

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
September 3, 2019**

The members of the City Council of the City of Phenix City, Alabama met at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time for the regularly scheduled work session on Tuesday, September 3, 2019, in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building located at 601 12th Street, Phenix City, Alabama. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Councilmember Arthur L. Day, Jr., Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. Also present were City Manager Wallace B. Hunter, City Clerk Melony Lee, and City Attorney Jimmy Graham. Department Heads in attendance were: Building Official Gil Griffith, City Engineer Angel Moore, Utilities Director Stephen Smith, Finance Director Labrita King Copeland, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Course Director Mike Barber, Library Director Michele Kilday, Parks & Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain, Police Chief Ray Smith, and Graduate Engineer John Spraggins.

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

The invocation was led by Councilmember Johnson.

Mayor Lowe called upon Troy and Kellie Pope to address council, as listed on the agenda. Mr. and Mrs. Pope came forward to address Council. Mr. Troy Pope stated that he and his wife received a letter from the City stating that they were in violation of an ordinance concerning the usage of three of their rental houses. Mr. Pope also stated that he and his wife have a total of ten rental houses and only three are listed on Airbnb.com. Mr. Pope further stated that the three houses said to be in violation are being rented out to families in need of temporary or short term housing. Mr. Pope asked Mayor and Council for some type of waiver to stay in business since they cater to military families and their business generates revenue for the City. Mr. Pope recited the Goggle and Webster's Dictionary definitions of a Residential Rental House and a Bed and Breakfast House. Mayor Lowe stated that he met with the Popes on Friday August 30, 2019. Mayor Lowe informed Mr. and Mrs. Pope that the City must be consistent with the law. Mayor Lowe stated that the three houses in question are not in the proper Zoning area for a Tourist Home or Bed and Breakfast home. Building Official Gil Griffith recited the City's definition of a Rental, Bed and Breakfast, and Tourist Home. Mr. Griffith stated there is a zoning issue. Mr. Griffith also stated that a residential home cannot be used for commercial purposes in an R-3 zoning area. Mr. Griffith further stated that a Room and Boarding House is allowed in zoning areas C1-C4. Mr. Troy Pope stated that their property is not a bed and breakfast business because the entire house is being rented out for a specific amount of time and he has a Residential Rental Property Business License. Mr. Pope also stated that his home is not a tourist home and is a rental property. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that there is a need for the business but it is not allowed in a residential area. City Manager Hunter also stated that to keep the business running as it is, would be against the law. Mayor Lowe thanked Mr. and Mrs. Pope for coming to speak with Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon City Engineer Angel Moore to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their August 27, 2019 meeting. Ms. Moore advised the meeting was cancelled due to no agenda items.

Mayor Lowe called upon City Clerk Melony Lee who discussed the following with Mayor and Council:

1. Advised Council that the Phenix City Art Park Grand Opening will be held on September 14, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.
2. Reminded council that the September 17th City Council Meeting will be held at the Youth Center on 5th Street South at 6:00 p.m.
3. Advised Council that there will be three Work Sessions in the month of September with the last one on September 30, 2019 at the regular scheduled time.
4. Advised Council that the City Council meeting will be held on October 1, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers
5. Advised Council that City Offices will be closed on October 14, 2019 in observance of Columbus Day and therefore will push the Work Session and Council Meetings over by a day.
6. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Councilmember Johnson thanked the Utilities Department for a job well done keeping the City's grass cut. Councilmember Johnson stated that the city looks good overall.

Councilmember Day inquired about an update on the American Legion on Seale Road. Gil Griffith, Building Official, stated that he spoke with Manny Samuel and Lewis Alexander concerning the American Legion. Mr. Griffith also stated that the gentlemen are working with Veterans Affairs and the Alabama American Legion Association for funding to repair the building. Mr. Griffith further stated that Mr. Samuel and Mr. Alexander informed him that the entire process should not take more than a year including obtaining permits and inspection time to get the building up to code.

Councilmember Day inquired about an update on the Highway 431 Shopping Center Project. Steve Smith, Utilities Director stated that the projected opening date for Renfro's Market is March 1, 2020. Mr. Smith stated that there is still a lot of work to do on the project. Angel Moore, City Engineer, stated that the traffic signal heads are up but will not be turned on until there is enough square footage of shopping areas, according to the ALDOT standards.

Councilmember Day inquired about an update on 5th Street South. Angel Moore, City Engineer, stated that storm drain pipes are being installed and there are still water lines that need to be relocated. Ms. Moore stated that construction takes time and they are taking the necessary steps to pass the ALDOT inspection. Ms. Moore further stated that she does not have a projected completion date.

Councilmember Day inquired about seasonal personnel being hired on permanently. Stephanie Chastain, Human Resources Director, stated that a person that was hired as a seasonal worker cannot work more than a year and must have a four month gap in employment to be hired permanently. Ms. Chastain also stated that seasonal employees are hired throughout the year.

Councilmember Day inquired about the updates to Arthur Sumbry Park. Todd Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that all of the City's Parks are checked daily for trash pickup and general maintenance. Angel Moore, City Engineer, stated that the upcoming projects for the Arthur Sumbry Park are paving the Horseshoe bend and the walking trail around the lake. Ms. Moore also stated that they are currently working on reducing the water and mud near the basketball court by installing a drainage ditch.

Councilmember Day inquired about hiring additional employees in the Finance Department. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the Finance Department is preparing for an upcoming audit and a freeze has been placed on hiring until the audit is complete.

Councilmember Day inquired about the process of hiring additional Police Officers. Chief of Police Ray Smith stated that candidates go through a rigorous process to include physical agility testing, psychological testing, entrance exams, and background screening, Chief Smith also stated that the Police Department is working with the Human Resource department to hire qualified candidates.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the replacing of lights at the Sanford Road ballfield. Todd Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that the Contractor is working on installing the additional lights at the ballfield. Mr. Hughes also stated that baseball games will not be played on that field until the lighting is complete for safety reasons.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the update on replacing the registers on the water meters. Stephen Smith, Director of Utilities, stated that there is an ongoing analysis and meters will be replaced as needed.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, September 16, 2019.