

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
September 20, 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, September 20, 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, Economic Development Planning Director Tracie Hadaway, Finance Director Labrita King Copeland, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Assistant Fire Tommy Chief, Golf Manger Mike Barber, Library Director Michele Kilday, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director Kristi Goggans, Director of Human Resources Stephanie Chastain, Chief of Police Ray Smith, 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 September 14, 2021 meeting.

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

1. Reminded Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on September 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
2. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet September 28, 2021 at 5:15 p.m.
3. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on October 4, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. over platform Zoom.
4. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on October 5, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. over platform Zoom.
5. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on October 11, 2021 in observance of Columbus Day.
6. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet October 12, 2021 at 5:15 p.m.
7. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on October 18, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. over platform Zoom.
8. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on October 19, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. over platform Zoom.
9. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet October 26, 2021 at 5:15 p.m.
10. Informed Council that the National League of Cities 2021 City Summit will be held virtually November 12, 2021, November 15, 2021 through November 19, 2021. Ms. Lee stated that the League will not hold an in-person conference this year.
11. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

City Clerk Melony Lee stated that on the August 2, 2021 Work Session, a request was made to add the District a board member resides in on the board sheet. Ms. Lee also stated that while completing the project, it was discovered that one member of the Tree Commission and one member of the Industrial Development Board residence is outside the City Limits. Ms. Lee further stated that the addresses were verified by the Engineering Department, who also confirmed they are outside of the City Limits. Mayor Lowe stated that the common denominator for all boards is that the member live within City limits. Mayor and Council agreed that the board members that are not within City limits are ineligible to serve. Mayor Lowe stated that names will be turned in and voted upon at the next Council Meeting.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council.

City Manager Wallace Hunter called upon City Engineer Angel Moore to discuss a grant that the City applied for over a year ago called the Rebuild Alabama Act Grant for Dobbs Drive. Ms. Moore stated that it is a great possibility that the City will receive funds from the Grant to go towards the Dobbs Drive Resurfacing project. Ms. Moore stated that the grant would save the City a lot of money.

Angel Moore, City Engineer, stated that the City has four garbage trucks that are normally used to pick up limbs and debris. Ms. Moore also stated that three of the four trucks are inoperable at this time and have parts on back order. Ms. Moore further stated that the Public Works Department is experiencing a shortage on workforce. Ms. Moore stated that the department has over twenty positions that need to be filled. Ms. Moore also stated that they are doing the very best that they can to fulfill all service requests, fix pot holes, mow grass, and pick up limbs, debris and items on the side of the road. Ms. Moore asked everyone to be patient during these trying times.

Councilmember Bailey stated that the nation, as a whole, has been experiencing labor shortages the past year and a half. Councilmember Bailey also stated that the he has been waiting on parts for a few cars at his dealership for a few months. Councilmember Bailey asked everyone for patience and understanding during this time. Councilmember Bailey stated that we are all in this together.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the City is doing the best that we can. Mr. Hunter also stated that the Parks and Recreation Department has been lending a helping hand to the Public Works Department when they can. Mr. Hunter also stated that there are people who don't want to work but there are some people that do and the City would be a great place to work.

Mayor Lowe stated that the COVID 19 Pandemic has had an effect on the entire City. Mayor Lowe also stated that the environment has shifted but we must remain wholesome. Mayor Lowe further stated that sometimes we just have to be patient and wait and being negative will not change the situation. Mayor Lowe encouraged City employees to continue to do their best.

John Spraggins, Graduate Engineer, stated that there has been an increase in the cost of Chemicals that the City has had to purchase in comparison with last year for the Waste Water Treatment Plant. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the City has felt pressure on both sides. Mr. Hunter also stated that the cost of materials are increasing, parts are taking longer to be received, and people are not wanting to or not able to work. Councilmember Day asked if the increase of materials for the water plant have an impact on charges for utilities. Mr. Hunter stated that prices are currently locked in due to a contract being in place.

Mayor Lowe stated that we have to continue to hold on to our faith and know that nothing comes to stay and this pandemic will eventually pass.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 4, 2021.