

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 31, 2020**

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, August 31, 2020, by the way of Zoom Video Conferencing. Upon roll call, the following members were present by the way of Zoom Video Conferencing: Councilmember Arthur L. Day, Jr., Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe (arrived after meeting was established). Also present by the way of Zoom Video Conferencing were City Manager Wallace Hunter, City Clerk Melony Lee, and City Attorney Jimmy Graham. Department Heads in attendance by Zoom Video Conferencing were: Deputy Building Official Ray Rogers, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, City Engineer Angel Moore, Utilities Director Steve Smith, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Library Director Michele Kilday, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Parks & Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Director of Human Resources Stephanie Chastain, Chief of Police Ray Smith, Graduate Engineer John Spraggins, and Waste Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Charles Woody.

Upon a quorum being established, Mayor Pro Tem – Councilmember Day called the meeting to order.

The invocation was led by Councilmember Gordy.

Councilmember Day advised that there were no Requests to Address Council.

Councilmember Day called upon City Engineer Angel Moore, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their August 25, 2020 meeting. Ms. Moore advised due to the Municipal Election, the meeting was cancelled.

Councilmember Day called upon City Clerk Melony Lee who discussed the following with Mayor and Council:

1. Advised Council that Canvassing of Municipal Election will be held at 12:00 p.m. on September 1, 2020 at the Martin Idle Hour Community Center.
2. Reminded Council that City Offices will be closed on September 7, 2020 in observance of Labor Day Holiday.
3. Advised Council that the September 15, 2020 Council Meeting will be held at the 5<sup>th</sup> Street South Youth Center at 6:00 p.m.
4. Advised Council that City Offices will be closed on October 12, 2020 in observance of Columbus Day Holiday
5. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Mayor Lowe joined the meeting via Zoom Video Conference at 3:03 p.m.

Councilmember Johnson encouraged everyone to be safe during the Coronavirus Pandemic. Councilmember Johnson inquired about the impact the Pandemic has had on City Employees. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that some departments have experience shortages due to employees being out to care for themselves or family members. Mr. Hunter also stated that the hiring process has been challenging but the Human Resource Department is doing a great job with the adjustments. Mr. Hunter further stated that all of the City Employees are

pulling together and even working overtime to help their fellow coworkers during these trying times.

Councilmember Johnson commended the Chief of Police Ray Smith on the Phenix City Police Department attending the Virtual I Can't Breathe Training Class. Chief Smith stated that every police officer has completed the Virtual Training class. Chief Smith also stated that the Virtual Training Academy has other training classes and policy updates. Chief Smith further stated that it is important to have continuous training, great leadership and support for a successful Police Department.

Councilmember Day stated that the American Legion building on Seale Road is not showing any signs of improvement. Councilmember Day also stated that no one seems to be working on the building to bring it up to code as promised months ago. Ray Rogers, Deputy Building Official, stated that the Building Department has given them time to bring the building up to code.

Councilmember Day inquired about Central High School Football team playing in the Garrett Harrison Stadium. Councilmember Day asked if the City would be liable if someone were to be exposed to the Coronavirus while attending a game. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the City is not liable. Mr. Hunter also stated that the Parks and Recreation Department as well as the Police Department have been working alongside the Phenix City Board of Education to make sure safety procedures are in place. Todd Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that the guidelines set by the Governor's Office are being followed for everyone's safety. Mr. Hughes also stated that the stadium is filled to twenty-five percent occupancy for attendees. Mr. Hughes further stated that mask are required and temperatures are checked for everyone who enters the stadium. Mr. Hughes stated that tickets must be purchased online for crowd control and to eliminate the exchange of money at the gate.

Councilmember Bailey thanked the Phenix City Police Department for recently defusing a domestic situation before it escalated into a standoff situation. Councilmember Bailey stated that the officers handled the situation with compassion. Councilmember Bailey also stated that the extensive training that is required of the officers was evident on that day. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the Police Department had a lot going on that day with the domestic situation and a visit from the First Amendment Auditors group. Mr. Hunter stated that the Police Department, Fire Department and the Building Department handled the situation very well.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the upcoming County Commissioners Election. Councilmember Bailey asked if the campaign sign regulations are the same as the Municipal Election sign regulations. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that City Right of Ways are off limits for any campaign signs. Mr. Hunter also stated that campaign signs could be placed on private property with the owner's permission 30 days prior to the election.

Mayor Lowe congratulated Councilmember Johnson on her re-election to the City Council. Mayor Lowe stated that it is important as leaders to be humble and stand up for what is right for the City. Mayor Lowe also stated that he has received several concerns and complaints about the Phenix City School System and Central High School's football team. Mayor Lowe further stated that the City Council does not control the day-to-day operations of the school board. Mayor Lowe stated that he was on the school board for 12 years and he understands the difficulties that they may face. Mayor Lowe also stated that the goal of the School Board is to make sure policies and procedures are being followed and in the best interest of the children and the City as a whole. Mayor Lowe further stated that we all as citizens of Phenix City should support our school system,

including the superintendent and the head football coach and believe that they have Phenix City's best interest in mind. Councilmember Day stated that he has received phone calls as well concerning the recent decisions of the Superintendent and the Head football coach and he agrees with Mayor Lowe. Councilmember Day stated that City Manager Wallace Hunter oversees the day-to-day operations of the City and Randy Wilkes as Superintendent oversees the day-to-day operations of the Phenix City School System. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that it is difficult to run a City and you may not please everybody but continue to do what is right. Mr. Hunter also stated that the School System reflects on the City, but is not controlled by the City. Mayor Lowe stated that we should lift each other up and not tear each other down.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that there were no agenda claims to review with Council.

Councilmember Day congratulated the newly elected School Board. Councilmember Day also congratulated Councilmember Johnson on her reelection on City Council District Two.

City Clerk Melony Lee thanked the City Manager, Department Heads, Police Department, Parks and Recreation, Golf Course Snack Bar and all who help the City Clerk's Office with the Municipal Election on August 25, 2020. Ms. Lee stated that she appreciated everyone. Mayor Lowe stated that the City Clerk and her team did an awesome job on the day of and leading up to the election.

Councilmember Bailey wished the best to the newly elected school board. Councilmember Bailey stated that everyone should work together for the betterment of the school system. Councilmember Bailey also stated that the City Clerk and her team did an outstanding job handling the election. Councilmember Bailey stated that the key to success is having the right people in the right position at the right time.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that we are going through trying times as a nation. Mr. Hunter also stated that laws and policies are in place for the protection and safety of all people. Mr. Hunter encouraged everyone to be safe and treat people the way that they themselves would want to be treated. Mr. Hunter stated that he is proud of Phenix City and the growth that has been made over the years.

Mayor Lowe thanked the Department Heads for their hard work and dedication. Mayor Lowe encouraged everyone to continue to work as a team for the betterment of the City.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, September 14, 2020.