

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
August 15, 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, August 15, 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 Arthur L. Day, Jr., Councilmember Vickey Carter Johnson, Councilmember Steve Bailey, Councilmember R. Griff Gordy, and Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. Also present were City Manager Wallace Hunter, City Attorney Jimmy Graham, and City Clerk Melony Lee. Department Heads in attendance: Deputy Building Official Ray Rogers, City Engineer Angel Moore, Economic Development Manager Shaun Culligan, Economic Development Planning Director Tracie Hadaway, Finance Director Labrita King Copeland, IT Manager Mike Bauer, Fire Chief Kris Kennedy, Golf Manager Mike Barber, Library Director Tammy Henry, Municipal Court Clerk Ruby White, Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes, Human Resources Director Stephanie Chastain, Chief of Police Ray Smith, Assistant Chief of Police George Staudinger, 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 advised there were no Requests to Address Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Tracie Hadaway, Economic Development Planning Director, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their August 9, 2022 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 August 16, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
2. Informed Council that the Alabama League of Municipalities will host the 3rd Congressional Luncheon August 18, 2022 from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EST in Opelika, Alabama. Ms. Lee stated that Councilmember Johnson and Councilmember Day advised they would like to attend the luncheon. Ms. Lee also stated that if anyone else would like to attend, please notify the City Clerk's Office.
3. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet August 23, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
4. Reminded Council that City Offices will be closed on September 5, 2022 in observance of Labor Day Holiday.
5. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on September 6, 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 Labor Day Holiday.
6. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on September 7, 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 Labor Day Holiday.
7. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet September 13, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
8. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on September 19, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.

9. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on September 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the 5th Street South Youth Center.
10. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet September 27, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
11. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

City Clerk Melony Lee discussed a public notice from the Planning Commission concerning petition for Conditional Use for 1325 Broad Street to add a bakery and bistro at the location. Ms. Lee stated that the public hearing will be held on August 23, 2022.

City Clerk Melony Lee asked Mayor and Council to review information passed out concerning the Plaque dedication for the Public Safety Building.

City Manager Wallace Hunter called upon Human Resource Director Stephanie Chastain to review Human Resources Recruitment avenues from 2020 to present. Ms. Chastain passed out an information sheet that listed Career Fairs, advertising, and recruitment programs. Ms. Chastain stated that the community has been hosting more career fairs this year than the past two years. Ms. Chastain also stated that she attended career fairs including local colleges, Ft. Benning and local agencies such as Goodwill, WTVM, WRBL and more. Ms. Chastain reviewed HR's job listing advertising efforts. Ms. Chastain explained the new Employee Referral Program that started last month. Ms. Chastain stated that if a current employee refers a new employee that is hired and stays with the City for 6 months, the referring employee will receive \$500.00 at the end of the 6 months. Mayor Lowe stated that the program was a good incentive. Ms. Chastain stated that HR is working with the IT Department to update the City's Social Media page to include open positions. Councilmember Bailey asked when a person applies for a job, does the Human Resource Department track the referral source. Ms. Chastain stated normally an applicant will let them know how they heard about the job opening. Mr. Hunter stated that one hurdle in hiring new employees is the amount of people who fail the drug test. Mr. Hunter also stated that wage rate competition is another issue.

Human Resource Director Stephanie Chastain read and discussed an article from Time Magazine, titled "*No Clean Water, Unplowed Streets: What the Public Sector's Hiring Problem Means for All of Us*". Councilmember Bailey recalled seeing several help wanted signs and several companies listing of incentives for full time employees such as sign on bonuses and childcare vouchers. Councilmember Bailey stated that the worker shortage is not a local problem but a worldwide problem trying to pull from the same pool of people.

City Manager Wallace Hunter called upon Utilities Director Charles Woody to explain the changes in garbage pickup. Mr. Woody stated that he spoke with Waste Management and they are updating their trucks for automated garbage pickup arms instead of labor / rider pickups. Mr. Woody also stated that details will be discussed later at a meeting with Waste Management. Mayor Lowe asked if the Back Door Service Program will still be available to Citizens who are unable to take their garbage can to the side of the road. Mr. Woody stated that the service will be discussed with Waste Management.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that City field workers are working hard with the number of people that they have on a day to day basis. Mr. Hunter also stated that the Parks and Recreation Department has been helping the Public Works Department. Mr. Hunter thanked City Employees for their hard work and dedication to the City. Mr. Hunter stated that people are retiring and it is not so easy to replace retired employees and vacant positions. Mr. Hunter also stated that it is not only happening in Phenix City but all over the nation.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the younger generation think and operate different from the generations before them when it comes to employment and loyalty to their employer. Mr. Hunter also stated that the Baby Boomer generation is getting older and retiring. Mr. Hunter further stated that it is a competition in the work force and wages and benefit packages are good selling points. Mr. Hunter stated that it can be discouraging but this will soon pass. Mr. Hunter also stated that he has hope and will not give up on Phenix City. Mayor Lowe stated that he, Council, Department Heads, and City Employees are all in this together. Mr. Hunter stated that hiring contractors to help out on some streets and City Right of Ways are also options that are being considered.

Councilmember Johnson stated that a gentleman who owns a small business off of 2nd Avenue, was seen cutting the ROW with his weed eater. Councilmember Johnson also stated that it shows that there are caring people in the City who understand and take pride in their City.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 6, 2022.