

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
October 2, 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, October 2, 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 Attorney Jimmy Graham, and City Clerk Melony Lee. Department Heads in attendance: Building Official Ray Rogers, Assistant Director of Engineering Michael Pattillo, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, Finance Director Labrita King Copeland, Assistant Fire Chief Kerry Bragg, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Human Resource Generalist Eliza Phillips, Police Chief George Staudinger, Graduate Engineer John Spraggins, and Utilities Director Charles Woody.

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

Mayor Lowe led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe called upon Mike Pattillo, Assistant Director of Engineering, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their September 26, 2023 meeting.

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, October 3, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
2. Informed Council of the ICF Opening Ceremony that will be held on Saturday, October 7, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. located at the Phenix City Amphitheater.
3. Informed Council of the Faith and Blue Celebration that will be held on Sunday, October 8, 2023 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. located at Mount Olive Baptist Church.
4. Informed Council of the ICF Social that will be held on Sunday, October 8, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. located in the Historic District Presidential Society at 5th Street and Front Avenue.
5. Informed Council that the City Offices will be closed on Monday, October 9, 2023 in observance of Columbus Day Holiday.
6. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
7. Informed Council of the ICF Athlete Social that will be held on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. located at the Art Park.
8. Informed Council of the ICF Social on Thursday, October 12, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. located at a private residents home.
9. Informed Council of the ICF Closing Ceremony on Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. located at the Powerhouse.
10. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, October 16, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
11. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on October 17, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.

12. Informed Council of the Ft. Moore Oktoberfest to be held Friday, October 20, 2023 through Sunday, October 22, 2023.
13. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
14. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, November 6, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
15. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
16. Informed Council that the City Offices will be closed on Friday, November 10, 2023 in observance of Veteran's Day Holiday.
17. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
18. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
19. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
20. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on November 23, 2023 and November 24, 2023 in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday.
21. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
22. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Councilmember Carter inquired about the fire hydrants being painted throughout the City and asked about the status. Assistant Fire Chief Kerry Bragg stated that they are in the process of painting the hydrants and that they are planning to paint them on a yearly basis. Assistant Chief Bragg also stated that the color is based on the pressure of the hydrant. Councilmember Day inquired if the work has been contracted out to a vendor. Assistant Chief Bragg stated that the State is doing the work and dividing the cost by district. Councilmember Day asked that this information be communicated to the Citizens in the Council Meeting. Assistant Chief Bragg stated he would inform Fire Chief Kristen Kennedy of this request.

Councilmember Carter stated that she was pleased to see the selection of activities that the Phenix City Russell County Library has been providing to the Citizens. Councilmember Carter also stated that she wanted to acknowledge and thank Library Director Tammy Henry and her staff for the work they have completed. Councilmember Carter further stated that the Library held the National Library Month in September and there were a lot of Citizens that came out and registered for Library cards. Councilmember Carter emphasized how important it is to have this in the community and that the Library staff is making a difference.

Councilmember Carter inquired about charging stations for Library guests. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that they are in the process of ordering additional stations. Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes stated that there are six new charging stations going in on 5th Street South Complex and four to five at the Parking Garage. Mr. Hunter stated that they need to plan for budgeting for the electricity that will be used for the new stations as well as ensuring that Citizens are not parking at the station all day long.

Councilmember Bailey stated that he appreciates the City adding land structures in front of St. Andrews and Summerville subdivisions. Councilmember Bailey also stated that only one Citizen stated that they did not like the way it looked but that it is needed. Councilmember Bailey further stated that he communicated to Citizens prior to the installment that the City did a lot to

prevent the issue prior to the installation but in the end this was the best solution for the safety of the community.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the status of the City employment numbers and if it can be broken down by type. Human Resource Generalist Eliza Phillips provided an update on the current open positions with the City. Ms. Phillips stated that all of the departments including Parks and Recreations, PubWorks and Utilities are pulling together and assisting each other with their workloads. Councilmember Bailey thanked them all for a job well done especially with staffing shortages. Councilmember Day inquired about the number of applicants tested versus the number hired. Ms. Phillips stated that out of the applicants that passed the written exams, some do not follow-up on the next steps in the process to take drug screening and some that do not pass the drug screening. Ms. Phillips also stated that there were several job fairs and hiring events that took place last month.

Councilmember Bailey stated that the Striping Company that is doing the work downtown are doing a good job and that it looks professional.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about a status update on the lot in Saddlebrook. Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan stated that there were no new updates.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the issue with coyotes and that he made contact with the Game Warden and they communicated to the Citizens what the guidelines are around these types of issues.

Councilmember Day inquired about the 13 condemned properties and whether the funding for these were part of the Grant Funding. Building Official Ray Rogers stated that these properties are separate and were not part of the current Grant Funding.

Councilmember Day inquired as to the status of the clean-up at the Old Seale Road American Legion property. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the owners are in the process of keeping up the property.

Councilmember Day inquired about the Police Department employee's that resign in good status and whether or not they can go to another agency and apply for the same position as they held with the City. Police Chief George Staudinger stated that the employee can apply at other agencies and that other agencies are extremely competitive with hiring employees away from other agencies. Chief Staudinger stated that he had recently visited area agencies and they are all in the same status as the City with low turnout for qualified candidates and trying to remain competitive with salaries and benefits.

Councilmember Carter inquired as to whether the Police Department was offering a sign on bonus. Chief Staudinger stated that they do still offer the sign on bonuses for new officers at \$2000.00 and for certified officers it is \$2500.00.

Councilmember Day stated that the Old Seale Road Bridge Project looks good so far and inquired about a status on the work. Assistant Director of Engineering Michael Pattillo stated that the contractor has demolished the site and is now in the process of the next steps. Mr. Pattillo also stated that they are currently on schedule with a couple of issues that have been addressed. Mr. Pattillo stated that the work will take up to nine months or longer to complete.

Councilmember Day stated that Phenix City is on the move. Councilmember Day also stated that there are several new businesses locating to the City and that Citizens thanked him for the new growth down 431. Councilmember Day further stated that he gives credit to the City Manager Wallace Hunter and his staff for working hard to continue the growth throughout the City.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about how properties are placed on the demolition list. Building Official Ray Rogers stated that the Building Department places the properties on the list as they monitor the status of the maintenance on the property and they continue to communicate with the property owners on what is needed to bring the property back up to prevent possible demolition.

Councilmember Carter stated that she has had several questions around the old buildings throughout District Two and if there are plans to clean-up those areas. Councilmember Carter also stated that the Council should continue to keep a focus on these issues moving forward.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

Mayor Lowe stated that there being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, October 16, 2023.