

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
RECESS MEETING OF JANUARY 20, 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 January 20, 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 Assistant Director Duvale Brown, Mary C. O'Keefe Center Director Sarah Qarqish, and Executive Administrator & Public Affairs Officer Laurri Garcia were also present.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Dr. Mike Barnett from First Baptist Church gave the invocation and Alderman Wade led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

**PROCLAMATION**

a. Arbor Day 2026

The Building Official accepted a proclamation from the Mayor proclaiming February 7, 2026, as Arbor Day. He reminded those present that the City will be hosting a tree giveaway on Saturday, February 7, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Ocean Springs Dog Park.

**AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Lanis Noble, agenda item 5-a, stated that his property has been devalued as a result of annexation and its inclusion within the floodway. He expressed concern that the City could be liable for the devaluation of properties located within the floodway.

**OLD BUSINESS**

a. **DEFERRED PER WORK SESSION** - Consideration of an Amendment to the Floodway Ordinance

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A motion was made by Alderman Pfeiffer, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to authorize the City Attorney to draft an ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2020-06 to designate the Board of Aldermen as the final decision-making authority, with the Zoning and Adjustment Board serving in a recommending capacity.

Alderman Pfeiffer stepped out of the Boardroom at 6:12 p.m.

b. Holly Grove Townhomes Sketch Plat Deferral Date

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to approve the deferral of the consideration of the sketch plat for the Holly Grove Townhome Subdivision from the February 3, 2026, Regular Meeting to the February 18, 2026, Recess Meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Hinton, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda, excluding item 6-g, pulled by Alderman Blackman, and item 6-ee, pulled by Alderman Stennis.

Alderman Pfeiffer returned to the Boardroom at 6:14 p.m. and confirmed that she did not have any items to pull from the consent agenda.

**Mayor:**

- a. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for the OS Elks Mardi Gras Parade on Saturday, January 31, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.; regular Parade Route; there will be overtime costs to the City, the applicant pays other associated event costs
- b. **AMENDED:** Authorize and waive all associated costs for the Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA to host a community baby shower at the Civic Center on Thursday, March 26, 2026, from 2:00-6:00 p.m.; to advertise the resources of the city
- c. Approve the Special Event Permit Application for the Hibernia Irish Society St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 14, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., regular Parade Route with staging taking place on Front Beach; overtime costs will be incurred by the city
- d. Authorize and waive all associated costs for the American Red Cross to host ten blood drives in the Civic Center for the year 2026; to advertise the resources of the city

**Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center:**

- e. Authorize the Mayor and the Mary C. O'Keefe Center Director to execute the MOU's with Molly Shea, Jordan West, McKenzie Perry, Adam Meadows and

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the renewal MOU's with Barbi Beatty, Katherine MacMahon, Bryan Milling and Christian Bailey

**Police Department:**

- f. Accept OSPD Monthly Report for December 2025 and Annual Report for 2025
- g. Authorize Employee #1686 for Out-of-State travel to Atlanta, GA for court proceedings January 26, 2026 until released

A motion was made by Alderman Blackman, seconded by Alderman Wade, and unanimously carried to table Out-of-State travel to Atlanta, GA for Employee #1686.

- h. **ADDED:** Authorize the Police Chief to execute the General Agreement with the United States Department of the Interior National Park Service Gulf Islands National Seashore

**Fire Department:**

- i. Accept OSFD Monthly Report for December 2025
- j. Accept OSFD 2025 Annual Fire Report
- k. Authorize Employees #2253 and #2866 for Out-of-State travel to Pueblo, CO for the Highway Response Specialist Course on February 1 – 7, 2026; all associated costs to be paid by FEMA/DHS
- l. **ADDED:** Authorize the Fire Chief to execute the First Due no cost add-on agreement

**Human Resources/Risk Management:**

- m. Authorize removing Patrolman Jastiny Bell from probationary status to full time status, effective January 22, 2026
- n. Authorize employment of Anthony Haden, Firefighter, effective February 2, 2026; \$13.64 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- o. Authorize employment of Timothy Lawson, Parks Grounds Maintenance, effective January 21, 2026; \$15.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- p. Authorize employment of Manual Hernandez, Drainage Laborer, effective January 21, 2026; \$15.50 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- q. Authorize employment of Steven Benson, Public Works Maintenance Laborer, effective February 2, 2026; \$15.50 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- r. Authorize employment of Cameron Ewing, Public Works Maintenance Laborer, effective January 21, 2026; \$15.50 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements

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- s. Authorize employment of Kyle Dressback, Public Works Maintenance Technician, effective January 21, 2026; \$17.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- t. Authorize employment of Trent Jeffcoat, Public Works Maintenance Technician, effective January 21, 2026; \$17.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- u. Authorize employment of Armetrius Green, Street Laborer, effective January 21, 2026; \$15.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- v. Authorize employment of Jared Barr, Street Laborer, effective January 21, 2026; \$15.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- w. Authorize employment of April Easley, Street Laborer, effective January 21, 2026; \$15.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements
- x. Authorize employment of Nelson Fitzpatrick, Water Laborer, effective January 21, 2026; \$16.00 hourly rate; one-year probationary status, pending successful completion of all pre-employment requirements

**Planning Commission (PC):**

- y. Accept Amended PC Minutes for December 9, 2025 Meeting

**Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):**

- z. Accept HPC Minutes for October 16, 2025 Meeting
- aa. Approve a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to construct a 3'-tall white painted picket fence, 6'-tall wood privacy fence, and a 3.8' x 6' wall mounted sign at 1007 Iberville Drive - PIDN: 60119172.000; HPC recommends approval
- bb. Approve a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to construct an 882-square-foot irregular shaped concrete pad for parking located at the rear of the house at 908 Calhoun Street – PIDN: 60137404.000; HPC recommends approval

**Building Department:**

- cc. Approve the Building Official's recommendations for the tree applications received through January 13, 2026
- dd. Accept the Building Department Permit Report for December 2025
- ee. Accept Code Enforcement Report through January 14, 2026

Alderman Stennis inquired about 1209 Iola Road listed on the Code Enforcement Report, stating that she had received complaints alleging the property was being used

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as a laydown yard for another site despite having an active demolition permit, and that the dumpster had been removed and later returned. The Building Official responded that the dumpster had been relocated on the property and that the demolition permit remains valid. A motion was made by Alderman Stennis, seconded by Alderman Pfeiffer, and unanimously carried to accept the Code Enforcement Report through January 14, 2026.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- a. Finance: 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**

Justin Sutton thanked the Board for approving the St. Patrick's Day Parade as part of the Consent Agenda and invited everyone to attend the event on March 14, 2026.

**MAYOR AND ALDERMEN'S FORUM**

Alderman Tillis stated that the Mississippi Municipal League (MML) conference held in Jackson the previous week was very informative and that he enjoyed the Capitol tour and the keynote address by Attorney General Lynn Fitch.

Alderman Stennis expressed concern that paving on Rayburn Avenue is not complete and that drainage issues remain. The Mayor responded that Jackson County has been contacted to determine whether an additional overlay of the roadway will be performed.

Alderman Pfeiffer stated that she is excited about the Hibernia St. Patrick's Day Parade, noting that it will be held in Ocean Springs for the first time.

Alderman Blackman stated that the pedestrian bridge replacement at Heron Bayou has

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begun.

Alderman Messenger thanked Macedonia Church for the invitation to its Martin Luther King Jr. Day presentation and for the choir's performance.

Alderman Hinton reminded the public of the Mardi Gras Day Parade on January 31 and thanked City staff for their efforts.

The Mayor stated that he attended Macedonia Church's Wild Game Day on Monday, described the event as enjoyable, and encouraged the Aldermen to attend next year. He reiterated that the MML conference was very productive.

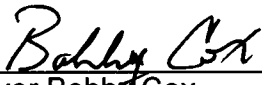
**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**ADJOURN UNTIL 6:00 P.M. on FEBRUARY 3, 2026**

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

The meeting ended at 6:30 p.m.

  
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Mayor Bobby Cox

  
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City Clerk Christine Millard

