

OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
July 15, 2025 | 4:00 PM
Owensboro City Hall
101 E. 4th Street
Owensboro, Kentucky

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Tom Watson

2. ROLL CALL – City Clerk Beth Davis

Present:

Mayor Tom Watson

Mayor Pro Tem Bob Glenn

Commissioner Jeff Sanford

Commissioner Curtis Maglinger

Commissioner Sharon NeSmith

3. INVOCATION & PLEDGE - Commissioner Sharon NeSmith

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.A. Mayor Watson recognized the following retirement recognitions effective July 31, 2025. Each recipient was in attendance and spoke a few brief words, with the exception of Norman Byers.

- Norman Byers, Jr., Lead Telecommunicator
- Aaron Hamilton, Police Sergeant
- Jennifer Hodges, Parks Dept. Recreation Facilities Manager
- Barbara Keller, OPD Administrative Aide
- Jeremy Mulligan, Police Lieutenant
- Greg Stepp, Mechanic

4.B. Amanda Rogers, Parks Director & Adam Wright, Grounds Manager gave an update on the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant the City recently received (presentation attached). The Equitable Urban Canopy Initiative was funded by the Inflation Reduction Act and the USDA Forest Service, Urban and Community Forestry Program in partnership with the Kentucky Division of Forestry. The \$84,303 grant will allow the City to conduct a comprehensive tree inventory and assessment, identify and mitigate potential risks, implement strategic tree removal where necessary, enhance Owensboro's urban canopy through strategic tree-planting efforts, and develop a tree canopy management policy. The locations consist of specific city parks with an estimated completion date of fall 2026.

4.C. Lieutenant Chad Johnson, Fire Department, presented information on elevator safety and the training received by first responders to meet the emergency situations (presentation attached).

4.D. Hunter Ragan, Sanitation Manager, shared information on the Sanitation Department's street sweeping program (presentation attached). Information and the street sweeping schedule can be found on the owensboro.org/sanitation page.

4.E. City Manager Nate Pagan stated that frequent requests from citizens have been received asking that the fowl ordinance be amended to allow backyard chickens within the corporate limits (presentation attached). Most similar cities currently allow chickens. He presented potential options if a change is made to the ordinance. Possible reasonable regulations would include: allowing chickens in residential zones only, five hen max, no roosters, 50' setback from closest neighboring house, covered and secured coops and no accumulation of feed or excrement. Chickens would be for personal use only with no commercial production allowed, permit required from the City and the Homeowners Association covenants would still apply. Feedback from the community can be sent to owensboro.org/chickens with more discussion likely to occur in one to two months. Mr. Pagan said he did not see any major impact based on his discussions with other cities.

4.F. The City Project List was distributed. City Manager Nate Pagan noted that the bids for the pickleball project are scheduled to go out this month.

5. BUSINESS

5.A. Minutes dated July 1, 2025 were unanimously approved by motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner Sanford.

5.B. The following board appointments were unanimously approved by motion of Commissioner NeSmith and a second by Mayor Pro Tem Glenn:

- **Apollo Area Neighborhood Alliance** – Reappoint Loretta Schell to a two-year term effective July 21, 2025
- **Shifley York Neighborhood Alliance** – Reappoint Debbi Barker and Miranda Barker to a two-year term effective July 18, 2025
- **Old Owensboro Neighborhood Alliance** – Appoint Derek Cain to a two-year term effective July 15, 2025

6. ORDINANCES – 1st READING

6.A. Ordinance 10-2025 entitled AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 3, ARTICLE III, SECTION 3-57 OF THE OWENSBORO MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO THE ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION CENTER TO ALLOW IT TO BE ENJOYED AT ALL

TIMES ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE SOLD, was introduced and publicly read on first reading.

The City created an Entertainment Destination Center (EDC) in the Owensboro riverfront area, which has been successful and popular with visitors in downtown Owensboro. The City now seeks to allow visitors to enjoy the EDC at all times alcohol is sold by establishments within the EDC. City Manager Pagan explained the EDC, "The District", was originally established by ordinance in 2018, which allows alcohol to be open carried downtown in special green cups. The EDC was initially only active during special events. After monitoring that for a couple of years, the ordinance was then amended in 2020 to allow the EDC to be active on weekends and during the week when special events were held. At the request of downtown businesses, this ordinance will allow the EDC to be active all times when alcohol is being sold. Most other cities have gone to a seven-day structure for their EDC.

7. CITY MANAGER ITEMS

7.A. The following personnel appointments were unanimously approved by motion of Commissioner NeSmith and a second by Mayor Pro Tem Glenn:

NEW HIRE/PROBATIONARY STATUS:

- **Ron W. Roberts** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Mechanic with the Public Works Maintenance Garage, effective July 28, 2025, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Megan N. Bryan** – Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025
- **Colby J. Chapman** – Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025
- **Zachary W. Farmer** - Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025
- **Joseph A. Riley** – Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Jodie L. Crow** – Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***

- **William A. Hardin** – Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***
- **Bryce C. Pate** – Probationary, full time, non-civil service appointment to Police Officer with the Police Department, effective August 4, 2025, ***contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements***

PROMOTIONAL/PROBATIONARY STATUS:

- **Edgardo J. Nieves** – Probationary, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Bus Driver with the Public Works Transit Department, effective July 28, 2025

REGULAR STATUS:

- **Joseph M. Wright** – Regular, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Fire Captain with the Fire Department, effective July 28, 2025
- **Matthew S. Cissell** – Regular, full-time, non-civil service appointment to Fire Captain with the Fire Department, effective July 28, 2025
- **Christopher J. Webster** – Regular, full-time, non-civil service appointment to IT Applications/Business Analyst Manager with the Information Technology Department, effective July 28, 2025

7.B. City Manager Comments – None

8. COMMUNICATIONS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

Members of the Commission discussed the events they recently attended.

Mayor Pro Tem Glenn recognized Adrienne Carrico and Beth Davis for coordination of the newly revitalized Old Owensboro Neighborhood Alliance and the successful activities of the others. He reminded the community that the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has closed the blue bridge for repairs, not the City.

Commissioner NeSmith recognized Rick Farris for having a recent #1 hit on the Bluegrass Music Chart. He will be giving away his first built guitar in Owensboro at the IBMA Music Award Ceremony in September.

Commissioner Sanford clarified that the proposed site for the new transitional recovery house is located within the County, not the City.

Mayor Watson announced that he and wife Barbara are new great-grandparents and have another one arriving in a few days.

9. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

Pam Smith-Wright (3520 Christie Place) requested space in Smothers Park near the Shelton Memorial for a monument to honor veteran military service women. The name of the monument would be the "Oberst Hayden Women's Memorial," in recognition of two decorated Army veterans from Owensboro, Mary Josephine Oberst and Vivian Hayden Lawton (6668 Battalion). The monument would be dedicated to all women who have served in the military. Fundraising for the monument has already begun.

William Brown (113 W. 2nd Street) expressed his concern as a downtown business owner and resident. He stated the downtown parking garage has gotten progressively worse with racing, loud cars, litter, and noise. He requested more police presence to deter the activity.

10. There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mayor Watson to adjourn the meeting at 5:11 pm, Commissioner Sanford seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Davis, City Clerk