

MEETING MINUTES
May 19, 2020

The members of the City Council of the City of Phenix City, Alabama met in a regularly scheduled council meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin-Idle Hour Park Community Center located at 3743 Moon Lake Drive, Phenix City, Alabama. Upon roll call, the following members of Council were present: Councilmember Arthur L. Day, Jr., Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. Councilmember Steve Bailey was present by conference call. Also present were: City Manager Wallace Hunter, City Clerk Melony Lee and City Attorney Jimmy Graham.

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

Councilmember Day delivered the invocation.

Councilmember Day led the pledge of allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor Lowe presented a proclamation recognizing Community Action Month.

PROCLAMATION

Mrs. Jamie Thomas, Director of Community Services, came forward to accept the proclamation.

Mayor Lowe presented the regularly scheduled meeting minutes of the May 4, 2020 Work Session and May 5, 2020 Council Meeting for approval. Councilmember Day moved to approve the minutes, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe stated there was no unfinished business to address at this time.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to authorizing an Escrow Trust Agreement and related transactions in connection with the refunding of the City of Phenix City's General Obligation School Warrants, Series 2014-A.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-134

Councilmember Johnson moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, and Gordy. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: Mayor Lowe. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to making application to the United States Department of Homeland Security and FEMA for a Public Assistance Funding Grant to obtain funds for reimbursement due to the COVID-19 pandemic declaration.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-135

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Day. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded:

YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented five (5) resolutions in reference to declaring properties a public nuisance and authorizing and directing the Housing Code Abatement Board to take necessary action to demolish, remove and clear all building materials, trash, and debris from the following properties:

1. 1900 2nd Avenue

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-136

2. 2013 2nd Avenue

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-137

3. 1701 12th Place South

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-138

4. 1114 20th Street

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-139

5. 1118 20th Street

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-140

Councilmember Day moved to approve the resolutions, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Johnson. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to awarding a bid to Foley Products Company for Reinforced Concrete pipe.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-141

Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Johnson. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented a resolution in reference to declaring one wrecked 2015 Dodge Charger as surplus to be disposed of to Blaze Recycling and Metals.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-142

Councilmember Day moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded:

YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented for first reading an Ordinance in reference to authorizing the Issuance of Water and Sewer Revenue Warrants, Series 2020B.

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-04

Councilmember Gordy moved to dispense with the reading of the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Day. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed. Councilmember Johnson moved to suspend the rules, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed. Councilmember Day moved to approve the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented for second reading an Ordinance to exempt certain items from the municipal sales and use tax during the third full weekend of July, 2020, referred to as the "Back-to-School" Sales Tax Holiday.

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-05

Councilmember Day moved to approve the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAIN: None. The motion thus passed.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham presented a subrogation claim against the City of Phenix City, filed by State Farm on behalf of Rudolfo Barraca. City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that on September 4, 2019 Mr. Barraca was on 11th Avenue waiting to turn left on South Railroad Street when a utility pole fell, causing damage to his vehicle. City Attorney Jimmy Graham recommended denying the claim due to the utility pole being maintained by Alabama Power Company. Councilmember Day moved to approve the City Attorney's recommendation to deny the claim, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Gordy. Upon said motion being put to a vote, the following vote was recorded: YEAS: Councilmembers Day, Johnson, Bailey, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Councilmember Day stated that City Manager Wallace Hunter has done a fantastic job along with the Department Heads getting the City to its current credit rating. Councilmember Day also stated that in the eight years that he has been on the City Council, all of the Department Heads work well together for the betterment of Phenix City.

Councilmember Johnson stated that with the City being under the Safer at Home Order issued by Alabama Governor Kay Ivey, there has been more trash and large items for collection on the side of the roads. Councilmember Johnson thanked the Utilities and Public Works Department for their services in picking up those items in a timely fashion and for helping keep the streets of Phenix City clean.

Councilmember Johnson congratulated the graduating Class of 2020 for overcoming all of the obstacles that have been placed in their way due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Councilmember Johnson thanked Superintendent Randy Wilkes and the Phenix City Board of Education for continuing the tradition of a High School Graduation while maintaining social distancing. Councilmember Johnson stated that she spoke with Dr. Brenda Cooley, Superintendent of the Russell county School District, who stated that their students will have a memorable graduation as well. Councilmember Johnson thanked the teachers and parents for making sure the students continued in a learning environment after the doors of the schools closed.

Councilmember Johnson thanked the citizens of Phenix City for allowing herself and her fellow councilmembers to serve and represent each District of the City.

Councilmember Bailey congratulated the graduating class of Glenwood High School and their Headmaster Frankie Mitchum, Central High School and their Superintendent Randy Wilkes, and Russell County High School and their Superintendent Dr. Brenda Cooley for pressing through the COVID-19 Pandemic to ensure everyone graduated. Councilmember Bailey stated that not only did the graduating Class of 2020 work hard during the Pandemic, but all students from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Councilmember Bailey thanked the teachers and the parents for assisting the students with their school work.

Councilmember Bailey stated that our City is not struggling financially during the Pandemic and that speaks volumes for City Manager Wallace Hunter. Mr. Hunter stated that the City put together a plan years ago that would allow the City to save money by refunding Bond issues. Mr. Hunter also stated that it feels great to see the vision come into fruition. Mr. Hunter further stated that he does not take the credit for the almost four million dollars in savings but it takes the entire team working together for the betterment of the City. Mr. Hunter thanked City Council as well as City employees working together to make sure the City continues to remain strong even in the middle of the Pandemic.

Steve Smith, Utilities Director, stated that a contractor working for the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) on the Opelika Bridge Project ran into main water line feed, causing water to be shut off in the subdivisions in that area. Mr. Smith also stated that the Utilities Department Emergency crew responded immediately, patched the pipe, and water services were restored last night. Mr. Smith further stated that ALDOT will be billed for the repairs.

City Manager Wallace Hunter thanked Jimmy Graham and all of the City Attorneys for representing Phenix City during litigations. Mr. Hunter stated that not only has refinancing the City's debt saved the City money but the City attorneys have saved the City a lot of money as well. Mr. Hunter also stated that it shows how working together is a benefit for the City.

Mayor Lowe thanked the Citizens for their understanding as we go through this together.

Mayor Lowe thanked CTV Beam for providing services for the citizens of Phenix City, Alabama.

There being no further business to address, the meeting thus adjourned until June 2, 2020.