

Mayor & Board of Aldermen –Special Call Meeting @ 6:00PM

Meeting Minutes

- June 11, 2025

Present: Mayor Adrian Wiggins
Vice Mayor Cates
Aldermen Marilyn Austin, Dan Bailey, Harry Campbell & Debbie Hummel

1. Call to Order

Mayor Wiggins called the meeting to order.

2. Establish Quorum

All were present

3. Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Cates to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Alderman Campbell. All were in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

5. Citizen Comments

Chris Goodman – Fair Oaks Drive – Spoke in opposition of purchasing real property located at 14655 Hwy 194, for the purpose of the town’s administrative offices. Prior to returning to his seat, he stated his support for the town’s public safety staff that is currently in place.

Paul Ponce – Oakland Woods Cove- Spoke in opposition of the proposed purchase, pointing out there is significant lack of support from the community and to continue pursuing the initiative, reflects a troubling disregard for constituents. Mr. Ponce stated he stood fully in support of Oakland’s Police Chief.

Oscar Ethridge – Black Ankle Drive – Encouraged the board to reconsider the property purchase due to the cost of restoration.

Forrest Bartlett – Marrietta Drive– Informed the board of recent auto thefts in the Burton Place Subdivision, he requested that the Police Department budget be increased to include additional Flock cameras for subdivisions who are willing to subsidize part of the cost. He gave kudos to the Oakland Police Department for being in the top 10 of safest cities for the past few years, due to a large part of the police chief.

Roy Neuhauser – Countryside Drive – Spoke in opposition of purchasing the proposed property. He suggested building a new single-story building on the property that is currently owned by the town.

Myron Massey – Lakewood Drive - Opposed to the purchase of the proposed property for administrative offices, based on inspection documents that reveal structural flaws, mold, and roofing issues. He also stated his support for Oakland Police Department and its Chief.

6. Old Business: Ordinances First Reading

Ordinance 25-05 - Adopting the FY 2026 Annual Operating and Capital Budget; Establishing a Public Hearing date of June 30, 2025.

A motion was made by Alderman Campbell to hear 1st Reading Ordinance 25-05. Alderman Bailey seconded the motion.

Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to approve the 1st Reading of Ordinance 25-05, with the condition of adding 2 additional positions, 1 Parks & Recreation and 1 Public Works. Alderman Campbell seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. The 1st Reading of Ordinance 25-05 passed.

Ordinance 25-06 – Establishing Municipal Property Tax Levy for FY26; Establishing a Public Hearing date of June 30, 2025

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Cates to hear 1st Reading Ordinance 25-06. Alderman Austin seconded the motion.

Town Manager Ellis reported the Fayette County Tax Assessor reassessment rate is \$0.4552. Mr. Ellis recommended the FY26 proposed property tax rate to remain as is, at \$ 0.6342 on each \$100 of assessed value. Due to the county's reassessment rate being lower, this would be considered a property tax increase for the Town of Oakland. During the work session there were various uses discussed for the tax increase, new positions, Fire Station #2 design, and Police Department salaries.

Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to approve the 1st Reading of Ordinance 25-06, based on the Town Managers recommendation. Alderman Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. The 1st Reading of Ordinance 25-06 passed.

Ordinance 25-07 – Authorizing a Water Rate Reduction And Sewer Rate Increase for Usages

A motion was made by Alderman Bailey to hear 1st Reading Ordinance 25-07. Vice Mayor Cates seconded the motion.

Town Manager Ellis reiterated the town has incurred debt for the update to the waste-water treatment plant, which is required to be paid back solely by sewer revenue. He explained that a utility rate study was performed by MTAS, which is the basis for the proposed rates: residential customers (inside the corporate limits) will receive a reduction on their base water rate; and, an increase on their base sewer rate. For commercial customers (inside the corporate limits) the water rate will remain the same, however both, residential and commercial customers (inside the corporate limits) will see an increase in their sewer rate.

In summary:

A reduced Water Rate will be granted to residential customers inside the corporate limits. All other water rates will remain the same.

An increased Sewer Rate will be imposed on both residential and commercial customers inside the corporate limits.

Alderman Hummel asked if the 3-month sewer adjustment normally given during June, July & August will continue with the passing of this ordinance? Mr. Ellis replied, the summer sewer adjustments will be eliminated with Ordinance 25-07. But because, this ordinance has an effective date July 1, 2025, sewer customers will receive a sewer adjustment for the month of June 2025. Mr. Ellis announced there are irrigation meters available, for approximately \$500. which, the water used is the only charge.

Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to approve the 1st Reading of Ordinance 25-07. Alderman Campbell seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. The 1st Reading of Ordinance 25-07 passed.

7. Consideration of Resolutions: New Business

A. Resolution 25-17 – Authorizing The Mayor to Enter Contract to Purchase Real Property Located at 14655 Hwy 194, Oakland TN 38060

A motion was made by Alderman Hummel to hear Resolution 25-17.

Town Manager Ellis explained the idea behind purchasing the church (14655 Hwy 194) was to solve an immediate problem with safe workspace for employees.

Mayor Wiggins voiced his thoughts of continuing with the new town building (previously proposed \$17m) rather than this church property.

Vice Mayor Cates agreed that a new city hall was needed, further stating the town owns property and can build nice office space for a lot less than \$17m. Mayor Wiggins commented there are other options in building something smaller and more affordable, but the blueprints that have been paid for will be irrelevant and the town will have to start all over in the process.

Alderman Hummel stated that while she appreciated Town Manager Ellis' effort, she agreed with Vice Mayor Cates. She shared that by her calculations, in just what was provided to the aldermen the town would be looking a \$1,649,849, not including architectural drawings and engineering cost. She asked Attorney Minor of the process if this resolution is voted down. Attorney Minor stated he would draft a letter to the real-estate agent and the real-estate attorney advising them that the town's due-diligence inquiries determined it is not in the best interest of the town to proceed forward with the contract. They must have the letter June 13th, if nothing is done by that date, the town is on the hook to purchase the property. Attorney Minor stated, based on the board's decision, he would not wait until the 13th; he would get the letter out tomorrow.

Alderman Hummel thanked Attorney Minor for explaining and clearing up questions she had. She closed in expressing her support for the Chief of Police and the Oakland Police Department.

Alderman Hummel made a motion not to move forward with the contract and not approve Resolution 25-17. The motion was seconded by Harry Campbell. Vice Mayor Cates called for a Roll-Call vote: Campbell-Yes, Austin-Yes, Hummel-Yes, Bailey-Yes & Cates -Yes. Resolution 25-17 failed.

8. Consideration of Other Business

A. Fairway Village Section "D" - Release Surety

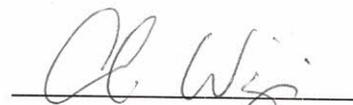
Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to release the bond at the recommendation of Planning Director Ed Courton and Attorney Minor. Alderman Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

9. Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Hummel.

Date: June 11, 2025


K. Yvonne Bullard, Town Recorder


Adrian Wiggins, Mayor