

**MEETING MINUTES
STATE OF THE CITY, JANUARY 27, 2022**

The members of the City Council of the City of Phenix City, Alabama met at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time in the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center (MIHPCC) located at 3743 Moon Lake Drive, Phenix City, Alabama for the purpose of conducting the 2022 State of the City Address. Mayor Eddie N. Lowe, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, and Councilmember Arthur L. Day were present. Councilmember R. Griff Gordy was not present. City Manager Wallace B. Hunter, City Clerk Melony Lee, and Office Manager Shannon Davis were also present. Department Heads in attendance at the MIHPCC were: Chief Building Official Gil Griffith, Deputy Building Official Ray Rogers, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, Economic Development Planning Specialist Jennifer Lowman, City Engineer Angel Moore, Finance Director Labrita King-Copeland, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Phenix City Russell County Library Director Michele Kilday, Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Planning Director Tracie Hadaway, Police Chief Ray Smith, Assistant Police Chief George Staudinger, and Utilities Engineer John Spraggins. Not present were Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White and Utilities Director Charles Woody. Also present were: City Attorney James P. Graham and City Attorney James McKoon.

Mayor Lowe welcomed everyone to the presentation of the State of the City.

Councilmember Bailey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Bailey delivered the invocation.

Mayor Lowe introduced Council, Department Heads, and Staff.

Mayor Lowe delivered the State of the City Address. Mayor Lowe reviewed the financial statement of the City and compared it with the past five years; he discussed staffing of city personnel and the effects of attendance due to the COVID-19 Pandemic; he discussed the city's infrastructure projects including street resurfacing; he discussed public development projects; he discussed commercial development projects; he discussed infrastructure projects to include the payment kiosk in the Utilities Department; he discussed the Public Safety Building Expansion/Renovation; he discussed the new Fire Training Center and the Art Center Building Renovation; he advised of the purchase of additional city office space on 7th Avenue; he discussed the development along Highway 80; he discussed the Commercial Development along the Riverfront; he spoke on Phenix City and Columbus, Georgia partnering to host the 2022 International Canoe Federation World Cup and the 2023 ICF World Championship; and he spoke on Industrial Development to include the expansion of Vectorply and Daechang Seat Corporation.

Upon the conclusion of the presentation, Mayor Lowe asked for anyone to come up or call in with any questions or comments. No one came forward either in person or by phone. Mayor Lowe also advised that citizens could email their questions anytime to the City Clerk at: cityclerk@phenixcityal.us and they would be answered.

Councilmember Day mentioned that the city is a member of the National League of Cities and a member of the Alabama League of Municipalities. He testified to the opportunities that being a member of both organizations has helped not only the councilmembers, but the city as a whole.

Councilmember Bailey spoke on the workforce of the city and how the employees are helping to fill voids. He praised their hard work and dedication to the citizens of the city.

Councilmember Bailey asked for input from the citizens. He invited the citizens to get involved in the community and to let the city government know how they feel about how things are run.

Councilmember Johnson mentioned how fortunate she is to work with the other members of council. She complimented the Mayor and City Manager on the fine job they are doing in leading the city. She complimented various departments on a job well done. She advised that the city has a lot of projects going on and she hopes that the city keeps moving in the direction it is going in.

Councilmember Johnson thanked everyone for allowing her to serve the city as Councilmember District Two. She asked everyone to continue to pray for the community. She wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Councilmember Day advised that this council works as a team. Each member of council is always willing and able to help with any issue, even if it is not in their particular district.

Councilmember Day reminded everyone that this city belongs to everyone who lives in it, and he asked that everyone do their part in helping to keep it clean. Please do not litter.

City Manager Wallace Hunter mentioned that city workers are under stress due to COVID and he really appreciates all the hard work they put into doing their job as well as covering other's jobs as needed. He touched on the problems of keeping people trained in a changing world. He thanked mayor/council for working with him for the benefit of the citizens of the city. He spoke on the benefits of working for the city and encouraged anyone looking for a job to apply with the city. He gave credit to the Police Department for their hard work in keeping crime held to a minimum. He reminded everyone that it is not an easy job and it can be dangerous.

Mayor Lowe advised serving on the council is not an easy job; but it is a necessary job that is done because they care for others.

Mayor Lowe reiterated that our strengths are our financial numbers and our people. He advised the weakness is infrastructure that has been in the ground for around a hundred years. He asked the citizens to look at how far the city has come in the last few years. He told everyone that the city has a number of opportunities to grow. He challenged everyone to be positive and to be a lifter and not a leaner. He advised that COVID has taught him two things: 1) that everyone needs everyone; and 2) to have patience.

Councilmember Bailey advised anyone can always contact the City Clerk's Office by email at cityclerk@phenixcityal.us and get an answer to any question.

Mayor Lowe thanked everyone for coming tonight and for watching on TV.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting concluded at 7:11 p.m.