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**Thursday, September 11, 2025****Page 1****Athens, Tennessee**

## Athens City Council Reviews Budget, Fire Station Plans, and Charter Changes



The Athens City Council met for a work session on Monday, Sept. 8, covering a broad agenda of financial, infrastructure, and policy matters.

Council reviewed Athens City Schools' FY 2025–26 Budget Amendment #1 and considered design and construction plans for Fire Station #3 presented by Wold Architect & Engineers. Additional building projects on the agenda included renovating the house at Regional Park into Parks & Recreation offices and renovations and expansion at City Hall, both with Allen & Hoshall.

Infrastructure items included awarding Bid RFB 25-11 for Mt. Verd Industrial Park improvements, reviewing amendments to the floodplain section of the zoning ordinance, and purchasing equipment and services for traffic signal maintenance and coordination at Exit 49. Council also discussed an ordinance to amend city code on permanent stormwater management.

Several resolutions were introduced: to amend the City Charter to remove fixed salary provisions for the Mayor and Council and allow compensation to be set by ordinance; to apply for an Atlanta Braves Foundation grant for renovations at Brody Ellis Field; and to declare certain city property as surplus for disposal. Council also heard a rezoning request for 2201 Decatur Pike from business to medium-density residential.

Councilmember items included funding for the Mid-East Tennessee Community Chorus, plans for a Veterans Parade, possible charter changes to add party affiliation and term limits for school board elections, proposals for new community centers and swimming pools, upgrading security cameras at all parks, and a firing range at Public Works. In board and committee matters, Abby Burke Carroll requested appointment to the Council Advisory Committee, and Frances Witt-McMahan was reappointed to the Athens Municipal Regional Planning Commission.

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## McMinn County Living Heritage Museum

### Upcoming September Events

History of The Robert E. Lee Hotel with Tyler Boyd  
**Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup> @ Noon - Free Admission**

**HERITAGE SCHOOL: Taiwan A to Z - 1, 2, 3 到臺灣**  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>th</sup> @ 11:00 AM**

Stop by the museum for an introduction to Taiwan in this hands on workshop! Learn how to make dumplings among other fun activities. Please bring an apron or wear something you don't mind getting messy.

This program is limited to 20 participants. **\$5 or free for members.**

### High Tea at The Forest Home

Date and Time: September 27, 1-4 PM

1-2 PM: Home Tour

2 PM: Presentation

2:30-4 PM: High Tea

Tickets: \$125 per person.

Programs sponsored by C. Scott & Muriel S. Mayfield Family Foundation, Tennessee Arts Commission, Hugh M. Willson Family Foundation, and City of Athens

**Hours:**  
Tuesday - Friday: 10 AM - 5 PM  
Saturday: 10 AM - 1 PM  
Sunday - Monday: Closed

**Admission:**  
Adults: \$5.00  
Senior 60+: \$3.00  
Students: \$3.00

### More Information

522 W Madison Ave.

Athens, TN 37303

423-745-0329

[www.livingheritagemuseum.org](http://www.livingheritagemuseum.org)

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Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2

Athens, Tennessee

## Scam Suspect Arrested After Hours-Long Operation in Englewood



The McMinn County Sheriff's Office arrested **26-year-old Ziyi Lu of Coral Springs, Fla.**, Tuesday evening after a several-hours sting in the Zion Hill community near Englewood. Authorities say Lu attempted to collect \$12,000 from a local woman targeted in a phone scam by someone posing as a federal agent.

Sheriff Joe Guy and investigators, working with the TBI and Drug Task Force, coordinated with the victim to keep the scammer on the phone while setting up surveillance. Lu was taken into custody when he arrived to meet the victim and is believed to have ties to a Chinese organized crime group.

He is charged with **criminal conspiracy of theft and financial exploitation of an elderly or vulnerable person**, and is being held at the McMinn County Jail on a **\$120,000 bond**. The investigation is ongoing. *Source: Joe Guy, McMinn Co. Sheriff.*

## Community News You Can Use

- [AAA-The Auto Club Group](#) is reminding fans to tailgate safely. Key tips include keeping grills away from vehicles, fully extinguishing coals before leaving, and never leaving a grill unattended. AAA also stresses alcohol awareness, urging fans to designate a sober driver and provide water and non-alcoholic options.
- The Athens Area Council for the Arts opens its 2025–26 Black Box Concert Series with **Seth Mulder & Midnight Run on Friday, Sept. 12 at 7 p.m.** Tickets (\$20–\$25) are on sale now. AACA will also host beginner-friendly **Artsplorations theatre workshops** during Fall Break, **Oct. 6–10**, with registration due by **Oct. 3**.
- The Hiwassee Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution will host a grave marking ceremony honoring Revolutionary War Patriots Pvt. John McMahan and Thomas Steed on **Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025, at 2 p.m.** at **Cedar Springs Methodist Church Cemetery, 418 County Rd. 703, Athens**. The public is invited. Bring a chair if needed.

**FALL MARKET**  
AT THE NOTCH  
BY TSALI NOTCH

**SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2025**  
10AM-3PM / Rain or Shine

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Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025


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Athens, Tennessee

## United Way to Host 2025 Day of Caring Sept. 18

Want to Change a Life in One Day?  
We Need YOU to Volunteer!

**Day of Caring**  
**September 18**



United Way of McMinn and Meigs Counties will host its annual **Day of Caring** on **Thursday, Sept. 18**, beginning at **8 a.m. at the McMinn County Senior Center**. The event also marks the official kickoff of United Way's **Annual Fundraising Campaign**.

Day of Caring is United Way's largest volunteer event of the year, giving community members a hands-on opportunity to see their contributions at work. Volunteers will assist **United Way Partner Agencies** with meaningful projects that often go unfinished due to limited staffing or funding.

Projects may include **yard work, landscaping, painting, beautification, and light construction tasks such as building shelves or walls**. Organizers encourage participants of all skill levels to sign up, noting that those with specialized skills may be matched with specific agency needs.

"This is a huge help for our partner agencies to tackle projects that cannot be completed due to lack of funds, manpower, or simply time. It's the best day of the year for United Way," said **Alicia Rose, President/CEO of UWMM**. Volunteers are asked to register by **Thursday, Sept. 11** at [uwmcminn-meigs.com/2025-day-caring](http://uwmcminn-meigs.com/2025-day-caring) or by calling **423-745-9606**. This year's event is made possible by sponsors including **Citizens National Bank, DENSO, Domino's of Athens, Food City, Old National Bank, and VEC Customers Share Foundation**.

Community members are also encouraged to support United Way year-round through donations or volunteer work. Support United Way's mission anytime by donating or volunteering: Their donation website is [uwmcminn-meigs.com/Donate](http://uwmcminn-meigs.com/Donate), or you can also email: [unitedway@unitedwaymm.com](mailto:unitedway@unitedwaymm.com).

Contributions can be made online, via payroll deduction, automatic withdrawal, cash, or check. To learn more, visit [uwmcminn-meigs.com](http://uwmcminn-meigs.com), call **423-745-9606**, or follow United Way on Facebook and Instagram.

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**14**  
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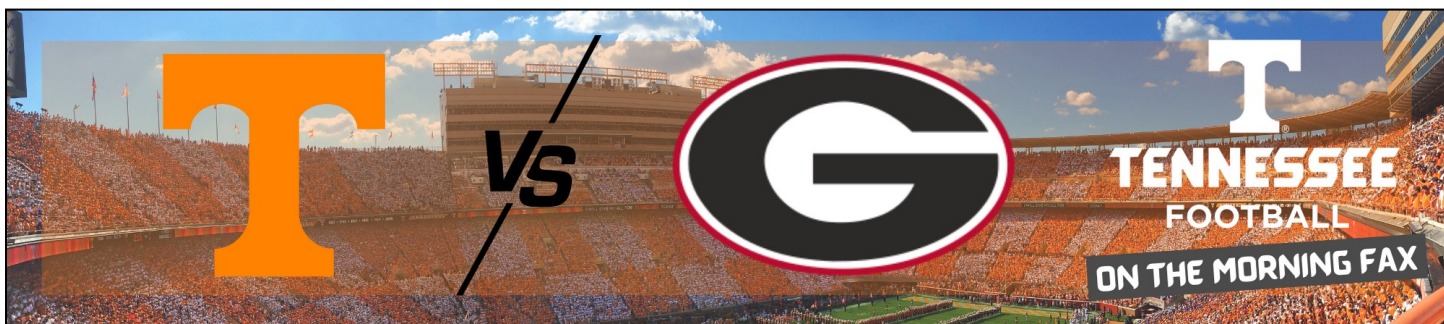
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Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

## Aguilar's Moment: Tennessee Prepares for Georgia Showdown

Joey Aguilar faces a defining game this Saturday as the Tennessee Volunteers host the Georgia Bulldogs in a primetime SEC clash. The matchup carries extra weight after a turbulent offseason for the Vols: former QB Nico Iamaleava transferred to UCLA following an NIL dispute, leaving Tennessee with an inexperienced quarterback room and a high-stakes decision for coach Josh Heupel. Aguilar, who transferred from Appalachian State to UCLA and then back to Tennessee, now has a chance to make a statement.

Through two games, Aguilar has impressed with accurate throws, mobility to stress defenses, and a deep-ball threat that was missing from last year's offense. He's averaging 9.1 yards per attempt and 13.7 per completion, highlighting his potential against top-level competition. Coach Heupel also praised Aguilar's leadership, noting the quarterback's encouragement of backup George MacIntyre during the Week 2 win over East Tennessee State. "Great teammate," Heupel said.

Tennessee will face Georgia without key cornerbacks Jermod McCoy (torn ACL) and Rickey Gibson III (injured), leaving sophomore Colton Hood and freshman Ty Redmond to step up in the secondary. But Georgia's offense has shown signs of struggle, scoring just 28 points against FCS Austin Peay, and QB Gunner Stockton has struggled with throwing accuracy in the early season. The Bulldogs may not be the unstoppable force many expect.

A win would be more than a statement on the scoreboard. For Aguilar, it would underscore the balance of player empowerment and coaching authority in modern college football—proving that the right player, in the right situation, can change a program's trajectory. With both sides showing vulnerabilities, this matchup could define the trajectory of the SEC race—and Aguilar's season.

*Never Miss an Update!*  
*Don't forget to*

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Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

## Athens Police Seize Dogs, Charge Owners with Animal Cruelty

On Sept. 9, Athens Police responded to 507 West Bank Street after reports of aggressive dogs running loose and damaging property. Officers found multiple dogs on the property, some charging at them, and the owner unable to control the animals. With help from the Athens Animal Shelter, McMinn County Humane Society, and Athens Fire Department, three dogs were captured outside and four more were later recovered from inside the dilapidated residence.

Police obtained a search warrant after the owner admitted to having additional dogs inside and revealed that a mother and six puppies had starved to death earlier because he was unable to care for them. All recovered animals were transported to the Humane Society for treatment and assessment. The owners now face multiple charges, including aggravated animal cruelty, neglect, and facilitation of neglect. The male owner also allegedly threatened to shoot officers during the encounter, leading to the seizure of two firearms.

Deputy Chief Jason B. Garren praised the officers and partner agencies for working under difficult conditions to complete the hours-long operation, emphasizing their persistence in safely recovering the animals. Authorities urge anyone who suspects animal abuse or neglect to contact the Athens Police Department at 423-744-2730.

## Obituaries

**Janet Kay Howard Woods**, 61 of Athens, passed away on Tuesday, September 9,. She was a member of Union Hill Baptist Church. Visitation will be held on Friday, September 12 from 4:00-7:00 PM at Faith Baptist Tabernacle. A Celebration of Life service will follow at 7:00 PM. Ziegler Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Janet Kay Howard Woods.

**Carol Frye Waddell, Susan Frye Carpenter, Martha Ann Frye Huggins, and Audra Lee Inman**, will be remembered during a Celebration of Life gathering held on Saturday, September 20. The family invites those who knew them to drop in between 2:00-4:00 pm at the Social on Depot Hill, for light refreshments and a joyful celebration of their lives and legacies. Announcement courtesy of Smith Funeral and Cremation Services of Athens.

## McMinn County Arrest Reports

**9-9-25**

**Elizabeth Powell**, 42 of Riceville, charged with schedule II fentanyl, more than 15 grams. Meth, 26 grams or more.

**Amanda Cooper**, 30 of Athens, charged with failure to appear and child support, Bond \$3,053.50

**Ray Hammonds**, 29 of Cleveland, charged with patronizing prostitution, solicitation of a minor.

**Yolanda Smith**, 40 of Loudoun, charged with casual exchange, possession of meth, simple possession of Schedule II fentanyl and drug paraphernalia, Bond \$22,000

**Terry Lynn**, 44 of Athens, charged with felony evading.

**James King**, 62 of Athens, charged with violation of probation for driving on suspended license, Bond \$432.95

**Mark Rollins**, 36 of Athens, charged with state violation of probation for introduction of contraband into penal facility.

**Shane Whitaker**, 39 of Decatur, charged with driving on suspended license. Schedule II meth, driving in possession of meth, possession of legend drugs, drug paraphernalia, and Meigs County state violation of probation. Bond \$21,000

**Keith Fry**, 39 of Athens, charged with drug paraphernalia.

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