

**City of Ocean Springs - Board of Aldermen
Special Call Meeting August 26, 2025 - Minutes**

Be it remembered that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs met in a Special Call Meeting at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. on August 26, 2025. A public notice stating the place, date, time, and subject matter of the meeting was posted within one hour of the meeting being called, both on the City's website and at City Hall, where it was available for examination and inspection by the public. Mayor Cox presided, and Aldermen Stennis, Wade, Hinton, Pfeiffer, Blackman, and Messenger were present. Alderman Tillis was absent. City Attorney David Harris Jr., City Clerk/Finance Director Christine Millard, Deputy City Clerk Vicky Hupe, Police Captain Matthew Morvant, Public Works Director Allan Ladnier, and Executive Administrator & Public Affairs Officer Laurri Garcia were also present.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

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

1. Plan of Action to Ensure Public Safety through the Labor Day Weekend

The Mayor stated that the meeting was called to address matters of public safety related to the Labor Day weekend following two recent incidents of gun violence downtown, in which no injuries were reported. He said the meeting was called in part to ensure that actions were taken to prevent additional incidents from occurring during the upcoming holiday weekend in the interest of public safety.

The Mayor read aloud a Proclamation and Order pursuant to Mississippi Code Section 33-15-17 declaring that recent acts of violence constituted a man-made emergency. The Order established that alcoholic beverage sales shall end at 1:30 a.m. on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, and that retailers of alcoholic beverages shall close at 2:00 a.m. on those dates. These measures shall remain in effect through Labor Day weekend and will be reevaluated at the next Regular Meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2025.

Alderman Pfeiffer questioned how the "man-made emergency" designation applies in this situation and raised concerns regarding the enforcement mechanism for closing times. Police Chief Steven Dye emphasized that public safety remains the City's top priority. He reported that six shots were fired on Washington Avenue after patrons left a downtown bar the previous weekend and that two shell casings had been recovered from a separate incident on Bowen Avenue the weekend before. Chief Dye stated that

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the Police Department has increased its presence downtown and will continue heightened patrols throughout the holiday weekend. Based on a review of recent data, he noted that criminal and violent activity tends to increase after 2:00 a.m. Following his remarks, Alderman Hinton reiterated that the measures adopted were temporary in nature, intended only to address immediate concerns over the holiday weekend, and not a long-term solution.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis and seconded by Alderman Messenger to adopt the Proclamation and Order restricting alcoholic beverage sales and requiring earlier closing times for retailers of alcoholic beverages. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

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

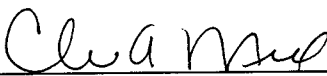
Nay: Alderman Pfeiffer

Absent: Alderman Tillis

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

The meeting ended at 5:50 p.m.


Mayor


City Clerk





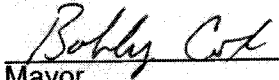
**Mayor & Board of Aldermen
SPECIAL CALL MEETING**

Tuesday, August 26, 2025 @ 5:30 PM

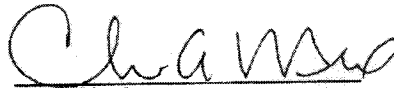
Location: City Hall Boardroom - 1018 Porter Avenue - Ocean Springs, MS 39564

The object of the meeting will be any matters pertaining to:

1. Plan of Action to Ensure Public Safety through the Labor Day Weekend



Mayor



City Clerk

AUGUST 26, 2025 - PROCLAMATION AND ORDER

CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI

SECTION I

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN of the City of Ocean Springs pursuant to Mississippi Code Section 33-15-17, that the City hereby adopts the following additional emergency measures that shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until further action is taken by the governmental authority of the City of Ocean Springs, to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

WHEREAS, the City is concerned for the health, safety, and welfare of the City's citizens arising from recent episodes of violence. **A BALANCING OF PUBLIC INTERESTS** has been considered here. In normal times, tourism and entertainment dollars are an economic and social asset to the City. Although permitted businesses in the nature of restaurants, social clubs, event centers, and bars provide such economic and social benefits to the City; these are outweighed significantly by the risk of bodily harm, property damage, or death and the potential for civil disturbances arising from acts of violence.

WHEREAS, the City has determined that recent incidents of violence, including the use of firearms in the City and County, constitutes a "man-made emergency" pursuant to Mississippi Code Section 33-15-5.

WHEREAS, the City has determined that recent incidents of violence, including the use of firearms in the City, are connected to the sale and service of alcoholic beverages, and

WHEREAS, the City now proclaims that in order to protect life and property, the following orders and regulations are reasonable and necessary to address the local emergency of violence occurring in the City as set forth herein:

In order to protect the health and safety of the Citizens of Ocean Springs, appropriate actions to promote proper public safety, prevent acts of violence, and enforce the laws of the State of Mississippi, shall include the following:

- A. This Proclamation and Order shall apply to all permitted businesses in the City of Ocean Springs to include Restaurants, Bars, Social Clubs, and Event Centers.
- B. Capacity shall be determined by the fire code rating for the premises.
- C. Alcoholic beverage sales will end at 1:30 A.M. on Saturday and/or 1:30 A.M. on Sunday, and/or 1:30 A.M. Monday.
- D. A strict closing time for retailers of alcoholic beverages of 2:00 A.M. Saturday and/or 2:00 A.M. Sunday and/or 2:00 A.M. Monday shall be maintained.

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- E. Restaurants, Bars, Social Clubs, and Event Centers may resume the sale of alcoholic beverages as early as 7:00 A.M. Saturday or 7:00 A.M. Sunday or 7:00 A.M. Monday.
- F. This Order does not prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages by a business which does not generally allow consumption of said alcoholic beverage on their premises, like grocery stores or convenience stores.
- G. This Order has no effect upon the operation of permitted businesses for “weekday” operations from 7:00 A.M. Monday for each day through the end of the sale of alcohol at 1:30 A.M. Saturday and the closing time of 2:00 A.M. Saturday, as set in parts C, D, and E of this Order.

BE FURTHER ADVISED, that the Board of Aldermen of the City shall review and approve or disapprove the need for continuing these emergency measures at least every thirty (30) days until such local emergency is terminated and shall proclaim the termination of such local emergency at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant.

SECTION II

ENFORCEMENT of this Order shall be via issuance of citations to the person in charge of the event on the premises at the time of occurrence AND the owner of the premises. **EACH PERSON ON THE PREMISES** at the time of the violation shall be deemed a separate violation. **CITATIONS** shall be answerable to the City of Ocean Springs Municipal Court. **VIOLATIONS** of this Order shall be a misdemeanor. **PENALTIES** for violations shall be punishable by a fine not exceeding Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per violation as provided by Mississippi Code Section 33-15-43 or imprisonment for not exceeding six (6) months or both.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED by this Board of Aldermen that copies of this Order shall be forwarded to the following:

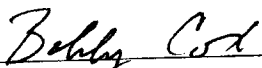
1. Honorable Tate Reeves
Governor of the State of Mississippi
20th Floor, Walter Sillers Building
P.O. Box 139
Jackson, MS 39205

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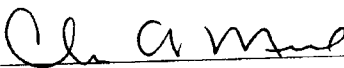
2. Director, Plans and Operations Division
Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
1410 Riverside Drive
Jackson, MS 39206
FAX# 352-8314

3. Jackson County Emergency Management
600 Convent Avenue
Pascagoula, MS 39567

Alderman Hinton	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Tillis	<u>Absent</u>
Alderman Stennis	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Wade	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Pfeiffer	<u>Nay</u>
Alderman Blackman	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Messenger	<u>Aye</u>



Bobby Cox
Mayor of the City of Ocean Springs, MS



Attest: Christine Millard
City Clerk, City of Ocean Springs, MS