

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 18, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on November 18th, 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

Joshua Deriso, Commission Chair
Commissioner Vesta Beal-Shephard
Angela Redding, City Manager
Janice Mumphery, Recording Secretary

Vice Chairman J. Wesley Rainey
Isaac Owens, Commissioner
Joel Wright, Representative City Attorney

Absent: Tommy Coleman, City Attorney.

Staff present: Maurice Hill - Community Advancement Manager, Sonya Alexander – Finance Director, Fire Chief Todd Alligood, David Wade – Human Resource Director, Nancy Crook - Municipal Court Clerk, Interim Police Chief Connie Sampson, Marcia Pridgen – Interim Public Works Director, Rick Smarr – Social Media Marketing Manager, Debbie Wright – UC&T Director.

Staff Absent: Mary Darby – Planning & Community Development Director.

Call to Order: Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Opening Remarks: 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.

Chairman Deriso also stated that this is a Regular Meeting and commentaries will not be taken from the audience. If there is a subject that needs an expert opinion, then the expert on that subject matter will be allowed to speak.

Invocation: There was a silent moment of prayer.

Pledge Allegiance to the United States Flag: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chairman Rainey.

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	✓	
Isaac Owens	Commissioner Ward Three	✓	
Vacant	Ward Two		

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – November 18, 2025: Vice Chairman Rainey moved to approve the Agenda for November 18, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Owens; the Agenda was approved by the Commission.

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APPROVAL OF BUDGET MEETING MINUTES – October 28, 2025: Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Budget Meeting Minutes for October 28, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Shephard. The Budget Meeting Minutes were approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – November 4, 2025: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Minutes for November 4, 2025; seconded by Vice Chairman Rainey. The Minutes for November 4, 2025, were approved by the Commission.

SPEAKERS APPEARANCES: Five (5) minutes

Ms. Annette Mumphery – Concerns of property owners having to move tenants' trash.

Ms. Mumphery requested that the City trash collection be moved back into the alleys. She also stated she does not think it is fair for property owners to have to move tenants' trash when they move out.

SPEAKERS ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM: Three (3) minutes: No Requests.

DEPARTMENT HEAD GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1. Community Advancement Manager – Maurice Hill Reported.

Site Plan Meeting – Attended a Site Plan Zoom meeting with a developer to discuss a commercial project with the Planning and Community Development Director on November 5th.

Site Plan Review Meeting – Attended a Site Plan Review meeting with the Planning and Community Development Director on November 5th to discuss zoning requirements for The Orchard Subdivision.

Ministers Meeting – Attended the Ministers Meeting on November 13th and support the community efforts of the group.

Continuum of Care Webinar – Attend the DCA Continuum of Care webinar on November 13th at 11:00 am to learn about resources available to assist the underhoused and unhoused residents.

Heir Property 101 Webinar – Attended the Center for Community Progress Heirs' Property 101 Webinar on November 13th at 12:00 pm to learn more about resolving Heirs' Rights issues.

2. Finance Department – Sonya Alexander Reported.

Sonya Alexander stated that invoice disbursements were high because of the employees getting paid three (3) times in November.

Waiting on revenue from Occupational Tax Certificate (Business License) and Property Taxes.

3. Fire Department – Chief Todd Alligood Goals

1. 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

1. We held our first annual family day/firefighter's competition on Saturday 11/8/25. It was well attended. We served hamburgers and hot dogs for lunch and each of our 3 shifts had a team in the competition. The events were quick dress, hose and ladder, and bucket brigade. B-Shift was the overall winner with 35 points.
2. Attended the Surgery Center Grand Opening at CC Regional Hospital.

4. Human Resource – David Wade – David Wade Reported.

- A Lunch-and-Learn titled "Breast Cancer Awareness" was held on October 25, 2025, with eleven (11) attendees.
- A Lunch-and-Learn titled "Understanding your Retirement" will be held on December 17th. More information is forth coming.
- Attended the Career Technical Agricultural Education (CTAE) Advisory Committee Meeting. A job fair industry tour, to be held in January, is in the planning stage.
- Attended the South Georgia Technical College – Accounting, Marketing, and Business Office Technology Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Both computers in the H. R. Department have been replaced. All information was successfully migrated to the new computers.
- The Best Software HRIS Program was remotely updated to resolve a connectivity issue after the Windows 11 upgrade.
- Flu vaccines are still available.

5. Municipal Court – Nancy Crook Reported.

Goals for Cordele Municipal Court

1. Report accurate and complete information for the Court and Public to aim to efficiently adjudicate cases, process cases quickly and maintain accurate records.
2. Complete Court Docket for the Judge in a timely manner.
3. Strive to provide accessible services. Maintain integrity and ensure accountability.
4. For the Court Personnel to go to yearly training.

Accomplishments for Cordele Municipal Court

1. All Dockets and Court Dispositions were turned into the State on time.
2. Jarmiah Burks and I have completed the yearly training mandated by Courts Authority (GMCCC).

6. Planning and Community Development Director:

Mary Darby – Director was not present at the Meeting. No report was given.

**7. Police Department/Codes Compliance/Animal Control – Interim Police Connie Sampson
Cordele Police Department - Goals and Accomplishments**

- We will continue to provide professional law enforcement service through our hiring process, training, and self-accountability. **Currently there are two applicants in the hiring process for the position of Patrol Officer. Our two cadets are in their last week of the academy and are expected to graduate November 21st. Three cadets are scheduled to start the academy in January.**

- **Develop strategies to attract more experienced officers. We are continuing to promote on our sign boards and on our Facebook page. We anticipate attending future career fairs to provide hiring information for applicants interested in working with our department. Also, our efforts include partnering with professional organizations such as Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police, NOBLE (National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives), Regional Police Academies and other local and state affiliated organizations.**
- **We will continue to connect with the community through community related events, increasing public contacts and through partnering with local groups and businesses. The Police Department along with Prevent Child Abuse Crisp is collecting new unwrapped toys for Adopt an Angel Toy Drive. A collection box is in the lobby of the police department until December 12th. This toy drive serves the children of Crisp County. We are also currently taking monetary donations for our Shop with a Cop Event which is on December 19th.**
- **We will continue to make advancements towards obtaining the Excellence in Policing Certification with the larger goal of state certification. Tramiska Jones has completed the initial orientation stages of the state certification process. She is comparing standards with current policies, adjusting as needed and consulting with other professionals who have successfully completed the certification process.**
- **On November 13, 2025, a cross functional team of Police Department employees participated in a comprehensive short- and long-term planning session. The outcome of this session provides a road map going forward that will enable all members to understand short- and long-term needs of the department as it continues to provide the highest level of safety and security needs for the City of Cordele and its citizens**

Animal Control Division - Goals and Accomplishments

- **Get more animals rescued/adopted by being more active in the community and on social media.**
 - **Rescues and adoptions are holding steady.**
- **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 with the shelter.**
- **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.**
- **Actively promotes better animal welfare. (Spay/neuter, vaccinations, correct shelter(housing), kennel ordinance control).**
 - **Educating people about proper shelter and living conditions. With it being so cold, people can reach out, along with us reaching out, to help keep pets safer this winter.**
- **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.**

Compliance Division - Goals and Accomplishments

- The codes division will continue code enforcement efforts to increase code compliance in 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.
Code officers were successful with citations and summons to bring Holsey Cobb Apartment management into Court for multiple ongoing code violations.
- 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.
Code Officers continued site building inspection training at the Christian Homes construction project.
- Address blighted commercial and residential properties through education, code enforcement, private funding, grant opportunities and working relationships with reliable, certified contractors. **Code Compliance officers obtained a demolition completion at 509 E 5th Ave and working a blighted renovation project at 602 N 10th St.**
- 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. **Code officers participated in community outreach programs at Trunk or Treat and Red Ribbon Drug Awareness Week.**

8. Public Works Department: Marcia Pridgen Reported.

Goals and Accomplishments

Goal 6: Prevent ground water infiltration into the City's Sewer System.

Phase 2 of ARPA Project – CIPP crews are working on tving down 13th Avenue, headed to the Industrial Park area.

Had a couple meetings with Greg Bacon regarding ARPA Phase 3 and have selected areas to start putting pricing together.

9. Social Media Marketing – Ricky Smarr Reported.

Rick Smarr stated that starting next week the City will participate with The Concern Citizens that Care and the Historic Awards Committee with distribution of food boxes at the Lions Club, preparation with start on Tuesday, distribution on Wednesday.

10. UC&T Director – Debbie Wright Reported.

Sent out 2025 Lead Control letters, approximately 5,507 letters were mailed.

11. IT – Brett Lavender Reported.

Brett Lavender stated that they are continuing the improvement processes for the City of Cordele. There were quite a bit of replacements and upgrades for Windows 11. this process is almost at the end. There are a few items that have unique situations, i.e. storage capacity,

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ensuring that no documentation is lost or stored data on any computer. He stated that they are working through these final items. Micah Jones was here again this week, Thursday and Friday and he is also working this week remotely to continue to work out any issues.

The other thing that we have been working on for the last year is cybersecurity awareness and training program. Typically, a quarterly report is done, the last report that was received; it showed the completed training, what was started, what we do. We have a lisp trend that is looked at, so during the last training session, we reduced our lisp trend for the City. With that you can see how many minutes of training, there has been over 1500 minutes of training just during the month of August. The trend is improving, so what will be done, if someone clicks on something, in a way that is a good learning opportunity, we will use this information to track over time, we will compare, it will help us to focus on specific types of things people will click on down the road to reduce trends and it will also give everyone the areas of risk.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Appointment of the Police Chief.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the appointment the City Manager Angela Redding made of Danny Hicks for Police Chief; seconded by Vice Chairman Rainey.
Police Chief Danny Hicks was sworn in by Chairman Deriso.
2. Sworn In:
 - a. Mr. Membrish Brown: Community Clubhouse Coordination Board.
Mr. Brown was sworn in by Chairman Deriso.
 - b. Mrs. Tueisha Grant: Downtown Development Authority – was not present.
3. Event Permit: Adopt an Angel Fundraiser, November 21, 2025, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Location – Pecan St./E. 16th Ave, taking money and toy donations at the intersection. Organizer: Lisa Odom, 943 Brock Rd., Arabi, GA. The Event Permit was recommended by Interim Police Chief Connie Sampson on Nov. 12, 2025.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Event Permit; seconded by Commissioner Owens.
Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Commission approved the Event Permit – Adopt an Angel Fundraiser.
4. Parade Permit: Lions Club Annual Christmas Parade, December 4, 2025, route of parade – will line up in front of Cordele City Hall and proceed down 7th Street ending at E. 15th Ave. Organizer: Monica Simmons, 502 S. 2nd St., Cordele, GA. The Parade Permit was recommended by Interim Police Chief Connie Sampson on Nov. 12, 2025.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve a Parade Permit; seconded by Commissioner Owens.
Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Commission approved the Parade Permit for the Annual Christmas Parade.
5. Consider and Approve Renewal of Alcohol Licenses. No Exception Noted. Initial Approval by Interim Police Chief Sampson.

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Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Commission approved the Parade Permit for the Annual Christmas Parade.

5. Consider and Approve Renewal of Alcohol Licenses. No Exception Noted. Initial Approval by Interim Police Chief Sampson.

Los Compadres	1116 E. 16th Ave.	Beer & Wine/On Premises Liquor By The Drink
El Grasol	102 E 14th Ave.	Beer Only/On Premises
Loves	1525 E. 8th Ave.	Beer/Wine/Off Premises

Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Alcohol Renewal Licenses collectively;
seconded by Vice Chairman Rainey.

Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye.
The Commission approved the Alcohol Renewals collectively.

6. Consider and Approve 2026 Holiday Schedule.

Commissioner Owens moved to approve the 2026 Holiday Schedule; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.

Commissioner Shephard, Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Owens voted aye.
The Commission approved the 2026 Holiday Schedule.

Commissioner Owens suggested making an amendment to the 2025 Holiday Schedule, adding Friday, December 26, 2025.

Commissioner Owens moved to approve adding Friday, December 26, 2025, to the 2025 Holiday Schedule; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.

Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Commission added Friday, December 26, 2025, to the Holidays for 2025.

Commissioner Owens moved to close City Hall at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, November 26, 2025, this is for all non-essential employees; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.

Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens voted aye.
The Commission approved for City Hall to close at 12:00 noon for all non-essential employees.

7. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: City Manager Angela Redding Reported.**

Past Events

Pre-K Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive
Collected 2,221 canned food items

Southeast Electrical Service Ribbon Cutting
Friday, November 14, 2025
10:00 AM

City Representative – Commissioner Isaac Owens – Ward Three

Crisp Regional Hospital Surgery Center
November 14, 2025
4:30 AM

This facility is located on the East side of the hospital.

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**Lake Blackshear Resort
6:00 PM**

Crisp County High School Veterans Day Program was held November 11, 2025.

Kiwanis Club Veterans Day Program was held Thursday, November 13, 2025.

**Cordele Railfan Festival
SAM Shortline
November 8, 2025
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

Upcoming Events/Meetings

**Crisp County Community Roundtable Discussion
Dr. Robert Scott – President
Albany State University Cordele Center
December 4, 2025
10:00 AM**

**SAMS Shortline Railroad
Cordele Holiday Train
Friday, December 12th – 5:00, 6:30, 8:00 PM
Saturday, December 13th – 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:00 PM
Friday, December 19th – 5:00, 6:30, 8:00 PM
Saturday, December 20th – 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:00 PM
Train will depart from the Downtown Cordele Depot.**

**Ongoing – Unity Community Action Council, Inc.
The Georgia Diaper Distribution Program**

**Blood Drive
Cordele Community Clubhouse
108 E 15th Ave.
Tuesday, November 25, 2025
1:00 – 6:00 PM**

Thanksgiving Distributions

**Cross Culture Church
Thursday, November 27, 2025
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

**Northern Heights Baptist Church
1102 East 8th Ave.
Saturday, November 22, 2025**

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8:30 AM until all food and meat is given out

Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church

508 S. 14th St.

Saturday, November 22, 2025

Thanksgiving Dinner giveaway

Johnny Dennis – Concerned Citizens That Care

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

Municipal Runoff Election - December 2, 2025

Deadline to register to vote or change voter information was October 6, 2025

Early Voting: Location – 210 S. 7th St. Room 103, Dates: 11.24 – 26.2025

City Updates

Christmas Parade – December 4, 2025

Alcohol Renewals – deadline December 10, 2025

Sidewalk Repair on 12th Avenue

Drive Thru Window -- almost ready

Christian Homes – W. 25th Ave. – twenty-four (24) units, 1, 2, 3 bedrooms. Construction should be completed by Thanksgiving no later than Christmas. Marketing will begin in December. Residents will be moved in mid to late January.

Bench Warrant Program – Judge Wright expressed an interest in an Amnesty Day, to be held on a Saturday, this will be to lift warrants, not to dispose of the case. Cases will be scheduled for February, service to be offered to the Community.

Public Works Parks and Cemetery Division is putting up Christmas decorations.

City Offices will close at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, November 26th, and will remain closed all day Thursday, November 27th and Friday, November 28th for Thanksgiving. City Offices will reopen Monday, December 1, 2025, at 8:00 AM.

8. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: No Report.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate) No Executive Session.

10. ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Shephard moved to adjourn the Meeting at 10:38 AM; seconded by Commissioner Owens. The Meeting was adjourned at 10:38 AM.