

SMITHVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
WORK SESSION
September 1, 2026, 2026 6:00 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers and Via Videoconference

1. Call to Order

Mayor Boley called the meeting to order at 5:58 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present: Marv Atkins, Kelly Kobylski, Melissa Wilson, Dan Hartman and Leeah Stone.

Staff present: Cynthia Wagner, Gina Pate, Matt Bond, Chief Lockridge, Jack Hendrix, Rick Welch, Matt Denton and Linda Drummond.

City Attorney present: Padraic Corcoran.

2. Lakefest Event Review

Parks and Recreation Director Matt Denton reported that Smithville Lake Fest was generally considered a successful community event and thanked the event committee for its coordination and partnership with the city. Event organizers plan to improve communication with downtown businesses, nearby residents, and affected areas in future years through email, social media, in-person outreach, and door hangers.

The carnival is expected to return, and organizers would like to keep it in its current location of the downtown area behind City Hall. They are also considering modifying the parade route to use only Commercial Avenue and plan to recruit additional volunteers and security personnel to assist with the parade, carnival area, and cleanup activities.

The City provided approximately \$2,835 in-kind support and services including staff time, water usage, campground use and other related City resources for the 2026 event. As planning begins for 2027, staff are seeking direction from the Board regarding what city services and resources should continue to be provided as in-kind contributions and which event-related costs, if any, should be charged to Lake Fest organizers.

Shauna Houghton, 113 Lakeland Drive, Lakefest committee Chair, thanked the City of Smithville for its partnership in making Lake Fest 2026 a success, particularly during this transition year with the carnival and car show. She reported approximately 4,000 visitors on Friday and 8,000 on Saturday, with no major incidents. The committee received positive community feedback.

For 2027, the committee plans to improve communication with residents and businesses through advance notifications, adjust the parade route and timing to reduce congestion, increase police presence and adult parade marshals, and enhance parking and safety measures. Ms. Houghton noted that they requested that the carnival remain in the south City Hall parking lots, citing safety, police proximity, and convenience for families. She asked the Board to approve the carnival application so planning for the 2027 event can continue.

Main Street District Executive Director Andi Brown reported that feedback from downtown businesses was generally positive and the carnival was particularly well received. The primary concerns raised involved road closures and their impact on business operations. Several businesses experienced difficulties receiving deliveries because of restricted access, and some business owners felt communication about closure timing could have been clearer. Business

owners supported Lake Fest but want to maintain a level of access to their businesses during set-up and event operations.

The Board supported moving forward with the carnival for 2027 and discussed ways to improve event logistics, including additional detour signage, earlier notification of road closures, coordinating with Clay County Parks and clearer directions for visitors traveling through town. They directed staff to monitor event-related costs such as water usage, campground spaces, and city services and bringing them back to the Board for consideration rather than committing to unknown expenses in advance.

3. Business License Review

City Attorney Padraic Corcoran reviewed Smithville's business licensing code and explained that it currently lacks a meaningful enforcement process for businesses that operate without a license or fail to renew one. He emphasized that enforcement is important not only for dealing with problem businesses but also for ensuring fairness, since compliant businesses pay licensing fees while noncompliant businesses do not.

Padriac explained that staff identified 40 businesses that appeared to be operating without a current license. After being contacted by staff, 24 either renewed their licenses or confirmed they had closed. Sixteen businesses remain unresolved. Under the current code, the City's only enforcement option is issuing a municipal court citation, which can result in a fine but does not allow the City to order a business to stop operating.

Staff proposed a more structured licensing system with clear requirements, defined renewal and delinquency timelines, written notices, opportunities to correct violations, appeal rights and stronger enforcement tools. The proposed process would give businesses multiple chances to comply before penalties are imposed and would allow license suspension or revocation for continued noncompliance.

Padraic noted that the goal is compliance, not punishment. The proposed process would ensure all businesses are treated consistently, provide due process and reduce the burden on staff.

Board members supported moving the license cycle from the current November-October schedule to a calendar-year system, potentially with prorated fees for businesses that begin operating midyear.

Board members emphasized that customer service, staff training, and technology should be included in the process. Noting that businesses often miss mailed notices, so the city should use email reminders, automate notifications and online tools to help businesses renew licenses on time. There should also be educational materials, FAQs, examples, QR codes and resource guides to help business owners understand licensing requirements and walk them through the application process.

Board members stressed that businesses making a good-faith effort to comply should be given reasonable accommodation when delays are caused by state agencies or technical issues. Padraic noted that the proposed ordinance already includes significant notice periods and allows staff discretion when businesses communicate and are actively working toward compliance.

Additional topics included clarifying how the ordinance applies to home-based businesses, contractors, landlords, real estate professionals, and businesses with multiple independent contractors operating under one office. Staff was directed to prepare FAQs and educational examples to address common questions before the ordinance returns for consideration.

Board members also expressed interest in simplifying renewals by reducing unnecessary paperwork and exploring options such as prorated fees and potentially longer renewal periods for certain businesses. Padraic recommended first implementing the new enforcement framework and technology improvements before considering larger structural changes.

The Board directed staff to return with ordinance revisions and educational materials.

4. Adjourn

Alderman Hartman moved to adjourn. Alderman Kobylski seconded the motion.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, motion carries. Mayor Boley declared the work session adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Linda Drummond, City Clerk

Damien Boley, Mayor