

Mayor & Board of Aldermen –Special Call Meeting

Meeting Minutes

- June 10, 2026

Present: Mayor Adrian Wiggins
Vice Mayor Cates
Aldermen Austin, Bailey, Campbell and LaBudde

1. Call to Order

Mayor Wiggins called the meeting to order.

2. Establish Quorum

All Present

3. Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance

4. Agenda Approval

Alderman LaBudde made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

5. Citizen's Comments

Roy Neuhauser – Countryside Drive – spoke in opposition to any proposed property tax increase.

Mike Heidebur – Misty Birch Lane – directed his comments in opposing to a property tax increase. He opined there are other revenue resources to be considered before imposing another increase on citizens of Oakland.

6. Ordinance 26-04 – Establishing Municipal Property Tax Levy for FY27; Establishing a Public Hearing Date – 1st Reading

Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to hear the 1st Reading of Ordinance 26-04. Alderman LaBudde seconded the motion. All voted in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Town Manager Ellis stated there has been a change in the FY27 Budget since May 28, 2026 Workshop, related to expenses. Finance Director Rice passed out a revised FY27 Budget (referenced "FINAL") reflecting an increase in Town Property & Liability Insurance, an increase of 10.5% on Health Insurance and a 1.5% increase in TCRS, also including an increase to the Public Works Budget showing an additional \$400,000 related to streets and asphalt, as well as \$300,000 in the Public Works Capital Improvement for the Clay Street Improvement.

Mr. Ellis further added there is a need for an additional \$250,000 to be allocated in the FY27 Budget, as the following: the funding of two grants; TDOT Signal Grant and TDOT Sidewalk Improvement Grant, an anticipated combined cost totaling \$100,000; **and**, payroll and operating expenses for Police & Fire, projecting a combined cost of \$150,000.

Lastly, Mr. Ellis pointed out the FY27 Budget allocations for Industrial Development Board (IDB) are \$72,000 in Other Professional Services- Consultant and \$10,000 in Legal, which he opined was not enough.

Mayor Wiggins was asked, by Mr. Ellis, to share Fayette County's referendum proposal, in attempting to take half of $\frac{1}{2}\%$ sales tax, which will cost the town \$600,000. Mayor Wiggins commented that the proposal was voted twice in the past and rejected, and he doesn't anticipate it to pass this time. The Mayor added that if it were to pass, it would not affect Oakland's budget until next year. Mr. Ellis said that while this is reflected in the park budget, the Town owes \$330,000 annually on the park's debt service and it would devastate any future park plans.

Mayor Wiggins pointed out the previous budget discussed in the workshop, indicated \$91,000 to the good. Referring to the revised budget he asked how much is the deficit now? Ms. Rice stated \$316,000. Ms. Rice referenced an email sent to the Board stating that adding property insurance, health insurance, TCRS and Public Works increases, the budget was thrown into negative \$66,000. She clearly stated if the Board chooses to include the additional \$250,000 as proposed, the FY25 Budget deficit would be \$316,019, leaving the Board to decide on cuts to the budget, or find ways to generate revenue. Mr. Ellis reiterated the deficit of \$316,000, leaving \$300,000 allocated to the Clay Street Improvement, will cover a portion of the project. Mayor Wiggins inquired about the current fund balance, Ms. Rice answered \$5.2 million (General Fund).

Mayor Wiggins spoke in opposition of a property tax increase, stating that businesses are coming soon, Chick-fil-a will be built in the next several months and immediately the town will begin receiving sale tax from them. He concluded by presenting the option of pulling \$300,000 from the fund balance to address the FY27 Budget deficit.

Vice Mayor Cates asked Ms. Rice what a twenty-cent property tax increase would generate, she stated approximately a million dollars. Mr. Cates said in his review of the budget, he didn't see anything that could be cut from it.

Alderman Bailey asked how Oakland benefited from the 40% increase that Fayette County imposed. Ms. Rice said it covered unplanned expenses. Home values increased, so those who sold their property made more money.

Alderman LaBudde stated there were things that could be cut such as the IDB funding, street paving, but cutting the budget is a temporary fix. He spoke in favor of a fifty-cent property tax increase to get ahead of the curve and a 3% increase each year for the next 5 years to stay ahead. He challenged the Board to step up and do what must be done to move the Town forward because "it's the right thing to do".

Alderman Campbell stated, while he agrees with some of the comments made, he opposes a property tax increase. Referring to the previous property tax increase, he was assured, by sitting Board Members at that time, 40% was enough to suffice for a couple of years.

Alderman Austin expressed concern of phone and postage expenses. She asked if cuts to any of those items are possible? Mr. Ellis stated not every employee has a town issued cell phone and as for postage, the Codes Department spends \$200-\$300 a week on Certified Mail related to grass violations. Ms. Austin asked if there were any other cuts that might be made. Mr. Ellis explained he was not advocating it, but cuts could be made to employee benefits and in other areas, but the town will be in the same shape next budget.

Mayor Wiggins called for a motion.

Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to increase the property tax an additional twenty-five cents. Alderman Labudde seconded the motion. The Mayor called for a roll-call vote: Alderman Campbell voted no, Alderman Austin voted no, Alderman LaBudde voted yes, Alderman Bailey abstained from vote and Vice Mayor Cates voted yes. The Mayor asked if anyone wished to change their vote, with no response, Mayor Wiggins called for more discussion. Alderman Austin declared it was inappropriate to have more discussion. Alderman LaBudde pointed out the importance of the issue. Alderman Bailey said that \$250 annually isn't a big issue to some, but to others it is. Mayor Wiggins asked Mr. Bailey if the issue was the amount? Mr. Bailey asked if there are any provisions in making the property tax more affordable for those of a certain age, income or disabled. Ms. Rice said there is a Tax Relief Program offered – citizens can go to the FC Property Assessor's Office to apply.

With no further discussion and no-one changing their vote, the Mayor restated the votes as: 2 in favor, 2 opposing and 1 abstention. Mayor Wiggins broke the tie in voting no. The motion to increase the property tax by twenty-five cents failed.

Mayor Wiggins offered to entertain another motion. Alderman LaBudde made a motion to increase the property tax an additional twenty cents. Vice Mayor Cates seconded the motion. Mayor Wiggins opened the floor for discussion. Alderman Campbell asked if the state was looking to put a freeze on property tax? Mayor Wiggins responded that an eighty-cent cap is being considered, however it did not pass this year and doubts it will pass in the next session. With a motion and second on the floor Mayor Wiggins called for a roll-call vote: Alderman Campbell voted no, Alderman Austin voted no, Alderman LaBudde voted yes, Alderman Bailey voted yes and Vice Mayor Cates voted yes. With 3 votes in favor and 2 votes opposing, the motion passed. The 1st Reading of Ordinance 26-04, increasing the FY27 property tax to .8342, passed.

7. Ordinance 26-05 – Adopting the Annual Operating and Capital Budget For Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2026 and Ending June 30, 2027; Establishing a Public Hearing Date – 1st Reading

Vice Mayor Cates made a motion to hear the 1st Reading of Ordinance 26-04. Alderman Bailey seconded the motion. All voted in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Finance Director Rice spoke on the Utility Bills, a subject of discussion during the May 28th Workshop. In recapping the discussion, she stated it was presented as an option to lower the bills of customers whose water usage is 1,000 gallons or less. She explained that by lowering the Minimum Usage from 2,500 to 1,000, a minimum water bill would drop to \$8.76 from what is currently charged \$16.98 (the figures shown here include tax). She stated that currently there are approximately 1,500 customers whose water usage is 1,000 gallons or less. She concluded by stating, this structure has no effect on customers whose water usage is above the proposed 1,000 gallon minimum. Mayor Wiggins asked Ms. Rice if this could be presented at the next meeting (June 18, 2026). She stated yes, with the 2nd Reading in July and reflected the July 2026 billing period.

Discussion of Ordinance 26-05 was picked up by recapping the deficit of the budget at hand (\$66,00). Ms. Rice reiterated the budget did not include Signal or Sidewalk projects (\$100,000) or the additional funding for Fire & Police (\$150,000). She pointed out the property tax revenue increase, previously passed in Ordinance 26-04, will allow the Board to include the additional \$250,000 expenses to be added while covering the adjusted deficit of \$316,019.

Alderman Austin referred to Clay St project asking Harvey if the business was still willing to work with the town on the project. Harvey deferred to Ed, who stated the question is; will the town be moving forward with the project? If not, the town would have to give the money back. He further stated he believed they had pulled their permit and should be starting the demolition of the old business and moving forward in the next couple of months.

Mayor Wiggins asked Ms. Rice if Clay Street was included in this budget (passed out)? Lorie reiterated, "Clay St has budgeted \$350k in the budget before you."

Mayor summarized the budget concluding that with the \$1m tax increase (just voted in) will shore up General Fund, allocating 3% for employees raise, no changes to employee benefits, plus part-time officer. Ms. Rice stated with the tax increase will be enough to cover the deficit, the Signal Grant, Sidewalk Grant and possibly enough to cover the Clay ST improvement.

Alderman Bailey requested to revisit the water subject, stating he has heard a lot and seen a lot indicating the proposed structure will increase the bills. Ms. Rice stated the minimum usage will be lowered from 2,500 gallons to 1,000 gallons, the rate will not change.

Mayor Wiggins called for a motion. Mr. Ellis requested the Board to clarify the motion by stating if the Board is voting for the budget that does not include the additional funding or does include the additional \$250k.

Alderman LaBudde made a motion to approve the amended (red-letter) FY27 Budget. Vice Mayor Cates seconded the motion. Mayor Wiggins called for a roll-call vote: Alderman Campbell voted yes, Alderman Austin voted yes, Alderman LaBudde voted yes, Alderman Bailey voted yes and Vice Mayor Cates voted yes. With 5 votes in favor and 0 votes opposing, the motion passed. The 1st Reading of Ordinance 26-05, Adopting the Annual Operating and Capital Budget.

Mayor Wiggins asked the Board to establish a Public Hearing date for the 2nd Reading of Ordinance 26-04 and Ordinance 26-05. It was set for Monday, June 29, 2026 at 6:30pm.

8. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman LaBudde.

Date: June 10, 2026

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Yvonne Bullard", written over a horizontal line.

K. Yvonne Bullard, Town Recorder

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adrian Wiggins", written over a horizontal line.
Adrian Wiggins, Mayor