

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - 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 May 5, 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 Assistant Director Stephen Farnsworth, Planning Director Amanda Crose, 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 of First Baptist Church gave the invocation, and Alderman Wade led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor added an update presentation from The Capitol Group to the agenda.

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

PROCLAMATION/PRESENTATION

a. PROCLAMATION: MS Gulf Coast Innovation Week – May 18-22, 2026

Jamie Miller, President and CEO of the Gulf Coast Business Council, accepted the proclamation from the Mayor proclaiming May 18–22, 2026, as Mississippi Gulf Coast Innovation Week.

b. ADDED: PRESENTATION - Update from the Capital Group

Delayed Presentation until after Agenda Public Comment Section.

Haley Martin with The Capitol Group gave an update presentation to the Board regarding the 2026 Legislative Session and funding opportunities for the City. The presentation included discussion of recently appropriated and reappropriated funds, legislative priorities, infrastructure and utility projects, and upcoming funding application timelines. It was reported that the City received approximately \$9.25 million in newly appropriated funds, including approximately \$5 million in GOMESA funding, \$2.75 million in CAPEX funding, \$500,000 in Tidelands funding, and \$1 million in DFA funding. The presentation also noted that the City received more than \$10.6 million in

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

reappropriated funds.

PUBLIC HEARING

- a. Requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the use of an existing cottage as an art house and retail space for the Ocean Springs Art Association at 801 Porter Ave - PIDN: 60137010.000; PC recommends approval

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to open the public hearing.

The Planning Director explained that the applicant, Julia Weaver with St. John's Episcopal Church, described the proposal as a small-scale art house and artist cooperative providing a venue for local artists to display and sell artwork. She stated that no late-night activity or sale of food or alcohol is proposed. The Planning Director further stated that no one spoke in opposition at the Planning Commission meeting and that the Planning Commission recommended approval.

Aldermen Tillis and Pfeiffer expressed support for the request.

Barbie Beatty, President of the Ocean Springs Art Association, spoke in favor of approval.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to close the public hearing.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Messenger, and unanimously carried to approve the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the use of an existing cottage as an art house and retail space for the Ocean Springs Art Association at 801 Porter Avenue – PIDN: 60137010.000.

AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Dee Wichman, agenda item 6-d, spoke against increasing the number of short-term rentals and expressed concern regarding the limited availability of long-term rental housing.

Bill Betterton, agenda item 6-d, spoke against short-term rentals. Regarding agenda item 6-a, he requested that the Board delay consideration of the proposed golf cart parking ordinance and review golf cart speed limits. He also stated that there is no designated handicap or veteran parking on Government Street and expressed concern that the proposed parking violation fee is excessive.

James Lewis, agenda item 6-c, stated that he believed the reference to the May 17, 2022, minutes may have contained a typographical error in the date.

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance Introduction: Designated Parking for Motor Vehicles and Golf Carts and Low-Speed Vehicles

Alderman Tillis stated that he worked with the City Attorney to develop a proposed downtown parking ordinance addressing designated parking for motor vehicles, golf carts, and low-speed vehicles.

The City Attorney explained that Section 14-50 of the City Code is currently a reserved section and that the proposed ordinance would add the new parking regulations to that section. He stated that the ordinance definitions were derived from Chapter 14 of the City Code and Mississippi Code Section 63-3-103. He further explained that Mississippi law does not specifically define golf carts, but the Ocean Springs Code of Ordinances does. The proposed ordinance generally provides that golf carts and low-speed vehicles park in designated golf cart parking spaces and motor vehicles park in designated motor vehicle spaces, while motorcycles may park in either type of space. He also noted that the draft ordinance includes a map identifying designated parking areas on Government Street between Cash Alley and Russell Avenue. Regarding enforcement, the City Attorney stated that the proposed \$200 fine was intended as a placeholder and that discussions with the Police Department indicated that escalating fines may be difficult to enforce.

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that she would like the purpose of the ordinance more clearly stated in the ordinance language to improve legal defensibility and justification, including references to traffic safety, efficient use of limited downtown parking, and the safe integration of motor vehicles, golf carts, and low-speed vehicles within designated areas. She also expressed concern that the proposed \$200 fine is excessive.

ADA parking accommodations were discussed. It was noted that handicap parking is available at the Fallo-Pleasant Municipal Parking Lot off Government Street and that there is insufficient room for an ADA street parking space in the affected area. The Project Manager stated that the proposed layout includes nine motor vehicle parking spaces and twenty-three golf cart parking spaces, with the golf cart spaces added due to the narrow roadway width.

During discussion, it was agreed that the ordinance would be revised so that penalties would be governed by the City's adopted fee schedule rather than a fixed amount within the ordinance. It was noted that the current fee schedule lists "Parking Violation – Other" as a \$60 fine, and that adjustments could be considered later if necessary. Discussion also included that, if adopted unanimously, the ordinance could become effective immediately due to public safety considerations.

- b. Appoint Civil Service Commissioner

The Deputy City Clerk tallied the votes for Civil Service Commissioner. A motion was

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

made by Alderman Messenger, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to appoint Jim Thompson to the Civil Service Commission to fill the unexpired term ending September 30, 2029.

c. Review of May 17, 2022 Minutes

Alderman Stennis began the discussion by making a motion to amend the minutes of the May 17, 2022 Board meeting to reflect the agreements authorized by the Board and executed by the parties in 2022. The motion was seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer.

During discussion, Alderman Stennis stated that the minutes had been changed without Board approval. She stated that both Phase I and Phase II GCRF agreements were drafted in January 2022 and that on May 17, 2022, the Board authorized the Mayor to execute those agreements. She further stated that the agreements were signed and notarized in August 2022, but that the current minutes packet contains amended GCRF agreements from July 2023 instead of the 2022 agreements. Alderman Stennis stated that she had copies of the executed 2022 agreements and argued that the minutes packet should reflect the 2022 agreements rather than the amended 2023 agreements, which she stated would require separate Board approval.

The City Attorney stated that the matter was ongoing when he became City Attorney in 2025 and that an investigation had been conducted. He stated that MDA drafted the agreements and transmitted them for execution. He further stated that his understanding is that the 2022 agreements never became effective with MDA and that the 2023 amended agreements are the operative agreements with MDA. The City Attorney stated that there is no legal authority for a current Board to amend the minutes of a prior Board. He referenced the 1998 Mississippi Supreme Court case *Stockstill v. Hales*, stating that amendments to prior minutes would require notice to parties whose rights may be affected, including MDA and OHOS, and a public hearing. He further stated that amendments to minutes cannot be used as a collateral attack on a prior Board action and that, if challenged, the minutes would stand as currently approved.

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that she was not aware of any law prohibiting amendment of prior minutes and expressed concern that the issue was being presented as a fear tactic. She stated her belief that the 2022 documents related to ownership while the 2023 documents related to a lease agreement. The City Attorney disagreed and stated that the 2022 agreements did not convey ownership. He further stated that the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding referenced a lease arrangement and that the document was included with both the 2022 and 2023 agreements.

The motion failed with Aldermen Stennis and Pfeiffer voting aye and Aldermen Tillis, Wade, Blackman, Messenger, and Hinton voting nay.

d. Discussion of Short-Term Rental Review and Moratorium

Alderman Hinton recused himself from the discussion and left the Boardroom at 7:24 p.m. Alderman Stennis stated that she no longer manages a short-term rental and

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

therefore would no longer recuse herself from related discussions.

Alderman Blackman left the meeting at 7:25 p.m. and did not return.

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that the current short-term rental moratorium is set to expire on August 18, 2026, and requested a review of the current process for applications and approvals.

The Planning Director explained that the Residential Short-Term Rental density zone will be capped at 55 permits following approval of one pending application, and that the citywide cap of 60 permits currently has three openings available with six applicants on the waiting list. She further stated that staff is evaluating a rental management module through iWorQ, which the City already uses for permits and work orders, to better track short-term rental activity.

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that under the current process, applications are reviewed by the Planning Commission and then forwarded to the Board of Aldermen for approval, after which inspections are conducted by the City. She expressed concern that when an applicant fails the initial inspection, there is currently no established timeline or limitation for reinspection, and stated that the issue should be addressed.

Alderman Messenger asked whether permit rates should be increased to offset the cost of the proposed software module. Alderman Tillis suggested a fee of \$600.00.

Alderman Hinton returned to the Boardroom at 7:34 p.m. following the discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Property insurance renewal update - Scott Lemon

Scott Lemon with Lemon-Mohler Insurance gave an update regarding the City's property, auto, Parks & Recreation, and liability insurance renewals. He stated that the City currently has approximately \$48 million in building values with a current wind coverage limit of \$10 million and that he is working to increase coverage while reducing costs. He further stated that the new Public Works buildings, once completed, will add approximately \$8 million in building value. Mr. Lemon stated that the City has added a significant number of vehicles in recent years but noted that the City experienced a two-year period without a vehicle accident claim. He also discussed the possibility of changing the childcare insurance coverage to Philadelphia Insurance, which he stated would provide greater coverage at a lower cost. Mr. Lemon stated that he expects to provide a final recommendation at the May recess meeting.

b. Adopt Resolution – Application for FY27-30 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Funding – Multimodal Improvements – GREYHOUND WAY WIDENING

The Mayor explained that the item was for authorization to apply for FY27–30 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) funding and that, if awarded, the matter would

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

return to the Board of Aldermen in the fall for approval. He stated that the grant requires a local match of approximately \$700,000. The Mayor further explained that the Greyhound Way widening project was originally initiated by Jackson County to improve roadway access for the school and surrounding subdivisions and that the roadway also serves as an evacuation route. He stated that, following annexation, the City's responsibility would extend from Old Spanish Trail to Fontainebleau Road.

Alderman Messenger expressed concern that the need for the project is being driven by increased development in the area and stated that she does not want taxpayers to bear the cost of infrastructure improvements benefiting developers. Alderman Hinton stated that there have been discussions regarding the County potentially constructing an overpass in the area. Alderman Messenger also asked about the possibility of imposing impact fees on developers. The Mayor responded that the City had previously attempted to impose such fees but was later required to refund them.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Tillis, to adopt Resolution 2026-014 authorizing submission of an application for FY27–30 TIP funding for the Greyhound Way widening project. The motion carried with a vote as follows:

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

Nay: Alderman Pfeiffer, Alderman Messenger

c. Adopt Resolution – Application for FY27-30 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Funding – Multimodal Improvements – OLD CCC CAMP ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, PHASE I

The Mayor again stated that the item was for authorization to apply for FY27–30 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) funding and that the matter would return to the Board of Aldermen for approval if funding is awarded. He explained that the project is located in Ward 6 and that there is insufficient right-of-way to construct sidewalks. He stated that the proposed project would include piping ditches and widening Old CCC Camp Road due to the roadway's current width limitations.

A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Hinton, to adopt Resolution 2026-015 authorizing submission of an application for FY27–30 TIP funding for Old CCC Camp Road Improvements, Phase I. The motion carried with a vote as follows:

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

Nay: None

d. Adopt Resolution – Application for FY27-30 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Funding – Bike / Pedestrian Improvements – GOVERNMENT STREET SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

The Mayor stated that the proposed project would include Government Street from Bechtel Boulevard to Ocean Springs Road. He further stated that, following discussion earlier in the day, staff would like to extend the project to Beverly Drive in an effort to eliminate the Hawk light system. The Mayor explained that the project would consist of

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

a multipurpose pathway.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Wade, to adopt Resolution 2026-016 authorizing submission of an application for FY27–30 TIP funding for Government Street Sidewalk Improvements. 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

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 item 8-b pulled by Alderman Pfeiffer, item 8-f pulled by Alderman Wade, and item 8-gg pulled by Alderman Messenger.

Mayor/BOA:

- a. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for Taco Fest on May 9, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., at Fort Maurepas, City may incur overtime and additional costs for the event
- b. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for Singing River Health System — Hospital Week Volleyball Tournament on May 13, 2026, from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at Fort Maurepas, at no cost to the City, the applicant pays the associated event cost

Alderman Messenger recused herself from the vote and left the Boardroom at 7:50 p.m.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to approve the Special Event Permit Application for the Singing River Health System Hospital Week Volleyball Tournament on May 13, 2026, from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Fort Maurepas, at no cost to the City, with the applicant responsible for all associated event costs.

- c. Approve the Special Event Application for Fridays at the Fort on May 29, 2026, June 26, 2026, July 24, 2026, August 28, 2026, and September 25, 2026, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., at Fort Maurepas, and authorize necessary related overtime expenses to ensure public safety and event operations
- d. Approve the Run, Walk, Permit Application for the Wesson Memorial 2 Mile Run/Walk on July 4, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., on Pine Ave, begins and ends at the YMCA, at no cost to the City, the applicant pays the associated event cost
- e. Approve the 2026 Cruisin' the Coast Special Event Application for October 8, 2026 (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m), October 9, 2026 (7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.), October 10, 2026 (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) and authorize necessary downtown road

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

closures and related overtime expenses to ensure public safety and event operations

- f. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for the 48th annual Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival on November 7-8, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., in Downtown Ocean Springs; authorize to waive special event permit fee; authorize street closures; Washington Avenue (Railroad to Josephine Street) Government Street (Washington Ave. to Magnolia Ave.) Porter Ave. (Jackson Ave. to City Hall); city sponsorship; to advertise resources of the City, there will be overtime costs to the City

Alderman Messenger returned to the Boardroom at 7:51 p.m.

Alderman Wade stated that the Washington Avenue road closure street names need to be corrected. A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to approve the Special Event Permit Application for the 48th Annual Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival on November 7–8, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in downtown Ocean Springs; authorize waiver of the special event permit fee; authorize street closures on Washington Avenue from Robinson Street to Joseph Street, Government Street from Washington Avenue to Magnolia Avenue, and Porter Avenue from Jackson Avenue to City Hall; authorize City sponsorship for the purpose of advertising City resources; and acknowledge that there will be overtime costs to the City.

- g. Approve the Casino Bridge Run, Walk, Bike Permit Application for April 3, 2027, from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., starting and ending in Biloxi, over OS/Biloxi Bridge, Front Beach, Washington, Porter & back over OS/Biloxi Bridge, at no cost to the City, the applicant pays the associated event cost
- h. Approve the Run, Walk, Bike Permit Application for the Harley Half Marathon on April 4, 2027, from 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., at Front Beach - Ocean Springs/Biloxi Bridge, at no cost to the City; the applicant pays the associated event cost

Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center:

- i. Authorize the Mayor and the Mary C. O'Keefe Center Director to execute the MOU's with Quantis Lane, Whitney Ivey, and Sagnite Castro

City Clerk:

- j. Approve Minutes: Work Session Meeting April 15, 2026
- k. Accept April 2026 Aged Receivables Report
- l. Ratify check 135982 to Renasant Bank for money order to purchase a replacement title for a Public Works vehicle

Fire Department:

- m. Authorize acceptance of the StairMaster 4000 donation from Mrs. Deb Platt and approve placement into Fire Station One inventory

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

Human Resources/Risk Management:

- n. Authorize out-of-state travel for Human Resources & Risk Management Director Mindy McDowell to attend the 2026 Phelps Labor & Employment Seminar in New Orleans on June 10–12, 2026
- o. Authorize the transfer of Planning Technician Elizabeth Dill to Administrative/Purchasing Assistant in the Finance Department, at the same hourly rate, effective May 6, 2026, six-month probationary period; and authorize beginning the process of filling the vacant position
- p. Authorize employment of Alyssa Fredericksen, Patrolman, effective May 6, 2026; \$22.50 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- q. Authorize employment of Levi Rainbolt, Patrolman, effective May 11, 2026; \$22.50 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- r. Accept resignation of Police Sergeant Charles ‘Trey’ Smith effective May 15, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- s. Accept resignation of Dispatcher Desiree Lewis, effective April 22, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- t. Authorize removing Deputy Fire Chief Sam Guin from probationary status to full time status, effective May 5, 2026
- u. Authorize removing Fire Training Chief Lionel Cothorn from probationary status to full time status, effective May 5, 2026
- v. Accept resignation of Parks Grounds Maintenance Timothy Lawson, effective April 24, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- w. Accept resignation of Parks Grounds Maintenance Milton Bourg effective May 15, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- x. Accept retirement of Beautification Supervisor Mike Hale effective April 30, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position

Planning Department:

- y. Approve UDC Committee Meeting Minutes for January 22, 2026

Planning Commission (PC):

- z. Approve the request for a Residential Short-Term Rental Permit at 808 Desoto Street #1 - PIDN: 60119106.000; PC recommends approval
- aa. Approve the request for a Residential Short-Term Rental Permit at 703 Twin Oaks Drive - PIDN: 61105016.000; PC recommends approval
- bb. Approve the request for a Residential Short-Term Rental Permit at 310 Dewey Ave - PIDN: 60137352.000; PC recommends approval

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

- cc. Approve the request for a Residential Short-Term Rental at 2401 Davidson Road - PIDN: 61420016.050; PC recommends approval

Grants Administration:

- dd. Authorize to Advertise the Deana Road Improvement Project Funded through State Appropriations and Modernization Act Proceeds
- ee. Authorize to Advertise the Construction of Concrete Bases (2) for the Gateway Sculptures – Funded by Gulf Coast Restoration Fund (GCRF)

Building Department:

- ff. Accept Code Enforcement Report through April 30, 2026
- gg. Approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through April 28, 2026

Alderman Messenger questioned the requested removal of the tree at 5496 Chalone Place, stating that the photographs provided with the application did not appear to show the tree as uprooted or leaning as described in the application. The Building Official responded that his recommendation was to approve removal of the leaning live oak tree, which he stated is diseased and dying, along with up to a 20% trimming of three additional live oak trees.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through April 28, 2026.

Parks & Recreation Department:

- hh. Accept Parks Advisory Board Minutes April 22, 2026
- ii. Authorize and waive rental fees for the Ocean Springs High School and Ocean Springs Middle School Track banquet at the Civic Center on May 13, 2026, and May 14, 2026 from 6:00 p.m. -10:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City

Public Works:

- jj. Authorize contribution of up to 25% municipal pro-rata share for the 2026 Jackson County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day (HHWD) event and provide at least four employees to work the six-hour event on May 9, 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 Hinton, 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.

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

b. City Clerk: Accept the Monthly Budget Report

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

James Lewis discussed Board of Aldermen transparency and accountability and stated that he believes certain meeting minutes are inaccurate and should be corrected. He referenced Robert's Rules of Order and also stated that a sidewalk on School Street is still needed.

Brian Rose discussed the 1515 Government Street parking garage matter, stating that the issue began in October 2025 when the Board was presented with a lease agreement and previously approved Memorandum of Understanding documents. He alleged that documents had been altered from those previously approved by the Board and that a signature page had been attached to a different document. He further stated that the agreement would have required the City to pay insurance-related costs. Mr. Rose stated that documents should not be deleted when amendments are made. He also stated that he received signed 2022 agreements through a public records request submitted in November 2025, but that a subsequent request in 2026 produced 2023 agreements, and he was later informed that the 2022 agreements did not exist.

MAYOR AND ALDERMEN'S FORUM

Alderman Tillis discussed several ongoing City initiatives, including development of a new Public Works inventory management system intended to improve accountability, efficiency, and cost control. He thanked Chief Fitch and the Fire Department for their response to the fire at Wasabi Restaurant. He also discussed ongoing work with the Mayor, Alderman Hinton, and the City Attorney on a new downtown parking ordinance for Ward 2 and a proposed tree management system with certified arborist oversight to better protect the City's live oak trees. Alderman Tillis additionally stated that efforts are underway to update rental agreements across multiple departments and properties. He encouraged cooperation among Board members and citizens to work together toward solutions and continued improvement of the City.

Alderman Stennis stated that several lights at Freedom Field are flashing and need to be repaired. The Parks & Recreation Director stated that Mississippi Power has been contacted regarding the issue. She also requested that shade structures be added over the exercise equipment at Front Beach. The Parks & Recreation Director stated that a representative is expected to provide an estimate the following week.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to authorize use of Freedom Field by the Greyhound Mini Football Camp on May 11 and May 12, 2026, from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and to waive rental

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

fees.

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to authorize use of the Civic Center by the Greyhound Baseball Boosters on May 5, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for an end-of-year banquet and to waive rental fees.

Alderman Pfeiffer reminded the public that the City's splash pads will open Memorial Day weekend. She also discussed concerns regarding the use of pesticides and weed killers by the City and requested consideration of non-toxic alternatives moving forward. She further stated that Jackson County recently sprayed East Beach with pesticides and posted signs that did not identify the responsible entity. Alderman Pfeiffer also asked about future plans for the Dewey Building, formerly the police station. The Mayor responded that, now that the roof replacement is complete, HVAC system improvements will be the next phase.

Alderman Messenger commended Alderman Tillis for his social media post regarding the Lovelace Oak and stated that the photographs highlighted the difficult but necessary decision to remove the tree. She asked about adding spring flowers at the entrance to Lakeview Subdivision. The Mayor responded that Ward funds could be used for that purpose. Alderman Messenger also thanked the Building Official for the prompt cleanup response regarding construction debris near a pond. She requested an estimated completion date for the sewer lift station project. The Project Manager estimated completion by June.

Alderman Hinton asked for an update regarding the Porter Avenue water line exploration project. The Project Manager stated that staff is continuing to evaluate options to isolate the line, noting that there are currently no valves available to shut it off, although the well has been reconfigured. Alderman Hinton also asked about Jackson County paving projects within Ocean Springs. The Mayor stated that no timeline has been provided but that Joe O'Neal with the Jackson County Road Department has contacted the City to review project lists. Alderman Hinton thanked City staff for their dedication and hard work.

The Mayor reminded the public that the National Day of Prayer event will be held on May 7, 2026, at Greyhound Stadium, with the Civic Center serving as the rain location alternative.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Alderman Wade, seconded by Alderman Messenger, 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

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 5, 2026 - MINUTES**

executive session to discuss the potential purchase of land.

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

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Stennis, to authorize appraisals for the three parcels of real property offered for potential purchase. The motion carried with a vote as follows:

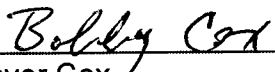
Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Stennis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Pfeiffer, Alderman Hinton

Nay: Alderman Messenger

RECESS UNTIL 6:00 P.M. on MAY 19, 2026

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to recess/adjourn.

The meeting ended at 8:41 p.m.



Mayor Cox



City Clerk Christine Millard

