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Reporting Public Issues

ATHENS CITY COUNCIL

Athens City Council approves ordinance that will affect impound lots

Athens City Council approves an ordinance that amends Athens City Code the requirements for impound lots on Nov. 2.

This ordinance was introduced by Councilmember Pete Kotses. The new amendment will allow towing operators to have impound lots located within a five mile radius outside of city limits. Previously, it was required for an impound lot to be on a transportation route and be within a 25 mile radius of city limits, according to the Ohio Revised Code,

Before the ordinance was officially approved by Athens City Council there were concerns regarding how residents will be able to access and condition the lots.

“My concern with five miles is these are extremely dangerous roads and if there are no available cabs they [residents] will have to walk,” Councilmember Beth Clodfelther said.

Councilmember Clodfelther brought up the concern that Athens no longer has a private cab service and wants to ensure that residents are able to retrieve their vehicles. There are alternative transportation services such as Athens On Demand Transit but it stops running at 7:30 p.m.

“A lot of residents get towed at night when they're at the bar or partying with friends. I worry about people who feel that they have to go get their car that night and get a ride from someone who is intoxicated or trying to walk on dark roads for miles,” Councilmember Clodfelther said.

Councilmember Christine Knisley, Athens City Council President, also brought up that the bus stops running at 10 p.m.

Councilmember Arian Smedley reminded the council that there are other alternatives such as Lyft which are available late into the evening.

There are three towing operators in Athens and only one of them, Athens Towing, is open 24 hours. Curtis towing is open from 8 a.m- 5 p.m. Residents may not be able to retrieve their vehicle once transportation options are closed.

“I think it is important we are having this conversation because we as a society do not think of how we penalize people. This will be affecting people who are more at risk,” Councilmember Chris Fahl said.

According to Councilman Kotses, one of the towing operators is in jeopardy of losing their property therefore, may have to relocate further. Columbus towing is in jeopardy of losing their property and is having troubling locating property that met the original criteria of being within city limits.