

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN
RECESS MEETING OF MAY 19, 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 May 19, 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, 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 Wade led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

PROCLAMATION

a. National Safe Boating Week; May 16 - May 22, 2026

Mayor Cox presented a proclamation recognizing May 16 through May 22, 2026, as National Safe Boating Week in the City of Ocean Springs. The proclamation emphasized the importance of boating safety, including the use of life jackets, boating safety education, emergency preparedness, and responsible operation of recreational vessels.

Michael Leonard accepted the proclamation on behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and encouraged local boat owners to participate in free vessel safety examinations at the Ocean Springs Marina and Harbor.

AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Scott Lester, agenda item 5-a, spoke regarding the proposed ordinance for golf cart and low-speed vehicle parking downtown. He expressed concern that the ordinance, as written, may create unintended difficulties for larger six-seat golf carts and low-speed vehicles that exceed the length of the designated golf cart parking spaces. He requested that the Board consider more flexible standards related to vehicle length and parking accommodation for larger family-sized carts.

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OLD BUSINESS

- a. **ADOPT ORDINANCE:** Designated Downtown Parking for Motor Vehicles and Golf Carts and Low-Speed Vehicles

The Mayor discussed concerns raised during agenda public comment, regarding parking accommodations for larger golf carts and low-speed vehicles within the proposed downtown parking ordinance area on Government Street between Cash Alley and Russell Avenue. Discussion took place regarding the length of designated golf cart parking spaces, maneuverability concerns for larger six-seat golf carts, and maintaining traffic flow and roadway width within the downtown corridor.

Board members and staff discussed possible amendments to allow larger golf carts to occupy two designated golf cart parking spaces while maintaining the requirement that golf carts park only in designated golf cart parking areas. Police Chief Dye stated that allowing golf carts to park in standard motor vehicle parking spaces could create enforcement difficulties and recommended maintaining separate parking designations for golf carts and motor vehicles.

Discussion also included the possibility of establishing a length requirement for larger golf carts eligible to occupy two designated golf cart parking spaces.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer and seconded by Alderman Hinton to adopt the ordinance designating downtown parking for motor vehicles and golf carts and low-speed vehicles, with the addition of Section B(4) stating that golf carts exceeding 96 inches in length may occupy two designated golf cart parking spaces. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

- Aye: Alderman Tillis, Alderman Stennis, Alderman Wade, Alderman Pfeiffer, Alderman Messenger, Alderman Hinton
- Nay: Alderman Blackman

- b. **Property Insurance Renewal - Scott Lemon**

Scott Lemon with Lemon-Mohler Insurance presented the City's property insurance renewal options for buildings, vehicles, Parks & Recreation operations, equipment, marine coverage, and cyber liability coverage. He stated that the City currently has approximately \$48 million in building values, with an additional estimated \$6–8 million in value expected upon completion of the new Public Works facilities.

Mr. Lemon explained that the proposed renewal options would increase the City's wind coverage from the current \$10 million limit to full coverage limits and would also provide blanket coverage rather than scheduled coverage. He further stated that deductibles for non-wind losses would decrease from \$25,000 to \$10,000 and that wind deductibles would move to a flat deductible structure.

Discussion also included cyber liability coverage and the importance of cybersecurity

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protections, including multifactor authentication and data breach response coverage for municipalities.

Mr. Lemon presented two renewal options and recommended Option 2, which provides a lower deductible and increased coverage at a slightly higher premium.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to approve Option 2 for the City's property insurance renewal program.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda, with the exception of items 6-f, 6-t, and 6-bb, which were pulled for discussion.

Mayor/BOA:

- a. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for Juneteenth Celebration on June 13, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at MLK Park, at no cost to the City, the applicant pays the associated event cost
- b. Authorize and waive rental fees for the Dream Program to host their annual Special Needs Athletes Awards Banquet at the Civic Center on August 8, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City
- c. Authorize and waive rental fees for the Class of 1973 Pascagoula Negro/Carver High School Alumni Association to host a fundraiser to assist the youth in our community with scholarships at the Civic Center on Saturday, October 31, 2026, from 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the City
- d. Approve the Run, Walk, Bike Permit Application for the Annual Brain Cancer Awareness walk/fun run supporting the National Brain Tumor Society on October 31, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at OS Bridge/Front Beach at no cost to the City, the applicant pays the associated event cost
- e. Authorize \$500.00 payment from Ward 1 funds to support Fort Bayou Civic Association Neighborhood Community Projects

Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center:

- f. Authorize the Mayor to execute the MCOK Landscape Maintenance Services Agreement

Alderman Messenger requested additional information regarding the bidding and procurement process for the proposed landscape maintenance agreement, including the number of quotes received. Discussion took place regarding the annual contract amount and procurement procedures. Alderman Messenger requested that the Board receive copies of the quotes prior to the next meeting. No action was taken, and the item will be reviewed further at a later date.

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City Clerk:

- g. Appoint MML 2026 Election Voting Delegate Mayor Bobby Cox and Alternate Voting Delegate Alderman at Large Matthew Hinton
- h. Ratify online payment made to Amazon Capital to avoid late charges for batteries and toolbox springs purchased
- i. Approve Minutes: Recess Meeting April 21, 2026

Police Department:

- j. Accept OSPD Monthly Report for April 2026

Fire Department:

- k. Accept Monthly Fire Report for April 2026

Human Resources/Risk Management:

- l. Accept resignation of Utility Billing Supervisor Janna Hinton, effective May 14, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- m. Authorize promotion of Planning Office Administrator Sirrae Williams to Planning Technician, \$18.41 hourly rate; effective May 26, 2026; six-months probationary status, authorize beginning the process to fill the vacant position
- n. Accept resignation of Police Officer Jose Godinez, effective May 22, 2026; authorize to begin the process of filling the vacant position
- o. Authorize removing Patrolmen Michael Daehnert and Sabrina Pena from probationary status to full time status, effective immediately
- p. Authorize employment of Kenya Lias, Dispatcher, effective June 4, 2026; \$17.50 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- q. Authorize employment of Jacob Bond, Firefighter, effective May 25, 2026; \$13.64 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- r. Authorize employment of Skylar Travis, Drainage Laborer, effective May 20, 2026; \$15.50 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- s. Authorize employment of Susan Aliff, Public Works Administrative Assistant, effective June 1, 2026; \$15.00 hourly rate; one year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements

Planning Department:

- t. Accept Palm Pointe Phase 2 Performance Bond and Maintenance Bond
- Alderman Blackman stated that the Palm Pointe Phase 2 project began prior to annexation and was originally developed under Jackson County regulations. He further stated that the matter is scheduled for a public hearing at the next Board of Aldermen

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meeting and requested that the item be tabled until after the public hearing.

Planning Commission (PC):

- u. Accept PC Meeting Minutes for April 14, 2026

Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB):

- v. Accept ZAB Meeting Minutes for April 14, 2026

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):

- w. Accept HPC Meeting Minutes for April 16, 2026
- x. Approve a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to construct a 4' tall white vinyl picket fence on three sides of an existing sport court at 915 & 921 Ocean Ave - PIDN: 60137400.100, 60137450.060, & 60137394.000; HPC recommends approval
- y. Approve a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to install a Gunite swimming pool with hot tub, 6' wide concrete walkway connecting the pool with the existing pier, fire pit in the backyard with landscaping, trim 3 trees in the front yard, remove one tree on the side of the property, and widen the existing driveway 8' the length of the driveway using concrete to match existing at 1217 Sunset Ave - PIDN: 60119030.110; HPC recommends approval

Grants Administration:

- z. Authorize Execution of Contract Amendment #3 for Overstreet & Associates, PLLC – ARPA/MCWI Project 455: Downtown Sewer Improvements to Increase for Design Modifications – Additional \$15,687

Building Department:

- aa. Accept Code Enforcement Report through May 14, 2026
- bb. Approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through May 11, 2026

Alderman Blackman requested that the tree application for 117 Spanish Cove Drive be removed from consideration to allow the applicant additional time to provide information.

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman and seconded by Alderman Hinton to approve all tree applications with the exception of 117 Spanish Cove Drive. The motion carried with Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, Wade, Blackman, Messenger, and Hinton voting aye and Alderman Pfeiffer voting nay.

- cc. Accept the Building Department Permit Report for April 2026

Public Works:

- dd. Adopt a Resolution for the Sale of Surplus Personal Property (Scrap Metal) with a Value of Less than \$1,000.00

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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 Pfeiffer, 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.

- 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 Stennis, 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.

- c. Building: ADOPT ORDINANCE: Adopt the 2024 Edition of the International Residential Code (IRC)

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman and seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer to adopt Ordinance 2026-003 adopting the 2024 Edition of the International Residential Code (IRC). The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

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

Nay: None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Bill Moore spoke regarding the possibility of installing an automated external defibrillator (AED) at the Halstead Tennis Courts and discussed the importance of CPR training and early defibrillation access.

MAYOR AND ALDERMEN'S FORUM

- a. Alderman Messenger: Discussion of the Installation of Pedestrian Crossing Signs in the Downtown Area

Alderman Messenger asked about pedestrian safety improvements and crosswalk signage near the YMCA and Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center. The Mayor stated that new pedestrian crossing signs have been prepared and will be installed. Alderman Messenger also reminded the public about the upcoming Battle of the Badges blood drive event and thanked the Ocean Springs Chamber of Commerce for the Taste of Ocean Springs event.

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Alderman Blackman discussed the possibility of installing three-dimensional style crosswalk markings within the City. The Mayor stated that the striping company has options available for those types of crossings.

A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to authorize use of the Civic Center on May 22, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for Ocean Springs School District parents and to waive rental fees.

Alderman Pfeiffer also discussed a resident request regarding signage for a blind autistic child and requested that the City review a simpler process for such requests. She additionally raised concerns regarding limbs and debris being placed in drainage ditches by neighboring property owners and stressed the importance of keeping drainage areas clear during hurricane season.

Alderman Stennis thanked Public Works for providing garbage cans during the Cherokee Glen 100-Year Anniversary celebration. She also discussed a resident concern regarding garbage pickup times and whether pickups should begin after 7:00 a.m. Discussion followed regarding operational and weather-related considerations for sanitation services.

Alderman Tillis stated that the Cherokee Glen celebration was a successful event and encouraged residents to visit the Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center, noting that he recently toured the facility.

Alderman Hinton asked about progress on the Washington Avenue South Road project and utility locating work associated with the Porter Avenue waterline replacement project. The Mayor stated that paving work is expected to begin within approximately three months. Alderman Hinton also thanked the Chamber of Commerce for the Taste of Ocean Springs event and reminded the public about the upcoming annual Red, White, & Blueberry Festival in June.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. Personnel in the Public Works Department

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

The City Clerk returned to the meeting and announced that a motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Blackman, and unanimously carried to go into executive session pursuant to Mississippi Code Section 25-41-7(4)(a), (c), and (g) to discuss personnel matters, security plans and devices, and purchase and lease matters.

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

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A motion was made by Alderman Hinton, seconded by Alderman Stennis, and unanimously carried to terminate Employee #2788 for excessive no call/no show occurrences.

Upon returning to open session, a motion was made by Alderman Blackman and seconded by Alderman Wade to prohibit electronic listening devices of any kind during executive sessions and that any person found in possession of such a device during executive session shall be subject to exclusion from the executive session. The motion carried with Aldermen Tillis, Stennis, Wade, Blackman, Messenger, and Hinton voting aye and Alderman Pfeiffer voting nay.

ADJOURN UNTIL 6:00 P.M. on JUNE 2, 2026

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.



Mayor Cox



City Clerk Millard

