

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**July 17, 2023**

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, July 17, 2023, in the Council Chambers located within the Public Safety Building at 1111 Broad Street, Phenix City, Alabama 36867. Upon roll call, the following members 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 Clerk Melony Lee and City Attorney Jimmy Graham. Department Heads in attendance: Building Official Ray Rogers, City Engineer Angel Moore, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Library Director Tammy Henry, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Human Resource Director Stephanie Chastain, Human Resource Generalist Eliza Phillips, Public Safety Director Ray Smith, Chief of Police George Staudinger, and Graduate Engineer John Spraggins.

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

Councilmember Bailey led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe advised there were no Requests to Address Council.

Mayor Lowe stated that there are no items under the Planning Commission.

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

1. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
2. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
3. Advised Council that the Alabama Municipal-CMO Regional Training will be held in Montgomery, Alabama on Thursday, July 27, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.
4. Informed Council that the Mayor's Ball Scholarship Award Night will be held on Thursday, July 27, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
5. Advised Council of the Budget Planning Hearing that will be held on Thursday, July 27, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
6. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session Meeting to be held on Monday, July 31, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
7. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, August 1, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
8. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
9. Informed Council of the Centennial Celebration Cocktail Party to be held on Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at the Amphitheater at 5:00 p.m.
10. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, August 14, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
11. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.

12. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
13. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed the claims with Council.

Councilmember Carter stated that a citizen had inquired about a Historical Landmark for an old primary school that was located at 24<sup>th</sup> Street. Councilmember Carter inquired about the process to locate this information through the Historical Commission. Public Safety Director Ray Smith stated that Alabama Historic Commission has a webpage and that there is an application process for a citizen to make a nomination for the landmark and research to be conducted. Chief Smith also stated that a search can be completed through the website to see if the application has already been submitted by another person. Chief Smith further stated that in the past the Historical Commission had a group in Phenix City and in Russell County and it was determined that both were not needed therefore, they were combined to Russell County Historical Commission. Councilmember Carter inquired if this was the correct process to request a landmark. Chief Smith stated that once it is submitted to the Russell County Historic Commission than it can be petitioned at that time. Councilmember Carter stated that she has acquired a picture of the old school from the Citizen. Chief Smith stated that the picture should be submitted with the application. Councilmember Day inquired about another older school and whether Chief Smith had heard of it before. Chief Smith stated that the Russell County Historic Commission would have all of the information for both Russell County and Phenix City. City Manager stated that the Russell County School System should have documents on all of the schools past and present.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that he has directed some department heads to create reports on current issues and challenges within their departments. Mr. Hunter stated he wanted to ensure that the Council is continuously up to date.

Human Resource Director Stephanie Chastain reviewed a report on the current statics for the City's Employee rates and how they compare to the U.S. Chamber Report on Workforce Shortages across the United States and in the State of Alabama. Ms. Chastain provided a presentation through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce website on Understanding America's Labor Shortage.

City Engineer Angel Moore provided an update on the current status of staff to include filled and open positions currently available in each of the Engineering and Public Works Offices. Ms. Moore stated that out of 44 positions there are 16 open.

Councilmember Day stated that the storage business located on 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue cleans out his units around the first of each month and places the furniture and debris out on the curb. Councilmember Day inquired as to whether or not the owner is aware that the City no longer picks up charge piles for private property. City Engineer Angel Moore stated that they have informed businesses and it is stated on the City's website that they should hire a private contractor to pick up the debris. Councilmember Carter inquired as to whether PubWorks provides a timeframe that the debris should be removed. Ms. Moore stated that she will check to see if a timeframe is being communicated and if it is not, PubWorks will begin providing that information.

Fire Chief Kristin Kennedy provided an update on the current status of the Fire Department staff to include filled and open positions. Chief Kennedy stated that currently they have 11 open positions with the Fire Department. Chief Kennedy provided an overview of the challenges with the candidates completing the entire process to be hired in a permanent status. Chief Kennedy stated that of the six (6) recruits that were brought in, only one (1) is still going through the process.

Chief of Police George Staudinger provided an update on the current status of the Public Safety Department to include open positions and the process for hiring new recruits. Chief Staudinger stated that they have 93 sworn positions and 28 of those positions are open. Chief Staudinger stated that they have 12 civilian positions and four (4) of those positions open.

Director of Parks and Recreation Todd Hughes provided an overview for the Phenix City Centennial Celebration. Mr. Hughes stated that the Cocktail Party begins at 5:00 p.m. and that the concert will be held on Wednesday, August 9, 2023 @ 7:00 pm. at the Amphitheater.

City Clerk Melony Lee asked for an Executive Session to discuss Good Name and Character for 15 minutes, from which the meeting would adjourn.

Councilmember Day moved to go into Executive Session to discuss Good Name and Character for 15 minutes, from which the meeting would adjourn. Councilmember Gordy seconded said motion. All were in favor.

Council went into Executive Session at 5:32 p.m.

Council came out of Executive Session at 5:35 p.m.

Mayor Lowe stated that there being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, July 31, 2023.