

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 4, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on November 4th, 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

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

J. Wesley Rainey, Commission Vice Chair
Isaac Owens, Commissioner
Tommy Coleman, City Attorney

Absent: Janice Mumphery, City Clerk/Recording Secretary

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

Call to Order: Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:05 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 comments 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 Commissioner Shephard.

Roll Call: A quorum was established.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – November 4, 2025: Vice Chair Rainey moved to Amend the Agenda for November 4, 2025, to include Cordele 7 Mart Alcohol License under Agenda Items; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Agenda for November 4, 2025, was Amended and Approved by the Commission.

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APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES – October 14, 2025: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Public Hearing Minutes for October 14, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Owens. The Public Hearing Minutes were approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – October 21, 2025: Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Minutes for October 21, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Minutes for October 21, 2025, were approved by the Commission.

SPEAKERS APPEARANCES: Speakers will have five (5) minutes: No Requests.

SPEAKER ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM: Speaker will have three (3) minutes: No Requests.

DEPARTMENT HEADS REPORTS:

1. Community Advancement Manager: Maurice Hill Reported.

PROPEL Youth Enrichment Meeting – Attended the YOUTH Enrichment Meeting on Oct 21st and we discussed developing an “All Star Students” Tournament as a fundraiser to support local summer programs.

7th Street Redevelopment Meeting – Attended the 7th Street Redevelopment Meeting on Oct 22nd to provide information to the attendees on the 7th Street Corridor Revitalization Plan.

BZA Meeting – Attended the Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting on October 23rd for the Georgia Home Center, and the sign variance request was approved by the Committee with a Condition.

I am currently preparing packets for December 4, BZA Meeting. The applicant is requesting several zoning variances for the ability to build a new home on the property located at 712 S 8th Street, Cordele, Georgia 31015.

Sign Permit Request – I am reviewing a sign permit request for a shopping center on 16th Avenue to provide the Planning and Community Development Director an update on the applicants’ request, based on the Zoning Ordinance in that Zoning District.

GALBA Summit – Attending the Georgia Land Bank Authority Summit on October 28th and 29th in Atlanta, to learn more about opportunities for Land Banks in Georgia. Also, to present the vision for Intergovernmental Committee as the Committee Chairman.

2. Finance Department: Sonya Alexander Reported.

Sales Tax Receipts: Month of October \$445,885.39

3. Fire Department Report: Fire Chief Todd Alligood Reported.

Reporting Period: September 30 – October 28, 2025

Calls for Service: Total 89

Car Fire	3
Grass Fire/Rubbish	2
Burn	1

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Smoke Scare	2
Fire Alarm	15
Medical Assist	46
Motor Vehicle Accident	8
Other	12

Department News

- Attended the Downtown Spooktacular
- Attended Trunk or Treat at the CC Pre-K
- Honored to serve on the interview committee for the new Chief of Police.

4. Human Resource: David Wade Reported.

- Attended the Budget Review Meetings and the Public Hearing Proposed FY 26 budget.
- Attended the Aldi's Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.
- Attended the Faith in Blue Flagpole Ceremony.
- Attended the Advisory Committee Meeting at South Georgia Technical College.
- The renewal for the First Responded PTSD Program was submitted on October 17th, this will be effective January 1, 2026.
- Working to complete the Firefighter Cancer Benefit Program 2026 renewal application, effective January 1, 2026.
- On October 16th Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage open-enrollment announcement for the 2026 benefit year was submitted to all employees – Enrollment period October 15 – December 7, 2025.
- Attended the Police Chief evaluation, interview and public forum meetings.
- Reminder, flu vaccines are still available.

David Wade stated at the last meeting Chairman Deriso requested information about the staffing information for the Police Department, asking if the positions were included on the manpower sheets. Just to clarify – eight vacancies – where they are:

One (1) Police Chief

Patrol and Detective Division – 26 employees – three of those are the Patrol Division, one Corporal, two Police Officers.

One (1) Detective.

Three (3) positions – Support Staff.

5. Municipal Court: Nancy Crook Reported.

Traffic Cases	145
Criminal Cases	5
Total Court Cases	150

Bench Warrants	10
License Suspensions Ordered	45

Total Collections \$35,223.98

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Total Cases Transferred	0
Total Defendants Incarcerated	0
Total Days Jail Sentenced	0

6. Planning and Community Development Director: Mary Darby Reported.

The following is a summary of tasks undertaken by the Planning and Community Development Department during the weeks of October 22, 2025 – November 4, 2025.

- I. Conducting Pre-Planning meeting with Code Enforcement on Proposed Zoning and Planning projects.**
- II. Conducting Site Plan Reviews on Proposed Commercial Developments.**
- III. Updating Cordele's Comprehensive Plan (2024-2029), Zoning Map.**
 - a. Divided city into seven areas for map updates. These include the four wards and the two main corridors. Currently, updating the corridors.
 - b. Ensuring annexations and rezonings are captured on the zoning map.
- IV. Working on the Update of the Comprehensive Plan Work Program (2024-2029) regarding 2025 Accomplishments and 2026-2029 program and project updates.**
- V. Conducting Succession Trainings with Team.**
 - a. Conducting site plan reviews.
 - b. Writing staff reports.
 - c. ESRI software.
 - d. Scheduling training sessions for HPC, BZA, and PC.
- VI. Reviewing Housing Plans/Developments that may promote development in the city.**
 - a. Reviewing GA Tech's study.
 - b. Reviewing Comprehensive Plan.
 - c. Reviewing CDBG opportunities.
 - d. Other studies and surrounding cities.
- VII. Working on CDBG Grant with RVRC.**
 - a. Updating the 2025 infrastructure grant proposal to be resubmitted in 2026 for consideration.
 - b. Reviewing the Gillespie-Selden Urban Redevelopment Plan for potential grant opportunities.
- VIII. Meetings Held, Attended, or Scheduled.**
 - a. 2nd 7th Street Corridor public meeting was held on October 22nd which began at 6:00 p.m.
 - b. ED Infrastructure meeting with U, C, & T scheduled for October 27, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.
 - c. Attended a GALBA Land Bank Summit on October 27th and October 28, 2025.

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- d. Propel meeting scheduled on October 30, 8:30 a.m.

IX. Preparing applications procedures and processes on:

- i. Sign Permit Applications.
- ii. Minor Subdivisions.

X. Public Hearings.

- a. December 4, 2025, BZA Hearing.
Property located at 712 S. 8th Street. The Applicant requesting approval for four Variances to reduce lot size, lot width, and yard setbacks on a non-conforming lot.
- b. Reviewing minutes from October 16, 2025, PC hearing.
- c. Held the BZA hearing on October 23, 2025.

7. Police Department/Animal Control/Codes Compliance – Interim Police Chief Connie Sampson

Reporting Period: September 30, 2025 – October 30, 2025

Calls for Service

Part I Crimes	18
Motor Vehicle Thefts	3 (3 recovered)
Aggravated Assaults	2 (0 arrests)
Larceny (Thefts)	12 (2 entering auto, 2 shoplifting with 1 adult arrest and 8 other thefts)
Burglary	1 (1 Residential)

Part II Crimes	98
Incidents Reported	86
Community Contacts	10
Arrests	29
Citations Issued	58
Warnings Issued	37
Total Calls for Service	1,079

Departmental News

- Currently we have zero applicants in the hiring process for Patrol Officer.
- Cadets Pollock Fennell are currently in their thirteenth week of the Police Academy.
- The Department will be participating in Tractor Supply's Hometown Hero Event, which is held on Saturday, November 1st from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM.
- We have started collecting donations for Shop with a Cop 2025.

Codes Compliance Division

Reporting Period: October 1, 2025 – October 29, 2025

Abandoned Vehicle	5
Inspections	1
Unsafe, Unsanitary, Etc.	6
Violations	8

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Weeds, Junk, Etc.	30
Other	1

Departmental News

Code Officers assisted with pick up of trash bags dumped in streets on 7th Ave W. and 24th Ave. E.

Code Officers conducted Court Hearings on four blighted properties and one property for renovation and demolition.

Cordele Market Place (by Walmart) restriped and sealed their parking lot.

Animal Control

Dog & Cat Intake Total	156
City Intakes	51
County Intakes	58
Other Entities Intakes	47
Number of Calls Received	48
Number of Adoptions/Rescues	2 Owner Reclaims/31 Adoptions/ 9 Rescues
Animals Currently at The Shelter	29 cats/25 dogs
Citations Issued	4
Warnings Issued	8
Open Shelter Slots:	3 dogs/7 cats

Division News:

- ADOPT! DON" T SHOP! Adoptions and rescues have picked up. Unfortunately, sign-overs have increased, along with people dumping animals.
- Dog food donations are continuing to come in. Probation, Tractor Supply, and the Public.

8. Public Works – Marcia Pridgen.

Cemetery/Parks

- Routine grass maintenance is ongoing.
- Cemetery/Parks will begin installing Christmas decorations on Monday, November 3rd.
- Cemetery/Parks has completed fifty-one (51) customers reported and routine maintenance Work Orders since the last Commission Report.

Engineering

- The Engineering Department has completed eleven (11) customers reported and routine maintenance work orders for the storm water system.

Gas

- Annual Leak Survey is in progress.
- The Gas Department has completed thirty-six (36) customers reported and routine maintenance work orders.

Street

- The street sweeper is back in service.
- Sidewalk repair on 12th Avenue between 7th Street & 8th Street is in progress.

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- The Street Department has completed five (5) customers reported and routine maintenance work orders.

Water/Sewer

- ARPA Project:
 - Phase 1 – Received final pay request from the Contractor.
 - Phase 2 – Contractor is still cleaning and tv'ing lines.
 - Inspections of services related to the lead/cooper survey have been completed for all customers who contacted us.
- The Water/Sewer Department has completed forty-four (44) customers reported and routine maintenance work orders.

GovDeals

- No sales occurred this month. Several computer items, approved by the City Commission, were sent out for bid on October 27th.

Vice Chairman Rainey stated he reviewed all the Landscaping Contractors for the City, it makes sense to him for the City not to have to contract out Landscaping Services. Vice Chairman Rainey asked Marcia Pridgen, Interim Public Works Director to look at Personnel and equipment that will be needed for the City to do the work, this will give a more understanding of what is needed to save the City some money.

There was a discussion on Personnel and equipment that is needed for Public Works to do all Landscaping Services for the City. Interim Public Works Director Marcia Pridgen will review all positions in Public Works, equipment and contracts, and she will report back to the Commission.

The Commission agreed to this decision.

9. Social Media/Marketing Report: Rick Smarr Reported.

Rick Smarr stated that he attended the GMA Communicators Conference in St. Simon. The Conference was very informative and collaborative.

10. UC&T – Debbie Wright Reported.

Water Treated 52 million gallons

Wastewater Treated 45 million gallons

Rain for the month of October – 1.9"

Debbie Wright stated that Cordele is in moderate drought.

11. IT – Brett Lavender Reported.

Computer Replacement: Brett Lavender stated the week of October 20th, Micah Jones from Interdev (System Engineer) came and worked with him and twenty-two computers were installed. They are preparing to install nine remaining computers.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Sworn In – Membrish Brown: To Community Clubhouse Coordination Board