falling tree limb damages pickup in Niota; No injuries reported



A falling tree limb damaged a pickup truck Saturday morning and temporarily blocked both lanes of traffic in the 800 block of Niota's West Willson Street, officials said.

The incident occurred just before noon when a Dodge Ram traveling eastbound struck a large tree limb that came down onto the roadway. The vehicle was able to continue a short distance but sustained under-carriage damage and was later towed from the scene. No injuries were reported.

Both lanes of West Willson Street were shut down while responders cleared debris and assisted at the scene.

Niota Rural Fire Department, Athens Rural Fire Department, McMinn County Sheriff's Office, and AMR all responded. Patrolman Bryan Godsey with Niota PD lead the investigation.

*Photo by David Prater, Niota Rural FD*

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# McMinn County Arrest Reports

## May 28, 2026

**Randall Collins**, 34 of Riceville, charged with state violation of probation for aggravated assault by strangulation.

**Deborah Payne**, 61 of Loudon, charged with failure to appear for false reports.

**Alexis Kosarek**, 31 of Etowah, charged with casual exchange, possession of meth and drug paraphernalia.

**Lisa Schenkel**, 56 of Niota, charged with driving on a revoked license.

**Christopher Taylor**, 52 of Etowah, charged with schedule 2 fentanyl for resale, schedule 2 meth for resale, drug paraphernalia, unlawful carrier possession of a weapon by a felon, and armed and dangerous felonies.

**Selina Lopez**, 23 of Niota, charged with domestic assault, and simple possession casual exchange.

**Valerie Lopez**, 21 of Athens, charged with domestic assault, and vandalism, over 1,000.

## May 29, 2026

**Donna Stewart**, 49 of Athens, charged with DUI, Bond \$3,000.

**Adam Dalton**, 43 of Etowah, charged with public intoxication.

**Jagger Carden**, 24 of Englewood, charged with statutory rape, Bond \$100,000.

**Savannah Patterson**, 38 of Madisonville, charged with failure to appear for driving on a suspended license, Bond \$4,000.

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

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Athens, Tennessee

## City Council Emails

Boyd also said Sherlin told him Councilman John Duggan “does not even know the difference between an executive session and a called meeting” and warned that “it was about to hit the fan.” Boyd said those comments led him to believe another city manager controversy could be developing.

“I became concerned about Dr. Dowling’s job,” Boyd wrote, saying he feared another “firing/resignation fiasco” and urging a peaceful resolution. He added that he believed none of the information shared was confidential and said citizens have a right to discuss public issues with elected officials.

Mayor Eaton thanked Boyd for the clarification on May 30.

As of Saturday, no personnel action regarding the city manager had been announced. The June 4 Special Called Session marks the first public agenda indicating the council will consider matters involving the position.

*Source: Emails exchanged between Tyler Boyd and Athens City Mayor Larry Eaton, sent by Eaton.*

## Obituaries

**Gerald Hamilton**, 69 of Etowah, passed away on Thursday, May 28. A skilled tradesman, Gerald was highly respected as both an electrician and plumber across McMinn, Loudon, and Monroe Counties. The family received friends from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Saturday, May 30, at Bordwine Funeral Home. Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah was in charge of arrangements.

**Dennis Eugene Remillard**, 84, of Sweetwater, passed away on Monday, May 25. He established a branch of Religious Book Discount House in San Diego, CA while working as a plumber for Local 230 and later owned his own company, Denny and Son Plumbing. No formal services have been announced. Companion Funeral and Cremation Service of Athens in charge of arrangements.

**Edith "Edi" Jeanette Landry Emmons**, 84, of Riceville, passed away on Tuesday, May 26. She attended St. Mary Catholic Church. She retired from Stanton Paper Box Company in NY after 41 years of service. A Funeral Mass will be held at 10:00 AM, Monday, June 1, 2026 at St. Mary Catholic Church. Interment will follow at McMinn Memory Gardens. The family will receive friends from 9:00 AM-10:00 AM prior to the service at the church. There will be a reception at St. Mary Catholic Church immediately following the interment. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home in Athens is in charge of the arrangements

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