

**CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 16, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on September 16, 2025, 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

J. Wesley Rainey, Commission Vice Chairman	Isaac Owens, Commissioner
Vesta Beal Shephard, Commissioner	Angela Redding, City Manager
Tommy Coleman, City Attorney	Janice Mumphery, City Clerk/Recording Secretary

Absent: Joshua Deriso, Commission Chairman

Staff present: Maurice Hill – Community Advancement Manager, Sonya Alexander – Finance Director, Fire Chief Todd Alligood, David Wade – Human Resource Director, Jarmiah Burks Deputy Municipal Court Clerk, Det. Scott Farrow, Marcia Pridgen – Interim Public Works Director, Rick Smarr – Social Media Marketing Manager, Debbie Wright - U, C & T Director, Bobby Stennett – IT.

Staff Absent: Nancy Crook Municipal Court Clerk

Call to Order: Vice Chairman J. Wesley Rainey, called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Invocation: Prayer was rendered by Rev. Rick Smarr.

Pledge Allegiance to the United States Flag: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Isaac Owens.

Roll Call: A quorum was established

Attendee's Name	Title	Present	Absent
Joshua Deriso	Commission Chairman		✓
J. Wesley Rainey	Commission Vice Chairman Ward Four	✓	
Vesta Beal Shephard	Commissioner Ward One	✓	
Vacant	Commissioner Ward Two		
Isaac H. Owens	Commissioner Ward Three	✓	

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: September 16, 2025: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Agenda for September 16, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Owens.
The Commission approved the Agenda for September 16, 2025.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – September 2, 2025: Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Meeting Minutes for September 2, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Shephard. The Regular Meeting Minutes were approved by the Commission.

PRESENTATION: Justin Elliott, Mauldin and Jenkins:

Justin Elliott stated that he will discuss the Auditor's Discussion and Analysis. He discussed the Engagement Team, Overview of (Audit Opinion, Financial Statements and Footnotes, Compliance Report), Required Communications, Financial Trends, Accounting Recommendations and Related Matters. Mr. Elliott stated the results the Audit for the City of Cordele is an Unmodified ("clean") Opinion on basic financial statements. He gave detailed summary in each area of the audit. He stated that the City was moving in the right direction.

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SPEAKERS' APPEARANCES: No Requests.

SPEAKERS ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM: No Requests.

DEPARTMENT HEADS GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1. Community Advancement Manager Maurice Hill Reported

The Orchard Subdivision – Held a meeting on September 3rd with The Orchard Developer and several community employer stakeholders. The employers are conducting employee surveys of home requirements and reporting back to the developer. We will schedule a Housing Session for citizens to preview home models and provide downpayment assistance information, once the information is in and has been assessed.

Georgia Film Academy – Held a meeting on September 4th with the Chancellor of the Ga Film Academy, Albany State, The School Superintendent and CTAE Director, DDA and PROPEL Youth Engagement. We discussed establishing new digital media programming options to bring a dual enrollment educational tract to the campus. Also, an option to provide adult learners Workforce Training Classes in Film Production, Cybersecurity, etc. to the downtown campus.

Brownfield Grant – Filling out an application for the Center for Community Progress Brownfield Technical Assistance Grant for the Land Bank, which is due on September 19th, to assess and map Brownfield sites in Cordele. If we are a grant recipient, Phase 2 of the grant would consist of mitigation of the brownfield sites that were identified in the assessment phase.

Georgia Funders Forum Grant – Met with UC&T Director on September 9th to discuss Water/Sewer Grants presented in the G3 Funder Webinar. We will go through the various grants, identify what is covered and what's required and present the information for review.

Innovation Technology Meeting – Set up a meeting with several technology providers, the CTAE Director and the School Superintendent on September 23rd to preview the AR/VR Interactive Technology Modules. We will discuss dual enrollment and adult Workforce Training options in eSports, Cybersecurity, etc.

Water/Sewer Grants – Met with the UC&T Director to review the Georgia Funding Forum grants spreadsheet to identify funding that would assist with Water/Sewer Projects in Cordele. This grant information will be forwarded for review and grant submission to follow.

Land Bank Meeting – The Land Bank meeting will be held on September 9th at 1 pm. We will discuss the Brownfield Technical Assistance Grant through the Center for Community Progress.

The Ministers Meeting – The meeting will be held on September 11th at 9:30 am at the Community Clubhouse.

GALBA Programs Committee – The meeting is scheduled for September 15th to discuss the GALBA Annual Summit and recruiting additional Land Banks.

Recycle Waste Diversion Grant - Mr. Hill stated that he was given a copy of the Recycle Waste Diversion Grant by the Planning Director. He is looking at this Grant to see if there are any opportunities in this Grant.

2. Finance Department – Sonya Alexander Reported

The Invoice Disbursement amount went up significantly because there was two large Invoices from the ARPA Project, and this money will be reimbursed.

Sonya Alexander thanked the employees in the Finance Department for all their hard work during the Audit.

3. Fire Department – Chief Todd Alligood Reported

Goals

- a. Provide best possible service to the citizens and visitors of Cordele through professionalism (actions and appearance), extensive training, quick response, effective emergency mitigation, community risk reduction programs, and community engagement.

Accomplishments

- a. Participated in a Battalion Chief Promotional Assessment with the Auburn Fire Department.
- b. Safety Committee meeting 9/10.
- c. Completed annual building pre-plans.
- d. Rico Howard is in week 2 at GPSTC for his FF1/HazMat certification.
- e. Partnered with Crisp County HS ROTC for a 9/11 commemorative stair climb at the HS football stadium.

4. Human Resource Director – David Wade Reported.

Goal 2: Align HR Goals with the City's objectives to improve public service delivery:

- a. A Lunch-and-Learn titled "Understanding Your Retirement Benefits" is scheduled for September 15th for all interested employees.
Presented by: Joshua Colley – Sr. Retirement Benefit Analyst RMEBS Field Service Representative
- b. Flu vaccines are available at the City's Wellness Center for all employees and covered dependents at no cost.

Goal 3: Create a qualified pool for all roles:

- a. Continuing updates to the City's website with job openings along with "We're Hiring Wednesday's video updates.

5. Municipal Court – Jarmiah Burks Reported

Goals

Report accurate information for the Court and Public to aim to efficiently adjudicate cases, process cases quickly and maintain accurate records.

Complete the Court Docket for the Judge in a timely manner.

Strive to provide accessible services, maintain integrity, and ensure accountability.

Accomplishments

All Dockets and Court Dispositions were turned into the State on time.

6. Planning and Community Development Director Reported

Goals and Accomplishments

Updating Cordele's Comprehensive Plan (2024-2029), Zoning Map, and Future Land Use Map.

- a. Scheduled CWP update meetings with most operating departments during the weeks of September 15-26, 2025, to achieve an update on which projects to remove, delete, or update relating to departmental projects, programs, and activities.
- b. Met with River Valley Regional Commission, ESRI GIS representative, and InterDev to discuss start-up GIS needs for the city. The meeting was completed by identifying a workflow for the ArcGIS Online/Pro community. An invoice for the platform has been submitted to the Finance Department. The initiation of the GIS workflow for the zoning map will begin in October 2025.
 - i. The Zoning Map will require the review, update, and inclusion of adopted Ordinances and Annexations approved by the city since 1995. This is when the last official zoning map was approved.
- c. A Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for the city will be initiated after the successful completion and adoption of an updated official zoning map.
- d. The city 31-character areas will be reviewed for consistency with the proposed FLUM.

Working on GIS system for Community Development.

The city is purchasing a "creator" license to have access to ArcGIS online software. The software is anticipated to be purchased by the middle of September 2025. Boundary data is being obtained from Crisp County GIS data hub and shapefiles from the River Valley Regional Commission.

Reviewing and commenting on the 7th Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan.

- a. A public meeting for stakeholders to review and comment on the 7th Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan has been legally advertised in the paper for September 22, 2025, at the Community Clubhouse from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- b. A logistics meeting with the city's Marketing Manager, Mainstreet Director, and River Valley Regional Commission was held to review the presentation style, methods, and promotion of the meeting.
- c. The identification of parcels within the study area and site visits for B-Roll was completed with the Marketing Manager.
- d. Working with the Marketing Manager to write a script for the video production.

Updating zoning applications to make them more user friendly for on-line services.

- a. Creation of or Updating of Zoning Applications.
A Board of Zoning Application, a 2025-2026 Board of Zoning Appeals Calendar and a Zoning Request(s) Filing Checklist have been created to structure the review and consideration process of zoning related requests.
- b. A Zoning Verification Request application has been created with a recommendation for amended fees. This application is pending review.
- c. Other applications will be created or updated for Planning Commission, Historic Preservation, and Zoning Amendments.

Updating the city website.

- a. A print-out copy of the Planning and Community Development website pages have been updated. The update of applications, documents, and files are being recreated for enhanced online presence.
- b. A vision and goals section are being prepared for review and approval by the City Manager.

Preparing an Operational Plan for the Planning and Community Development Department.

- a. An Operational Plan and GIS Workflow are being prepared for review and consideration by the City Manager. Will be completed by the end of this year.

Working on scheduling interviews for the Community Development Specialist position in October 2025

- a. The top three applicants will be interviewed and considered.
- b. Additional job tasks and assignments are being considered for the position to assist in the planning and development areas.

Prepared a staff report for the Board of Zoning Appeals public hearing scheduled on September 25, 2025, for property located at 202 East 12th Avenue for a proposed entrance home.

- a. The proposed property is located within the O'Neal Neighborhood Historic District and within a quarter-mile radius of the Central Business District and a children's facility.
- b. Staff reports will be completed and submitted for internal review by September 17, 2025.

The Historic Sign for the Gillespie-Selden Historic District was approved by the HPC Board on August 20, 2025.

Updating Zoning Codes of Ordinances.

- a. The Zoning Codes of Ordinances needs to be rewritten severely.
- b. Code Sections are being updated to begin a quick-fix process of the Zoning Ordinances.
- c. LI, HI, and R-1 zoning districts have been updated and pending review by legal.
- d. Meetings are being requested with the city legal representation to update various code sections.

Meetings Held or Attended and Conferences scheduled during this reporting period:

- a. Attended the Safety and Accident Meeting on September 10, 2025.
- b. Scheduled to email and deliver the Historic Preservation Commission Agenda, Minutes, and Staff report for the September 17, 2025, meeting.
- c. Follow-up meeting scheduled with Danita Doleman regarding grant writing for the City of Cordele on September 12, 2025.

There was a discussion regarding parking on 7th Street. Vice Chairman Rainey asked if this will be discussed at the 7th Street Corridor Meeting.

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City Manager Angela Redding stated this matter was not part of the Meeting. She and others met with GDOT (Georgia Department of Transportation) because this is a State Highway, and GDOT did state that if the Commission wanted parking on 7th Street that they can petition GDOT to park there, but GDOT will designate the parking areas.

City Manager Angela Redding also stated the GDOT said there should not be any parking on 7th Street and the City will not give citations for parking on 7th Street at this time.

7. Police Department/Codes Compliance/Animal Control – Capt. Scott Farrow Reported Police Department – Goals and Accomplishments

Currently there are seven applicants in the hiring process for the position of Animal Control Officer and Patrol Officer. Abigail Murphy was promoted to Administrative Clerk. She is currently being trained on the duties of this position.

We are continuing to promote on our sign boards and on our Facebook page. The Speed Detections Sign is in use.

The Department is partnering with the Minister's Faith Based Committee to host a National Faith and Blue 'Meet at the Pole' scheduled for Friday, October 10th at 10:00 am. The Community is invited to join us at the flagpole at City Hall to pray for our community and our First Responders.

The Police Department has partnered with Cordele Mainstreet to host Downtown Spooktacular 2025. It will be held Thursday, October 30th from 5:30 – 7:00 PM at the SAM Shortline Parking Lot.

Animal Control

1. Get more animals rescued/adopted by being more active in the community and on social media.
 - Rescues have picked up tremendously. Adoptions are still holding steady.
2. Work towards implementing a volunteer program at the shelter.
 - We are working on a schedule and paperwork to have volunteers. Several people have inquired and are very interested in helping the shelter.
3. Make shelter improvements: grates for drains, seal the floors, replace rusted kennel pipes, add a few more kennels outside.
 - Dogs are moving and kennels will start being repaired on the insides.
4. Actively promotes better animal welfare. (Spay/neuter, vaccinations, correct shelter(housing), kennel ordinance control).
 - Educating people about proper shelter and living conditions.
5. Host events with the hope of bringing awareness to the shelter, animal health and welfare and increasing donations.
 - Have been helping people decrease the number of unsterilized animals.
 - Microchips are a big hit still! Several people come to get a chip!

- * *Received another big donation of pet food from Tractor Supply, JAG probation, and several citizens buying and leaving for us to pick up at Tractor Supply.

Codes Compliance Division

- a. The codes division will continue code enforcement efforts to increase code compliance with all wards. This will provide more attractive and presentable neighborhoods for the current citizens, future citizens, workers and travelers with the hopes to attract new businesses, industry and potential residents to the city. **There are on-going cases to clean up several areas in the city.**
 - b. The codes division will continue sending codes officials to advanced training and certification seminars through the International Code Council (ICC) and the Georgia Association of Code Enforcement (GACE) with the hopes of each code official becoming certified in multiple inspection categories. **New codes Administrative Clerk Abigail Murphy is currently training in this position.**
 - c. Address blighted commercial and residential properties through education, code enforcement, private funding, grant opportunities and working relationships with reliable, certified contractors. **Three demolition permits are awaiting clearance by public works.**
 - d. Increasing our social media presence and utilizing other innovative ways to relay information and announce code issues and problems. The aim is to educate and keep the public informed about code-related issues that concern them. **Codes officials are working to educate the public on city ordinances on the upkeep of properties in the city.**
- 8. Public Works Department – Marcia Pridgen Reported**
Goal 6: Prevent ground water in infiltration into the City's System
Phase 1 of ARPA Project: Project has been completed pending final inspections.
Phase 2 of the ARPA: Contractor has completed cleaning and tying 7,500 feet of line and should begin CIP lining in the following weeks.
- Commissioner Shephard inquired about Goal 8: Clean up the City's alleys. She stated that she was in class this past week and there was a person in class that stated their City is doing a Project called "Shut down and Clean-up". On Wednesday their City Hall is closed, and all departments go out and help to clean the City. Commissioner Shephard suggested that the City of Cordele stop and clean the City quarterly. All the Commissioners and City Manager liked the idea.
- 9. Social Media Marketing Manager – Rick Smarr Reported**
Launch of the new CITY OF CORDELE website is set for 11:00 AM October 1st. The new site will live on the Domain www.cordelega.gov. Mr. Smarr received the requirements for transition, and the October 1st launch commitment document from Granicus and forwarded those to CM Redding, Bobby Stennett, Brett Lavender and the InterDev team. The Website Team has done an outstanding job building out their respective departments and work does

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continue in some areas, but confidence is high that we have a product that is going to be received well by the community.

Our goal is to continually update and improve the website with fresh content daily because this is the means of a successful website.

10. UC&T Director – Debbie Wright Reported

- a. Received a copy of the draft of the ground water use permit on Friday, it was signed off and sent back. The original will be sent to us later, it will be good for ten years

11. IT Department – Brett Lavender Reported

Update: Getting the remaining twenty-seven computers installed before Windows 10 ends.

Recap: The 1 gig of internet connectivity is finally working.

Reminder: the Commission approved a Cyber Security Grant; it is still in the cue.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consider and Approve the First Reading of An Ordinance to Establish Yard Regulations for Residential Properties in the City of Cordele; to Provide Fencing Development Standards; to Provide Permit Fees for Fencing; Repealing All Ordinances in Conflict Herewith; and For Other Purposes.

Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the First Reading of an Ordinance; seconded by Commissioner Owens.

City Manager Angela Redding stated before the First Reading of this Ordinance, she is asking the Commission to make a recommendation for this Ordinance to go before the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing and then back to the Commission, because this is a City initiated change.

Commissioner Shephard moved for this Ordinance to go before the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing and then come to the City Commission; seconded by Commissioner Owens.

The Commission approved for this Ordinance to go before the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing and then come before the Commission.

2. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Past Events

Community Café

September 8, 2025

Clara Scott Apartments

Paula Woodall – Mental Flint Behavioral Health Care – Mental Health Self Care

In a crisis, please call – 988 for help, or the crisis line 833 – 215 - 2545

Faith Based Organizations Meeting

September 11, 2025

Community Clubhouse

108 East 15th Avenue

9:30 – 10:30 AM

Public Safety Dinner

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September 11, 2025
Lions Club Fairground
The City of Cordele is a Silver Sponsor
City of Cordele Lunch & Learn
Cordele Police Department Training Room
September 15, 2025, at 12:00 Noon
Understanding Your Retirement Benefits

7th Street Corridor Public Meeting
September 22, 6:00 – 7:30 PM
Community Clubhouse

Additional Upcoming Events/Meetings

Memorial Plaque Dedication
For Mr. Steve Rentfrow
September 19, 2025
10:00 AM

Greater New Birth Family Outreach Ministry
Youth Outreach Every 3rd Saturday 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Kindergarten – 12th Grade
Next Event September 20, 2025

Crisp County Power Commission
Monday, September 18, 2025
Ugandan Children's Choir/Imani Milele Choir
Cordele First Church
September 18, 2025
6:30 PM

Light Up Pink
Thursday, September 25, 2025
7:00 PM
1301 S Greer St.
Sponsored by – Melody Godfrey Agency

81st Annual Central Georgia Fair
October 1st – 5th, 2025
Wednesday – Saturday – Gates opens at 1:00 PM

Cordele Cub Scout Pack 270 – Sign Up Event
Saturday, September 27, 2025
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
509 N 7th St.

Additional Upcoming Meetings
PROPEL Meeting

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Thursday, September 18, 2025
Crisp Power Commission Boardroom
8:30 AM
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
Wednesday, September 17, 2025
City Hall – Courtroom
6:00 PM

Planning Commission Meeting
Thursday, September 18, 2025
City Hall – Courtroom
10:00 AM

Georgia Municipal Association District 8 Meeting
Monday, September 22, 2025
Community Clubhouse
11:00 AM

City Updates

City Dumpster Location Hours
Thursday and Friday – 12:00 PM (Noon) to 4:00 PM
Public Works have started the interview process for this position.

Installation of No Stopping or Parking Signs – Speedway Location

Reminder: Deadline to register to vote in the November election is October 6th by 5:00 PM.

Business License Renewals

Alcohol License expires at the end of the year, December 31st of said year.
Renewal Alcohol License will be mailed out in September 2025. The last City Commission Meeting of the year is December 16, 2025. Applicants were encouraged to begin the process early to allow time for fingerprinting.

Drive Thru Window – The cabinet should arrive later this month.

Aldi Grand Opening
October 9, 2025
9:00 AM

Action Item: Crisp Community Council is requesting to use the City's Property on N 7th Street for the 100-mile Yard Sales on October 11, 2025
Commissioner Owens moved to approve for the Crisp Community Council to use the City's Property; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
The Commission approved the Crisp Community Council to use the City's Property at N. 7th Street.

T-SLPOSTS PROJECTS

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TSPLOSTS Funds – the City has spent - \$127,248.86 on some of the projects listed.

LMIG – 10% Match

Mower

Tractors (2)

Replaced Traffic Signal at 3rd Street and 8th Avenue

SPLOST Projects – Total Spent to date is \$870,610.48

Payment for Ladder Truck – made two payments

Backhoe – Street Department

Side Arm Mower

Backhoe – Water Department

- 8. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:** Tommy Coleman requested to enter into an Executive Session for Litigation and Personnel.

- 9. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate):
Commissioner Owens moved to enter Executive Session at 10:12 AM for Litigation and Personnel; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye.
The Commission approved to enter Executive Session at 10:12 AM for Litigation.

10. RECOVERED REGULAR SESSION:

Commissioner Shephard moved to reconvene Regular Session at 10:41 AM; seconded by Commissioner Owens.

The Commission reconvened the Regular Session at 10:41 AM.

- 11. ADJOURNMENT:** Commission Shephard moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 10:42 AM; seconded by Commissioner Owens.
The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 AM by the Commission.