

**City of Ocean Springs Board of Aldermen
Special Call Work Session November 20, 2025 - Minutes**

Be it remembered that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs met in a Special Work Session in the Boardroom at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. on November 20, 2025. A public notice stating the place, date, time, and subject matter of the work session 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. Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, Wade, Hinton, Pfeiffer, Blackman, and Messenger were present. Alderman Pfeiffer left the meeting at 5:44 p.m., and Alderman Messenger arrived at 5:47 p.m. City Attorney David Harris, Jr., City Clerk/Finance Director Christine Millard, Planning Director Amanda Crose, Building Official Darrell Stringfellow, and Executive Administrator & Public Affairs Officer Laurri Garcia were also present.

The Mayor called the Work Session to order.

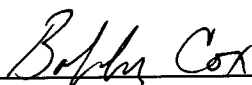
The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a Tree Canopy Committee. The Building Official reviewed the current process for evaluating tree-removal applications and explained procedures that had been followed when a committee was previously in place.

The Board discussed their overall vision for the committee, including its purpose, composition, membership, and terms. Discussion included balancing property-owner rights with the goal of preserving the tree canopy in Ocean Springs. The Board also discussed establishing a mitigation fund with defined tree-replacement ratios and priority planting areas, as well as fines and the appropriate timing for required replanting.

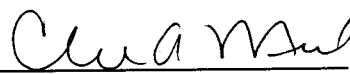
The composition of the committee was considered, including whether it should function as a subcommittee of the Planning Commission or whether the Planning Commission itself should hear tree-related matters as part of its regular agenda. The Planning Director recommended incorporating the work into the Planning Commission to avoid creating an additional meeting and added workload for staff. She also mentioned the possibility of requiring a tree survey during the preliminary plat stage for new developments.

Alderman Hinton volunteered to draft new guidelines with the Planning Commission serving in this role and with tree-mitigation matters added to their agenda. Under the proposed process, applications would continue to begin with the Building Official, include a \$300 mitigation option, and be approved or denied by the Board of Aldermen, after which the matter would go to the Planning Commission to verify completion of mitigation payments or required plantings.

No official action was taken during the Work Session. The meeting ended at 6:29 p.m.


Mayor Cox




City Clerk C. Millard



Mayor & Board of Aldermen WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 20, 2025 @ 5:30 PM

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

This is a Work Session Only - No Official Action will be Taken.

1. Tree Canopy Committee Formation Workshop