

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
February 5, 2024**

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, February 5, 2024, 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 Shannon Davis, and City Attorney Jimmy Graham. Department Heads in attendance: Building Official Ray Rogers, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, City Engineer Angel Moore, Finance Director Labrita King Copeland, Fire Chief Kristen Kennedy, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Kristi Goggans, Police Chief George Staudinger, and Graduate Engineer John Spraggins.

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

Councilmember Carter led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe called upon Jennifer Davidson with the Russell County-Alabama Extension Office – Arbor Day and Farmer’s Market Days to address Council, as listed on the agenda. Ms. Davidson was not present at the appointed time. Mayor Lowe stated that if Ms. Davidson arrives at a later time, he would allow her to address Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Angel Moore, City Engineer, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their January 23, 2024 meeting.

Mayor Lowe called upon City Clerk Shannon Davis who discussed the following with Mayor and Council:

1. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
2. Informed Council that Parks and Recreation Department will hold the Mother-Son Dance on Friday, February 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
3. Informed Council that Parks and Recreation Department will hold the Father-Daughter Dance on Saturday, February 10, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
4. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 5:15 p.m.
5. Informed Council that the East Alabama Chamber of Commerce will hold the Breakfast and Business on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 7:00 a.m.
6. Advised Council that the Zoning Adjustment and Appeals Board will meet on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
7. Informed Council that United Way Emerging Leaders United-Great Chattahoochee will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.
8. Advised Council that the Alabama Rescate Conference will be held on Saturday, February 17, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.
9. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024 in observance of President’s Day Holiday.

10. Informed Council that a Black History Observance Breakfast will be held on Monday, February 19, 2024 at 7:00 a.m. located at the Columbus Trade Center.
11. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building. This meeting will be held on a Tuesday afternoon due to the President's Day Holiday.
12. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building. This meeting will be held on a Wednesday morning due to the President's Day Holiday.
13. Informed Council that a Black History Celebration will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. at the Central Activity Center.
14. Informed Council that Fort Moore will have an Access Control Point Ceremony to be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.
15. Informed Council that Arbor Day Tree Give-away will be held on Saturday, February 24, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.
16. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 5:15 p.m.
17. Informed Council that the East Alabama Chamber of Commerce will hold an After Hours on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
18. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, March 4, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
19. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
20. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 5:15 p.m.
21. Informed Council that CVCC Chattahoochee Valley Community College will hold a Hall of Fame to be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, time TBA.
22. Informed Council that the East Alabama Chamber of Commerce will hold the Breakfast and Business on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 7:00 a.m.
23. Advised Council that the Phenix City Russell County Library will meet on Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
24. Informed Council that Parks and Recreation Department will hold the St. Patrick's Day Celebration on Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
25. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, March 18, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
26. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
27. Advised Council that the Board of Zoning Adjustment & Appeals Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
28. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 5:15 p.m.
29. Informed Council that the East Alabama Chamber of Commerce will hold an After Hours on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
30. Informed Council that Parks and Recreation Department will hold the Easter Egg Hunt on Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
31. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Jennifer Davidson with the Russell County-Alabama Extension Office arrived to the Council meeting at 3:19 p.m.

Councilmember Carter stated that there is a cut in the road located on 10th Avenue and that it is getting deep. Councilmember Carter asked if the Public Works Department could address the issue. City Manager Wallace Hunter confirmed the area and stated that the Public Works Department will look into the issue.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the utility leaks throughout the City. Assistant City Manager Chan Gamble stated that they are making progress on the list of issues. Councilmember Bailey thanked Mr. Gamble and stated that the City workers could only do so much and that he knows they are working hard to fix all of the leaks on the list.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the status of the downtown grass maintenance that is currently being completed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Councilmember Bailey stated that Parks and Recreation are doing a good job keeping everything downtown clean. Councilmember Bailey inquired about the status of hiring a contractor to continue the work. Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Kristi Goggans stated that they are not bringing in a contractor at this time. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes has taken pride in ensuring that the downtown area is being maintained. Mr. Hunter also stated that since it is the winter months, they did not want to accept a bid for a half of the contract for the maintenance. Mr. Hunter further stated that Mr. Hughes has reached out to several contractors regarding the work. Mr. Hunter stated that he will be making a decision to either hire full-time employees to handle the work or hire contractors to come in and support the City workers.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the status of the new Human Resources Building. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that they are in the process of getting the building ready and are currently adding security doors to the front. Mr. Hunter also stated they are making good progress.

Councilmember Day stated that he noticed that the new Circle K that is located off Highway 431 has been completed and inquired as to when the store would open. Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan stated that the owners are still working on some items to have the store opened.

Councilmember Day inquired about the new Race Trac Store. Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan stated that they should be announcing the opening soon.

Councilmember Day inquired about the project for the lights down Highway 431. City Engineer Angel Moore stated that she submitted the project to ALDOT and they denied it.

Councilmember Day inquired about the distribution of gasoline tax proceeds against Russell County. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the bottom line is that the County does not want to pay it. Mr. Hunter also stated that he would review it for the Citizens during the Council Meeting.

Councilmember Carter inquired about adding a turning lane light for the flow of traffic on 14th Street. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that they completed a study on that issue and that the State did not approve the addition of the turning light and stated that it was not warranted at that time.

Councilmember Day inquired about the Fire Department's Training Facility completion. Fire Chief Kristen Kennedy stated that it is almost ready. Councilmember Day asked about the timeframe to allow other Fire Departments to use the facility for training. Chief Kennedy stated that are waiting to hear back from the Fire College regarding the need for use of the facility.

Mayor Lowe called upon Jennifer Davidson with the Russell County-Alabama Extension Office and Tommy Ware, Chairperson for the Phenix City Tree Board to address Council. Ms. Davidson apologized for being late. Ms. Davidson stated that she was at the meeting on behalf of the Phenix City Tree Board and for the upcoming Arbor Day. Ms. Davidson inquired if Council would allow them to use the parking lot at the Garrett-Harrison Football Stadium for their Fresh Market on Thursdays and Saturdays from April to Thanksgiving. Ms. Davidson stated that the Market has been renamed to Phenix Fresh Open Air Market. Ms. Davidson also stated that she had spoken with Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes and he had given his approval and wanted her to confirm with Mayor and Council. Mayor Lowe inquired if all of the products sold at the market are locally grown. Ms. Davidson stated that it is all local farmers from the surrounding areas. Ms. Davidson thanked the Council for allowing her to address them at the meeting.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

Councilmember Day inquired about the status of the new Police vehicles that have been ordered. Police Chief George Staudinger stated that they have received all of the vehicles that were ordered.

Councilmember Day moved to go into Executive Session to discuss Good Name and Character for 25 minutes, from which the meeting would adjourn. Councilmember Gordy seconded said motion. All were in favor.

Council went into Executive Session at 4:27 p.m.

Council came out of Executive Session at 4:52 p.m.

Mayor Lowe and Council interviewed the candidate for the Zoning Adjustment and Appeals Board.

Mayor Lowe stated that there being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, February 20, 2024.