

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF AUGUST 19, 2025 - MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Be it remembered that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs met in a Recess Meeting at City Hall at 6:00 p.m. on August 19, 2025. Mayor Cox presided, and Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, Wade, Hinton, Pfeiffer, and Messenger were present. Alderman Blackman was absent. City Attorney David Harris Jr., City Clerk/Finance Director Christine Millard, 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, Planning Director Amanda Crose, Parks & Recreation Director Stephen Glorioso, Project Manager Sarah Harris, and Admin & Community Relations Coordinator Laurri Garcia were also present.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. James Lewis gave the invocation and Alderman Messenger led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to amend the agenda to move items 11-b and 11-c from Mayor & Aldermen's Forum to New Business 7-c and 7-d.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to accept the amended agenda.

PROCLAMATION

a. Honoring Jeanne Carter Luckey

The Mayor proclaimed August 19, 2025, as Jeanne Carter Luckey Day, and members of the Luckey family were present to accept the proclamation.

PRESENTATION

a. Alexander, Van Loon, Sloan, Levens, Favre, PLLC (AVL) - FY 23-24 Audit Presentation

Kim Marmalich of Alexander, Van Loon, Sloan, Levens, Favre, PLLC (AVL) presented the FY 2023–2024 Audit Report results. She reported that the City received an unmodified opinion on its financial statements, which is the highest level of assurance auditors can provide, indicating that the statements are materially correct as presented

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under Government Auditing Standards. She noted the audit is historical in nature, covering the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024. Ms. Marmalich stated there were no difficulties in completing the audit, no disagreements with management, and no significant deficiencies or material instances of noncompliance with state laws and regulations. The Board had no questions. The motion to accept the FY 2023–2024 Audit was inadvertently omitted and will be placed on the next Consent Agenda.

AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Item 9-c: James Lewis asked about the Covington Civil & Environmental proposal to provide the Environmental Risk Analysis of the Leica site. The Mayor clarified that the analysis will be conducted on City property surrounding the Leica site, not directly on the Leica site itself.

Agenda Item 6-b: Cameron Rea spoke against the proposed moratorium on Short-Term Rentals (STRs).

Agenda Item 7-b: Eamon Mohiuddin thanked the City for allowing a public meeting at the Civic Center for Great River Utility and Gulf Park Estates residents.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Adopt Resolution Establishing a Resolution Numbering System -Alderman Pfeiffer

Alderman Pfeiffer noted that at the previous meeting, the Board authorized the City Attorney to revise the proposed resolution establishing a resolution numbering system so that the numbering would begin with that resolution and continue on a forward-going basis. She stated that an unauthorized edit had since been made to the revised document, which removed the sponsorship language she had included.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer and seconded by Alderman Stennis to Adopt the Resolution Establishing a Resolution Numbering System with the sponsorship language restored (**RES 2025-001**). The motion carried with the following vote:

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

Nay: Alderman Wade

Absent: Alderman Blackman

- b. Adopt Resolution for a Temporary Moratorium on the Submission and Acceptance of Short-Term Rental Applications

Aldermen Hinton and Stennis recused themselves from the discussion due to a

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potential conflict of interest and stepped out of the boardroom.

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that the draft Resolution for a Temporary Moratorium on the Submission and Acceptance of Short-Term Rental Applications contained numerous grammatical errors. She distributed a memo outlining eight suggested corrections.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer and seconded by Alderman Tillis to adopt the Resolution for a Temporary Moratorium on the Submission and Acceptance of Short-Term Rental Applications (**RES 2025-002**). The motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Messenger

Nay: Alderman Pfeiffer

Abstain: Alderman Stennis, Alderman Hinton

Absent: Alderman Blackman

- c. Adopt Resolution Amending the Urban Renewal Plan to Return Control to the Board of Aldermen

Alderman Pfeiffer distributed a memo providing clarifications and suggested revisions to the proposed resolution.

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton and seconded by Alderman Wade to adopt a Resolution amending the Urban Renewal Plan to return control to the Board of Aldermen, incorporating Alderman Pfeiffer's suggested revisions to Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 (**RES 2025-003**). The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

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

Nay: None

Absent: Alderman Blackman

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to set a Public Hearing for September 16th to rescind the Urban Renewal Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Request Refund of Rental Fees – Fundraising Basketball Tournament

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to approve the refund of the \$500 rental fee for the use of Taconi Gym and the Ryan Youth Center on August 2–3, 2025, for the fundraising basketball tournament in memory of CJ Fairley; to advertise city resources.

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- b. Request Refund of Civic Center Rental Fee for Great River UOC Community Meeting

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Messenger, and unanimously carried to approve the partial refund of the Civic Center rental fee in the amount of \$300.00 to Great River Utility for the August 12, 2025, community meeting, to advertise city resources.

- c. Amended to move to New Business: Alderman Pfeiffer - Parliamentary Procedure Workshop Proposal

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer and seconded by Alderman Stennis to discuss and seek direction on a Parliamentary Procedure Workshop. No action was taken.

The Mayor suggested that, rather than going out of state, the Board consider working with MML or another in-state option. Alderman Pfeiffer clarified that the proposal was not for a training class like those offered by MML, but for a workshop-style group activity designed to help the Board determine how it wishes to work together over the next four years. She provided information on the costs of the different workshops available. Alderman Hinton stated that he would like to see other options.

- d. Amended to Move to New Business: Alderman Pfeiffer - Community Opioid Risk Coordinator Grant Opportunity

No action was taken.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda, with the exception of Items 8-c, 8-x, 8-y, and 8-z, which were pulled by Alderman Pfeiffer.

Mayor/BOA:

- a. Adopt Resolutions confirming appointments in compliance with Mississippi Code §21-15-41 and related statutory provisions

Adopted Resolutions — **RES 2025-004** through **RES 2025-017**.

- b. Adopt Resolution to allow the sale of beer by the American League Post #42 for the duration of the 2025 Cruisin' the Coast

Adopted **RES 2025-018**.

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City Clerk:

- c. Approve Minutes: Special Call Meeting July 7, 2025

Alderman Pfeiffer said the incorrect minutes were attached to the agenda packet and could not be approved. No action was taken.

- d. Approve Minutes: Special Call Meeting July 29, 2025
- e. Ratify check 133669 to Unfazed Show and Band for 8/8/25 Friday at the Fort Performance

Police Department:

- f. Authorize Employee #2396 for Out-of-State travel to Austell, GA for Managing the Detective Unit training October 19-23, 2025
- g. Accept OSPD Monthly Report for July 2025

Fire Department:

- h. Accept OSFD Monthly Report for July 2025

Human Resources/Risk Management:

- i. Authorize ratification of the employment of Laurri Garcia, Admin & Community Relations Coordinator, effective August 18, 2025; \$28.85 hourly rate
- j. Authorize removing Code Enforcement Officer Casey Morgan from probationary status to full time status, effective immediately
- k. Authorize employment of Ashton Lanham, Animal Control Officer, effective August 20, 2025; Step 1, \$15.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- l. Authorize employment of Shaysmeen Marie Gomez Ortiz, Dispatcher, effective August 20, 2025; \$14.50 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- m. Authorize employment of Desiree Lewis, Dispatcher, effective August 20, 2025; \$14.50 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- n. Authorize employment of Robert Williams, Grounds Maintenance, effective August 20, 2025; Step 1, \$14.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- o. Authorize termination of Employee #2870, Sewer Laborer, effective August 14, 2025; and authorize filling the vacant position

Planning Commission (PC):

- p. Accept Planning Commission Minutes for July 8, 2025 Meeting

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- q. Approve a Commercial Subdivision Final Plat - Spring Plaza Subdivision - 1515 Bienville Blvd - PIDN: 61265011.000; PC recommends approval
- r. Approve a Minor Subdivision Final Plat - Marta's Place - 4005 Government Street - PIDN: 60127030.040; PC recommends approval
- s. Approve a Short-Term Rental Permit for 221 Audrey Circle - PIDN: 61375036.000; PC recommends approval

Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB):

- t. Adopt Zoning and Adjustment Board By-Laws
- u. Accept ZAB Minutes for April 8, 2025 Meeting
- v. Approve a variance for a reduction of the minimum landscape buffer requirement from 20 feet to 15 feet and a reduction in the minimum width for the proposed one-way alley from 18 feet wide to 13.5 feet wide East side of Church Street and North from Bienville Blvd – PIDN: 60119058.000; ZAB recommends approval
- w. Approve a variance for a reduction of the minimum landscape buffer requirement from 20 feet to 16.6 feet for the construction of a parking space at 1401 Government Street – PIDN: 60119426.000; ZAB recommends approval

Grants Administration:

- x. Authorize the Mayor to Execute the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MDOT to Receive Funds for Drainage Improvements on Highway 90 at Deana Road

Alderman Pfeiffer distributed proposed edits to the MDOT MOU. The Grants Administrator explained that the MOU had been provided and approved by MDOT, and that any changes would require MDOT's reapproval, which could be a lengthy process and further delay the project.

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis and seconded by Alderman Wade to authorize the Mayor to execute the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MDOT to receive funds for drainage improvements on Highway 90 at Deana Road. The motion carried with the following vote:

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

Nay: Alderman Pfeiffer

Absent: Alderman Blackman

- y. Authorize the Mayor to Execute a Lease Agreement with the Walter Anderson Museum of Art (WAMA) for Stewardship of the OS Community Center (OSCC)

Alderman Pfeiffer distributed concerns and proposed edits to the lease agreement with WAMA for the Community Center. Mattie Codling, WAMA Executive Director,

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explained that the lease had been drafted and placed on the agenda pending legal review, and that the City had already submitted edits to the agreement. The Grants Administrator noted that WAMA must have a lease in place in order to apply for a grant for the building, for which the City itself is not currently eligible. She requested that the lease agreement be approved subject to legal review and incorporation of necessary amendments.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to authorize the Mayor to execute a Lease Agreement with the Walter Anderson Museum of Art (WAMA) for stewardship of the Ocean Springs Community Center (OSCC), following legal review and incorporation of amendments.

- z. Authorization to Execute a Proposal with Stevenson Consulting for Construction Materials Testing and Special Inspection Services Related to Construction of the Public Works Facility in the Amount of \$14,500.00

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that she had pulled the wrong item. A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to authorize the execution of a proposal with Stevenson Consulting for construction materials testing and special inspection services related to the construction of the Public Works Facility in the amount of \$14,500.00.

Building Department:

- aa. Approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through August 12, 2025
- bb. Accept the Building Department Permit Report for July 2025
- cc. Accept Code Enforcement Report through August 14, 2025

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

- b. City Clerk: Authorize the adjustment of water/sewer accounts due to a finding that the customers did not receive the benefit of the utility and the excess usage was due to unforeseen circumstances

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A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to adjust the water/sewer accounts listed, with the finding that the customers did not receive the benefit of the utility and excess usage was due to unforeseen circumstances.

- c. Mayor: Discuss Covington Civil & Environmental proposal to provide an Independent Evaluation of Environmental Risk Analysis of the Leica site

The Mayor clarified that the proposal under discussion pertained not to the Leica property itself, but to the public area surrounding the Leica site. Alderman Pfeiffer distributed a memo providing clarification and proposed edits to the document.

No action was taken.

- d. Building: Discuss authorization to set a public hearing for the demolition of 126 and 128 Earle Taylor Lane

The Building Official explained that the property, a duplex, was damaged by fire on March 17, 2024, and has since remained without power, water, or sewer service. He stated that one of the property owners has been contacted, while the other has not been reached. He requested that the City Attorney conduct a title search and verify there is no pending litigation involving the properties and recommended initiating the demolition process and scheduling a public hearing for October 7, 2025.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to authorize the City Attorney to conduct a title search and verify there is no pending litigation involving the properties, to initiate the demolition process, and to set a public hearing on October 7, 2025, for the demolition of 126 and 128 Earle Taylor Lane.

- e. Fire: Purchase of SCBA Air-Paks utilizing 2% Tax Funds

The Fire Chief explained that the department's air packs are at the end of their service life and no longer meet NFPA standards, creating a safety issue for the department. He reported that the total cost of the purchase is \$242,383.92, which includes all harnesses, air bottles, and face masks, and requested that the 2% tax fund be used to cover the full amount for public safety.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to authorize the purchase of Scott X3 Pro 4.5 SCBA units for the Ocean Springs Fire Department in the amount of \$242,383.92, utilizing funds from the 2% tax fund for public safety.

- f. City Clerk: Celebrate K20 - Reflection, Resiliency, Rebuilding

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The Grants Administrator announced that Jackson County, in partnership with local municipalities, will host an event commemorating the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. The event will take place on Thursday, August 28th, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Sound Amphitheater in Gautier. It will be a free community event featuring food, music, and speakers.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Coast Transit Authority Executive Director Ninette Barrios and Assistant Executive Director Chris Foret spoke during the Public Comment section. It was noted that they should have requested a presentation slot, as previous directors have done in the past. They distributed the CTA FY2026 Ocean Springs Annual Operating Subsidy Request, which included information about CTA services and ridership in Ocean Springs, and requested a \$77,100 subsidy from the City for FY2026.

Bill Moore, James Lewis, Dan Burton, Taylor Pontius, Leslie Oliver, Becky Desporte, and Ron McDonald addressed the Mayor and the Board.

MAYOR AND ALDERMEN'S FORUM

Alderman Tillis thanked City Hall employees for their assistance in his new role as alderman. He addressed the recent gunfire incident downtown over the weekend and stated that he and Alderman Stennis plan to meet with the Police Chief and downtown business owners to discuss measures to help prevent future violence. He also asked the City Attorney about the possibility of relaying information to the public regarding pending litigation with the City's former attorney. The City Attorney replied that certain information is a matter of public record, but details regarding strategy or upcoming steps are confidential and cannot be disclosed by the Aldermen.

Alderman Stennis asked whether the former attorney was an employee or an independent contractor. The HR Director confirmed that the attorney was not an employee. The City Attorney clarified that, although the attorney was not an employee, discussion of the City's contract with legal counsel and whether to continue representation involves legal strategy and consequences and therefore differs from consideration of other independent contractor agreements. Alderman Stennis expressed concern regarding the legality of the executive session held on August 5th concerning the former attorney and the potential liability of the Aldermen. The City Attorney reiterated that the executive session discussion pertained to the legal strategy of six pending cases and the City's relationship with Wilkinson, not the contract with Wilkinson's firm.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to authorize out-of-state travel for Employee #1686 to Atlanta,

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GA, to testify in court from August 26–27, 2025.

Alderman Pfeiffer asked for an update on the GC Research Lab Boat Launch. The Mayor replied that an MOU is being prepared and should be ready in the next few weeks. Alderman Pfeiffer also reported that she received an email from Jason Camp with MSU Extension Services offering a 2–3 hour course covering the duties and responsibilities of the Mayor and Board, the Open Meetings Act, public records, and a Q&A session. She noted that there would be no training fee, but an estimated \$300 in travel expenses. The training must be approved by unanimous vote and conducted in an open meeting. Alderman Pfeiffer said she would present it at the next meeting.

Alderman Messenger thanked Julia Weaver and Melanie Allan for their efforts in spearheading the Tree Canopy Renewal Project.

Alderman Hinton thanked City staff for their hard work during the transition period and expressed the Board of Aldermen's support.

a. Mayor - Team Building

No action was taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

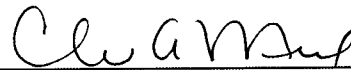
ADJOURN UNTIL 6:00 P.M. on SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to adjourn.

The meeting ended at 8:25 p.m.



Mayor



City Clerk

