

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
January 3, 2022

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, January 3, 2022, at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center located at 3743 Moon Lake Drive, Phenix City, Alabama 36867. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. Councilmember Arthur L. Day, Jr., was not present. Also present were City Manager Wallace Hunter, City Attorney Jimmy Graham, and City Clerk Melony Lee. Department Heads in attendance: Building Official Gil Griffith, Deputy Building Official Ray Rogers, City Engineer Angel Moore, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, Economic Development Planning Director Tracie Hadaway, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Library Director Michele Kilday, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain, Chief of Police Ray Smith, Graduate Engineer John Spraggins, and Utilities Director Charles Woody.

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

Councilmember Bailey led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe called upon Patricia Frey with United Way to address Council, as listed on the agenda. Ms. Frey came forward to address Council. Ms. Frey stated that the United Way in Columbus, Georgia serves the Chattahoochee Valley, which includes Phenix City, Alabama. Ms. Frey also stated that there are federal funds available through the Housing and Urban Development Department to support United Way in their efforts to end homelessness in our geographical region. Ms. Frey passed out brochures to Mayor and Council. Ms. Frey stated that the Point in Time Count is an event to count the number of homeless individuals or families that are sheltered or unsheltered. Ms. Frey also stated that a sheltered individual or family resides in an emergency shelter, sponsored hotel, transitional house of a place designated as a safe haven. Ms. Frey further stated that an unsheltered individual or family resides in areas such as; a car, park, abandoned building, campground or parking lot. Ms. Frey stated that the Point-in-Time count is a national count that takes place annually during the last ten days in January. Ms. Frey also stated that in those ten days, the homeless individuals or family's needs are assessed and referrals are made for temporary or permanent housing. Ms. Frey further stated that law enforcement and volunteers in the region support their efforts on the designated days of the count. Ms. Frey thanked Mayor and Council for allowing her to speak and share the information. Ms. Frey invited Mayor and Council to be a part of this year's count on January 24, 2022 and January 25, 2022. Mayor Lowe thanked Ms. Frey for coming to speak with Council.

Mayor Lowe exercised his Point of Privilege and called upon Alabama State Representative Chris Blackshear to address Council. Representative Blackshear came forward to address Council. Representative Blackshear spoke on the changes issued from the State level for local legislation concerning the pay increase for elected officials. Representative Blackshear explained how the salaries would be set for the next City Council term that will begin in 2025. Representative Blackshear stated that in the past, if the County Commissioners gave their employees a cost of living pay increase, it would include the four City Council seats but not the Mayor. Representative Blackshear also stated that the Mayor's salary is locked in and Councilmember's salaries cannot exceed the amount of the Mayor. Representative Blackshear further stated that the new law separates the County Commissioners from the City Council on when pay can be increased for a City Councilmember. Representative Blackshear stated that

the changes will be published in the Citizen Newspaper for four consecutive weeks. Mayor Lowe thanked Representative Blackshear for explaining the changes. Councilmember Johnson stated that Representative Blackshear had mentioned that a pay increase could come out of the current expense account and a resolution would need to be passed, in order for the increase to go in affect for the next Council term. Representative Blackshear gave an example; a five percent increase could be voted upon and approve by Mayor and Council that would come out of the current year expense account and that about would be the salary for the next Council term in 2025. Councilmember Gordy stated that it is for accountability, that a raise should be voted upon and presented the right way. City Manager Wallace Hunter and Mayor Lowe stated that Council has always been transparent to the Citizens when conducting business for the City. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that Phenix City is growing. Mr. Hunter also stated that each District has experienced a growth in population. Mr. Hunter further stated that with growth comes positive and negative situations. Mr. Hunter stated that an increase of crime has come along with the increase in population. Councilmember Bailey stated that currently, the structure of pay for City Councilmembers is determined by the County to coincide with County Commissioners. Councilmember Bailey asked if that would change with the new law. Representative Blackshear stated that it would change. Councilmember Bailey stated that he thinks the separation is a good thing and it holds the City and County accountable for itself. Mayor Lowe thanked Representative Blackshear for coming to speak with Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Angel Moore, City Engineer, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their December 28, 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 January 4, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
2. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet January 11, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
3. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on January 17, 2022 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
4. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on January 18, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center. This meeting will be held on a Tuesday afternoon due to the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
5. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on January 19, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center. This meeting will be held on a Wednesday morning due to the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
6. Informed Council that the Alabama League of Municipalities will hold its 2022 Municipal Advocacy Day in Montgomery, Alabama, on January 19, 2022 from 8:00 a.m. until 4:15 p.m. Central Standard Time.
7. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet January 25, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
8. Advised Council that the State of City Address will be held on January 27, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
9. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on January 31, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
10. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on February 1, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
11. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet February 8, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.

12. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on February 14, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
13. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on February 15, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
14. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on February 21, 2022 in observance of Presidents Day Holiday.
15. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet February 22, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
16. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on February 28, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
17. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Councilmember Johnson thanked City Manager Wallace Hunter and his team for the work completed on the 10th Avenue Bridge and the 12th Avenue Bridge. Councilmember Johnson stated that she has received compliments on both bridges from a few Citizens.

Councilmember Johnson inquired about the lighting on 24th Street near the Dixie Youth Ballpark. Councilmember Johnson stated that the lights were on at the ballpark, which seemed to be lighting up the area. Councilmember Johnson also stated that without those lights, the area would be dark. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that there are lights on the poles on 22nd Street. Mr. Hunter also stated that the ballpark lights normally go out at a certain time. Mr. Hunter further stated that the lighting in that area will be checked out.

Councilmember Johnson stated that the new signs at the Cemetery look good. Councilmember Johnson asked if Big Pine Grove Cemetery and Pine Grove Cemetery was two separate cemeteries. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that there was a time in history where the cemeteries were segregated and separated but they are now one cemetery. Mr. Hunter also stated that prior to the City owning the cemeteries, they were privately owned and the owner could choose who could or could not be buried there. Mr. Hunter further stated that all cemeteries are now public cemeteries maintained by the Public Works Department. Mr. Hunter stated that during the fall and winter months, grass does not grow as fast and it has allowed the City to catchup on the landscaping.

Councilmember Bailey stated that he has received a few phone calls of gratitude concerning the street signs at Andrews Road and Summerfield Road. Councilmember Bailey also stated that it has not solved all their problems but the signs have definitely helped.

Councilmember Bailey asked for an update on the new land-field project. Angel Moore, City Engineer, stated that the consultant has provided the pre-bid package. Ms. Moore also stated that the hopes are to get a contractor to bid on the project, with a price close to what was originally budgeted.

Councilmember Bailey inquired about the extra Siphon Hose that was installed at Lakewood Lake. Councilmember Bailey asked if it was performing properly. Angel Moore, City Engineer stated that the hose help brings levels down but with the increase in rainfall, the levels come back up. Ms. Moore stated that the extra hose is working a lot better than the previous one.

Mayor Lowe called upon City Manager Wallace Hunter and City Engineer Angel Moore to discuss the 2021 Redistricting Plan. Mr. Hunter stated that the State of Alabama requires the City to review the district boundaries based on the population determined by the 2020 Census to have an equal representation for each district. Mr. Hunter also stated that the last Census and

redistricting occurred in 2010. Ms. Moore reviewed the information released by the Census Bureau. Ms. Moore stated that the City's population increased by almost 6000 from 2010 to 2020 people throughout the City. Ms. Moore also stated that District One experienced the largest increase. Ms. Moore further stated that the redistricting lines have to be redrawn and presented to Mayor and Council within 6 months of the release of the data from the Census, which falls on February 12, 2022. Ms. Moore handed out and explained the timeline of events, deadlines, and State code to Mayor and Council. Ms. Moore stated that a public hearing will be held in each District. Ms. Moore also stated that once Mayor and Council have approved the map that shows the redistricting, the map will be presented to the United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) for final approval. Ms. Moore stated that the final approval from USDOJ must be obtained before the next municipal election. Ms. Moore also stated that if a current City Councilmember's personal address shifts out of their District, they would be allowed to complete their current term. Ms. Moore reviewed the difference in the population of the 2010 Census versus the population of the 2020 Census. Ms. Moore stated that according to the 2020 Census, Phenix City has a population of 38,816 people. Ms. Moore also stated that to achieve the population median, that number must be divided by three representing the three districts, which would mean each District will have approximately 12,939 people. Ms. Moore further stated, with the proposed redistricting, each District would be very close to that number. Ms. Moore stated that the proposed redistricting would consist of Citizens from District One redistricting to District Two and Citizens from District Two redistricted to District Three. Councilmember Bailey asked if Citizens would be notified of their District change so that they may vote in the proper place for the right District. City Clerk Melony Lee stated that the Citizens in District One were notified in the 2020 election that their voting location had change and she is sure that notifications will be sent notifying of the change of District. Councilmember Johnson asked which areas would be shifted from District Two to District Three. Ms. Moore defined the areas that will be affected by the redistricting. Councilmember Bailey asked, what happens if during the public hearing, the majority of Citizens disagree with the redistricting. Mr. Hunter stated that Phenix City is continually growing and the redistricting is because of that growth. Mr. Hunter also stated that the City follows the guidelines set in place by the United States Department of Justice. City Attorney Jimmy Graham recalled no one showing up to the public hearings for the 2011 Redistricting. Ms. Lee stated that at the 2011 Redistricting public hearings, each district had its own three-hour hearing allowing Citizens time to be heard and each District hearing was set a week apart.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that there is a workforce shortage not just in Phenix City but all over our nation. Mr. Hunter also stated that City Workers are doing the best that they can to complete services. Mr. Hunter asked every to please have patience during this pandemic.

Mayor Lowe thanked the City Manager, Council, Department Heads and all City Employees for their dedication to the City.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 18, 2022.