

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES December 2, 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 Monday, December 2, 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, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, City Engineer Angel Moore, Utilities Director Stephen Smith, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Course Director Mike Barber, Library Director Michele Kilday, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, 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.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham arrived at 3:06 p.m.

Mayor Lowe called upon City Engineer Angel Moore to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their November 26, 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 she will be attending a City Clerk's Conference in Gulf Shores, Alabama from December 3 – 6, 2019.
2. Reminded Council that the Christmas Parade Reception will start at 9:00 a.m. on December 7, 2019 and the actual Christmas Parade will start at 10:00 a.m.
3. Reminded Council that Breakfast with Santa will be held on December 14, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.
4. Reminded Council that Christmas at Moon Lake will be held on December 14, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.
5. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed December 24 and 25, 2019 for the Christmas Holidays.
6. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed January 1, 2020 in observance of the New Year's Day Holiday.
7. Advised Council that the State of the City Address will be held on January 9, 2020.
8. Advised Council that City Offices will be closed on January 20, 2020 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday and therefore will push the Work Session and Council Meetings over by a day.
9. Informed Council that there are no upcoming board appointments for January 2020.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that in 2018 City Offices opened for half a day starting at 1:00 p.m. the day after Christmas; he asked Council if the same would be allowed for this year. Council advised the Clerk to place a Resolution on the December 17, 2019 Council Agenda to that effect.

Councilmember Johnson stated that she received several phone calls from citizens in her district that expressed their gratitude on the resurfacing on 16th street. Councilmember Johnson also stated that she thanked the citizens for their calls and concerns and asked for patience as the city works on other roadway projects.

Councilmember Day inquired about an update on the American Legion on Seale Road. Gil Griffith, Building Official, stated that he had spoken to Manny Samuel and Lewis Alexander back in September about having the building repaired and up to code. Mr. Griffith also stated that the gentlemen were given one year to request for assistance from the Alabama State American Legion and have the building repaired. Mr. Griffith further stated that he would follow up with them soon to see where they are in the process.

Councilmember Day inquired about the resurfacing of Downing Drive. City Engineer Angel Moore stated that asphalt has to cure before the permanent stripes and road markings are placed. Ms. Moore also stated that it is a fourteen day process and will be completed soon.

Councilmember Day inquired about the property between the City and the Phenix City Board of Education. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the area has been surveyed and a portion of the property may be useful to the City. City Manager Wallace Hunter also stated that it will be a future project to look into.

Councilmember Day inquired about the new Liberty Hill Development on 20th Street. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the Liberty Hill Housing Development is a part of the Phenix City Housing Authority and not Liberty Hill Baptist Church. Mayor Lowe stated that a portion of the units will be used for Veterans, however the project is a part of the Phenix City Housing Authority and residents must meet the Housing Authority's requirements.

Councilmember Day inquired about an update on the Highway 431 and 5th Street South projects. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that everything is still going as scheduled and the projected grand opening will be March 2020. Angel Moore City Engineer stated that the contractors are continuously working on 5th Street South. Ms. Moore stated that they did run into some unforeseen issues but they are being taken care of and the project should be finished soon.

Councilmember Day inquired about the updates at the Lakewood Golf Course. Golf Course Manager Mike Barber stated that trees have been removed to eliminate the shade issues and winter cleanup has been completed.

Councilmember Day 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 and there are 134 current outstanding work orders.

Councilmember Day inquired about the repairing of the pavilions at the Arthur Sumbry Park. Todd Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that they are in the process of finding a water leak at the park. Mr. Hughes also stated that a crack in the pipes was created when the payment was laid and their focus has been shifted. Mr. Hughes further stated the pavilions will be repaired after the water leak issue has been resolved.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about safety and security procedures around the holidays for the Police and Fire Departments. Councilmember Bailey asked if outdoor Christmas lighting was a fire hazard. Fire Chief Kris Kennedy stated that the City received a grant a few years ago for free smoke detectors for the citizens and free fire safety inspections and that was the only time

the Fire Department has gone door to door in the communities. Chief Kennedy also stated that the Fire Department does not go on private property unless there is an issue. Councilmember Bailey asked if the Police Department increased the amount of officers on the streets to decrease the number of people drinking and driving and the overall concern and safety of the City. Police Chief Ray Smith stated that overtime is permitted to officers to allow them to patrol the streets and events for the safety of the citizens of Phenix City. Chief Smith also stated that the funds are reimbursed by the Federal Government. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that everyone should look out for each other, be aware of their surroundings and report any suspicious activity or behavior.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the increase of scams that occur this time of year. Chief of Police Chief Ray Smith stated that online scamming and gift card scams are of great concern. Chief Smith stated that most of the calls and scams are coming from overseas which limits the Police Departments jurisdiction. Chief Smith also stated that people should be cautious when purchasing gift cards. Chief Smith further stated that gift cards can be tampered with prior to purchasing them in the stores. Chief Smith advised to make sure gift cards are sealed prior to purchasing them. Chief Smith stated that scammers are placing magnetic strips on the back and registering the cards, so that when money is downloaded they can retrieve the money before the purchaser realizes it. Chief Smith recommends notifying banks as soon as an unauthorized transaction is discovered.

Councilmember Johnson inquired about burning debris or leaves in the City limits. Councilmember Johnson asked if there was a City Ordinance or something that the citizens needed to know when burning leaves in their own yards. Fire Chief Kris Kennedy stated that citizens can refer to the City's website under Fire / Rescue or call the Fire Station Battalion Chief Office at 334-291-4715 to obtain information on Burn Permits.

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, December 16, 2019.