

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
September 19, 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, September 19, 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, 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 Day led the invocation.

Mayor Lowe called upon Kevin Topping to address Council, as listed on the agenda. Mr. Topping came forward to address Council. Mr. Topping thanked Mayor and Council for everything that they do for the City. Mr. Topping stated that he comes before Mayor and Council today concerning the spraying of herbicide on the grass along Silver Lake Drive and inside of Lakewood Park. Mr. Topping passed out a brief synopsis that included pictures of the area of concern. Mr. Topping stated that a lot of people walk through the neighborhood on Silver Lake Drive. Mr. Topping also stated that the grassy area turns to mud in the rain, and the vegetation that once held back the rain is no longer there. Mr. Topping further stated that the people who live in the neighborhood, were not advised which pesticide would be sprayed in that area and when. Mr. Topping stated that children or people in the area maybe allergic to the chemicals in the grass. Mr. Topping asked if there was a program or a formal way for introducing chemicals to public domain, which would include the type of chemicals, the known side effects, and the health hazards of people and the environment. Mr. Topping stated that powerful chemicals lay in soil for a year or more. Mr. Topping stated that he is aware that the City is short on help but something needs to be done. Mayor Lowe called upon Todd Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director, to explain the process. Mr. Hughes stated that the area was sprayed on July 8, 2022 with MSM Turf Herbicide and 2, 4-D Amine Weed Killer. Mr. Hughes passed out information to Mayor and Council that stated both herbicides are used to kill weeds and are over the counter strength herbicides. Mr. Hughes stated that the herbicides were used for the purposes intended. Mike Barber, Golf Manager, stated that he would like to address Mr. Topping's concerns. Mr. Barber stated that the MSM Turf Herbicide was combined with the 2, 4-D Amine Weed Killer along with a spreader sticker and they were not applied at full strength. Mr. Barber also stated that the same combination was used in other parts of the City. Mr. Barber further stated that nebulizer seed oil does not react well to centipede grass which created the bad look in the park's grass which is burnt leaf tissue and it is not dead to the root. Mr. Barber stated that the grass will come back as it has in other areas of the City. Mr. Barber also stated that the safety of Citizens and animals is always the main concern. Mr. Barber further stated that all herbicides are approved by the state. Councilmember Gordy asked if the plan was to kill the grass and the weeds or just the weeds. Mr. Barber stated that the application of the herbicide was intended to kill weeds. Councilmember Day stated that once the grass starts to grow, is there something that could be

applied to make it grow faster. Mr. Hughes stated that it just takes time for grass to grow. Councilmember Gordy asked if the citizens could be made aware of when the spraying was going to begin and where. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that a notice can be placed on the City's website and on the City's electronic billboards. Mr. Topping suggested a City Map listing upcoming projects to include the spraying and location of herbicides. Mayor Lowe stated that Mayor and Council will always have the Citizens of Phenix City's best interest in mind. Mayor Lowe thanked Mr. Topping for coming to speak with Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Tracie Hadaway, Economic Development Planning Director, to discuss the actions taken by the Planning Commission at their September 13, 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 September 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the 5th Street South Youth Center.
2. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet September 27, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
3. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on October 3, 2022, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
4. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on October 4, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
5. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on October 10, 2022 in observance of Columbus Day Holiday.
6. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet October 11, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
7. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on October 17, 2022, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
8. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on October 18, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
9. Informed Council that the East Alabama Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a Legislative Luncheon on October 18, 2022 at 11:30 a.m.
10. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet October 25, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
11. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on October 31, 2022, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
12. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on November 1, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.

City Clerk Melony Lee informed Mayor and Council that Greater Mt. Zion Baptist Church will host a Faith and Blue event with the Phenix City Police Department and the Russell County Sherriff Department on October 9, 2022 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Chief of Police, Ray Smith stated that Faith and Blue is an annual event that rotates from local churches each year. Chief Smith stated that all citizens are encouraged to attend.

City Clerk Melony Lee reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

During the discussion of the agenda items, Mayor Lowe read a proposed resolution in reference to authorizing the Alabama Department of Revenue to Administer and Collect Sales

and Use Taxes Levied by the City of Phenix City, beginning on December 1, 2022. City Manager Wallace Hunter called upon Finance Director Labrita King-Copeland to explain. Ms. King-Copeland stated that the City is ending its agreement with a company called Avenu, a tax collection service for Phenix City, and beginning a tax collection service with the Alabama Department of Revenue who will, Administer and Collect Sales and Use Taxes Levied by the City of Phenix City, beginning on December 1, 2022. Ms. King-Copeland also stated that Cameron Clark, with the Alabama Department of Revenue, was present to answer questions or concerns from Mayor and Council. Mr. Clark stated that he was the local liaison for the Alabama Department of Revenue, Sales and Use Tax Division. Mr. Clark also stated that along with him were Katrina Thomas and Jasmine Evans also from the Alabama Department of Revenue, Sales and Use Tax Division, Auburn District, which includes Phenix City. Mr. Clark explained the benefits of changing from a private Collector to the Alabama Department of Revenue. Mr. Clark stated that they are government helping government. Mayor Lowe stated that the City will be saving money by working with the State. Mr. Clark stated that the City will be charged on a per-transaction basis which is cost efficient. Councilmember Day asked if working with the Alabama Department of Revenue would be an easy transition for the City's Finance Department. Ms. King-Copeland stated that she is hoping it will be an easy transition from Avenue to the State. Councilmember Johnson asked if the City has to renew the agreement with the State annually. Mr. Hunter stated that the agreement is continuous. Mr. Clark stated that the City's contract with Avenu is expiring and with the State being named as the administrator, no expiration date is noted. Mayor Lowe thanked Mr. Clark, Ms. Thomas and Ms. Evans for coming to speak with Council.

Mayor Lowe continued reviewing agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council. While reviewing the claim, City Attorney Graham read a section from the Code of Alabama, Section 35-15-1.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the City is in the last phase of the fiscal year. Mr. Hunter reflected on the challenges faced and obstacles that were overcome. Mr. Hunter stated that the City is at a point where we can't slow down. Mr. Hunter also stated that the Downtown Vision Plan has been presented to the County as well. Mr. Hunter complimented on the growth of Russell County School System. Mr. Hunter thanked Mayor and Council, Department Heads and City Employees moving the City forward.

Mayor Lowe encouraged everyone to stay driven for the right reasons.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, October 3, 2022.