

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
April 19, 2021

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, April 19, 2021, 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. Also present by the way of Zoom Video Conferencing were City Manager Wallace Hunter, City Attorney Jimmy Graham, and City Clerk Melony Lee. Department Heads in attendance by Zoom Video Conferencing were: Building Official Gil Griffith, City Engineer Angel Moore, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, Finance Director Labrita King Copeland, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Library Director Michele Kilday, Parks & Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Human Resources Generalist Eliza Phillips, Chief of Police Ray Smith, Acting Utilities Director Charles Woody and Graduate Engineer John Spraggins.

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

Councilmember Gordy led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe advised there were no Requests to Address Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Angel Moore, City Engineer, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their April 13, 2021 meeting.

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

1. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on April 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. over the platform ZOOM.
2. Informed Council that the Alabama Attorney General will hold a Press Conference and Presentation to recognize the service and sacrifice of Assistant Police Chief Gail Green Gilliam at 3:00 p.m. on April 27, 2021 at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
3. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet April 27, 2021 at 5:15 p.m.
4. Reminded Council that April 30, 2021 is the last day to file the Statement of Economic Interest.
5. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on May 3, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. over the platform ZOOM.
6. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on May 4, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. over the platform ZOOM.
7. Informed Council that the Department of Human Resources will have a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on May 7, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
8. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet May 11, 2021 at 5:15 p.m.
9. Informed Council that the Alabama League of Municipalities Convention Meeting will be held May 12, 2021 – May 15, 2021.
10. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on May 17, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. over the platform ZOOM or in person at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.

11. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on May 18, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. over the platform ZOOM or in person at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
12. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet May 25, 2021 at 5:15 p.m
13. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on May 31,2021 in observance of Memorial Day.
14. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

City Clerk Melony Lee discussed the 2021 "Back-to-school" Sales Tax Holiday Ordinance. Mayor and Council agreed that the Ordinance should be placed on the May 4, 2021 Agenda for first reading.

Councilmember Gordy inquired about the 2021 Budget Meeting dates. Councilmember Gordy asked if there were any tentative dates set for the meeting. Councilmember Gordy stated that if possible, June 28, 2021 and June 29, 2021 would be ideal dates for him. City Clerk Melony Lee stated that June 28, 2021 and June 29, 2021 are within the tentative window. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the dates would be considered when scheduling the 2021 Budget Meeting.

Councilmember Johnson asked City Clerk Melony Lee if the City Clerk's Office could reach out to Dr. Dionne Rosser-Mims from Troy University to set up a meeting with herself and other Councilmembers. Councilmember Johnson stated that Dr. Rosser-Mims had reached out to her previously but they have been unsuccessful in scheduling a meeting. Ms. Lee stated that she would reach out to Dr. Mims and follow up with Mayor and Council.

Councilmember Gordy stated while at the Coach Pitch Baseball field the past weekend, he noticed a couple of dips in the grass between field number five and field number six. Councilmember Gordy asked if the dips could be filled in for safety of the kids and spectators. Todd Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that the holes will be taken care of.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council.

Councilmember Day inquired about the renovation of the Public Safety Building. Chief of Police Ray Smith stated that the project is on schedule and moving forward. Chief Smith also stated that once the demolition of the front of the building is complete, foundation will be set, and the additional office spaces will be constructed. Chief Smith further stated that the Police Department is still available to meet the needs of the citizens. Chief Smith stated that the new Council Chambers should be able to hold approximately 180 people and the new courtroom should hold approximately 200 people.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham stated that he received a few phone calls concerning the time capsule that was placed in front of the Public Safety Building years ago. Chief of Police Ray Smith stated that the capsule has been temporarily moved to a safe location and has not been opened. Chief Smith also stated that there are three monuments that will be relocated throughout the City.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that he wanted to discuss an issue that has been going on in the City. Mr. Hunter also stated that he witnessed over the weekend, a group of people riding in cars as if they were in a parade blocking both sides of the streets and cruising through

neighborhoods. Mr. Hunter further stated that this is unsafe for participants and the neighborhoods. Mr. Hunter stated that this kind of behavior will not be tolerated in Phenix City. Mr. Hunter also stated that he noticed that most of the cars were from Columbus, Georgia. Mr. Hunter further stated that the Phenix City Police Department, Russell County Sheriff and the Columbus Police Department are all willing to work together and put some preventative measures in place to stop these dangerous gatherings.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that unfortunately, mass shootings are becoming an epidemic. Mr. Hunter encourage everyone to be aware of their surroundings and notify the Police Department if they see something suspicious.

City Manager Wallace Hunter commented on a recent meeting with Phenix City's Mayor Eddie Lowe, Columbus, Georgia Mayor Skip Henderson and Smiths Station Mayor Bubba Copeland. Mr. Hunter stated that the meeting was broadcasted by CTV Beam. Mr. Hunter also stated that the group discussed crime, demolitions and situations that are going on in the Tri City area. Mr. Hunter thanked the Phenix City's Building Department for the work that they do in Phenix City and staying on top of the City's demolitions.

Councilmember Day inquired about the car parade that happened in his District off Seale Road and 10th Avenue this past weekend. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that cars were blocking the entire street not allowing others to pass. Mr. Hunter also stated that they were running stop signs and displaying bad behavior. Mr. Hunter further stated that Police cars will have to patrol the area. Mr. Hunter stated that people are coming from Columbus across the bridge to join the cruise parades as well.

Councilmember Bailey stated that situations like the cruising parades could escalate out of hand very quickly. Councilmember Bailey also stated that most participants are looking for trouble or a way to stir up trouble. Councilmember Bailey further stated that with everything that's going on in our nation, he is concerned for the safety of our community and the safety of our Police Officers as well. Councilmember Bailey stated that some perpetrators maybe targeting Police Officers and purposely start trouble to cause trouble. Councilmember Bailey encouraged everyone who sees something to say something and not confront the perpetrators. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that he witnessed the chaos firsthand this weekend and watched as some cars came from Columbus, Georgia. Mr. Hunter stated that the targeted area for this past weekend was South Phenix City near Mother Mary Mission and he could see them coming across the bridge.

Councilmember Johnson stated that she has received a couple of calls concerning skid marks in neighborhood streets. Councilmember Johnson encouraged everyone to please drive safely when coming through neighborhoods. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the perpetrators feel that this is a game leaving skid marks and car racing through neighborhoods. Mr. Hunter also stated that placing surveillance cameras and speed detectors throughout the City may reduce these type of problems. Mr. Hunter further stated that the Police Department will increase patrolling in certain areas but they cannot be everywhere at the same time.

Councilmember Bailey stated that Phenix City has a wonderful Police and Public Safety Department. Councilmember Bailey also stated that cameras and speed detector devices placed throughout the City should slow things down and hopefully deter people from breaking the law. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that we are living in different times and people need to be mindful of their surroundings. Mr. Hunter also stated that citizens should make sure to lock their car doors at night to reduce car and gun theft. Mr. Hunter further stated that it is time for the community to come together and look out for each other.

Mayor Lowe encouraged everyone to be the right person and do the right thing.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, May 3, 2021.