

City Council Weekly Update - May 25, 2025

From Bret Bell <bret.bell@cityoftybee.gov>
Date Mon 5/26/2025 3:55 PM
To #Council <#Council@cityoftybee.org>
Cc #Dept Heads <#DeptHeads@cityoftybee.org>

 3 attachments (20 MB)

Georgia Power Transmission Line Project.pptx; Ft Screven & N Campbell Local HD_Phase 2 Final Report_Updated.pdf; 5-23-25 Letter to Mr Turner.bb.pdf;

Greetings Mayor and Council!

Hope everyone is having a great Memorial Day Weekend. I'm personally looking forward to my first Tybee summer on the job. Ready to go!

Two weeks ago I, along with the Mayor and Assistant City Manager Owens, met with representatives from Georgia Power to discuss its planned transmission line project on Tybee Island.

Georgia Power sent letters last week to residents living along the planned route informing them that they may see surveyors near their properties. The letter contained a phone number to call with questions.

Power on Tybee is fed by a transmission line that runs along 191 wooden poles from Wilmington Island over the U.S. 80 causeway to the substation on Jones. Georgia Power is planning to replace the poles and lines for a few reasons:

1. The infrastructure currently supports 46kV of power, which is undersized. Georgia Power wants to increase capacity to the more standard 115kV.
2. The 191 wooden transmission poles were installed around 1969, putting them toward the end of their useful life
3. The existing poles have an unorthodox configuration, leaving them prone to lightning strikes.
4. The existing line is radial and must be worked hot.
5. New poles would be designed to be less prone to damage during storms, resulting in increased power resiliency.

The current wooden transmission poles average about 55 feet in height. The new poles would be made of concrete or steel, be between 100 and 120 feet tall, and up to 5 feet in diameter. They would be similar to the transmission infrastructure now running to Jekyll Island, pictured here:



Team Tybee expressed concern about locating such massive poles adjacent to residential structures on the island. Georgia Power did say the new pole structures would result in greater spans and fewer poles needed on Tybee. Exactly where those poles may land is not know at this time, though the route will be identical to the current transmission route aside from two small deviations near Lazaretto Creek and U.S. 80 at Jones.

Georgia Power did say one of its goals was to minimize conflict with structures on Tybee. Once the surveying work has resulted in a proposed alignment and conceptual design, Georgia Power will schedule a workshop with City Council, likely this fall. Work is expected to begin in 2026 and be completed in 2028.

Attached is Georgia Power's project presentation they gave to us.

Denial of Orange Crush Festival Permit

On Friday I sent the attached letter to Georgia "Mikey" Turner denying his application for a special event permit to hold an Orange Crush Festival in April 2026. The denial letter is attached.

As you know, Mr. Turner was once business partners with Steven Smalls, who applied for and received the special event permit for Orange Crush Festival 2025. The two are now in a dispute over the Orange Crush trademark. Mr. Smalls has also submitted a permit application, which I have yet to act on.

Mr. Turner has indicated that he will appeal my decision to City Council. More information will be forthcoming.

Phase 1 and 2 Ft. Screven/N. Campbell Final Report

Earlier this month Historic Preservation Commission Chairwoman Holly Grell-Lawe submitted the attached final report on Phases 1 and 2 of the CLG Grant Project to Develop a Local Historic District for the Fort Screven National Historic District and the North Campbell Neighborhood.

I attended a community visioning session on the project last week, and remain extremely impressed by the team's process and organization. Below is message from Holly to City Council to accompany the report.

Dear Mayor West and City Council Members,

Phases 1 and 2 of HPC's CLG Grant Project to Develop a Local Historic District for the Fort Screven National Historic District and the North Campbell Neighborhood have been completed. Attached is the Phase 1 and 2 Final Report from HPC's consultants which includes their recommendations.

We would appreciate your reading of the report in preparation for further discussions and considerations this summer and fall as outlined in the project's *Summary of Project Activities and Deliverables* table (previously provided to you).

We believe that you will find the developmental history and historical significance information extremely interesting. The consultants' research appears to have uncovered some previously unknown information about Tybee's history.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Tybee Island HPC
Holly Grell-Lawe, Chair
Mike Goldberg
Cara Cole
Marna Lewin
Jacilyn Ledford

June Council Workshops

A reminder that during June and July, as has been tradition, Tybee will only have one Council Meeting and one Workshop per month (to be held June 11 and 12, and July 9 and 10).

Our Workshop topics on June 11 will be:

- New Fire Department Finance Plan
- Overview of Parking System
- Skidaway Institute of Oceanography – Beach and Dune Monitoring

Communications and Outreach Weekly in Review

Coordinated 7 media interviews focusing on Beach Safety, Memorial Day and Budget Public Hearing

Tybee in the News

[Tybee Island beach bum parade 2025: A splash-tastic success](#)
[Rep. Buddy Carter draws protesters as Senate candidate visits Tybee](#)
[Tybee Island beach bum parade 2025: A splash-tastic success](#)
[Tybee Island welcomes second loggerhead sea turtle nest of the season](#)
[Man brandishes gun after wife was drenched with water during Beach Bum Parade](#)
[Tybee science center warns driver to slow down for terrapin crossings](#)

Events and Facilities

YTD as of 5/23/25

Special Events:	12
Beach:	57
Film:	18
Guard House:	45
Memorial Park Screened Pavilion:	34
Memorial Park Open Air Pavilion:	48
Jaycee Park Gazebo:	1
Community Cafeteria:	81
Community Classroom:	80

Reservation Website: 316 transactions resulting in revenue of \$14,251

New Special Event Application Submission on Website: 21 submissions

Weekly Updates:

- The Beach Bum Parade concluded the city's spring line-up of special events leading up to the start of busy summer season. The delayed start due to a bicycle accident not related to the parade did not

impact any of the festivities. The next special events are July 4th - a Bike Parade in the morning and Fireworks at night.

- The Guard House now has a keyless lock system for those reserving the space. DPW used its access code this week for the weekly cleaning, and Infinity used a temporary code for access to set up Wi-Fi on the new television. Previously made reservations are being contacted that the last 4 digits of their phone number will be their access code during their reserved time and no longer need to pick up a key. Updated policies and procedures for reservation use regarding access with the new system are being created and will be added to the online reservation website information. We are also creating a formal procedure for assigning these codes to each reservation, as well as city staff, through the app.
- Ravens Eye Film LLC will be filming the upcoming independent film "Ravens Eye" in the greater Savannah area, and on Tybee next weekend, June 7 & 8. The production company's filming activities will be at Jaycee Park on June 7 from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. The production will be renting the Guard House for staging crew and filming a walking scene in a small portion of Jaycee Park. The company has also requested two off-duty TIPD officers to conduct intermittent traffic control for 2-3 minutes at a time while they film a simulated car accident. No actual stunts or special effects will be used for this shot. They will have a small crew of about 20 at Jaycee Park and will be distributing notifications to the surrounding area and obtaining signed documentation of permission from the properties that touch the area where filming will occur. All other production activity, vehicles, equipment, etc. will be at Pat Matthew's property on Lazaretto. Filming will occur there on June 8.

The footprint in the park and the portion of Van Horn for intermittent traffic control is shown below.



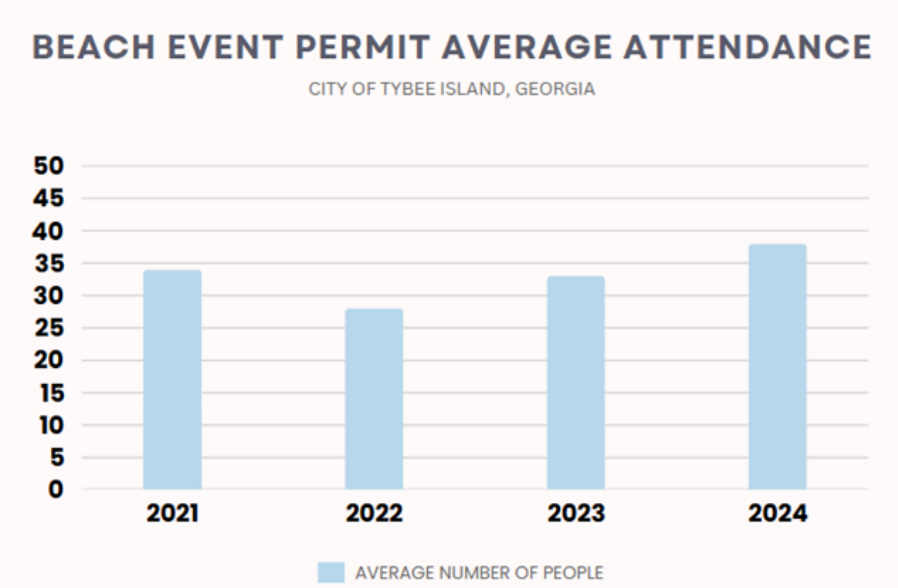
Beach and Inflatable Research

We are currently conducting analysis for potential improvements for permits, regulations and fees related to beach events and inflatable amusements.

Among the potential changes we are reviewing:

- Setting beach fees to the number of people in attendance
- Creating separate resident and non-resident rates.
- Creating different fees for different locations, based on demand.

Below is average beach event attendance for the past few years:



The most commonly used locations are North Beach, Chatham/19th, adjacent to the Pier, and Center St/2nd Ave

Inflatable Amusement Structures

We currently do not have standards or separate permits for “inflatable amusement structures.” A few things we are exploring:

- Requiring, in conjunction with an "event space" reservation and/or event permit, an additional inflatable structure permit with its own permit fee (most likely \$50)
- Requiring proof of liability insurance from the vendor. Many cities keep a 'preferred vendor' or 'approved companies' list that keeps a current COI on file with the city.
- Requiring a site plan/map of the public property indicating only certain areas where inflatable structures are allowed to be placed.

Code Compliance This Week

Citations

Smoking on the Beach	2	
Pets on the Beach	1	
Glass on the Beach	1	
Dog at Large	1	
Fire on the Beach	1	
Sandbar Violation	1	
Pier Jumping	3	
Total		10

Warnings

Pier Jumping	1
Smoking on the beach	1
Dog on the beach	1

Cart Inspections 24

Wheelchair Checkouts 14

Additional Activity:

- Code Compliance assisted TIPD with traffic control for the Beach Bum Parade
- The CC Supervisor completed and passed the exam for Certified Environmental Specialist.
- Code Compliance was notified by DPW that items possibly belonging to a homeless person were found in the dunes. Officer on the beach picked the items up and delivered them to the TIPD for found property. PD Officers located a small crossbow and drug paraphernalia in the items.
- The CC Supervisor observed that the crew doing the work for LiveOak Fiber at TIPD had not installed the proper safeguards to prevent runoff from entering the storm drain. Photos were taken and shown to the Community Development Director. The director contacted the person in charge to get the situation corrected. (Now corrected)

- Code Compliance was dispatched to 1217 Bay Street, Unit 115-B (Savannah Beach and Raquet Club) regarding a report of a dog bite. An officer responded and after speaking with the victim it was learned that the bite took place near the Crab Shack outside our jurisdiction. The officer referred the victim to Chatham County Animal Services (CCSA). The officer did try to contact CCAS personally and through dispatch but was unsuccessful. The officer did complete and submit a contact sheet online on the victim's behalf. The victim was informed of his need to follow up with CCSA.
- Code Compliance has been investigating a complaint of unpermitted work being performed at 8-B 13th Street. The investigation revealed that there had been work done at the location and that it did appear that at least part of the work had been completed without a permit. A Notice of Violation was issued for the possible infraction with information to contact the Community Development Office.

Parking Revenue Year to Date Comparison

MONTH	FY2025	FY2024	GAIN/LOSS
JULY	\$1,070,704	\$1,200,607	-\$129,903
AUG	\$679,586	\$701,020	-\$21,434
SEPT	\$447,400	\$630,213	-\$182,813
OCT	\$376,017	\$416,828	-\$40,811
NOV	\$200,387	\$210,757	-\$10,370
DEC	\$22,345	\$77,354	-\$55,009
JAN	\$152,287	\$146,744	\$5,543
FEB	\$286,795	\$238,367	\$48,428
MARCH	\$542,160	\$546,818	-\$4,659
APRIL	\$863,706	\$685,106	\$178,601
TOTAL THRU APRIL	\$4,641,387	\$4,853,814	-\$212,427
MAY	(thru May 25) \$727,764	\$976,524	#
JUNE	#	\$1,165,611	#

The Week in Infrastructure

DPW

- Emptied trash cans and collected litter along beach and crossovers on Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- Emptied trash cans and collected litter along the street on Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- Completed drainage project on Solomon Avenue
- Installed sign at boat ramp on Alley 3
- Performed ditch maintenance on Bay Street between Mckenzie Street and Byers Street
- Replaced three broken concrete tee pads for the disc golf course at Jaycee Park
- Installed American flags along Butler Avenue
 - Staff determined that some flags were in poorer condition so they we not hung up
 - Staff ordered more flags and will be installed upon delivery
- Power washed foot showers
- Power washed the south end compactors
- Power washed the Public Safety Building
- Removed three pay and display meter kiosks for Code Compliance
- Helped replace an A/C unit
- Trimmed bushes and grass on US 80
- Cut and trimmed Memorial Park
- Cut and trimmed Jaycee Park
- Cleaned parking lots
- Cleaned storm drains

- Cleaned and supplied public restrooms daily
- Cleaned City-owned facilities
- Performed three tree assessments
- Issued seven tree permits

Recycling/Dump

- Picked up and emptied recycling trailers from Memorial Park and Polk Street
- Baled cardboard
- Picked up litter on Bay Street
- Picked up recycling from South Annex Building and City Hall
- Picked up recycling from food pantry
- Called in trash containers and yard waste containers in DPW Yard
- Assisted residents in unloading trash, yard debris, and recycling brought to DPW yard
- Collected aluminum can roll-offs for business pilot recycling program

Fleet

- Performed maintenance on PD180.
- Ordered parts for multiple vehicles
- Repaired power washer
- Performed maintenance on Code Enforcement mule
- Performed oil change on Parking vehicle
- Replaced batteries in PD188 and PD195
- Replaced ignition switch on LE76 mower
- Replaced hydraulic line on JCB backhoe 233
- Recharged A/C on DPW263

Sewer/Water

- Maintained daily operations and performed maintenance at the WWTP and lift stations
- Performed weekly water sampling and testing
- Continued utility locates for Live Oak installation
- Made repairs to Grit King
- Relocated water main in Horsepen and installed two bollards
- Located buried water meters
- Televised storm sewer for DPW Heavy Construction crew
- Televised sewer lines on 14th Street and 7th Avenue
- Replaced broken manhole cover on 14th Street
- Cut grass and trimmed around WWTP

Maintenance Building at WWTP

- Contractor has removed the old building and encountered debris in the soil underneath building.
 - Awaiting structural recommendation for the number of piles to install

The Week at the Police Department

Accidents:

This Week: 4 accidents, 0 injuries
 2025 YTD: 39 accidents, 3 injuries
 2024 YTD: 37 accidents, 5 injuries
 2024 TOTAL: 104 accidents, 18 injuries

Arrests:

This Week: 8 total – 2 DUIs / 0 Felonies
 2025 YTD: 165 arrests
 2024 YTD: 247 arrests
 2024 TOTAL: 504 arrests

Calls For Service:

This week: 356
 2025 YTD: 5,915

2024 YTD: 6,243
2024 TOTAL: 14,588

Citations:

This week: 10
YTD: 596
2024 YTD: 1,000
2024 TOTAL: 1,792

Part 1 Crimes									
	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Arson	Motor Vehicle Theft	Total Part 1
2025 (YTD)	1	0	0	1	1	12	0	0	15
2024	0	3	0	10	3	51	0	0	67
2023	0	0	3	8	2	37	0	0	50
2022	0	0	0	2	1	17	2	1	23

Daily Information:

05/16: All officers worked the Beach Bum Parade.

05/17: Our running team participated in the 200 Club of the Coastal Empire Savannah Mile! Team TIPD had the largest law enforcement group to run, with 11 officers and 1 cadet! We ran this 1 mile in full uniform, including vests. Look closely at the second picture.... Council Member Tony Plough is in the background, wearing a yellow shirt and blue shorts! Thank you for your support and for joining us!





05/18: 3 officers covered an event in Memorial Park while U.S. Representative Buddy Carter spoke.

05/20: Chief Hayes, Assistant Chief Whitley, and Capt. Randolph met with Council Member Tony Ploughe to further discuss ideas for the DUI and Designated Driver Awareness Campaign. Thank you to DPW, Brent Levy, for assisting with our request to use the digital message board to help bring awareness to use a designated driver before the busy holiday weekend. We will continue to build on this as a team!





05/20: Chief Hayes, Assistant Chief Whitley, and Lt. White met with Kenny Wesley of AmChar Wholesale Inc. in reference to trade-in and purchasing of new firearms for next year's budget, 2026-2027. We will continue to research vendors and dollars.

05/21: Chief Hayes, Assistant Chief Whitley, and Lt. White took the first of 5 classes offered through FEMA, Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience. At the end of the five classes, all will have a certification in Critical Infrastructure Protection. These classes are offered free over the next several months in Savannah.

05/22: HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to the Tybee Island E911/ Communications Center and the Tybee Island Municipal Court on passing their GCIC Audit with flying colors! The GBI auditor stated she's never been out of an audit as quickly as ours, including the Tybee Island Municipal Court. This takes our WHOLE team to accomplish, including officers, code compliance, parking, etc.

The GCIC is the Georgia Crime Information Center, which is a centralized database of critical criminal records, including computerized criminal histories, the automated fingerprint identification system, and the sec offender registry. In order to maintain access to the GCIC, criminal justice agencies must undergo a triennial audit to ensure compliance with applicable statutes, regulations and policies.

Staffing:

Tybee Police is down a total of five officers, two of which are being held frozen. We have two cadets who recently started with the police department. They will attend the police academy starting in July. Until then, they will train at the Police Department. We have two applications for the last spot. The background, interview, and psychological exam for one applicant is complete. We currently have one officer on light duty on workers' compensation.

Upcoming Events:

06/02: Rocky and Captain Randolph are scheduled to make an appearance at Camp Grace on Wilmington Island on Monday, June 2. We did this last year, and the campers and staff liked it so much that they invited us back.

06/05: We're also putting together an awareness presentation about various scams for older adults on Tybee. Once completed, this presentation will be given at the YMCA on Thursday, June 5. This is particularly timely considering the \$150,000 that was reportedly lost to a scammer a few days ago.

06/04, 06/18, 07/09: Last summer Fresh Air Home asked us to take part in a series of presentations to the children in attendance. We had officers talk to campers about patrol, what they do on a daily basis and let the kids take a look inside of our patrol cars. They have reached out again, and we plan make a Drone Unit demonstration during the event.

06/12, 07/03, 08/28: Next dates for Golf Cart Education and Enforcement.

******Please let me know if you have anyone interested in the summer camp below. This camp is put on through the Georgia FBI NAA and is great for college resumes!**

YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

SAVE THE DATE

JULY 13-18

Georgia Military College

Nominations can be made through your law enforcement agency now.

Requirements:

- Sophomore, Junior or Senior in High School at the time of the academy
 - Your department vets the applicant. This program is for future leaders. This person represents YOUR agency.
 - Applicant wants to attend; not sent because of punishment or only because their parents want them to attend.
 - Cost: The nominating agency agrees to pay the \$1,000 fee to sponsor the applicant
- Please send any questions to Chief Chuck Atkinson at chuck.atkinson@doravillega.us

The Week at the Fire Department

The Tybee Island Fire Department (TIFD) responded to **23 incidents** from May 17 to May 22, 2025. All incidents were resolved with a status of "Closed" and a disposition code of "100." Below is a summary of the incidents by type and location:

- **EMS Calls (Excluding Vehicle Accidents with Injury):**
 - May 19: 5 7th Lane
 - May 19: 1 Old US HWY 80
 - May 19: 1413 Second Avenue
 - May 21: 26 Van Horne Avenue
 - May 17: 16 Tybrisa Street
- **Medical Assist, Assist EMS Crew:**
 - May 17: 101 FT Pulaski Road
 - May 17: Miller
 - May 18: 8 18th Street
 - May 18: 925 Old US Highway 80
 - May 18: 1511 Butler Avenue
 - May 18: 16 Tybrisa
 - May 20: 1409 Butler Avenue
 - May 20: 1404 Miller Avenue
 - May 22: 7 Rosewood Avenue
- **Assist Invalid:**
 - May 17: 808 Lovell Avenue
 - May 22: 905 Butler Avenue
- **Emergency Medical Service, Other:**
 - May 17: 163 Lewis
 - May 20: 613 Miller
- **Smoke Scare, Odor of Smoke:**
 - May 20: 17 Palmwood

- **Walk-in Station for EMS:**
 - May 20: 512 Jones Avenue
- **Removal of Victim(s) from Stalled Elevator:**
 - May 18: 1 Center Street
- **Welfare Check, Non-Emergency:**
 - May 18: 1600 Strand Avenue
- **Lock-out:**
 - May 18: 33 Meddin Drive

Additional Updates

- **Junior Lifeguard Camps:** Initial meeting with Junior Guards USA, Ocean Rescue, and TIFD planned the Junior Lifeguard Camps. First camp announced, with 6 confirmed participants. Expected to become a popular program.
- **Training Drills:** All three shifts conducted open water swimming rescue drills, focusing on:
 - **Water rescue hand signals:** Standardized gestures to communicate effectively during water rescues.
 - **Dolphin dive/Water rescue entries:** Techniques for efficient, safe entry into water for rescues.
 - **Active victim rescue:** Rescuing conscious, cooperative victims in distress in water.
 - **Passive victim rescue:** Safely retrieving unconscious or non-responsive victims from water.
 - **Rescue board active victim rescue:** Using a rescue board to save conscious victims.
 - **Rescue board passive victim rescue:** Using a rescue board for unconscious victims.
 - **Combative victim rescue:** Managing aggressive or panicked victims during rescue.
 - **Jet ski victim retrieval (active):** Using jet skis to rescue conscious victims.
 - **Jet ski victim retrieval (passive):** Using jet skis to retrieve unconscious victims.
- **Community Engagement:** C-shift, led by Lieutenant Brandon Kaupp, assisted the Rising Tides Food Pantry on Wednesday. The community expressed gratitude, and TIFD is happy to support this initiative.
- **Boater Safety Training:** All TIFD members are taking the free NASBLA/NFPA-recognized online boater safety course, covering safe vessel operation, navigation rules, and emergency procedures to enhance water rescue capabilities.

Personnel Update

Tybee Fire has filled the department's one vacant firefighter position with Mr. Aldo Graniello. Aldo brings 13 years of firefighting experience from Chatham County Fire Department and is a former Marine. His certifications include:

- EMT-B, Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2
- Apparatus Operator Pumper, Apparatus Operator Aerial
- HAZMAT Ops, HAZMAT Awareness
- Fire Instructor 1, Fire Officer 1, Fire Officer 2
- NIMS ICS 100, 200, 300, 700, 800, G-191
- Rope Rescue Tech, Confined Space Rescue Tech, Trench Rescue Tech

Aldo's qualifications strengthen our team, and we hope to continue attracting seasoned professionals. To fill the Sergeant and Lieutenant positions vacated by Lieutenant Woodcock's retirement, Chief McMillian is preparing testing protocols for internal candidates. Our department has highly qualified personnel ready to step into these roles. Testing will be rigorous to ensure we select the best leaders.

In the News

The Savannah Morning News ran an article recently about our lifeguard recruitment efforts, including our new contract with Junior Guards: [Tybee Island sees bigger pool of lifeguard recruitment this year](#)

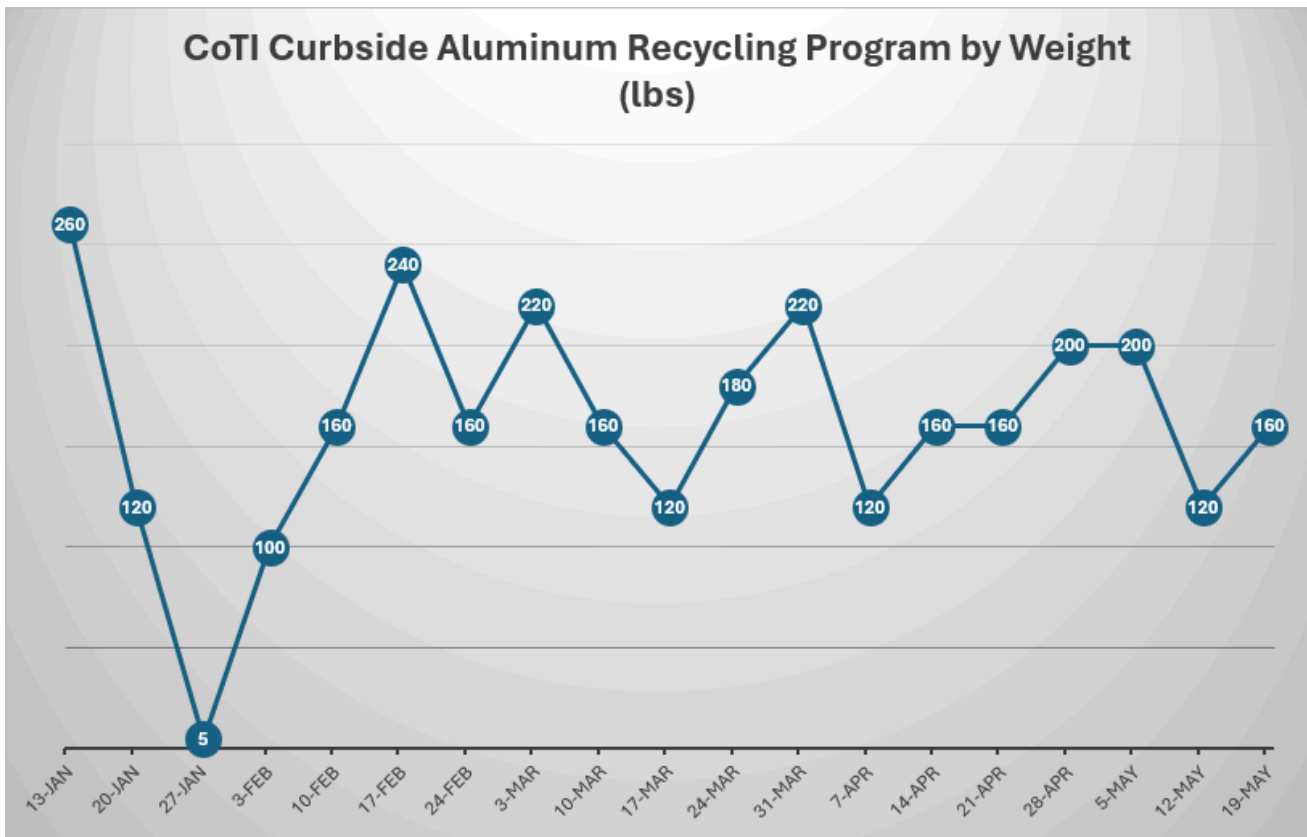


[Tybee Island sees bigger pool of lifeguard recruitment this year](#)

Tybee Island partnered with Junior Guards USA to train youth and create a lifeguard recruitment pipeline. The program will teach kids ages 11 and up lifesaving skills, hoping to encourage them to ... www.savannahnow.com

Community Planning and Development

Below is the latest on our commercial curbside aluminum recycling program:



The Week at the Campground

- 126 Arrivals, 512 Site nights, 70% occupancy rate, up 2% Yoy.
- Hosted Wag n Wiggle pet rescue event. Approximately 40 staff, volunteers and guests in attendance.
- Replaced HVAC fan motor and capacitor in upper bathhouse.
- Experimenting with utilizing a TV as digital message board in the store as another method of providing information to guests.

Municipal Court Weekly

Court was held on May 20, 2025. Here are the dispositions of that docket:

Bond Forfeiture	33
Bind-over to State Court	16
Dismissed	5
Guilty as Charged	23
Merged	10
Nolo Contendre	1
Nolle Prosequi	2
Warning	104

Friday 5/23/2025 The court will meet with Captain B. Runyon of the Thunderbolt Police Department to discuss how Tybee Municipal Court personnel can help them next month while they are in between court clerks.

Have a great week everyone!



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