

MEETING MINUTES
June 7, 2022

The members of the City Council of the City of Phenix City, Alabama met in a regularly scheduled council meeting on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center located at 3743 Moon Lake Drive, Phenix City, Alabama 36867. Upon roll call, the following members of Council were present: Councilmember Arthur L. Day, Jr., Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. Also present were City Manager Wallace Hunter, City Attorney Jimmy Graham, and City Clerk Melony Lee.

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

Pastor Alice Hubbard of True Believers Ministry delivered the invocation.

Councilmember Bailey led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

City Manager Wallace Hunter presented employee service recognitions to Adrian Lewis – 5 years, Clinton Batson – 5 years, Christopher Thomas – 20 years, Anthony Rutledge – 30 years, and Tyrone Stanford –30 years.

Mayor Lowe presented a proclamation recognizing Central High School Baseball Team 2022 AHSAA 7A State Champions.

PROCLAMATION

Head Coach AJ Kehoe and members of the baseball team came forward to accept the proclamation.

Mayor Lowe presented the regularly scheduled meeting minutes of the May 16, 2022 Work Session and the May 17, 2022 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 the satisfaction of a special assessment on property located at 308 16th Avenue South, Ramona Cabrera, owner.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-100

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 making application to the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for financial assistance.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-101

Councilmember Day moved to approve the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. 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 a one-time compensation of \$500.00 to the Central High School Baseball team.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-102

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, Gordy, and Mayor Lowe. NAYS: None. ABSTAINS: None. The motion thus passed.

Mayor Lowe presented an application for conditional use approval submitted by Brookhaven Property Group, LLC to add an addition of 18 units and parking at 1805 Knowles Road.

LETTER

Councilmember Day moved to approve the application, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. 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 one opening on the Industrial Development Board. Mayor Lowe called for nominations. Councilmember Day nominated to appoint Linda Key. There were no other nominations. Councilmember Gordy moved to appoint Linda Key, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. 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.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham presented a notice of claim against the City of Phenix City, filed by Walter L. Gary, III and Jeremy W. Armstrong. City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that Mr. Gray and Mr. Armstrong are seeking the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the primary structure located at 1305 14th Street. City Attorney Graham recommended denying the claim. City Attorney Graham stated that he would reach out to Mr. Gary and Mr. Armstrong to direct them to file a petition for a variant in front of the Board of Zoning Adjustments and Appeals. Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the City Attorney's recommendation to deny the claim, 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.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham presented a claim against the City of Phenix City, filed by Yvonne Porter. City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that on March 18, 2022, while driving on 10th Avenue, Ms. Porter ran over a pothole and caused damage to her vehicle. City Attorney Graham recommended denying the claim due to the City had no prior notice of the pothole. Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the City Attorney's recommendation to deny the

claim, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Bailey. 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.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham presented a claim against the City of Phenix City, filed by Jimmie Jo Mathis and Mike Mathis. City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that the claim alleges that on May 5, 2022, while driving on US 80E, a rock fell from a City owned vehicle that hit and cracked the windshield of the Mathis' vehicle. City Attorney Graham recommended denying the claim. City Attorney Graham stated that upon investigation, the Public Works Department had a dump truck in the area but the driver stated that the truck was not loaded at the time. Councilmember Johnson moved to approve the City Attorney's recommendation to deny the claim, 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.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham presented a claim against the City of Phenix City filed by Bence Law Firm on behalf of Majee Raines. City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that the claim alleges that on April 22, 2022, Mr. Raines was involved in an automobile accident at the intersection of 15th Ave and 3rd Street South due to the traffic stop sign being hidden behind overgrown shrubbery. City Attorney Graham recommended denying the claim. City Attorney Graham stated that stop sign was visible. Councilmember Gordy moved to approve the City Attorney's recommendation to deny the claim, 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 thanked City Employees for serving the community and putting their heart into their work. Mayor Lowe asked everyone to be patient if service requests are not completed immediately. Mayor Lowe stated that the entire Country is experiencing a work force shortage. Mayor Lowe also stated that trouble don't last always and this too shall pass.

Councilmember Johnson congratulated the Central High School Baseball team for becoming the first baseball team in school history to win the State Championship game. Councilmember Johnson stated that the Phenix City School system is not only producing educated individuals but educated student athletes as well. Councilmember Johnson wished the baseball team success in their future endeavors.

Councilmember Johnson stated that the employees that were recognized earlier in the meeting have completed over 90 years of combined service to the Community. Councilmember Johnson thanked and congratulated the employees. Councilmember Johnson stated that the City is one of the best places to work. Councilmember Johnson also stated that the City is continuously hiring for several positions throughout the City. Councilmember Johnson further stated that applications and job listings can be found on the City's website or at the Human Resource Department.

Councilmember Johnson stated that she received a phone call last week to wear orange on Friday, June 3, 2022 in support of National Gun Violence Awareness Day. Councilmember Johnson encouraged everyone to be vigilant and aware of their surroundings. Councilmember Johnson stated that there was a shooting recently in District Two. Councilmember Johnson also stated that for every one shooting that occurs is one too many. Councilmember Johnson further stated that we want our community to be one of the safest communities to live, work and play.

Councilmember Johnson stated that our children should be active in some type of extracurricular activity. Councilmember Johnson also stated that the City has several parks, Central Activity Center and the Library are all open. Councilmember Johnson encouraged everyone to love one another, take care of each other and stop the gun violence.

Councilmember Day congratulated the Central High School Baseball team on winning the National Championship. Councilmember Day stated that the entire City is proud of them.

Councilmember Day congratulated the employees that were recognized for their years of service to the City. Councilmember Day stated that the City is a great place to work.

Councilmember Day stated that he had the opportunity to attend two events in the community on Saturday, June 4, 2022. Councilmember Day also stated that one of the events was the NCHI Annual Diabetes Walk at the Amphitheater sponsored by Mr. Toby Dixon and his Civic Organization. Councilmember Day further stated that the second event happened at Meadowlane Park sponsored by Desmond Morgan was a Stop the Violence event. Councilmember Day stated that it takes a community coming together to prevent the violence that is happening in our City. Councilmember Day encouraged everyone to pray for our nation. Councilmember Day stated that prayer can go where no other can go. Councilmember Day encourage everyone to love one another and treat everyone the way they want to be treated.

City Manager Wallace Hunter recalled growing up and playing recreational sports. Mr. Hunter stated that there are programs that our youth can join in outside of the school system. Mr. Hunter stated that Central High School and Russell County have had several coaches that stood out and made a difference in the lives of young people. Mr. Hunter congratulated Head Coach AJ Kehoe and the Central High School Baseball team for winning the State Championship. Mr. Hunter expressed to the team, a job well done.

City Manager Wallace Hunter called upon Human Resource Director Stephanie Chastain to discuss the City's employment status and what's going on in the job market in the surrounding areas. Ms. Chastain passed out a packet containing data from the Alabama Labor Market report and several articles on the employment/unemployment rates. Mr. Hunter stated that just last month alone, over four million people in the United States quit their jobs. Ms. Chastain explained that the labor market consist of people that are employed and those that are unemployed but actively seeking employment. Ms. Chastain stated that not everyone who is unemployed is seeking employment for various reasons. Ms. Chastain also stated that average civilian labor workforce for Phenix City the first four months of this year is 15,130 individuals. Ms. Chastain further stated that the population for Phenix City is 36,461 according to the 2020 Census. Ms. Chastain stated that 41% of Phenix City's population is either employed or actively seeking employment. Ms. Chastain also stated that the unemployment rate is calculated by the number of individuals divided by the total number of labor force. Ms. Chastain further stated that according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a portion of the total population is used approximately 60 thousand households per month which is rotated every four months. Ms. Chastain stated that retired individuals, under age, disabled or full time college students are not generally counted as the unemployed because they are not seeking employment. Ms. Chastain compared Phenix City to other Cities in Alabama. Ms. Chastain stated that the highest was North Port, Alabama with 53%, Pratsville, Alabama 49%, Opelika, Alabama 48%, Montgomery, Alabama 47% and Mobile, Alabama 46%. Ms. Chastain also stated that the report is updated monthly. Ms. Chastain restated what Mr. Hunter stated earlier that over four million people in the United States quit their jobs in May, 2022. Ms. Chastain stated that the Utilities and transportation industries had the hardest hit. Ms. Chastain also stated that the City's Utilities

Department and Public Works Department would be classified in that industry. Ms. Chastain further stated that not only did 4.4 Million people quit their jobs last month but in the previous months as well. Ms. Chastain stated that “Baby Boomers Generation” are retiring and the “Millennial Generation” and “Generation Z”, are not replacing them. Ms. Chastain stated that she read in an article in the Montgomery paper, that if every unemployed resident in Alabama was looking for a job and obtained a job, there would still be 30,000 vacant jobs. Ms. Chastain also stated that means more jobs available then the number of people available to work. Councilmember Bailey asked if there was a reason that so many people are not looking for jobs. Ms. Chastain stated that it is becoming rare that an employee will stay loyal, start and retire with the same company. Ms. Chastain also stated “Generation X” are nearing retirement and they may be the most loyalist of the generations after the “Baby Boomers”, the Millennials and Generation Z generations have the tendency to company hop. Councilmember Bailey stated that they also have the option to work from home or work for themselves. Councilmember Bailey also stated that immediate gratification will not carry a person through their lifetime but loyalty and stability will. Councilmember Bailey further stated that the money that an individual makes today will not provide for the future but the present. Councilmember Day stated that when he speaks to young people, he tells them to think about the future and invest in themselves and their future. Mr. Hunter stated that the City is doing everything that can be done to increase the City’s work force. Mr. Hunter also stated that the City has great benefits and great retirement plan to help provide for an uncertain future. Mr. Hunter encouraged everyone to please be aware of their surroundings and make sure that they are knowledgeable on current events and what is going on in the nation. Mr. Hunter stated that it is up to the elders to teach the younger ones.

Mayor Lowe stated that there have been a lot of factual things spoken at today’s meeting. Mayor Lowe encouraged everyone to learn how not to be and set the example on how to live and do what is right. Mayor Lowe stated that in order to get the right person, we must be the right person. Mayor Lowe encouraged everyone to be a lifter and not a leaner.

Mayor Lowe thanked CTV-Beam for bringing the council meeting to the Citizens of Phenix City, Alabama.

There being no further business to address, the meeting thus adjourned until June 22, 2022.