APPROVED AS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL 03-18-25

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2025

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, March 3, 2025, 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 Carter Green, 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 Code Enforcement Officer Ricky Carlson, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, Director of Engineering Angel Moore, Graduate Civil Engineer Chris Casey, Finance Director Labrita King-Copeland, Assistant Fire Chief Kerry Bragg, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain, IT Director Mike Bauer, Library Director Tammy Henry, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Police Chief George Staudinger, Assistant Police Chief Joseph Weierick, and Utilities Director John Spraggins.

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

Councilmember Day led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe called upon Eddie Eubanks, BSI, Inc. to address Council as listed on the Agenda. Mr. Eubanks stated that Michael Bowden was also on the agenda to address Council and he would let Mr. Bowden speak on their behalf. Mayor Lowe called upon Director of Engineering Angel Moore to discuss the history of the rezone request that took place in 2011. Ms. Moore provided Council with a package of information outlining the details for their review. Ms. Moore reviewed the details of the rezone request for Silver Terrace, LLC. Mr. Bowden came forward to address Council on his new request to rezone. Mr. Bowden stated that his understanding of the process for rezoning is for the Planning Commission to review and make a recommendation for City Council but that it is ultimately City Council's decision to approve or deny the request to rezone. Mr. Bowden also stated that his purpose for the meeting today was to provide their plan for the rezone with their perspective in mind and a package with that information was provide to Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Director of Engineering Angel Moore, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their February 25, 2025 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, March 4, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
2. Informed Council that Chattahoochee Valley Community College will hold their Hall of Fame Event on Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
3. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 5:15 p.m.
4. Informed Council that the Unity Prayer Breakfast will be held on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 7:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
5. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, March 17, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.

6. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Community Center.
7. Advised Council that the Board of Zoning Adjustments and Appeals will meet on Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.
8. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 5:15 p.m.
9. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, March 31, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
10. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
11. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 5:15 p.m.
12. Advised Council that the Phenix City Russell County Library Board will meet on Friday, April 11, 2025 at 5:15 p.m.
13. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on Monday, April 14, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.
14. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Building.
15. Advised Council that the DRA will meet on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.
16. Advised Council that the Board of Zoning Adjustments and Appeals will meet on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.
17. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at 5:15 p.m.
18. Reviewed upcoming Board Appointments.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about whether the City could provide a sign acknowledging the Central High School's Girls' Flag Football Team's National Championship. Councilmember Bailey stated that there is a current sign to honor the Boys Little League Champions and that the girls should have the same honor and that it was sometimes harder for girls sports to receive the same acknowledgements. Councilmember Bailey also stated that the City of Phenix City is consistent with acknowledging the achievements of all of the teams and that it would be great for all coming through the City to see the signs. Mayor Lowe inquired if the sign at the Garrett Harrison Football Stadium would be included. Councilmember Gordy clarified that the Booster Club paid for the sign at the stadium and not the City. Mayor Lowe asked Director of Parks and Recreation Todd Hughes to look into the information for the sign.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the status of the Moon Lake Project. Director of Parks and Recreation Todd Hughes stated that they were still in the planning stages to ensure they will have everything that they need to approve the final plan. Mr. Hughes also started that they are looking to have it ready for final review within the next month. Councilmember Bailey inquired about the projected costs. Mr. Hughes stated that at this time they had only the preliminary cost information.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the status of the Irrigation updates to the Phenix City Golf Course. Golf Manager Mike Barber stated that the installation is 65% completed at this time and provided the additional timeline for the remaining work and that they are targeting the end of April for completion. Councilmember Bailey inquired if any of the work being done on the greens have affected the number of citizens playing golf. Mr. Barber stated that the weather plays a more critical role but that the work has caused minimal impact. Mr. Barber also stated that the citizens have provided overall positive feedback on the updates.

Councilmember Day inquired about the new golf carts. Golf Manager Mike Barber stated that the new carts were received in November 2024 and they have not had any issues with them. Councilmember Day inquired about any maintenance issues with the carts. Mr. Barber stated that the carts are gas powered and that Parks and Recreation Department changes the oil and completes regular maintenance.

Councilmember Bailey stated that he has had a citizen inquire about a fire hydrant that was damaged due to an accident on Old Auburn Road and Highway 80 intersection near the Circle K Store. Councilmember Baily also stated that the citizen's insurance company is challenging them about their insurance because the hydrant is no longer there. Councilmember Bailey further stated that Fire Chief Kristen Kennedy had previously explained to him that there was damage done to the lines that connect to the hydrant as well. Councilmember Bailey inquired about the timeframe to replace the hydrant. Assistant Fire Chief Kerry Bragg stated that currently, the Fire Department has a list of hydrants throughout the City that are in need of repair and or replacement and that they are working with Director of Utilities John Spraggins to address the issues to have the hydrants fixed.

Councilmember Bailey stated that he has had around 20 elderly citizens residing on 4th Avenue between 29th Street and 22nd Street that walk the sidewalks daily that have inquired about the status of fixing the leaks because they have to cross the road to avoid the water. Councilmember Bailey also stated that it is a hazardous situation for the citizens and asked if it is possible for Utilities Department to check on the status of fixing the water leaks and follow up with Council. Director of Utilities John Spraggins stated that the crews were working on that area last week but were called off for an emergency.

Councilmember Day inquired about the work that is in process with the Brandywine Water Tanks. Director of Utilities John Spraggins stated that the tanks were being cleaned. Councilmember Day inquired about the timeframe for the completion. Mr. Spraggins stated that the entire process should take about 30 days. Councilmember Day inquired if there were any impacts to the water pressure while the tanks were down. Mr. Spraggins stated that it does not affect the pressure.

Councilmember Day inquired about the Water Meter Register replacements. Director of Utilities John Spraggins stated that they were in the process of making the replacements and that they do not have a timeframe for completion. Mr. Spraggins also stated that they still have workers going to the meters and manually reading them. Councilmember Day stated that he realized the process takes a while to complete.

Councilmember Day inquired about the status of the water leak on 25th Avenue on behalf of a citizen that has contacted him numerous times. Director of Utilities John Spraggins stated that the order of the leaks on the list are based on the severity of the leaks. Mayor Lowe stated that he has spoken to the citizen and communicated the information to him. Councilmember Day stated that he communicated to the citizen that the Utilities Department reviews all of the leaks in all three of the districts and the ones that are most critical are addressed first. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that it was a shame that the Utilities Department is among so many others across the country that are struggling with hiring and retaining a qualified workforce that wants to work. Mr. Hunter also stated that there are other leaks that have been going on longer than the one on 25th Avenue and it has to be approached based on the urgency of the leak.

Assistant City Manager Chan Gamble stated that Human Resources, Economic Development, Information Technology, and the Utilities Departments are working jointly to hold a

Hiring Event on April 3, 2025 at the Troy Riverfront Campus in Phenix City. Mr. Gamble also stated that there are billboards, social media, online marketing and TV spots reserved for promoting the event. Mr. Gamble further stated that it is a Hiring Event, which means, the day of the event, the applicants will be interviewed and will be allowed to take any required test and background checks will be expedited. Mr. Gamble stated that the applicants could be hired on the same day pending background and drug test. Mr. Gamble also stated that they are advertising for positions across all of areas of Utilities. Councilmember Bailey inquired about advertising in the Columbus, Georgia area and Mr. Gamble stated that they are advertising in Columbus. Councilmember Day inquired as to how many positions were open. Mr. Gamble stated that there were up to 30 open positions.

Councilmember Day inquired about any compensation that the City receives when the Columbus Lions Football Team practices at the Phenix City Garrett Harrison Stadium. Director of Parks and Recreations Todd Hughes stated that the Columbus Lions provide tickets and they sponsor several different events for the Parks and Recreation Department, for example the Easter Egg Hunt that is held and free to citizens and events held during the summer camps. Councilmember Day inquired if there were ever any damages when they use the field. Mr. Hughes stated that they have not damaged the fields.

Councilmember Day inquired about updates on the Phenix Lumber Mill. Assistant City Manager Chan Gamble stated that the Phenix Lumber Company has filed for bankruptcy and that there have been claims submitted against the company and the owners of the estate. Mr. Gamble stated that the litigation is currently at a stay, which happens when the company files bankruptcy. Councilmember Gordy inquired about the family's that lost loved ones at the company and if they had claims against the company. Mr. Gamble stated that there were currently two wrongful death lawsuits that are pending and further explained the process for these types of lawsuits when a bankruptcy has been declared.

Councilmember Day requested a status update on the Downtown Riverfront Development Project. Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan provided an overview of the recent meetings held and that the work is moving forward and in the planning stages.

Councilmember Day inquired about the Seed Fund status. Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan stated that it was a creative idea to bring many different stakeholders and partners to hopefully invest in local development. Mr. Culligan provide a background on the work that was done to bring the developers together but because of insufficient funds that were raised and lack of interest, the project was not continued.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

Mayor Lowe stated that there being no further business to address, the meeting thus adjourned until March 17, 2025.