

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 1, 2025 MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Be it remembered that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs met in a Regular Meeting at City Hall at 6:00 p.m. on July 1, 2025. Mayor Cox presided, and Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, Wade, Hinton, Pfeiffer, Blackman, and Messenger were present. City Attorney David Harris Jr., City Clerk Patty Gaston, Deputy City Clerk Vicky Hupe, Police Chief Steven Dye, Fire Chief A.J. Fitch, Building Official Darrell Stringfellow, Public Works Director Allan Ladnier, Human Resources & Risk Management Director Mindy McDowell, Grants Administrator Carolyn Martin, Interim Community Development & Planning Director Wade Morgan, Parks & Recreation Director Stephen Glorioso, and Project Manager Sarah Harris were also present.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Mike Barnett from First Baptist Church gave the invocation and Alderman Wade led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to accept the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. 4005 Government St - PIDN: 60127030.040 - Request approval for a Minor Subdivision of a 2-lot subdivision - Zoning: R-1 Low Density Single Family; PC Recommends approval

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to open the Public Hearing.

The Interim Community Development Director stated that a two-lot subdivision was previously approved in 2007; however, the applicant did not complete the process at that time. He noted that the Planning Commission now recommends approval of the request.

There was no public input.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to close the Public Hearing.

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A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to approve the Conditional Use Permit for the construction of a single-family residence at 1208 Harbor Road, PIDN: 61124900.015.

- b. 1209 Robinson Street – PIDN: 60119434.000 – Request a zone change from R- D Two Family Residential to CMX-2 Community Commercial/Mixed Use; PC recommends denial

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to open the Public Hearing.

The Interim Community Development Director explained that the Planning Commission recommended denial of the request to rezone the property due to an insufficient change in the character of the neighborhood.

Public Input:

Joe Jewell, Greg Gipson, Ester Payton, Renee Oliver, James Lewis, Ya Ya Mohamed, and Greta Wells spoke in opposition to the rezoning.

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to close the Public Hearing.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to uphold the Planning Commission's recommendation and deny the request to rezone 1209 Robinson Street to CMX-2.

- c. Spring Plaza Sketch Plat and Preliminary Plat Subdivision – 1515 Bienville Blvd – PIDN: 61265011.000 – Request approval for a Sketch Plat for a Minor Subdivision of a 3-lot subdivision – Zoning: C-H Regional Commercial; PC Recommends approval

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to open the Public Hearing.

The Interim Community Development Director explained that Aldi grocery store, which recently took over the former Winn-Dixie location, is seeking to create its own lease space within the shopping center by subdividing the property into three lots with shared parking. He stated that the proposed lot lines would run through the building to separate Aldi's footprint and that restrictive covenants would be in place, ensuring all three lots remain under a single ownership. He further noted that the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request.

Public Input:

Tom Eringsing inquired about the division of the building and the potential future occupants.

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Ellen Hall asked whether the restrictive covenants could hinder future buyers if Aldi were to vacate the property.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to close the Public Hearing.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to approve the preliminary sketch plat for a Minor Subdivision of a 3-lot subdivision at Spring Plaza, 1515 Bienville Boulevard, PIDN: 61265011.000.

AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Item 5-b: Joe Jewell requested that the Board consider implementing a rotation of the Mayor Pro Tempore position on an annual basis.

Agenda Items 6-l and 6-m: Joe Jewell spoke in support of extending the probationary period for City employees.

Agenda Item 6-p: Joe Jewell spoke in opposition to the removal of trees and requested that the Board consider enacting a moratorium on tree removals.

Agenda Item 6-o: Bill Moore inquired about the scope and details of the Storm Drain Improvements project for Weeks Bayou and Halstead Bayou.

Melissa Burton was advised to reserve her comments for the general public comment section, as her item was not listed on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to table the appointments of the Boards and Commissions until the Recess meeting.

b. Appoint Mayor Pro Tempore

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to appoint Alderman Hinton as Mayor Pro Tempore for a one-year term.

c. Adopt Resolution Appointing Mississippi Municipal League (MML) 2025 Voting Delegates for the City of Ocean Springs

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton and seconded by Alderman Stennis to adopt

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a Resolution Appointing Alderman Pfeiffer as the alternate 2025 MML Voting Delegate for the City of Ocean Springs. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Stennis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Pfeiffer,
Alderman Blackman, Alderman Messenger, Alderman Hinton
Nay: None

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman and seconded by Alderman Hinton to adopt a Resolution Appointing Mayor Cox as the primary 2025 MML Voting Delegate for the City of Ocean Springs. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Stennis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Pfeiffer,
Alderman Blackman, Alderman Messenger, Alderman Hinton
Nay: None

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda, except for item 6-s pulled by Alderman Hinton.

Mayor/BOA:

- a. Authorize the Mayor to execute the 2025-2026 lease agreement with Head Start - Community Action of South Mississippi for nine rooms in the Taconi Building
- b. Authorize the Mayor to execute the 2025-2026 lease agreement with the MS Gulf Coast YMCA for seven rooms in the Taconi Building
- c. Authorize and waive all associated fees for the American Red Cross and Ocean Springs Rotary Club to host a blood drive at the Civic Center on July 11, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, to advertise the resources of the city
- d. Authorize and waive all associated fees with Mosaic Church's use of the Community Center on Sunday, July 20, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM for student night worship; to advertise the resources of the city
- e. Authorize and waive all associated fees for the YMCA's use of the Civic Center on December 9, 2025, for their annual Senior Christmas Party; to advertise the resources of the city
- f. Execute Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) for Operation and Maintenance of the Charnley-Norwood House on East Beach

City Clerk:

- g. Authorize the Mayor to execute the contract with Sound Associates, Inc. for

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Entertainment during the Cruising the Coast / OS Block Party in the amount of \$15,900.00

- h. Approve the renewal of the electrical services agreement with Weaver Electric, Inc. effective through July 31, 2026
- i. Authorize to Designate Applicant Agent for Hurricane Nate FEMA/MEMA project reimbursement to Payroll Technician Jennifer Ferrell
- j. Authorize to Designate Applicant Agent for Hurricane Ida FEMA/MEMA project reimbursement to Project Manager Sarah Harris
- k. Approve Minutes: Recess Meeting June 17, 2025

Human Resources/Risk Management:

- l. Authorize extension of the probationary period for Battalion Chief Keith Guice through December 10, 2025, to allow time for successful completion of departmental standards
- m. Authorize extension of the probationary period for Firefighter Dawson Wicker for up to one year to accommodate a training extension approved by the Mississippi Fire Personnel Minimum Standards and Certification Board

Grants Administration:

- n. Authorize Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Jackson County to Provide Funding for the City of Ocean Springs' Project – Front Beach Sidewalk Improvements – No Cost Time Extension
- o. Authorize Award for the STORM DRAIN IMPROVEMENTS: WEEKS BAYOU, HALSTEAD BAYOU – American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) / MS Municipality and County Water Infrastructure Grant (MCWI) – MDEQ Agreement #470-2-SW-5.6 – Couvillion Group, LLC in the amount of \$2,322,455.35

Building Department:

- p. Approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through June 25, 2025
- q. Accept Code Enforcement Report through June 26, 2025

Public Works:

- r. Adopt Resolution to Sell Surplus Personal Property with a value of less than \$1,000.00
- s. Authorize Engel Electric to continue serving as the Public Works Electrical Service Provider at the hourly rates listed effective through July 31, 2025

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Blackman, and unanimously carried to authorize Engel Electric to continue serving as the Public Works Electrical Service Provider at the hourly rates listed effective through July 31,

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2026.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- a. City Clerk: Approve payment: Docket of Claims, all expenditures are appropriate and authorized by law, and spread the summary on the Minutes

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to approve the Docket of Claims finding that all expenditures are appropriate and authorized by law, and spread the summary on the minutes.

- b. City Clerk: Accept the Monthly Budget Report

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to accept the monthly budget report.

- c. City Clerk: Closeout and Reallocation of Hurricane Nate and Hurricane Zeta Funds

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to authorize the closeout of the Hurricane Nate and Hurricane Zeta funds and approve the transfer of \$210,500.00 to the Garbage Fund for the emergency purchase of a grapple truck, and \$238,668.74 to the Street Fund with authorization to begin the reverse bid process for the purchase of a second street sweeper.

- d. Police: Authorize Emergency Purchase – HVAC System Replacement at Police Department

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Blackman, and unanimously carried to authorize an emergency purchase and budget amendment to hire TEMCO of the Gulf Coast for the replacement and installation of two AAON HVAC units at the Police Department, in the amount of \$138,059.40, to be funded from the 2% Food and Beverage Fund.

- e. Police: Authorize the Motorola Solutions Termination Agreement and Payment of Final Balance

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to authorize acceptance of the Termination Agreement with Motorola Solutions, approve payment in the amount of \$362,514.45 with maintenance support continuing through August 29, 2025, and approve a budget amendment to reduce the 2022 loan fund by \$20,514.11 to cover the remaining balance of the payment.

- f. Police: Authorize entering into contract with PTS Solutions for Police and Court Software

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A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to authorize entering into a 3-year agreement with PTS Solutions for Police and Court software in the total amount of \$75,800.00, to be paid from the U.S. Treasury Equitable Seizures Fund as follows: \$40,800.00 upon signing, \$27,000.00 upon completion of Police conversion, and \$8,000.00 upon completion of Court conversion.

g. Public Works: Authorize Emergency Purchase of a Knuckle Boom Truck

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to authorize the emergency purchase of a Pac-Mac K20 boom truck from Burroughs Companies in the amount of \$210,500, to be paid from the Garbage Fund, and approve a budget amendment to accommodate the purchase.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Ron Chambers, Joe Jewell, Renee Oliver, James Lewis, Greg Gipson, Melissa Burton, and Bill Moore addressed the Mayor and the Board.

MAYOR AND ALDERMEN'S FORUM

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to place all City contracts under review for a period of 60 days.

Alderman Tillis noted that one of the lease agreements listed on the consent agenda contained an incorrect date.

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis and seconded by Alderman Wade to hire a part-time Arborist; the motion was subsequently withdrawn after discussion.

Alderman Stennis thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve and requested that the marina signpost be removed from the beach property.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis and seconded by Alderman Tillis to rescind Ordinance 2025-03 effective immediately, with the understanding that any future ordinance extending Civil Service coverage must first obtain the explicit approval of the Civil Service Commission as required by Miss. Code Ann. Section 21-31-13. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Stennis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Pfeiffer,
Alderman Blackman, Alderman Messenger, Alderman Hinton

Nay: None

Alderman Wade thanked the Public Works Director for working on the easements on Ridgeview Drive and Parkwood Place.

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A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to initiate the process and request an estimate from a third-party environmental consulting firm to conduct an independent study and evaluation of contaminants located within the City's right-of-way and, if granted permission, on the neighboring property near the Leica site on Pine Drive.

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to appoint Aldermen Stennis, Messenger, and Tillis to assist the Human Resources Director.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to appoint Aldermen Blackman, Wade, and Pfeiffer to assist the City Clerk.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to appoint Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, and Blackman to assist the Risk Management Director with insurance matters.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to appoint Aldermen Wade and Hinton to assist the Public Works Director, Building Official, and Project Manager with engineering-related matters.

A motion was made by Alderman Messenger, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to suspend the Ocean Springs Redevelopment Authority pending further review.

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton and seconded by Alderman Stennis to form a new Tree Committee consisting of seven members, one from each ward and one at large, and to hold a Board of Aldermen work session to establish the structure and responsibilities of the committee. The motion carried with a vote as follows:

Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Stennis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Pfeiffer,
Alderman Messenger, Alderman Hinton
Nay: Alderman Blackman

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to go into a closed session to determine the necessity of going into an executive session.

The City Clerk returned to the meeting and announced that a motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to remain in executive session to discuss pending litigation with Rosenberg, Fisher, and Crear, the Tuli/Burton appeal, and discussion of city parking garage lease.

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A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to come out of the executive session where the following action was taken:

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Blackman, and unanimously carried to hire Currie, Johnson & Myers as outside litigation counsel to handle the Tuli/Burton appeal of the Board of Alderman's decision to vacate the alley between parcels 60119054.000, 60119056.000, 60119058.000, 60119048.000, 60119050.000, 60119042.000, and 60119046.000.

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Blackman, and unanimously carried for Dogan Wilkinson to continue representation of the City of Ocean Springs in pending litigation matters in which Dogan Wilkinson was already involved and to set this matter for review at the first meeting in August 2025.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to reappoint Monte Tynes as City Judge.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to reappoint Tyler Cox as City Prosecutor.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to reappoint Tristan Armor as City Judge Pro Tempore.

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to extend agenda public comment and public comment to five minutes for each speaker.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Messenger, and unanimously carried to reappoint Chic Cody as Event Coordinator.

RECESS UNTIL 6:00 P.M. on JULY 15, 2025

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to recess.

The meeting ended at 8:47 p.m.

Mayor

Date

Clerk

Date