

MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CITY OF COLUMBUS, MS December 16, 2025

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in the Court Chambers of the Municipal Complex. Mayor Stephen Jones presided over the meeting and all Council Members were present. Also present were the General Counsel, the COO, CFO, Police Chief, HR Director, and all other Department Heads.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Stephen Jones called the meeting to order and called upon Rev. Willie Jones, Pastor of Anderson Grove M. B. Church, to offer the Invocation.

II. CONFIRMATION OF/OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Council Member Harris made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Council Member Smith seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion

The motion carried 6/0.

III. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

A. Approve Minutes for the Meeting of December 2, 2025

B. Approve Minutes for Meeting of December 10, 2025 Work Session / Meeting.

Council Member Harris made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Meeting of December 2, 2025 and the Minutes for the Meeting of December 10, 2025 Work Session / Meeting. Council Member Spears seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

IV. APPROVE DOCKET OF CLAIMS

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Council Member Spears made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for December 16, 2025 in the amount of \$512,526.60. Council Member Harris seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve request for Veronica Stewart, Administrative Assistant, to become a Notary Public at an approximate cost of \$250.00.
- B. Approve request for Mayor Jones, City Council Members, Executive Staff and Department Heads to attend "2026 Strategic Planning Session" to be held at Plymouth Bluff at the cost of \$1,400.00.
- C. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel: Preston Long and DeAndra Lewis. to attend "NFPA 1010 Basic Firefighter" to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of registration, lodging, use of City vehicle for travel, reimbursement of meal expenses and any other expenses, total estimated cost is \$4,000.00.
- D. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, James Dunnam, to attend "Hazardous Materials Technician" to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of registration, lodging, use of City vehicle for travel, reimbursement of meal expenses and any other expenses, total estimated cost is \$235.00.
- E. Approve request for five (5) Fire and Rescue personnel: Terrance Colister, Jacorey Douglas, Frederick Harris, Alan Lewis and Matthew McWain to attend "MSTAT (Mississippi Trainee Agility Test)" to be held in Starkville, MS, and approve payment of registration use of City vehicle for travel, reimbursement of meal expenses, and any other expenses, total estimated cost is \$100.00.
- F. Accept letter of resignation from Fire and Rescue Firefighter Frederick Harris, effective December 21, 2025 and approve compensation of any unused vacation leave.
- G. Approve request to send CPD Officers Diamond Lee and Darius Glover to the "North Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Center" in Tupelo, MS; approve the cost of reimbursable tuition of \$4,000.00 per officer and reimburse officers for clothing allowance, not to exceed \$350.00 each upon completion of the academy.

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- H. Approve request for CDP personnel to attend “Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Course” to be held in Columbus, MS and approve any necessary expenses.
- I. Approve use of City vehicle for the Building Inspection Director and Office Manager to attend a one-day Elevation Certificate Workshop in Starkville, MS, hosted by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency on January 27, 2026.
- J. Approve request to pay for on-line Residential Electrical Inspector course for Building Inspector that will count toward the Mississippi Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule at a cost of \$309.00.
- K. Approve the lowest and best bid from Henry Miller Roofing, LLC in the amount of \$7,042.01 to replace the shingle roof on the Farmers’ Market Annex building.
- L. Approve the lowest and best bid from Graham Roofing in the amount of \$38,944.00 to install a white TPO retrofit roof system on the East Columbus Gym.
- M. Approve renewal of Notary Bond and required expenses for the Human Resources Director in the estimated amount of \$150.00.
- N. Approve the 2% Tourism Tax Payment of \$25,000 to Lowndes County, \$20,833.33 to Golden Triangle Development LINK, \$33,333.33 to the City of Columbus and \$145,459.60 to Columbus Visitors Bureau, in the total amount of \$224,626.26.

Council Member Smith made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as prepared. Council Member Spears seconded the motion. Mayor Jones called for discussion, and there being none, all Council Members voted in favor of same, with a unanimous vote.

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA:

A. Comments, Announcements and Observations from the Mayor and Council

- Mayor Jones recognized the new Municipal Judge, Chynnee Bailey, and welcomed her to the City. Judge Bailey thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity and looks forward to serve the City in this capacity.

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- Mayor Jones offered Special Recognition to Zion Reed for winning the TCB Fight Pro Middleweight Championship Belt 2025 in Tunica, MS on December 6, 2025. His next fight will be February 21, 2026 at the Trotter Convention Center. Mr. Reed thanked the Mayor and Council for the recognition and support.
- Except for Emergency Personnel, all City Offices will be closed ½ day on Wednesday, December 23 and Thursday and Friday, December 25 & 26, 2025 for Christmas holidays.
- The next Work Session will be held Tuesday, December 30, 2025 at 10:30 p.m.
- Mayor Jones offered Condolences to:
 - ❖ The Lathan Family in the loss of Brenda Lathan.
 - ❖ The Ivy/Bonner Family in the loss of James O. Ivy, Rogena Bonner's father
 - ❖ The Tate Family in the loss of Timothy Tate's mother.

DEPARTMENT HEADS' MONTHLY REPORTS:

B. Public Works – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Public Works Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

C. Garage – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Garage Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

D. Building Inspection and Code Enforcement – November 2025 Report

The Monthly Report for the Building Inspection Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

E. Fire and Rescue Department – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

F. Forensic Lab – November 2025 Monthly Report

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The Monthly Report for the Forensic Lab for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

G. Police Department – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Columbus Police Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

H. Facilities – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Facilities Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

I. Planning & Community Development – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Planning & Community Development Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

J. Columbus Recreation Department - November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Columbus Recreation Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

K. Finance – November 2025 Monthly Report

Jim Brigham, CFO, presented the Monthly Financial Report for November 2025 that includes the General Fund cash balance of \$6,799,142.85, which is a decrease of \$1,529,624.78 compared to the same time last year. The Sales Tax Receipts for November are \$964,6557.00, which is an increase of \$10,582.00 compared to the same time last year. The balance in the Major Projects (ARPA) is \$2,706,662.69, City-wide Park Improvement project has a balance of \$620,869.91, Modernization Use Tax has a balance of \$3,342,703.95, and the Amphitheater balance is \$1,000,000.00. No action was taken.

L. Information Technology – November 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Information Technology Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

M. Human Resources – November 2025 Monthly Report

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The Monthly Report for the Human Resources Department for November 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

N. Human Resources Department – October 2025 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report for the Human Resources Department for October 2025 was presented. No action was taken.

O. BOARD VACANCIES

Jammie Garrett, COO, announced vacancies on various boards.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

1 Vacancy, Robert Smith's 4-Year Term Expires 12/21/2025.

Appointment will be made January 6, 2026.

APPLICANT:

Robert Smith

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA

NONE

VIII. POLICY AGENDA

A. Discuss/Approve a request from Lowndes Fire Coordinator Jim Robbins for the donation of twelve (12) 1 ¾" surplus fire hose sections.

Council Member Smith made a motion to declare twelve (12) 1 ¾" fire hose sections as surplus and donate it to Lowndes Volunteer Fire Department care of Jim Robbins, Fire Coordinator. Council Member Jefferson seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

B. Discuss/Approve recommendations from the December 8, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.

Permitted Use Request 25-14

Tameka Williams

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2210 Bluecutt Road
R-1 Single Family Residential District

Request to allow operation of residence as a short-term rental.

With a non-binding vote due to lack of a quorum, the Planning Commission voted four to one (4 /1) to recommend approval of the request

Finding of Facts:

The Commission based their decision on the request being in harmony with the district and there were no objections from neighboring property owners.

Council Member Greene moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to allow operation of residence at 2210 Bluecutt Road as a short-term rental in a Single-Family Residential neighborhood be approved. Council Member Harris seconded the motion. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

Permitted Use Request 25-15

Vaudine Brock
310 11th Street North
R-1 Single Family Residential District

Request to allow operation of residence as a short-term rental.

With a unanimous vote of 5 to 0, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request.

Finding of Facts:

The Commission based their decision on the request being in harmony with the district and there were no objections from neighboring property owners.

Council Member Smith moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to allow operation of residence at 310 11th Street North as a short-term rental in a

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Single-Family Residential neighborhood be approved. Council Member Spears seconded the motion. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

Permitted Use Request 25-16

Jamal El Bey
Vacant lot on Stokes Road
R-1 Single Family Residential District

Request to allow a mobile home placement.

With a unanimous vote of 5 to 0, the Planning Commission recommended denial of the request

Finding of Facts:

The Commission based their decision on mobile homes not being allowed in R-1 Single Family Residential districts.

Councilman Smith moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to deny the request to allow a mobile home placement on a vacant lot on Stokes Road in a Single-Family Residential District be approved and upheld. Council Member Greene seconded the motion. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

Permitted Use Request 25-17

Fields Ferguson on behalf of Rhett Parker
714 10th Street North
R-1 Single Family Residential District

Request to allow operation of residence as a short-term rental.

With a unanimous vote of 5 to 0, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request.

Finding of Facts:

The Commission based their decision on the request being in harmony with the district and there were no objections from neighboring property owners.

Council Member Harris moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to allow operation of a residence at 714 10th Street North as a short-term rental in a Single-Family Residential neighborhood be approved. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

Rezoning Request 25-18

D J Mantooth on behalf of Rockwood Property Group LLC

1525 3rd Avenue North

R-1 Single Family Residential District

Request to rezone property to R-2 Two-Family Residential.

With a unanimous vote of 5 to 0, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request to rezone the property to R-2 so as to allow the owner to convert an existing single-family residence to a duplex.

Finding of Facts:

The Commission based their decision on a public need for housing and a change in the character of the neighborhood with the change being stated that the neighborhood had declined in its upkeep and there was no longer a market for large single family homes at the location in question, so without the zoning change, the property would continue to decline in value and become blighted. There was also no objection from neighboring property owners.

Council Member Harris moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City

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Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to allow the rezoning of property at 1525 3rd Avenue North from R-1 Single Family Residential District to R-2 Two-Family Residential be approved based on a public need for housing and a change in the character of the neighborhood. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

Rezoning Request 25-19

D J Mantooth on behalf of Rockwood Property Group LLC
1415 3rd Avenue North
R-1 Single Family Residential District

Request to rezone property to R-2 Two-Family Residential.

With a unanimous vote of 5 to 0, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request to rezone property from R-1 single family residential to R-2 Two-Family Residential.

Finding of Facts:

The Commission based their decision on a public need for housing and a change in the character of the neighborhood with the change being stated that the neighborhood had declined in its upkeep and there was no longer a market for large single family homes at the location in question, so without the zoning change, the property would continue to decline in value and become blighted.. There was also no objection from neighboring property owners.

Council Member Smith moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to allow the rezoning of property at 1415 3rd Avenue North from R-1 Single Family Residential District to R-2 Two-Family Residential be approved based on a public need for housing and a change in the character of the neighborhood. Council Member Jefferson seconded the motion. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

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All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

C. Discuss/Approve Property, Casualty and Liability Insurance Renewal for 2026.

Human Resources Director presented the renewal request for Property, Casualty, and Liability Insurance for 2026, which will go in effect December 31, 2025 at a cost of \$544,474.00. Agent of Record, Brad Mauck, was present to answer questions about the renewal. Council Member Smith made a motion to approve the Property, Casualty and Liability Insurance Renewal for 2026 in the amount of \$544,474.00. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion. The Council requested that the agent provide a proposal for a Claims-Made or Occurrence Policy for Law Enforcement to the Renewal of the Existing Policy.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

Renewal Documents follow:

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City of Columbus, MS Insurance Employers Mutual/MMSC Proposal 12/31/2025 to 12/31/2026

	Employers Mutual		Employers Mutual			
Property	Exp. Value	Exp. Premium	Proposed Value	Proposed Premium	MMSC Value	Premium
Blanket Buildings	\$41,807,468	\$119,817	\$42,508,374	\$129,112		
*Business Personal Property						
*Per Schedule of Property						
Streetlights	\$3,400,000	Included	\$3,712,800	Included		
Deductible \$25,000 90% co-insurance						
Wind/Hail Ded. \$50,000 per occurrence						
<u>Inland Marine (Equip. Coverage)</u>						
Scheduled Items	\$2,849,885	\$11,617	\$3,065,685	\$12,416		
Deductible \$1,000						
Scheduled Items - ACV						
<u>Crime (Employment Theft Dishonesty)</u>	\$100,000	\$ 524	\$100,000	\$524		
Deductible \$1,000						
<u>Cyber Solutions</u>	\$100,000	\$ 917	\$100,000	\$917		
Deductible \$1,000						
<u>Auto</u>						
Auto Liability \$1,000,000 Subject to Mississippi Tort Statutory Can of Uninsured Motorists					INCLUDED	
Medical Payments						
Physical Damage Coverage	229 Units	\$116,938	257 Units	\$149,467		
\$2,000 Deductible Comp & Coll	\$14,081,529		\$16,114,655			
<u>General Liability</u>					\$500,000	
Each Occurrence						
General Aggregate						
Subject to the MS Tort Statutory Cap of Limited Pollution						
Cemetery Liability						
Medical Expense						
Personal and Advertising Injury						
Employee Benefits Liability					INCLUDED	
(\$1,000 Deductible)						
<u>Law Enforcement Liability</u>					\$500,000	
Each Wrongful Act						
Annual Aggregate						
Retroactive Date 12/11/2017					Deductible \$0	
<u>Public Official Management Liability</u>						
<u>And Employment Practices Liability</u>					\$500,000	
Each Wrongful Act						
Annual Aggregate						
Retroactive Date 7/1/1993					Deductible \$0	

Disclosures: This outline is a synopsis of coverage and implies no terms and conditions of the actual Contract. No coverage can be construed by the synopsis. Please refer to the actual contract. Cancellations after binding are subject to eleven percent retainage plus cancellation provisions of the Insurance contract. Quote is valid until 12/31/2024. Actual premium may change based upon Confirmation of schedules. All commissions and fees are fully earned.

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CHANGES IN COVERAGE TO RENEWAL

REMOVED:

161 Maple, Columbus MS 39702 has been excluded from the policy until repairs are completed.

Increased values on buildings and Business personal property.

SAME AS LAST POLICY TERM

Property Deductible \$25,000 with a \$50,000 wind/hail deductible.

110% margin clause on the blanket coverages.

All locations Limitations on Coverage for Roof Surfacing Form CP7370 – at the time of a loss if it is determined that the roof is 15 years or older, Actual Cash Value applies. At time of loss, if roof is less than 15 years Replacement Cost will apply.

Auto Deductible \$2000 Comp and \$2,000 Collision

****** We marked 14 different companies for competitive quotes. Receiving a quote only from the incumbent Employers Mutual Company.**

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D. Discuss/Approve Resolution of the Mayor and City Council approving the levy of a 2 percent added tax upon Short-Term Rentals within the City of Columbus.

Council Member Smith made a motion to approve the Resolution of the Mayor and City Council approving the levy of a 2 percent added tax upon Short-Term Rentals within the City of Columbus. The motion was seconded by Council Member Jefferson, and after a thorough discussion, the Mayor called for a vote on the motion and the motion was adopted on a voice vote of those members there and then voting as follows:

Council Member Stewart	voted: <u>YES</u>
Council Member Smith	voted: <u>YES</u>
Council Member Greene	voted: <u>YES</u>
Council Member Harris	voted: <u>YES</u>
Council Member Jefferson	voted: <u>YES</u>
Council Member Spears	voted: <u>YES</u>

The Mayor then stated that the Resolution, having received a majority of the votes of the Mayor and City Council, was hereby passed and ordained on this the _____16th day of December, 2025.

THE RESOLUTION FOLLOWS:

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**Resolution of Mayor and City Council approving the levy of a 2
percent added tax upon Short Term Rentals
within the City of Columbus**

Council Member Smith moved for the adoption of a Resolution approving the levy of an added two percent (2%) tax upon short term rentals within the City of Columbus, Mississippi which resolution reads;

WHEREAS, with growing frequency, property owners in Columbus are renting their dwellings to third parties for short terms at significant profit; and

WHEREAS, Section 27-65-23.1 of the Mississippi Code provides for the collection of added sales taxes upon short term rentals upon passage of a resolution by the Mayor and City Council or the County Board of Supervisors declaring their intention to include such entities for purposes of the collection of a "hotel" and "motel" tax upon the entities described in said Mississippi Code Section; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 1069 of the 1985 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature provided for an added 2% added tax on Motel and Hotel rentals, to be used for the purposes of providing funds for the promotion of conventions and the construction and maintenance of convention spaces and that such rentals in unincorporated areas of the County be paid to the County Supervisors and such rentals inside the City of Columbus be paid to the governing authority of the City of Columbus;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED as follows:

1. That the above and foregoing provisions of this Resolution be adopted; and
2. That pursuant to the authority granted to them under Section 27-65-23.1 of the Mississippi Code, the Mayor and Council declare their intention to levy an added two percent (2%) tax on all short term rentals within the incorporated areas of the City, the limits of which may be adjusted from time to time hereafter; and
3. That this resolution and levy apply to all such rentals within the City limits of the City of Columbus notwithstanding the limitations and definitions set forth in House Bill 1069 from the 1985 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature; and
4. That this Resolution be effective 30 days after passage of this Resolution;
5. That the Municipal Clerk/Secretary Treasurer be authorized and hereby is directed to deliver a certified copy of this Resolution to the Mississippi State Tax Commission.

The Motion was seconded by Council Member Jefferson and after a thorough discussion the Mayor called for a vote on the motion and the motion was adopted on a voice vote of those members there and then voting as follows:

	Yes	Nay
Council Member Stewart	<u>X</u>	_____
Council Member Smith	<u>X</u>	_____
Council Member Greene	<u>X</u>	_____
Council Member Harris	<u>X</u>	_____
Council Member Jefferson	<u>X</u>	_____
Council Member Spears	<u>X</u>	_____

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The Mayor then stated that the Resolution, having received a majority of the votes of the Mayor and City Council, was hereby passed and ordained on this the 16th day of December, 2025.



Stephen Jones, Mayor of City of Columbus, MS

Certification of Mayor's Signature:



James Brigham, Municipal Clerk and Secretary/
Treasurer



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ADJOURNMENT:

The Mayor then asked if there was any other business to come before the Mayor and City Council. There being none, Mayor Jones announced that the meeting was ADJOURNED.

Approved by: _____
Stephen Jones, Mayor

James “Jim” Brigham
CFO/Secretary-Treasurer/Clerk

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