

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 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, December 5, 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, Planning Director Tracie Hadaway, 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 Resource 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 introduced special guest Ivy Brooks, Synovus Accelerated Banker.

Mayor Lowe called upon Mr. Floyd Teasley to address council, as listed on the agenda. Mr. Teasley came forward to address Council. Mr. Teasley stated that he, along with Dr. Janet Goodwin, represent Keep Phenix City Beautiful. Mr. Teasley also stated that the organization was re-established prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic but activities were few. Mr. Teasley further stated that the Keep Phenix City Beautiful Organization would also like to re-establish the selection of Yard of the Month Program starting January 2023. Mr. Teasley stated that a yard from a business, residence and Church will be selected from one specific district. Councilmember Bailey stated that he would need a set of yard signs. Councilmember Johnson and Councilmember Day stated that they will need new signs also. Dr. Goodwin stated that the contest will rotate from district to district monthly starting with District One in January, District Two in February, District Three in March and so on. Dr. Goodwin also stated that several citizens have asked the Organization to restart the yard of the month program. Dr. Goodwin further stated that they wanted to formerly ask Mayor and Council to allow the contest to restart. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the City will provide the signs for the contest for each District. Councilmember Johnson stated that she spearheads the City Wide Cleanup Day and it will resume in January 2023. Councilmember Johnson also stated that she will contact the Keep Phenix City Beautiful Organization for assistance. Dr. Goodwin stated that their organization would love to assist in the efforts of beautifying Phenix City. Mayor Lowe thanked Mr. Teasley and Dr. Goodwin for coming to speak with Council.

Mayor Lowe called upon Mr. Carlos Branham to address council, as listed on the agenda. Mr. Branham came forward to address Council. Mr. Branham thanked Mayor and Council for the opportunity to speak about the structure and foundation issues that he is experiencing at his property located at 11 Green Wing Lane in Mallard Creek Subdivision, Phase 2. Mr. Branham apologized for not being able to attend and address Council as listed on the Work Session Agenda for January 31, 2022. Mr. Branham reviewed what was discussed at the Work Session by Department Heads in his absence according to the minutes for that particular meeting. Mr. Branham stated that copies of his findings and documentations were provided for Mayor and

Council. Mayor Lowe stated that the documents have been received and reviewed. Mayor Lowe asked what expectations Mr. Branham had for Council. Mr. Branham stated that he does not agree with all of the information that was provided at the January 31, 2022 Work Session. Mr. Branham also stated that the variance for property has caused a financial burden and because the sanitary sewer easement runs on the side of his garage it has caused shifting and sinking of his home's foundation. Mr. Branham further stated that several foundation companies have inspected his home. City Manager Wallace Hunter asked if the home had been purchased from another home owner. Mr. Branham stated that he purchased the home as the first owner of the property. City Attorney Jimmy Graham asked if he purchased the home "as-is". Mr. Branham stated that he is unsure. Mr. Branham also stated that he was told by the Realtors, not to sign the warranty of protection because of the pending lawsuit involving the adjacent lot number 57. Mr. Branham further stated that he believes that things were not done properly concerning his property. Mr. Hunter asked if Mr. Branham had obtained an attorney. Mr. Branham stated that because of the area, he doesn't think he would receive fair representation with a local attorney. Ray Rogers, Deputy Building Official, stated that the replat was done in 2008, prior to Mr. Branham purchasing the property. Mr. Rogers also stated it was recorded in the Lee County Judge of Probate Office in 2008 as well. Mr. Rogers further stated that Mr. Branham would need to take up his issues concerning the replat with the Lee County Judge of Probate Office. Mr. Rogers stated that a side yard and front yard variance was applied for and approved. Mayor Lowe suggested that Mr. Branham seeks legal advice concerning his issues either in the City or outside of the City. Mayor Lowe stated that according to the presented documents, the Lee County Probate Judge signed off on paperwork concerning the plats. Mayor Lowe also stated that it is not a City issue. Mayor Lowe thanked Mr. Branham 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 November 22, 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 December 6, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
2. Advised Council that the Memorial Service for J. W. Brannen will be held on December 6, 2022 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the Lakewood Golf Course Clubhouse.
3. Advised Council that the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Poplar Springs Park on 14th Avenue will be held on December 6, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.
4. Advised Council the Breakfast with Santa will be held on December 10, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.
5. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet December 13, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
6. Advised Council that the City Manager and the City Clerk Holiday Luncheon will be held on December 15, 2022 at 12:00 p.m.
7. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on December 19, 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 December 20, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
9. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on December 23, 2022 and December 26, 2022 in observance of the Christmas Holiday.
10. Advised Council that the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for December 27, 2022 at 5:15 p.m. has been canceled due to the Christmas Holiday.

11. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on January 2, 2023 in observance of the New Year's Day Holiday.
12. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on January 3, 2023 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 New Year's Day Holiday.
13. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on January 4, 2023 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 New Year's Day Holiday.
14. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet January 10, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
15. Informed Council that City Offices will be closed on January 16, 2023 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
16. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Work Session to be held on January 17, 2023 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.
17. Advised Council of a regular scheduled Council Meeting to be held on January 18, 2023 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.
18. Advised Council that the Planning Commission will meet January 24, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.
19. Advised Council that the State of City Address will be held on January 26, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Martin Idle Hour Park Community Center.
20. Reviewed upcoming board appointments.

Councilmember Bailey thanked the Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Works Department for the beautiful displays of the Christmas decorations. Councilmember Bailey stated that he has watched the crew work on the setup for hours, even after dark. Councilmember Bailey also stated that it looks better this year than previous years.

Councilmember Bailey stated that the City is growing and in the right direction. Councilmember Bailey also stated that he has not received any complaints or concern calls lately from Citizens and that is a good thing and shows that City workers are doing a good job.

Councilmember Day inquired about the ownership of a portion of College Park Drive. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that Chattahoochee Valley State Community College owns the portion coming around the curve on College Park Drive. Mr. Hunter also stated that the City is currently resurfacing College Drive and Retail Drive. Councilmember Day asked about the new businesses that will be in that area. Mr. Hunter stated that there are plans for a gas station and restaurant in the area.

Councilmember Day stated that the renovations of the Public Safety Building are looking good. Chief of Police Ray Smith stated that project is coming along well.

Councilmember Johnson stated that she agrees with Councilmember Bailey and the Downtown area and the overall appearance of the City looks great and the community has noticed. Councilmember Johnson thanked all of the departments involved in decorating the City.

Councilmember Johnson asked if street sweepers were available to take care of all the leaves that have fallen off of trees into the City's streets. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that the departments are working overtime to make sure City streets are clear. Angel Moore, City Engineer, stated that a CDL license is required to operate the street sweeper and the City is still

in need of CDL licensed employees. Mr. Hunter stated that overtime hours are available but he doesn't want workers to be burnt out so they are doing the best that they can. Mr. Hunter also stated that in the past, local churches and social clubs would help keep their neighborhoods and especially the parks, clean and safe. Mr. Hunter further stated that instead of helping to keep the City and Parks clean, some people are saying negative things about the City. Mr. Hunter stated that Phenix City is doing a lot of positive things but that doesn't get posted on social media. Mayor Lowe stated that people can be cruel using social media and that is one of the reasons he doesn't participate. Mayor Lowe also stated that it has been brought to his attention that someone is talking bad about the school system and the kids. Mayor Lowe further stated that it is disturbing and hurtful that people would bring kids into the mix. Mayor Lowe stated that the school system is a part of this City and they are more important than ourselves because they are our future.

Councilmember Day stated that there are a lot of mattresses and other household items out on 25th Avenue near the storage units. Councilmember Day asked if there was a charge to pick those items up. Angel Moore, City Engineer stated that because of the lack of work force and CDL drivers, it still may take a little longer for items to be picked up. Ms. Moore also stated that businesses will be charged when items are picked up. City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that Smiths Station shut down their dumping site and unfortunately, some people are bringing the items over to Phenix City and dumping them here. Mr. Hunter encouraged people if they see someone dumping tires or other items on the side of the road, please report it.

Councilmember Johnson stated that she has received quite a few calls on trash bins being left in the street after trash has been emptied or on the incorrect day of pickup. Councilmember Johnson also stated that if the street sweeper was available, it could not get down some of the City's streets because the bins are left in the road.

Councilmember Johnson stated that there are areas in the City that need to be re-stripped because the lines on the roads are not visible. Councilmember Johnson mentioned 17th Avenue by the Marathon.

City Manager Wallace Hunter stated that people need to care more about the community and the City they live in. Mr. Hunter also stated that cameras and fines for littering and dumping, need to be put in place to combat some of the City's issues.

Mayor Lowe went over the agenda items.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham reviewed agenda claims with Council.

City Manager Wallace Hunter called upon Assistant Chief of Police George Staudinger to update everyone on the tragic event that occurred at the River Walk. Assistant Chief Staudinger stated that a double homicide occurred at the River Walk on Saturday, December 3, 2022. Assistant Chief Staudinger also stated videos of a person of interest have been circulating on the local news station and social media. Assistant Chief Staudinger further stated that tips are coming in and they are hopeful that the person of interest will be located soon. Assistant Chief Staudinger encouraged everyone to reach out to the Police Department if they have any information on the case. Councilmember Bailey stated that people shouldn't be afraid to walk at the River Walk because it may have been an isolated and unfortunate event that could have happened anywhere. Councilmember Day asked if Crime Stoppers was involved. Assistant Chief Staudinger stated that Crime Stoppers and the State of Alabama have been involved and there is a possibility of a reward. Councilmember Gordy asked if it is known if the victims knew each other or had any involvement with each other. Assistant Chief Staudinger stated that one victim appeared to have

walked up on a situation and was shot and killed. Mayor Lowe stated that it was truly a tragic situation. Mayor Lowe also stated that we have to continue to lift our City up in pray and hold on to our faith.

City Attorney Jimmy Graham asked for an Executive Session to discuss Economic Development for 20 minutes, from which the meeting would adjourn.

Councilmember Day moved to go into Executive Session to discuss Economic Development for 20 minutes, from which the meeting would adjourn. Councilmember Johnson seconded said motion. All were in favor.

Council went into Executive Session at 4:52 p.m.

Council came out of Executive Session at 5:07 p.m.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned until 3:00 p.m., Monday, December 19, 2022.