

OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
August 4, 2026 | 5:00 PM (CT) 6:00 PM (ET)
Owensboro City Hall
101 E. 4th Street
Owensboro, Kentucky

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Tom Watson

2. ROLL CALL - City Clerk Beth Davis

3. INVOCATION & PLEDGE – Mayor Tom Watson

4. BUSINESS

4.A. Minutes dated July 14, 2026 were approved by motion of Mayor Watson and a second by Mayor Pro Tem Glenn; motion carried.

4.B. The following board appointments were unanimously approved by motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner Maglinger:

- **Ambulance Contracting Authority** – Appoint Tristan Russelburg to fill the remainder of an unexpired term ending January 2, 2027 (replace Mike Staples)
- **Wesleyan Shawnee Neighborhood Alliance** – Appoint Kenith Riley to a two-year term effective August 4, 2026

5. ORDINANCES – 1st READING

5.A. Ordinance 16-2026 entitled AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE OWENSBORO METROPOLITAN ZONING ORDINANCE FOR THE CITIES OF OWENSBORO AND WHITESVILLE, AND DAVIESS COUNTY, REGARDING REVISIONS TO ARTICLE 8 - SCHEDULE OF ZONES SPECIFICALLY REGARDING ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS was introduced and publicly read on first reading.

The Owensboro Metropolitan Planning Commission met in regular session on July 9, 2026, and proposed amendments to the text of the Zoning Ordinance for the cities of Owensboro and Whitesville, and Daviess County regarding revisions to Article 8 as it relates to accessory dwelling units. The findings of fact supporting the revisions: provide a wide variety of types of housing suitable to a wide range of people; may increase the inner-city housing unit density; identify the housing needs of the community; continue development strategies for the orderly distribution of housing activities; and maintain high-quality infrastructure and site development standards. City Manager Pagan explained that several months ago, OMPC staff made a presentation about accessory dwelling units

(ADU), which are small, secondary housing units on the same property or lot as a single-family house. Based on feedback from the Board of Commissioners at that time, OMPC staff created regulations under which ADUs are permitted to be constructed. Melissa Evans, OMPC Senior Planner, further explained that ADUs are currently only allowed in the business, industrial and professional zoning classifications. The proposed change would permit ADUs, both attached and detached (with a conditional permit), in residential areas. Certain restrictions will apply: conditional use permit required for detached units; attached units will be principally permitted; the primary property owner must reside either in the primary dwelling or the accessory unit; one accessory unit will be allowed per parcel; one additional on-site parking space shall be provided; the size of the ADU will be limited to 50% of the primary dwelling; attached units will be required to have the entrance located on either the side or rear façade; detached units must be located in either the rear or side of the parcel and follow all setback requirements; the structure shall meet all current Kentucky building code requirements; the property owner shall provide certification in writing that there are no deed restrictions that would prohibit an ADU on the property; and if the property is served by a septic system, the property owner shall provide written approval from the health department that the system can accommodate the ADU or that it needs to be altered to accommodate. If a neighborhood has private restrictions, they will trump this change. An ADU could potentially be a “tiny home” on a parcel with a primary structure. Smaller lot sizes would be required to build standalone tiny homes and as such, will require a separate text amendment. This zoning ordinance amendment does not address short term rentals. Pagan added that this could help with the housing shortage. A list of preapproved plan templates will be available to expedite the construction process.

6. MUNICIPAL ORDERS

6.A. Municipal Order 25-2026 entitled A MUNICIPAL ORDER AUTHORIZING AND RATIFYING, NUNC PRO TUNC, THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR A STATE HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT THROUGH THE KENTUCKY OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$791,800.85, THE PROCEEDS OF WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED BY THE OWENSBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT TO PURCHASE NEW MOTOROLA PORTABLE RADIOS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT FOR ALL OFFICERS; NO MATCH IS REQUIRED BY THE CITY was unanimously approved on one reading by motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner Sanford.

The Owensboro Police Department (OPD) needs reliable communication in order to maintain public safety and respond to threats they face in our community. Many of the radios currently in use have exceeded their expected service life, incurred increasing maintenance issues and lacked modern interoperability and encryption capability. The City ratifies, nunc pro tunc, the submission of an application for a State Homeland Security Program Grant with the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security in the amount of \$791,800.85, to purchase new Motorola portable radios and associated equipment for all of its officers. No match is required for this grant.

6.B. Municipal Order 26-2026 entitled A MUNICIPAL ORDER AUTHORIZING AND RATIFYING, NUNC PRO TUNC, THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR A KENTUCKY OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$131,649.00, THE PROCEEDS OF WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED BY THE CITY OF OWENSBORO FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE TRAINING; NO MATCH IS REQUIRED BY THE CITY was unanimously approved on one reading by motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner NeSmith.

The City ratifies, nunc pro tunc, the submission of an application for a Kentucky Office of Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$131,649.00, the proceeds of which will be utilized by Owensboro Fire Department for structural collapse training, for which no match is required.

6.C. Municipal Order 27-2026 entitled A MUNICIPAL ORDER AUTHORIZING AND RATIFYING, NUNC PRO TUNC, THE EXECUTION OF A KENTUCKY PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE KENTUCKY CABINET FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DAVIESS COUNTY FISCAL COURT TO RECEIVE FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,000,000.00, THE PROCEEDS OF WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED BY THE CITY OF OWENSBORO FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE 121-ACRE MASSIE INDUSTRIAL SITE; A TWENTY PERCENT (20%) MATCH IS REQUIRED FROM THE CITY was unanimously approved on one reading by motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner Sanford.

The City of Owensboro seeks to enter into a grant agreement with the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development and Daviess County Fiscal Court to receive funds in the amount of \$1,000,000.00, the proceeds of which will be utilized by the City for infrastructure improvements to the Massie site. A twenty percent (20%) match is required for this grant. City Manager Pagan stated the City has been awarded a \$1,000,000 grant for development of the Massie site. Because the City owns the property and will be the beneficiary of the grant, the State will not allow the City to administer the grant funds. The County has agreed to do it, hence their inclusion in the grant agreement. The grant has a 20% match, the City has an appropriation of additional funding from the General Assembly that is more than necessary to satisfy the matching requirement.

7. CITY MANAGER ITEMS

7.A. The following personnel appointments were approved with motion by Mayor Watson and second by Mayor Pro Tem Glenn; motion carried.

PROBATIONARY, FULL-TIME, NON-CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS:

- **Alec R. Bennett** – Firefighter with the Fire Department, effective August 24, 2026, *contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements*

- **Jonathan T. Garrett** – Firefighter with the Fire Department, effective August 10, 2026
- **Kurt A. Henson** – Firefighter with the Fire Department, effective August 24, 2026, *contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements*
- **Sarah M. Jorgensen** – Clerk-Typist with the Police Department, effective August 24, 2026, *contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements*
- **Jonah M. Carpenter** – Police Officer with the Police Department, effective September 13, 2026, *contingent upon successful completion of all post-offer, pre-employment requirements*
- **McKinley R. Davis** – Police Officer with the Police Department, effective September 13, 2026
- **Austin J. Rusch** – Police Officer with the Police Department, effective September 13, 2026

PROBATIONARY, FULL-TIME, NON-CIVIL SERVICE, PROMOTIONAL APPOINTMENTS:

- **Kerry L. Bodenheimer** – Director of Parks and Recreation, effective August 24, 2026
- **Courtney M. Yerington** – Major with the Police Department, effective August 10, 2026

REGULAR, FULL-TIME, NON-CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS:

- **Hunter D. Hinton** – Police Lieutenant with the Police Department, effective August 10, 2026
- **Jeffrey A. Johnson** – Refuse Truck Driver with the Sanitation Department, effective August 10, 2026
- **Tristan H. Russelburg** – Police Major with the Police Department, effective August 10, 2026

7.B. City Manager Comments – None

8. COMMUNICATIONS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

Commissioner NeSmith thanked the state representatives for supporting the infrastructure grant of \$1,000,000.

Commissioner Sanford thanked developers for investing in the city. He stated that the City is working on an ordinance to address electric scooters (Pagan anticipates presentation at the second meeting in September). Sanford also asked the City to look at and implement protocols for businesses operating without a business license.

9. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

Rene Kuegel (2140 Tamarack Road) spoke against a data center and requested an ordinance be enacted to restrict them. She mentioned visiting a data center in Memphis, TN and shared the impact (noise deafening).

Jeff Kuegel (2140 Tamarack Road) spoke against a data center.

Jason Potts (9821 State Route 2830, Maceo) spoke about issues (design and maintenance) with the sidewalks and how they affect those with mobility limitations. He encouraged looking at the ADA requirements for sidewalks.

Jake Westerman (2918 Yosemite Drive) spoke against a data center.

Jamie Sowders (2415 Hayden Bridge Rd.) reiterated that Mayor Watson said there would not be a data center as long as he was in office. He encouraged the City to consider a responsible bidder ordinance.

Cliff Carlock (9140 State Route 405, Maceo) spoke about corruption on all levels of government and pointed out the officials on the dais.

Tatum Helm (1122 Booth Avenue) spoke against a data center, NDAs, the tragedy around the Dust Bowl, supporting non-profits and rising rate of homicides.

Trish Baggerly (3991 Brookside Court) spoke against a data center.

Jim Riney (5248 W. 5th Street Road) asked what infrastructure at the Massie site the \$1,000,000 grant would cover, drainage or generalized. He discussed the two ditches on the property, running sand with the danger of infrastructure collapse, and the design of retention basin.

10. There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned unanimously at 6:25 p.m. with motion of Mayor Watson and a second from Commissioner Sanford.

Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Davis, City Clerk