

**CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on September 2, 2025, 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

Joshua Deriso, Commission Chairman	J. Wesley Rainey, Commission Vice Chairman
Vesta Beal Shephard, Commissioner	Isaac Owens, Commissioner
Angela Redding, City Manager	Tommy Coleman, City Attorney
Shamica Fairfax, Recording Secretary	

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, Police Chief Jalon Heard, Marcia Pridgen – Interim Public Works Director, Rick Smarr – Social Media Marketing Manager, Debbie Wright - U, C & T Director, Bobby Stennett – IT.

Staff Absent: Janice Mumphery, City Clerk/Recording Secretary, Mary Darby – Planning and Community Development Director.

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

Opening Remarks: Chairman Deriso also stated that this is a Regular Meeting, and comments will not be taken from the audience. Department Heads and City Officials will speak to give Reports 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.

Invocation: There was a moment of silence.

Pledge Allegiance to the United States Flag: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Vesta Beal Shephard.

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 2, 2025: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Agenda for September 2, 2025; seconded by Vice Chairman Rainey. Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye. The Commission approved the Agenda for September 2, 2025.

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APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – August 19, 2025: Vice Chairman Rainey moved to approve the Meeting Minutes for August 19, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Owens. Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye. The Regular Meeting Minutes were approved by the Commission.

SPEAKERS' APPEARANCES: No Requests.

SPEAKERS ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM: No Requests.

DEPARTMENT HEADS REPORTS:

1. Community Advancement Manager Maurice Hill Reported

Planning and Community Development Team Meeting – Attended the meeting on August 24th to be introduced to the P&CD Team and discussed the Community Advancement Managers updates to the Departments Operational and Work Plans.

GALBA Intergovernmental Committee – Conducted a Call Meeting on August 25th to introduce verbiage to amend legislation so Land Banks have more options to forgive demolition charges on blighted properties, etc. throughout Georgia under Land Bank sales transactions.

USDA 502 and 504 Grant Workshop – Received and submitted the USDA Servicer Agreement for review to setup workshops to assist residents that did not qualify for the CHIP Grant.

The Orchard Subdivision – Scheduled a meeting on September 3rd with the Orchard Developer and several community employer stakeholders to discuss home and lot sizes to accommodate their staff. This meeting will be held in the Cordele Police Department Conference Room.

Georgia Film Academy – The staff at the GA Film Academy is scheduled to visit the campus of Albany State in Cordele on September 4th to walk through the facility and discuss establishing Workforce Training Classes in Film Production at the Downtown Campus.

Innovation Technology Meeting – Setting up a meeting with Vizitech, the CTAE Director and the School Superintendent the week of September 15th to preview the AR/VR Interactive Technology Modules that align with the school curriculum as educational and workforce training classes.

2. Finance Department – Sonya Alexander Reported

Sales Tax: \$484,761.14 for the month of August.

3. Fire Department – Chief Todd Alligood Reported

Reporting Period: July 29, 2025 – August 22, 2025

Calls for Service: Total 47

Smoke Scare	3
Grass/Rubbish Fire	3
Medical	16

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Motor Vehicle Accident	2
Car Fire	1
Structure Fire	1
False Alarm/Other	16
False Call	3
Trash Fire	1
Power Line Down	1

Department News

- Currently conducting Fire Pre-Plans at all the businesses within the city limits. We are not looking for violations, we are just getting familiar with the lay-out of the building, checking emergency contacts, locating electrical/gas cut-offs and water supply.
- Attended the Public Safety Roundtable at the EOC.
- Rico Howard starts his 10-week FF1/HazMat Certification training at GPSTC this week. We wish him luck!

Fire Safety Week Oct. 5-11 "Charge into Fire Safety...Lithium-ion Batteries in your Home".

To safely charge a lithium battery in your electric vehicle (EV) at home, always use a certified charging device and cable, follow the manufacturer's instructions, and ensure the charger is plugged directly into a proper outlet, never an extension cord or multi-plug adapter. Regularly inspect cables for damage, ensure the area is dry, and unplug the charger once the battery is full.

4. Human Resource Director – David Wade Reported.

July 30, 2025	Conducted random drug screens in the Gas Department. All results were negative.
July 31, 2025	Received the resignation of an Animal Control Officer in the Police Department. Resignation is effective August 15, 2025.
August 01, 2025	Completed and submitted the Employer Shared Responsibility (ESR) report for the 2025 Affordable Care Act filing.
August 05, 2025	Hired a Records Technician in the Police Department.
August 06, 2025	Hired a Police Officer in the Police Department.
August 11, 2025	Hired a Maintenance Technician in Public Works.
August 14, 2025	Completed and submitted the annual GMEBS Retirement Plan Valuation Census.

5. Municipal Court – Nancy Crook Reported

Municipal Court Summary Report August 2025

Traffic Cases	315
Criminal Cases	30
Total Court Cases	345

Bench Warrants	11
License Suspensions	43

Total for all payments	\$40,264.50
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Total Cases Transferred to Superior Ct.	0
Total Defendants Incarcerated	0
Total Days Jail Sentenced	0

6. Planning and Community Development Director

Mary Darby was absent. Her report was included in the Agenda Packet for the City Commission to read.

7. Police /Codes/Animal Control – Police Chief Jalon Heard

Police Department

Reporting Period: July 29, 2025 through August 25, 2025

Part I Crimes	47
Rape	1
Motor Vehicle Theft	1 (1 recovered)
Aggravated Assault	7 (4 arrests, 1 warrant issued)
Larceny (Thefts)	37 (22 entering autos, 5 shoplifting w/4 adult and 2 juveniles arrests, 10 other thefts)
Burglary	1 (1 Residential)
 Part II Crimes	 129
Incidents Reported	121
Community Contacts	15
Arrests	26
Citations Issued	35
Warnings Issued	38
Total Calls for Service	1,084

Departmental News

Currently we have two (2) applicants in the hiring process for Patrol Officer, one applicant for school crossing guard and six applicants for Animal Control Officer. Two cadets are in their eighth week of the Police Academy.

We are currently accepting internal applications for Corporal. Assessments will be held soon.

The Event Committee have started the planning of events for the National Faith and Blue Weekend which is October 10th – 13th. We also attended a meeting about Downtown Spooktacular which is scheduled for October 30th.

Department Report – Animal Control – Reporting Period – July 29 – August 26, 2025

Dog & Cate Intake Total	143
City Intake	43
Intakes from Crisp County	52
Intakes from Other Entities	48
Number of Calls Received	40
Number of Adoptions/Rescues	22 Adoptions/2 Rescues
Animals at the Shelter	32 cats, 19 dogs + 14 under 6 weeks
Citations Issued	

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Warnings Issued	8
Open Shelter Slots	2 dog kennels/10 cat kennels

Division News:

- ADOPT! DON'T SHOP! Adoptions and rescues have slowed down.
- Dog food donations are continuing to come in. Probation, Tractor Supply and the public!

Department Report – Codes Compliance Division – Reporting Period July 29 – August 25, 2025

Abandoned Vehicles	2
C&D (Construction & Demolition)	2
Inspections	12
Tampering with Utility Property	2
Unsafe, Unsanitary, Etc.,	1
Violations	20
Weeds, Junk, Etc.	21
Other	6

Departmental News:

Code Compliance Officers assisted with two demolitions at 508 E 9th Ave. and 712 S. 8th St.
Code Compliance Officers are continuing training with framing and utility rough in inspections at Christian Homes Apartment.
Code Compliance had two blighted property cases in Municipal Court for the month of August.

8. Public Works Department – Marcia Pridgen Reported

Cemetery/Parks

- Routine grass maintenance is ongoing.
- Cemetery/Parks has completed 85 customers reported and routine maintenance work orders since the last commission report.

Gas Department

- Georgia Public Service Commission conducted three inspections on August 25th and August 26th. The inspections included the Distribution Integrity Management Plan (DIMP), DIMP Implementation, and Public Awareness. No violations were found. The PSC is scheduled to return on September 15 to conduct the Operator Qualification Inspection.
- Public Awareness messaging for Affected Public – Customer and Non-customer is being prepared. Inspection preparation has slowed progress; however, we are hopeful to have this mailing complete within the next two weeks.
- Annual Regular and Relief Valve Inspections are complete.
- Annual Leak Survey is scheduled to begin September/October.
- The Gas Department has completed 46 customers reported and routine maintenance work orders.

Street

- The Street Department has been in several different locations, clearing heavy debris from gutters that the sweeper is unable to remove. This requires using the backhoe and dump truck followed by the sweeper.
- The Department has removed debris from various ditches.
- The Street Department has completed 41 customers reported and routine maintenance work orders.

Water

- Water Department has completed 55 customers reported and routine maintenance work orders.
- Phase 2 ARPA Project has begun.

GovDeals Sales Report for July 2025

- Commission approved surplus items are slated for auction on Thursday, August 28, 2025.

9. Social Media Marketing Manager – Rick Smarr Reported

On August 27th I reached out to Granicus for the steps needed in the process to take the website live to the .gov domain. I received those steps on the same day and forwarded to Brett, Bobby & the Interdev team. GO LIVE is still set for 11:00 AM, October 1st. cordelega.gov.

September 8th will be production day for the 7th Street Corridor Urban Redevelopment Project Public Hearing Promotional Video. This has been rescheduled for the 15th.

September 11th, I was invited to accompany the Cordele Fire Department to a 9-11 Commemoration Ceremony with Crisp County JROTC at the Cougar Den.

10. UC&T Director – Debbie Wright Reported

Water Treated 55,066,100 gallons
Wastewater Treated 63,650,000 gallons

We have had 2 vendors come and look at our outdated SCADA system. They are both going to give us a quote on the new SCADA systems needed to keep our wells and tanks operating at the necessary levels. This is necessary for continuing water system pressure. We have to always keep in mind that CyberSecurity is most important. This is absolutely an Emergency!!

We have been notified by EPD that we will have a Water Lab Inspection on October 13, 2025. This is never a pleasant experience. Debbie Wright stated that when she retires, we will no longer be able to test samples for other cities or systems that are State Compliant. They (EPD) will not issue a waiver to be able to test for them. She said that she has done all she can do to try and keep testing for them. If anyone on the Commission has any say so I would love to have them contact someone to keep being able to do this service, please do so. These little cities and others only have to do 1 sample a month or a quarter. They will be left at the mercy of UPS, FEDEX or the US Postal Service to get a sample there in 30 hours. Most times it is late or never shows up.

Commission Chairman Deriso asked about a microbiologist and what does other cities charge for testing.

City Manager Angela Redding stated that the City of Cordel charges \$30 a sample.

11. IT Department – Brett Lavender Reported

- Brett stated that they are continuing to work on Windows 11 upgrades.
- Bobby Stennett has replaced eight (8) of the devices that are planned to be replaced. There are a total of thirty-eight (38) desktops and eleven (11) laptops to be replaced.
- Participated in Mary Darby's GIS Road Map Teams Meeting.
- Internet Connectivity is now connected and been tested; Bobby has been testing throughout the
- Facilities to get an understanding of what's going on.
- Internet speed has improved by 20%.
- Bobby Stennett will finish with the fiber connection for Gas and Wastewater on September 2, 2025.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consider and Approve an Event Permit: Crisp County High School Homecoming Parade. Sponsored by CCHS Student Council, Rilee Miller. Parade date and starting time: September 11, 2025 at 5:00 PM. Line up will start at 4:30 PM at Crisp County Pre-K, South Hickory St. and will end at the Football Field Stadium (E 24th Ave). Reviewed and recommended by Police Chief Heard on August 7, 2025.
Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Event Permit – Crisp County High School Homecoming Parade; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye.
The Event Permit for the Homecoming Parade was approved by the Commission.
2. Consider and Approve an Event Permit: A Tent Revival – Organizer's name: Julius Windom and Gary Grant; Outpouring of the Holy Spirit Center. Date and Location: September 5 – 15, 2025, 302 W 16th Avenue. Written permission from the property owner is on file. Police Chief Jalon Heard reviewed and recommended August 21, 2025.
Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Event Permit for the Tent Revival; seconded by Vice Chairman Rainey.
Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Event Permit for the Homecoming Parade for the Tent Revival was approved by the Commission.
3. Consider and Approve a Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Cordele, Georgia to Provide for the Issuance of a Tax Anticipation Note, Series 2025, and For Other Purposes.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Resolution to Provide for the Issuance of a Tax Anticipation Note, Series 2025; seconded by Commissioner Owens.
City Manager Angela Redding stated the Commission's approval is requested for a TAN. This is a line of credit – not to exceed \$800,000. If needed, it has to be paid off by December 31, 2025.
Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Shephard, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye.
The Resolution was approved by the Commission.

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4. Consider and Approve the Second Reading of an Ordinance to Authorize and Direct the City Attorney to Initiate Judicial In Rem Foreclosure Proceedings For Delinquent Ad Valorem Taxes Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 48-4-78 et seq.; To Provide For The Orderly Enforcement and Collection of Municipal Tax Liens; To Provide for the Transfer of Title to the City or Other Authorized Entity; To Provide For Severability; To Repeal Conflicting Ordinances; and For Other Purposes.

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

Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens voted aye.

The Second Reading of an Ordinance was approved by the Commission.

5. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Upcoming Events/Meetings

Monday, September 8, 2025

Community Café at Clara Scott Homes

213 N. 13th St.

6:00 PM

Faith Based Organizations Meeting

September 11, 2025

Community Clubhouse

108 East 15th Avenue

9:30 – 10:30 AM

Upcoming Events

City of Cordele Lunch & Learn

Cordele Police Department Training Room

12:00 Noon

Understanding Your Retirement Benefits

GMA District 8 Meeting

September 22, 2025

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Cordele Community Clubhouse

108 East 15th Ave.

City of Cordele Public Meeting

Cordele Community Clubhouse

108 East 15th Ave.

September 22, 2025

6:00 – 7:30 PM

7th Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan

Upcoming Meetings

Community Clubhouse Coordination Board Meeting

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Monday, September 8, 2025
City Hall – Courtroom
10:00 AM

DDA Meeting
Tuesday, September 9, 2025
Main Street Office
8:30 AM

Land Bank Meeting
Tuesday, September 9, 2025
CCPC Boardroom
1:00 PM

Minister's Meeting
Thursday, September 11, 2025
Community Clubhouse
9:30 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.

Qualification for the General Election in November was held August 18-22, 2025
At-Large Seat – 7 Qualified
Ward 2 – 5 Qualified with 1 withdrawal
Ward 3 – 3 Qualified

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.

Renewal Occupational Tax Certificate (Business License) will be mailed out the first of November 2025.

City Manager Angela Redding informed the Commission and public of the Ordinance pertaining to Occupational Tax Certificates (Business Licenses) due date, court penalty and interest. She also presented Ordinances from three surrounding Cities, Ashburn, Tifton and Warner Robins with similar penalties as the City of Cordele.

City of Cordele - Occupational Tax Certificate Ordinance

Sec. 6-49. - Due date; court penalty and interest.

A penalty is imposed on each business and practitioner of an occupation which or who fails to apply for and obtain appropriate registration and to pay any and all regulatory and

administrative fees and occupation taxes required by this article prior to April 1 of each year. Said penalty shall be in the amount of ten (10) percent of the regulatory and administrative fee and occupational tax determined to be due and owing under the provisions of this article. Such delinquency shall also bear interest at the rate of one (1) percent for each month or partial month of such delinquency. Penalties provided herein shall be in addition to any other penalties, civil or criminal, which may be applicable.
(Ord. No. 0-94-27, § 19, 12-20-94; Ord. No. 0-95-45, § 19, 12-19-95)

8. **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:** Tommy Coleman requested to enter into an Executive Session for Litigation.
9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate):
Commissioner Owens moved to enter Executive Session at 10:04 AM for Litigation; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye.
The Commission approved to enter Executive Session at 10:04 AM for Litigation.
10. **RECOVERED REGULAR SESSION:**
Commissioner Owens moved to reconvene Regular Session at 10:24 AM; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Vice Chairman Rainey, Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Commission reconvened the Regular Session at 10:24 AM.
11. **ADJOURNMENT:** Commission Shephard moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 10:24 AM; seconded by Commissioner Owens.
Commissioner Shephard, Commissioner Owens, Vice Chairman Rainey voted aye.
The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 AM by the Commission.