

**MEETING MINUTES
October 3, 2023**

The members of the City Council of the City of Phenix City, Alabama met in a regularly scheduled council meeting on Tuesday, October 3, 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.

Reverend Karen Seifert, Summerville United Methodist Church was present to deliver the invocation as listed on the agenda.

Mayor Lowe led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

City Manager Wallace Hunter and Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain presented employee service recognitions to Barbara Delong - 10 years, Kristi Goggans - 10 years, and Linda Porch - 20 years. Ms. Chastain stated that Merry Willis Jones – 20 years was not present.

Mayor Lowe presented a proclamation recognizing Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

PROCLAMATION

Cheryl A. Johnson and others came forward to accept the proclamation.

Mayor Lowe presented the regularly scheduled meeting minutes of the September 18, 2023 Work Session and regularly scheduled meeting minutes of the September 19, 2023 Council Meeting for approval. Councilmember Day moved to approve the minutes, 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 stated there was no unfinished business to address at this time.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to authorizing the Mayor and City Manager to enter into a contract agreement with East Alabama Chamber of Commerce in an amount not to exceed \$35,000.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-208

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, 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 presented a resolution in reference to rescinding Resolution No. 2022-246 in reference to accepting an offer from David Downey Homes, LLC to purchase 2113 Walker Court in the amount of \$40,000.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-209

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 the Mayor and City Manager to sign documentation and accept an offer from Hard-Ing Builders, L.L.C. for the purchase of 2113 Walker Court in the amount of \$30,000.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-210

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, 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 presented a resolution in reference to authorizing the Mayor, City Manager and Chief of Police to enter into an agreement for the administration of grant funds through the SEARHSO-ESCC-Community Traffic Safety Program from October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-211

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 declared that now was the time and place for a public hearing in reference to the fixing of costs incurred by the City of Phenix City for the removal of substandard structures and the establishment of special assessments upon properties located at 2006 4th Avenue and 607 7th Place. Mayor Lowe stated anyone wishing to address Council concerning these properties should come forward and do so at this time. Neither hearing nor seeing anyone come forward, Mayor Lowe declared the hearing closed.

Mayor Lowe presented two (2) resolutions in reference to the fixing of costs incurred by the City of Phenix City for the removal of substandard structures and the establishment of special assessments upon properties located at:

1. 2006 4th Avenue

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-212

2. 607 7th Place

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-213

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolutions, 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 presented a resolution in reference to authorizing the Mayor and City Manager to enter into a 36 month lease agreement with Best Copy Products, Inc. for one Sharp BP-70C55 Networked Digital Color Copier in the amount of \$195.45 per month.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-214

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 the Mayor and City Manager to sign and accept the dedication of a drainage and utility easement from Seth D. Naranjo.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-215

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 a resolution in reference to accepting the dedication of a drainage easement from Timothy Thomason and Tanner Thomason.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-216

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 the Mayor and City Manager to sign an agreement with Russell County for the mutual exchange of business license information.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-217

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 the Mayor and City Manager to sign a contract with Neal, Kendust & Murray, P.C. for Professional Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-218

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, 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 presented a resolution in reference to authorizing and directing the Mayor and City Manager to sign an agreement with The Valley Rescue Mission to locate collection box(es).

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-219

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 an Itemized Statement of Expense for Bentavious Miller, of the Fire Department in the amount of \$25.63. Councilmember Carter moved to approve the Itemized Statement of Expenses in the amount of \$25.63, 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 passed.

Councilmember Carter thanked the West Central Georgia Cancer Coalition Organization for attending the meeting and providing the information to Council. Councilmember Carter stated that the information is important and that at some point and time, they have all benefited from organizations like the Cancer Coalition. Councilmember Carter also stated that they support the Coalition and thanked them for providing the information packets for the meeting.

Councilmember Carter stated that as she attends functions within the Community, Citizens thanked her and Council for the great work that they continue to do for the City and she would like to relate that back to Council. Councilmember Carter also stated that she wants to thank the Citizens for continuing to reach out and that the Council continues to do all they can to support the Citizens.

Councilmember Carter congratulated the City's employees with 60 years of combined service to the City and that the City has dedicated employees that are willing to work and to perform the duties that they were hired to do. Councilmember Carter stated that a group of Citizens thanked Linda Porch with Parks and Recreation for the exceptional service that she provided to them.

Councilmember Day stated that Phenix City is on the move and that there are several new businesses locating to the City. Councilmember Day also stated that Citizens have thanked him for the new growth down 431. Councilmember Day stated that he doesn't take the credit but communicates that it is the City Manager Wallace Hunter and his staff that are working hard to continue the growth in the City.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the City has come out of an extremely hot summer and the City employees have been working diligently to complete the work. Mr. Hunter also stated that the workforce employment numbers are gradually rising especially with the fall months ahead and that the employees will be taking care of the right-a-ways but that may not be maintaining the ditches at the same time. Mr. Hunter further stated that there have been misunderstandings on the types of services the City is responsible for in comparisons to what the Citizens understanding is at this time.

City Manager Wallace Hunter asked Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes to present information on the guidelines for the City's rental facilities. Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes stated that the referenced facility is the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center. Mr. Hughes also stated that there is a rental agreement available for Citizens to rent the building for functions. Mr. Hughes further stated that the building has a maximum capacity that was set by the Building Department and Fire Department and that they do their best to accommodate Citizens to use the facility and have as many attend the event as the maximum allowed. Mr. Hughes stated that they have added a guideline to the rental agreement on the numbers to allow and this can be based on the type of event needed. Mr. Hughes stated that if an event is requested for stadium style chairs, the capacity may be different than an event with table and chairs seating due to adding tables and a stage that will limit the amount of people that the room will hold. Mr. Hunter stated that this information is stated on the rental agreement and Mr. Hughes confirmed. Mr. Hughes stated that the agreement stated maximum capacity of the building is 300 people and 270 people with table and chairs in the largest room in the facility, and if a stage is added, that will further reduce the number of people it can hold. Mr. Hunter stated that if there was an event where there were 250 people and they had tables and chairs, than that was illegal. Mr. Hunter also stated that he has brought this to the attention of the Citizens because he wants the agreement to be thoroughly read and make sure that everyone understands the requirements that have been documented. Mr. Hunter further stated that the facility cannot be used if money is being collected at the door for a ticketed event, and that a charity event is not the same thing and he wants to ensure that there is no confusion on the differences and that the agreement states that there are no fundraising, commercial or charitable activity for profit or non-profit allowed. Fire Chief Kristen Kennedy stated that the building has a total capacity of 300 people, which pertains to the entire building and does not mean that 300 can fit into an individual room in the building and each room has its own capacity and that is also based on the number of table and chairs. Chief Kennedy also stated that the capacity of the building is based on the event setup and that additional setup takes up the square footage and reduces the number of attendees that can be in the room and entire building.

Mayor Lowe stated that this Council has a responsibility to take the high road; however, there will be times when the situation calls for a different approach which will always be handled with upmost integrity, character, and morals.

Mayor Lowe thanked everyone for attending and stated that we should always be a lifter and not a leaner.

There being no further business to address, the meeting thus adjourned until October 17, 2023.