

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 1, 2023**

The members of the City Council of the City of Phenix City, Alabama met in a regularly scheduled council meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers located within the Public Safety Building at 1111 Broad Street, Phenix City, Alabama 36867. Upon roll call, the following members of Council were present: Councilmember Arthur L. Day, Jr., Councilmember Vickey F. Carter, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. Also present were City Manager Wallace Hunter, Assistant City Manager Chan Gamble, City Attorney Jimmy Graham, and City Clerk Melony Lee.

Upon a quorum being established, Mayor Lowe called the meeting to order.

Pastor Grant Parker of Epworth Methodist Church was not present to deliver the invocation as listed on the agenda. Mayor Lowe stated that he would be allotted to pray if he comes later in the meeting. Councilmember Carter delivered the invocation.

Councilmember Carter led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

City Manager Wallace Hunter and Human Resources Generalist Eliza Phillips presented employee service recognitions to Michael Smith - 5 years and James Aderhold - 5 years.

Mayor Lowe presented a proclamation recognizing the Phenix City 9U All Stars, 2023 USSA World Series Champions.

**PROCLAMATION**

Head Coach Case Rasmus and members of the baseball team came forward to accept the proclamation.

Mayor Lowe exercised his point of privilege and called upon Pastor Grant Parker of Epworth Methodist Church to pray for our City, the ball team and the Cities next 100 years. Pastor Parker prayed.

Mayor Lowe called upon State Representative Chris Blackshear. Representative Blackshear came forward to address Council. Representative Blackshear stated that as an elected official it was their responsibility to provide services and quality of life for the citizens that they represent. Representative Blackshear also stated that at the State Level, he applies for grants to help Phenix City. Representative Blackshear further stated that in 2012, Mayor Lowe, City Manager Wallace Hunter, and he had a vision for a Miracle Park. Representative Blackshear presented a \$500,000 check to match funds from the City to fund the Miracle Park (Special Needs Kids) for the Lakewood Park Renovation. Councilmember Gordy thanked Representative Blackshear on behalf of the City Council and the previous City Council for everything he has done to assist Phenix City with this funding. Councilmember Gordy stated that he wanted to thank previous Councilmember Craig Howard for all of the work and dedication that he provided and for him being instrumental in laying the ground work for this project. Councilmember Gordy also stated that they are proud to be in a position to provide funding for this project and look forward to reaching out to Citizens that are willing to invest in additional funding for these children. Councilmember Gordy further stated that this project would not just provide for Phenix City children but for all of the surrounding communities as well. Councilmember Gordy stated that not only will the renovation provide a ball field but a playground for special needs children as well.

Councilmember Gordy also stated that this is an outstanding day and that they are grateful for everyone involved. Director of Parks and Recreation Todd Hughes stated that he had discussed this project with former Councilmember Craig Howard many years ago so this has been a vision for a while and something that is needed for our community and surrounding communities.

Mayor Lowe presented the regularly scheduled meeting minutes of the July 17, 2023 Work Session and the regularly scheduled meeting minutes of the July 18, 2023 Council Meeting for approval. Councilmember Day moved to approve the minutes, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Carter. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe stated there was no unfinished business to address at this time.

Mayor Lowe presented a Resolution No. 2023-151 to be ratified in reference to authorizing and directing the Mayor and City Manager to sign a contract extension with M&M Staging for a roofing system lease at the Phenix City Amphitheater July 28, 2023 thru December 11, 2023 in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023-151**

Councilmember Gordy moved to ratify the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to adopting an Annual Transportation Plan.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023-152**

Councilmember Day moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to approving and adopting the proposed budget for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023-153**

Councilmember Day moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to authorizing and directing the Mayor, City Manager to enter into an agreement with LexisNexis, a division of RELX, Inc. for an online service in an amount not to exceed \$2,244.00 for the first year with an increase of 5% annually for a term of three (3) years.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-154**

Councilmember Carter moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented two (2) Resolutions and Public Notices in reference to setting public hearing dates and fixing demolitions costs associated with the following properties located in Phenix City:

1. 1824 1st Avenue

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-155**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

2. 1808 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-156**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Councilmember Day moved to approve the Resolutions and Public Notices, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to rejecting bids received for the demolition of 1709 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-157**

Councilmember Carter moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to rejecting bids received for the Phenix City Human Resources Office Renovations located at 1211 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-158**

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Day. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to awarding a bid to JLD Enterprises, LLC for bid E23-03 Traffic Striping & Markings.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-159**

Councilmember Day moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to authorizing and directing the Mayor and City Manager to sign an Agreement with Ice Miller, LLP to provide a proposal for arbitration/rebate calculations for the Series 2016-A Warrants.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-160**

Councilmember Carter moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Day. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to authorizing the Mayor and City Manager to sign the Staffing Services Agreement with The Reserves Network, Inc., to provide staffing services.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-161**

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to authorizing the Mayor and City Manager to submit the renewal application and payment to ADEM for solid waste facility permit in an amount not to exceed \$5,400.00.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-162**

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Day. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented for first reading an Ordinance to Amend the Code of Ordinances of the City of Phenix City, Alabama, Section 1.094 of the Merit System Rules and Regulations of the City of Phenix City, Alabama. Councilmember Day moved to place the ordinance on first reading, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAIN: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented for first reading an application for a Bail Bonding Company License submitted by Kimberly Bell for 5 Star Bail Bonds, LLC located at 2214 Gateway Dr., Suite A, Opelika, Alabama 36801. Councilmember Day moved to place the application on first reading, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Carter. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAIN: None. The motion thus passed.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham presented a claim against the City of Phenix City, filed by Victoria Wilkinson. City Attorney Graham stated that the claim alleges that the City of Phenix City is liable for the damage to Ms. Victoria Wilkerson's brick mailbox located at her residents on July 18, 2023. Mr. Graham also stated that a Phenix City Public Works grab-all truck accidentally damaged and knocked over the brick mailbox while in the process of a debris pick up. Mr. Graham further stated that Ms. Wilkerson provided three (3) estimates for the repair and that he has discussed this with Assistant City Manager Chan Gamble and has agreed to have the City acquire their own estimates. Mr. Graham requested to table this claim until the next City Council Meeting on August 15, 2023. Mr. Graham stated that City Manager Wallace Hunter agreed to supply a temporary mailbox for Ms. Wilkerson. Councilmember Bailey moved to approve the City Attorney's recommendation to table the claim, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Carter, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Citizen Betty LeBlanc requested to address Mayor and Council. Mayor Lowe informed Ms. LeBlanc that the floor is not open for Citizens to speak at the Council Meeting. Mayor Lowe stated that Ms. LeBlanc can submit a Request to Address City Council at Work Session form. Ms. LeBlanc disregarded what the Mayor advised. Ms. LeBlanc apologized for the being out of order. Mayor Lowe thanked Ms. LeBlanc for her apology.

Councilmember Carter stated that the City is preparing for the Centennial Celebration and that so far it has been a great year for the City and that we want to continue to ask for God's Blessing. Councilmember Carter congratulated the individuals that graduated from the six week ELITE (Empowering Leaders into Transformative Engagement) Academy class at Troy State University. Councilmember Carter stated that the graduation was held on July 22, 2023 at Troy State University Campus. Councilmember Carter thanked the individuals and stated that it was well deserved.

Councilmember Bailey congratulated the young men on the Phenix City 9U All-star Team on their 2023 USSA World Series win. Councilmember Bailey stated that the team has a lot to look forward to with the talent they have on the team.

Councilmember Bailey stated that this City has come a long way over the last 100 years and that he is very proud to be part of the Centennial Celebration. Councilmember Bailey also stated that he hopes that the citizens do not forget where the City came from and where it is today. Councilmember Bailey further stated that he can only imagine where the City and Country are going over the next 100 years and he hopes that the citizens will face it with love, peace, caring, and the Lord God Almighty. Councilmember Bailey stated that he is proud to be part of the City Council and the City of Phenix City.

Councilmember Day stated that he recalls discussing the Miracle Park in 2012 when he became a member of the City Council. Councilmember Day also stated that he is proud to see it come to fruition and for the funding that has been raised to ensure the project is completed. Councilmember Day further stated that Phenix City is the only City within 40 miles that will have this kind of establishment.

Councilmember Gordy stated that he has a close connection with the Phenix City 9U All-Star kids and with the Coaches. Councilmember Gordy also stated that his twin sons are the same age and have played in the league and that he has coached most of the kids.

Councilmember Gordy further stated that the Coaches should be recognized for doing an outstanding job coaching and teaching the kids character and integrity and that it is not all about winning but being good teammates with good sportsmanship. Councilmember Gordy stated that the Coaches also instill in the kids that they are playing to glorify God and that he has seen a big change in the league and the kids because they keep the focus on God and they should be recognized for it. Councilmember Gordy also stated that he is proud of the team and the recognition they received.

City Manager Wallace Hunter thanked the Council, City Clerk's Office, City Attorney, and Department Heads for the work they provided for the 2024 City Budget. Mr. Hunter stated that the combined budget between the General Fund and the Utilities is over 80 million dollars. Mr. Hunter provided an overview of the funds that have been allocated for projects across the city. Mr. Hunter stated that this City has come a long way and that the City is here to serve and not be served. Mr. Hunter also stated that one of his main goals when he accepted the City Manager position was to ensure that they could silence the critics and represent the citizens that feel like they are neglected, looked over and looked past. Mr. Hunter further stated that they developed a plan to recruit and tried to get people to invest in every part of the City. Mr. Hunter stated that the plan has come to fruition as the City has development throughout the City and on the Riverwalk. Mr. Hunter also stated that if we do not lead by example that everything else will falter.

Mayor Lowe stated that one of the things that this Council has worked towards is raising the bar extremely high so that when the next Councilmembers come in behind them, they will have the attributes that this Council has set forth. Mayor Lowe also stated that the Citizens should not expect anything less and that no leader should ever make decisions on their own self-interest and desires. Mayor Lowe further stated that the chief motivator behind any decision should be love not just for others but for God because when you love God you will want to serve sacrificially. Mayor Lowe stated that this is serious business about the people of this community.

Mayor Lowe thanked the Citizens of Phenix City, the Department Heads and everyone that works for the City. Mayor Lowe encouraged everyone to be a lifter and not a leaner.

City Manager Wallace Hunter asked for an Executive Session to discuss Good Name and Character for one hour, from which the meeting would adjourn.

Councilmember Day moved to go into Executive Session to discuss Good Name and Character for one hour, from which was the meeting will adjourn. Councilmember Gordy seconded said motion. All were in favor.

Council went into Executive Session at 10:30 a.m.

Council came out of Executive Session at 11:15 a.m.

Mayor Lowe thanked CTV-Beam for bringing the council meeting to the Citizens of Phenix City, Alabama.

There being no further business to address, the meeting thus adjourned until August 15, 2023.