

**MINUTES
CITY OF CORDELE COMMISSION BUDGET MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2025**

The City of Cordele Commission held a Budget Meeting on August 14, 2025, at 5:30 PM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

Joshua Deriso, Commission Chairman
Vesta Beal Shephard, Commissioner
Angela Redding, City Manager

Wesley Rainey, Vice Chairman
Isaac Owens, Commissioner
Janice Mumphery, City Clerk/Recording Secretary

Staff present: Maurice Hill – Community Advancement Manager, Sonya Alexander – Finance Director, Fire Chief Alligood, David Wade – Human Resources, Nancy Crook – Municipal Court Clerk, Debbie Wright – UC&T Director, Rick Smarr – Social Media/Marketing Manager.

Call to Order: Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

INVOCATION: There was a moment of silent prayer.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Shephard.

ROLL CALL: A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Joshua Deriso	Commission Chairman		✓
J. Wesley Rainey.	Commission Vice Chairman		✓
Vesta Beal-Shephard	Commissioner Ward 1		✓
Isaac Owens	Commissioner Ward 3		✓
Vacant	Ward 2		

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – August 14, 2025: Commission Owens moved to approve the Agenda for August 14, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Shephard. The Agenda was approved by the Commission.

Opening Remarks: Chairman Deriso also stated that this is a Regular Meeting, and comments will not be taken from the audience. This is a Budget Meeting and Department Heads and City Officials are the only ones allowed to speak during this Meeting. If there is a subject that needs an expert opinion, then the expert on that subject matter will be allowed to speak.

Chairman Joshua Deriso asked all attendees of the Meeting to put their phones on silent or vibrate, preferably silent. If anyone needs to take a call, please step outside the door, away from the doors, so your conversation will not be heard.

AGENDA ITEMS

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:

1. DISCUSSION FY 2026 BUDGET:

Commissioner Owens moved to discuss the FY 2026 Budget: seconded by Commissioner Shephard. The Commission approved to discuss the FY 2026 Budget.

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**Chairman Joshua Deris Proposed Budget Cuts FY 2026:
Statement on Proposed Budget Cuts**

As costs continue to rise and the expected levels of state and federal funding decline, we are faced with difficult but necessary decisions to ensure the long-term financial health of our city. The Chairman's proposed FY 26 budget reductions reflect a careful review of each department's expenditures, focusing on areas where we can reduce or delay spending without jeopardizing essential services.

These adjustments are not simply about balancing the numbers—they are about re-prioritizing how we invest our limited resources. Now more than ever, we must direct more funding toward distressed communities, ensuring that those most in need see tangible improvements in their neighborhoods, infrastructure, and opportunities.

By making targeted cuts—such as reducing payments to outside agencies, scaling back certain equipment purchases, and trimming discretionary service budgets—we can reallocate funds to programs that strengthen economic opportunity, improve quality of life, and build a more equitable Cordele for everyone.

Our goal is to be fiscally responsible while also being morally responsible: meeting our budget challenges head-on and investing in the people and places that need us most.

Department	Proposed	Increased	Cuts	Total Saved
Legislative	\$754,347	\$132,117	Payments to other agencies-	\$96,000
			\$96,000	\$96,000
Executive	\$1,447,727	\$282,397	Technical services to \$100K	\$65,000
			Other Equipment to \$25K	\$15,000
Fire	\$2,549,250	\$82,435	Small equipment by \$10,000	
Public Works	\$3,991,581	\$(121,401.78)	Lawn care by \$10,000	\$10,000
Total Saved				\$186,000

Legislative actions:

Use the savings (\$186,000) and put into community development.

Use the savings (\$186,000) and put it into community development.

Use the \$25,000 for damages/judgments to acquire building- new spaces for community development offices and nonprofit, and small business incubator.

Move the \$3,500 for workshops under to micro-grants for small businesses and nonprofits.

Chairman Deriso suggested leasing the Badcock Building, South 7th Street, for Community Development. Chairman Deriso stated that the building has a really good set-up. Chairman Deriso stated that when he called regarding the Badcock Building, it was \$7,000 to lease a month. He stated if the cuts are made, the city will be able to afford to rent the Badcock Building for Community Development.

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Overages:

Fire	\$22,586.37
Library	\$17,012.71
Water/Waste Treatment	\$145,508.84
Water Distribution	\$40,541.44
Gas	\$15,855.74
Total	\$241,505.10

Legislative Questions:

Professional services?	Increase of \$65,000
Contingencies?	Increase of \$30k

Executive Questions:

Technical Services ?	Increase of \$150,000
Building Repairs?	Increase of \$75k
Other equipment?	Increase of \$40k
Capital outlays?	Increase of \$25k
Total Increase of	\$281,597 ???

Fire:

Questions:

Small equipment (\$50,000) and other equipment (\$40,000)?

Chairman Deriso also stated other areas that can be cut down are the positions of Community Advancement Manager and Social Media Marketing Manager, these positions were contingent upon looking at our whole government and making cuts.

City Manager Angela Redding addressed some of the areas:

Legislative: \$96,000 is IDC. The City has an Agreement with Industrial Development.

Chairman Deriso stated that this Agreement can be broken with a 180-days' notice.

Executive: This is for technical services contracts that we have for the upcoming year; InterDev is one of them.

Other Equipment: IT (Information Technology) is included in Executive. Bobby Stennett, IT Manager, prepared a list that needs immediate attention. That is the reason for this line item increasing to \$40,000.

Wastewater Treatment: There will be an adjustment in that Department, because the city did receive the Generator Grant. A Budget Amendment was approved by the Commission; a journal entry will be made for this item. Approximately \$200,000 will be reduced in some of the cost in the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

There was a detailed conversation regarding journal entries being made because funds are in to cover the cost. Mismanagement of funds was discussed also; this was with the previous Administration.

There were other discussions regarding Agreements and Budget cuts.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate): No Request.

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- 3. ADJOURNMENT:** Vice Chairman Rainey moved to adjourn the Meeting at 6:56 PM; seconded by Commissioner Owens. The Meeting was adjourned by the Commission.