

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - 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 April 21, 2026. Mayor Cox presided, and Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, Wade, Hinton, Pfeiffer, Blackman, and Messenger were present.

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, Planning Director Amanda Crose, Parks & Recreation Director Stephen Glorioso, Project Manager Sarah Harris, and Executive Administrator & Public Affairs Officer Laurri Garcia were also present.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Parks & Recreation Director gave the invocation and Alderman Hinton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

a. PROCLAMATION: National Day of Prayer — May 7, 2026

The Mayor proclaimed May 7, 2026, as the National Day of Prayer in Ocean Springs. Ginger Magruder, Tammy Harmon, Rebeca Tyndal, and students with Hounds for Christ were present and accepted the proclamation.

b. PROCLAMATION: In Celebration of National Junior Auxiliary Week

The Mayor proclaimed April 6–10, 2026, as National Junior Auxiliary Week in Ocean Springs. Breanna Delagrave, Public Relations and Technology Chair, and Shelly Laughlin, Vice President, were present and accepted the proclamation.

c. PRESENTATION: JCUA - Update Report

Eric Page, Executive Director of JCUA, and Jerry Munro, Ocean Springs JCUA Representative, presented a PowerPoint providing a high-level overview of regional water and sewer utilities. The presentation included discussion of wastewater system challenges such as inflow and infiltration, infrastructure maintenance efforts, population growth trends,

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

and ongoing capital improvement needs. The presenters also discussed how targeted infrastructure improvements, including manhole lining and pipeline lining and repair projects completed between 2012 and 2019, have contributed to improved system performance. It was noted that these efforts have helped reduce sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) reports over time, although continued maintenance and improvements remain necessary.

d. PRESENTATION: 2025-2026 Mayor's Youth Council

Francisco Valentine, MYC President, presented an update on the Mayor's Youth Council. He stated that the organization consists of approximately 30 Ocean Springs High School juniors and seniors who meet twice per month. He discussed the group's goals of bridging the gap between youth and the City, volunteering at City events, and completing small group service projects. He noted that the MYC has completed 12 service projects and hosts events for students, including Grads on the Green.

Mr. Valentine presented Amber Carter, MYC Sponsor, with a letter of appreciation for her service and thanked the Mayor and Mrs. Lori Cox for their support.

AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Liz Elmore, agenda item 5-a, spoke as President of OSPREYS (Ocean Springs Pedestrians and Residents for Exercise and Youth Safety) in support of a work session for the Bicycle Safety Plan.

Ed Trehern, agenda item 5-a, spoke in favor of the work session and suggested the development of an Ocean Springs bike tour map.

James Lewis, agenda item 5-a, spoke in favor of a work session focused on regulations and enforcement. He stated that education is key and requested that HOA representatives be included in the discussion.

Drew Davey, agenda item 5-a, an emergency room physician and parent, spoke in favor of implementing the Bicycle Safety Plan.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion of Scheduling a Work Session for Bicycle Safety Plan

Alderman Pfeiffer discussed the need to schedule a work session to review the 2018 Bicycle Safety Plan developed by Jackson County and to consider potential updates. She stated that the discussion should include infrastructure connectivity throughout the City, as well as e-bike regulations and public education. She requested that key staff be present, including the Police Chief, Planning Department, and other relevant City staff. She also suggested inviting community stakeholders and subject matter experts, including

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

representatives from OSPREYS, the Ocean Springs School District Police Chief, Heritage Trails of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and Bike Walk Mississippi, who have expressed support.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion of Public Records Requests Process and Associated Fees

Alderman Messenger stated that she was contacted by a citizen regarding the fee schedule for public records requests and concerns about response times. She emphasized the importance of making records accessible to the public.

The City Clerk reviewed the City's public records request process and procedures, including guidance on how to search for commonly requested records on the City's website. The City Clerk explained that responses to public records requests consist of providing existing documents and that the City does not create new records or compile data in response to a request. She further stated that fees are based on the time required to fulfill the request and that certain requests, such as email searches, may require the use of an outside vendor with associated costs set by that provider.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda, with the exception of items 7-a, 7-b, 7-c, 7-y, 7-z, and 7-aa, which were pulled by Alderman Tillis.

Alderman Tillis expressed concern regarding the frequency of waived rental fees. He requested a review of lease and rental agreement policies to ensure that an administrative fee is charged even when rental fees are waived. He also emphasized the importance of verifying that security requirements are properly enforced and followed.

Mayor:

- a. Authorize and waive all associated fees for St. Alphonsus to set up their annual fundraiser at the Civic Center on Thursday, April 23, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City**

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to authorize and waive rental fees for St. Alphonsus to set up their annual fundraiser at the Civic Center on Thursday, April 23, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City.

- b. Authorize and waive all associated fees for the Ocean Springs School District to host an academic celebration for the 7th graders at Fort Maurepas on May 1, 2026, from 8:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City**

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to authorize and waive rental fees for the Ocean Springs School District to host an academic celebration for the 7th graders at Fort Maurepas on May 1, 2026, from 8:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City.

- c. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for Mosaic Church Family Fun Night on June 11, 2026, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., setup time is 2:30 p.m. with tear down at 8:45 p.m. at Fort Maurepas/Fort Maurepas Stage/Front Beach, at no cost to the City; the applicant pays the associated event cost

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to approve the Special Event Permit Application for Mosaic Church Family Fun Night on June 11, 2026, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., setup time is 2:30 p.m. with tear down at 8:45 p.m. at Fort Maurepas/Fort Maurepas Stage/Front Beach, at no cost to the City; the applicant pays the associated event cost.

- d. Authorize the Mayor to execute the 2026 Cruisin' the Coast Venue Proposal and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the event scheduled for October 8–10, 2026

City Clerk:

- e. Approve Minutes: Special Call Meeting April 2, 2026
- f. Approve Minutes: Regular Meeting April 7, 2026

Police Department:

- g. Accept OSPD Monthly Report for March 2026

Fire Department:

- h. Accept OSFD Monthly Report for March 2026

Human Resources/Risk Management:

- i. Accept the resignation of Civil Service Commissioner Kevin Westbrook, effective March 17, 2026; authorize advertisement of the vacancy
- j. Authorize removing Police Deputy Chief Matthew Morvant from probationary status to full time status, effective immediately
- k. Accept resignation of Animal Control Officer Ronnie Ryan, effective April 17, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- l. Accept resignation of Fire Captain Samantha Guthrie effective April 22, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- m. Authorize promotion of Firefighter Joshua Brown to Captain, effective April 25, 2026; \$18.64 hourly rate; six months probationary status
- n. Authorize employment of Alex Torres, Firefighter, effective May 7, 2026; \$14.05 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

employment requirements

Planning Commission (PC):

- o. Accept PC Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2026
- p. Approve the request for Final Plat of Madison Place Phase 2A Subdivision - PIDN: 60124060.000; PC recommends approval
- q. Deny a request for a lot split at 605 Ward Ave - PIDN: 60130250.000; PC recommends denial

Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB):

- r. Accept ZAB Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2026

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):

- s. Accept HPC Meeting Minutes for March 12, 2026
- t. Approve a request for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to remove the existing fence and construct a 4' tall white vinyl picket fence in the same exact location as the existing fence at 921 Ocean Ave & 309 Washington Ave - PIDN: 60137394.000 & 60137392.000; HPC recommends approval

Grants Administration:

- u. Authorization to Execute Change Order #1 for the Lift Station Improvements Related to the ARPA/MCWI Downtown Sewer Improvement Project – 455-1- CW-5.5 – Jumeaux, Inc. to deduct \$6.62

Building Department:

- v. Accept the Building Department Permit Report for March 2026
- w. Accept Code Enforcement Report through April 15, 2026
- x. Approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through April 15, 2026

Parks & Recreation Department:

- y. Approve facility use agreement for YMCA use of Taconi Basketball Gym for Adult Basketball from April 19, 2026 — May 31, 2026

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Messenger, and unanimously carried to approve facility use agreement for YMCA use of Taconi Basketball Gym for Adult Basketball from April 19, 2026 — May 31, 2026.

- z. Approve a facility use agreement for YMCA Summer Programs use of Taconi Gym starting Wednesday, June 3rd, from 1pm to 4 pm and continuing every Wednesday until July 29, 2026

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to approve a facility use agreement for YMCA Summer Programs use of Taconi Gym starting Wednesday, June 3rd, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and continuing every

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

Wednesday until July 29, 2026.

- aa. Authorize and waive all associated fees for the Dale Brown Sports Academy to use the Taconi Basketball Gym on June 26, 27, and 28, 2026, to advertise the resources of the City

A motion was made by Alderman Tillis, seconded by Alderman Blackman, and unanimously carried to authorize and waive rental fees for the Dale Brown Sports Academy to use the Taconi Basketball Gym on June 26, 27, and 28, 2026, to advertise the resources of the City.

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 Stennis, 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

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, 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.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Albert Diaz requested that, prior to the issuance of permits for development off Ocean Springs Road, the public notice from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding wetlands be reviewed. He stated that there is no proposal for water runoff mitigation and that the site includes nine endangered species.

Ralph Humphrey, representing MGFB.org (Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks), stated that reef balls were donated by the City for FH10. He said coordinates will be provided once the reef is placed and that it will be named the "City of Discovery Reef."

MAYOR AND ALDERMEN'S FORUM

Alderman Tillis requested that the City Attorney prepare a downtown parking ordinance

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

addressing golf cart parking regulations and enforcement. He also stated that the Reynolds property needs to be cleaned. The Mayor responded that the fence is being replaced and Public Works will cut the grass, noting that complaints were received after the last cutting. Alderman Tillis requested an update on the Fayard property. The Project Manager stated that once water quality approval is received, the project can proceed to bid. Alderman Tillis also requested that when Public Works does not collect debris due to the type of material, a notice be left for the resident to reduce inquiries to aldermen.

Alderman Stennis thanked Public Works for installing speed limit signs on Russell Avenue and stated that she has also received calls regarding debris pickup. She raised concerns about parking garage minutes from May 17, 2022, noting that signed documents from 2023 were included and requested that they be corrected. The City Clerk explained that the prior practice was to include signed documents with the minutes once received to maintain a complete record. She stated that she has contacted Dr. Jason Camp regarding a revised process, and he recommended placing executed documents on a subsequent agenda for formal acceptance.

Alderman Wade thanked Public Works for cleaning the easement on Woody Circle and requested that Kensington Avenue be cut.

Alderman Pfeiffer asked about the status of the USM Research Lab boat launch agreement. The Mayor stated that it is still being worked on. She also requested an update on Covington Engineering. The Mayor responded that the City is awaiting information from MDEQ. Alderman Pfeiffer further discussed the design review committee requirements within the Unified Development Code (UDC), noting that the City is not currently in compliance with the requirement for three resident members. The Planning Director explained that applications are reviewed by departments and outside engineers under established design review guidelines, which include a point-based system. She stated that the process involves multiple reviews and that the City has been operating as a staff-based review group rather than a formal committee to avoid delays. She further noted that similar processes in other coastal cities do not include resident members.

Alderman Blackman stated that he received a compliment regarding Police Chief Dye and Deputy Chief Morvant for their assistance during an active shooting incident at the Jackson County Courthouse. A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to include the executed location agreement approved on April 2, 2026, with the production company for Marshall Park as an attachment to the minutes.

Alderman Messenger thanked those who assisted with the cleanup of Ocean Springs Road. She asked Public Works about the status of drainage projects in Ward 6. The Public Works Director stated that most materials have been received, and work will begin once remaining materials arrive.

Alderman Hinton requested an update on the Porter Avenue water line replacement. The Project Manager stated that work has begun behind the well and includes reconfiguration of piping. She noted that exploratory work will follow and that no completion date has been

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2026 - MINUTES**

determined. Alderman Hinton also asked about paving on Russell Avenue. The Project Manager stated that the water line will tie into Russell Avenue and paving will occur once that work is complete. Alderman Hinton agreed that a golf cart parking ordinance should be addressed and thanked City staff for their work.

The Mayor thanked City staff for their hard work and dedication. He stated that the Porter Avenue project will be a significant improvement. He also noted that the Capital Group will provide a report on state funding received and will pursue federal funding opportunities for projects that did not receive state funding.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

The City Clerk returned to the meeting and announced that a motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to go into executive session to discuss the leasing of land and litigation in the matter of City of Ocean Springs vs. Garriga, as an open discussion would be detrimental to the litigating position of the City.

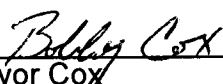
A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to come out of executive session, where the following action was taken:

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Tillis, and unanimously carried to approve the substitution of counsel, David Harris, City Attorney, in the matter of City of Ocean Springs vs. Garriga.


ADJOURN UNTIL 6:00 P.M. on MAY 5, 2026

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

The meeting ended at 8:25 p.m.



Mayor Cox



City Clerk C. Millard

