
City Council Weekly Update - August 11, 2025

From Bret Bell <bret.bell@cityoftybee.gov>

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To #Council <#Council@cityoftybee.org>

Cc #Dept Heads <#DeptHeads@cityoftybee.org>

3 attachments (20 MB)

Tybee Island ULI TAP Report 080525.pdf; Solomon Avenue Improvements.pdf; Memo to CC Variances 08082025.bb.docx;

Greetings Mayor and Council,

We've obviously been dealing with a lot of water over the past week, with potentially more heavy rain today and tomorrow. We measured 5.6 inches of rainfall on Saturday, enough to overwhelm most drainage systems.

The fact that we received two sewage spills in two months from essentially the same location following heavy rain, however, is concerning.

The first incident occurred July 12 when an estimated 10,300 gallons spilled from a raised manhole at 807 Jones Avenue following 4-5 inches of rainfall. All sewer systems experience some stormwater infiltration, which tends to lead to heavier volumes processed by the Wastewater Treatment Plant. On July 12 our plant treated 2.1 million gallons of effluent, more than twice the normal volume. The fact that we experienced a significant spill indicates abnormal infiltration, and is a sign of a more significant problem with our infrastructure in this area.

We attempted to televise the lines in this area to understand the causes of the infiltration, but were prevented due to sedimentation in the lines beyond the capability of our smaller Vac truck. We contacted all local companies with heavier duty Vac trucks, but they have been in heavy demand due to regional development, and we were unable to schedule a site visit until this week.

This weekend's rainfall fell on soils already saturated from a week's worth of rain, which has led to extremely high groundwater levels on the island. This was particularly the case on the island's lower elevations, located on Tybee's southern half.

All this water had few places to go, and once again infiltrated our compromised lines in this area, spilling an estimated 24,000 gallons from the same Jones manhole in addition to another one nearby on 8th Street.

The Vac truck contractor is currently on Tybee, and will be working with our crews today to clean lines so we can televise and understand the problem. This effort could be set back by additional rain today and tomorrow.

A reminder that we are preparing for infrastructure improvements on several fronts:

- We have received a \$2.6 million federal grant (and have budgeted a \$650,000 local match) to expand the outfall and storm line running beneath 15th Street. Engineering and design is currently being finalized, after which we will go out for State permitting and competitive bidding. The project is expected to begin in January, with completion near the end of May.
- We expect to hear this fall whether we will be awarded a \$10 million grant to develop a reservoir beneath the 14th Street parking lot that will connect with the 15th Street project. Status updates indicate the grant application is in a favorable position for award.
- We have worked with GEMA to cancel the Safe Shelter grant we received, and apply for the same bucket of hazard mitigation funds to help fund other resiliency/stormwater projects on Tybee. We have a number of potential projects identified in our Stormwater Management Plan, Community Resilience Plan, and Natural Infrastructure Master Plan.
- We secured a \$2.4 million loan this summer from GEFA with a low 2.49 percent interest rate to complete improvements to our sanitary sewer system included in our five-year CIP.
- We passed an IGA with the County last month that includes \$4.3 million in SPLOST funding for Tybee stormwater/resiliency infrastructure project. This will appear on the November ballot.

I plan to provide an update of the spill event and our infrastructure plan at Thursday's Council Meeting.

Wednesday Workshop Presentations

As a reminder, Council Workshop begins at 3 p.m. Wednesday. We will hear two presentations:

- Final Report of the Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel study of Memorial Park (report attached)
- Recommendations for traffic changes to Solomon Avenue.

The ULI report will be presented to the public at 6 p.m. Wednesday at the Post Theater. Four panel members from the ULI TAP will present the report. The public will be asked to submit written questions, which will be read and addressed at the meeting.

Pending Council feedback on the Solomon Avenue recommendations, we will also schedule another meeting/input session with the public.

Recommendations to Definition of Variance

At recent meetings Council has had significant discussion about when and for what reasons City Council can grant a variance to provisions of the Land Development Code. There are a number of inconsistencies and ambiguities in the Code's handling of variance criteria, definition, process and procedures.

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel has worked with the City Attorney to propose some simple amendments to hopefully eliminate some of the ambiguity in the language. The recommendations are attached. We are looking for input and direction.

Weekly Updates Posted to City Website

Special thanks to Communications and Outreach Director Cassidi Kendrick, who has posted all *Weekly Updates* going back to December on the City Website. There is a link on the homepage under the “Common Services” section, or you can get to them here: <https://www.cityoftybee.org/247/City-Manager>



Communications and Outreach Update

Key Updates & Highlights

- Staff has begun collaborating with Visit Tybee on visitor messaging related to beach erosion. Photo and video content will be developed for social media platforms to educate visitors on current beach conditions and highlight the best areas to enjoy during their visit.
- Staff will soon issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Island-Wide Wayfinding Signage Project. The goal is to complete installation by the end of the calendar year. Cassidi Kendrick, Communications & Outreach Director, will provide a status update on the project during an upcoming City Council workshop.
- Additional Designated Driver social media content has been created and scheduled in advance of the upcoming Labor Day Beach Bash, taking place August 30–31 at the Tybee Island Pier. This campaign serves as an important reminder to encourage safe and responsible celebrations, helping to keep both residents and visitors safe.
- The next video episode scheduled to air on Tyb.TV will spotlight the Water/Sewer Department, providing an inside look at the essential services it delivers to the community. The episode will feature an overview of the department’s operations, details on the upcoming infrastructure Capital Improvement Program, and information on the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) loan supporting the work. Viewers will gain a better understanding of how these initiatives will improve service reliability and strengthen Tybee Island’s infrastructure for years to come.
- Final preparations are under way for the 2025 Labor Day Beach Bash. Festivities kick off Friday night at 7 p.m. with a performance by The Swingin’ Medallions. On Sunday, the stage will feature Ramble Tamble, the CCR Experience, followed by a spectacular fireworks show off the pier at dark.

Public Information & Media

Savannah Morning News:

- <https://www.savannahnow.com/story/news/accident/2025/08/04/pedestrian-killed-sunday-night-on-tybee/8551117007/>

WTOC:

- <https://www.wtoc.com/2025/08/06/tybee-island-city-manager-lays-out-splost-8-priorities/>
- <https://www.wtoc.com/2025/08/04/pedestrian-dies-after-being-hit-by-car-tybee-island/>

WJCL:

- <https://www.wjcl.com/article/pedestrian-killed-near-tybee-island-beach/65591699>

WSAV:

- <https://www.wsav.com/crime-safety/tybee-police-respond-to-fatal-collision-involving-a-pedestrian/>

Social Media & Digital Engagement

Page Insights

- Views: 100,300
- Total followers: 29,000

Top Facebook Posts This Week

- River’s End Campground Spotlight
8,900 views, 188 engagements
- Recycling Staff Shout Out
7,100 views, 107 engagements

Website Updates:

- Bids/Proposals
- Calendar
- City Manager
- Staff Directory
- Home Page

Facilities & Special Events

Number of events YTD:

- Special Events: 15
- Special Events Vendor Permits: 77

- Beach: 110
- Film: 20
- Guard House: 59
- Memorial Park Screened Pavilion: 51
- Memorial Park Open Air Pavilion: 58
- Jaycee Park Gazebo: 2
- Community Cafeteria: 136
- Community Classroom: 124
- Event Banner Permits: 51

Reservation Website: 517 transactions with a YTD transaction total of **\$17,854.50**

New Special Event Application Submission on Website: 25 submissions YTD

Preliminary Planning for 2026 Orange Crush

Robyn led an early coordination meeting to kick off planning for the 2026 Orange Crush application process. This included working with key city departments to align on requirements, timelines, and event logistics, as well as continuing to refine the application process to ensure efficiency, clarity, and compliance.

Pirates Fest 2025

Participated in pre-planning meetings for the Tybee Island Pirate Fest, collaborating with event organizers on logistics, event details, and permitting requirements.

Facility Showings

Conducted a site visit of the Guard House, showcasing City facility to a prospective renter and providing information on amenities, rental policies, and booking procedures.

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

CLG Grant-Local Historic District Project: Staff mailed nearly 500 letters to property owners within the proposed district and placed 20 yard signs throughout the Fort Screven and North Campbell areas to help spread the word about the upcoming public workshop on August 19. In addition, Maggie posted flyers around the island and scheduled social media posts to further increase awareness and encourage community participation.

Main Street Program

Shop Local Receipt Program

- The first week of the Tybee Island receipt program has been a great success! As of Friday morning, we have received **33 submissions**.
- This program is designed to encourage local shopping and support Tybee Island businesses while giving back to the customers who make it all possible. The total dollars reported from receipts in the first week are **\$1,938.96**
- Staff has received lots of positive feedback, and people are already excited for us to do it again!

Sand Cat Ribbon Cutting: Maggie has been working closely with Sand Cat Coffee and the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce to coordinate a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating Sand Cat Coffee. The event is scheduled for September 5, 2025, at 10 a.m. The team is planning to meet soon to finalize event details and logistics. Locals and visitors are invited to attend the celebration, meet the Sand Cat team, and discover what makes this new spot such an exciting addition to Tybee Island.

Beachcomber Article: Prepared the monthly Main Street article for the Tybee Beachcomber magazine. This recurring feature highlights upcoming events, recaps the previous month's activities, shares updates on current and future projects, and offers other important news from the Main Street program.

Streetscape Improvements: Main Street is collaborating with the Department of Public Works to install new bike racks on the South End and to pressure wash the sidewalks on Butler Avenue, Strand Avenue, and Tybrisa Street.

Mobile Visitor Center: The project is steadily moving forward as we prepare to bring visitor resources directly to the community and key island events. Staff is collaborating with Visit Tybee on a Public Reveal after Labor Day, along with scheduling appearances around town.

The Week with Code Compliance

Between Aug 1 and Aug 8, Code Compliance responded to **65 calls for service**. Below is a breakdown of the most pertinent ones by Type and Location:

Type of Call	Address
Assist Police at pier with fight call (support function)	Pier
Loud party (unfounded)	6 6 th Ave
Assist Ocean Rescue with water rescue	Sand Bar Beach
Assist Ocean Rescue with closing beach for lightning	Beach
Dog at large	5 th and Beach
Delivered found property to TIPD	TIPD
Assist motorist move disabled cart / courtesy ride	6 th Street
Dog at large (gone on arrival)	3 rd Street
Assist Police with locating missing father of juvenile	Strand area
Dog at large (unfounded)	Sea and Breeze
Barking dog (unfounded)	8 Palmwood Court
Delivered found property to TIPD	TIPD
injured possum (died before treatment could be rendered)	402 9 th Street
Follow up civil matter between neighbors	1007/1009 Laurel
Violation notice	1801 Butler
Violation notice	1105A Bay Street
FOLLOW UP	1102 Laurel Ave
Assist Fire with water rescue (support function)	Alley 3
Site inspection and violation notice	1207 Bay Street
Followup Site inspection (reminder notice)	1601/1603 Chatham Ave

Code Compliance Statistics

Code compliance staff works M-W 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesday-Sunday 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. During this time they handled:

3 Citations

- 1 Vehicle on beach
- 1 Dog at large
- 1 Dog at large

4 Warnings

- 1 Pet on beach
- 1 Pet on beach
- 1 Pet on beach
- Uncovered Dumpster

Calls for service

- 65

Motorized Cart Inspections

- 15

Beach Wheelchair

- 12

Citizen Encounters (these are meaningful encounters with citizens or visitors in which we provide some level of assistance but don't rise to the level of reporting or enforcement)

- 94

Parking Services

- **247 parking citations this week**
 - 18 expired time
 - 200 no payment
 - 2 handicap violations
 - 27 prohibited
- **2 vehicles booted**
- **538 parking citations YTD for FY26**
- **Citizen encounters**
 - Office: 192
 - On street: 237

Parking Revenue

MONTH	FY2026	FY2025	GAIN/LOSS
JULY	\$1,135,293	\$1,070,704	\$64,589
AUG (thru Aug. 7)	\$153,229	\$679,586	
SEPT	\$0	\$447,400	
OCT	\$0	\$376,017	
NOV	\$0	\$200,387	
DEC	\$0	\$22,345	
JAN	\$0	\$152,287	
FEB	\$0	\$258,783	
MARCH	\$0	\$542,159	
APRIL	\$0	\$863,706	
MAY	\$0	\$976,406	
JUNE	\$0	\$1,182,473	
TOTALS	\$1,288,522	\$6,772,253	-\$5,483,731

Updates

Training

- Ofc. McLain completed a Wildlife and Rabies course through Humane World for Animals. This was done to determine if this would be beneficial to staff and it was determined to be needed. All staff will receive this.
- First Aid CPR and AED training was scheduled this week for all Code staff.
- Two staff members were signed up for GSWCC training this week. It deals with erosion and sedimentation.
- In the months to come staff will receive NIMS/ICS training for emergency preparedness.

Ordinance review and rewrite: This is underway and has been for some time. Updates will be coming soon.

New Parking Software - Passport: Passport agreements have been signed and delivered to Passport. We expect implementation to begin in the next few weeks. This will run in parallel to our antiquated software until fully implemented and tested.

The Week with Fire

Fire and EMS Call Summary

A total of **15 calls** for service last week. Below is a breakdown by type and location:

Incident Summary

08/06/2025

EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury – 7 Rosewood
EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury – 7 Rosewood
EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury – 0 Gulick Street

08/05/2025

EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury – 512 Jones Avenue
EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury – 603 Jones Avenue
Assist invalid – 603 Jones

Medical assist, assist EMS crew – 1207 5th Avenue

08/04/2025

Heat detector activation due to malfunction – 404 Butler Avenue
Medical assist, assist EMS crew – 714 2nd Avenue

08/03/2025

Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident – 10 11th Street
Accident, potential accident, other – 14 17th Street
Heat from short circuit (wiring), defective/worn – 40 Estill Avenue
Medical assist, assist EMS crew – 7 Rosewood Avenue
Public service – Back River and Jacks Cut

08/02/2025

Medical assist, assist EMS crew – 165 Lewis Avenue

Personnel Update

Staff Departure

I'm sad to report that Firefighter Billy Groover has submitted his resignation. Billy has served our department for the past three years with dedication and professionalism. He cited the rising cost of living and lack of affordable housing as the main reasons for his departure. Billy is returning to Tennessee, and we wish him the very best in his next chapter.

Hiring Status

We currently have two open firefighter positions. Although the job postings went live just last week, we've already received a strong pool of applicants. All candidates meet minimum certification standards (FF1 & FF2), and most also hold EMT credentials. It's encouraging to see such interest, which reflects positively on the changes we've made over the past eight months. Interviews will be scheduled soon.

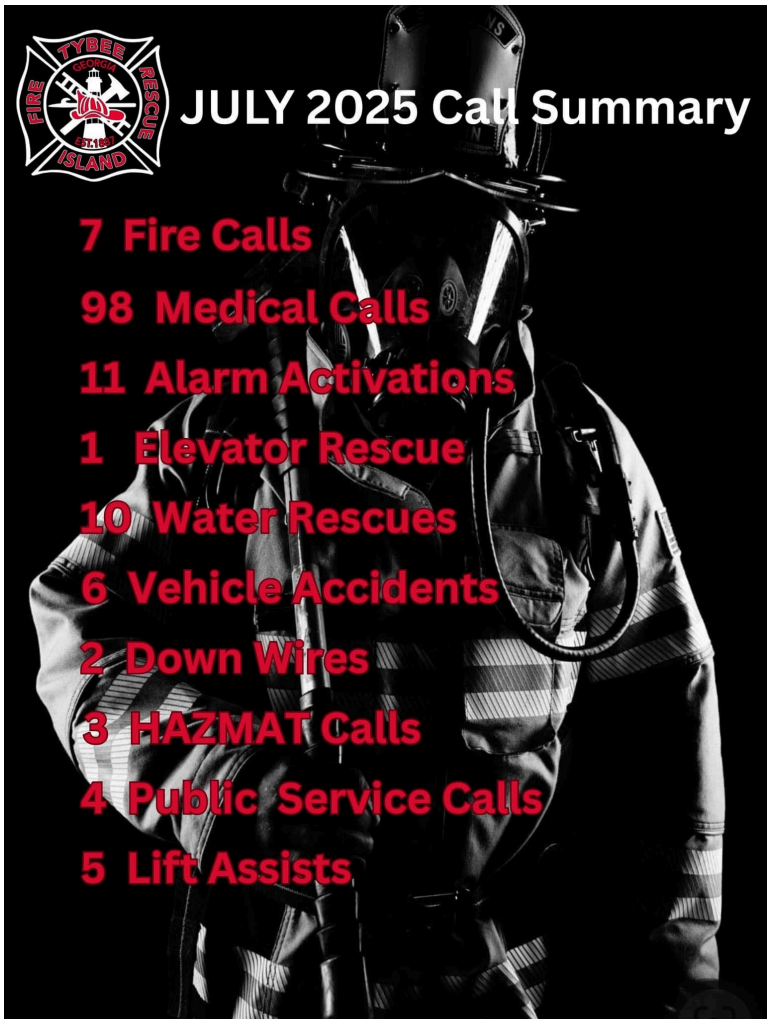
Promotional Testing

Eligible personnel will take the written exam for promotional consideration this coming Monday. We're filling one Lieutenant and one Sergeant position. Candidates were given 30 days to prepare, and we wish them the best as they enter the next phase of the process.

TYBEE ISLAND OCEAN RESCUE
WEEKLY REPORT

Advise-ments: **3,278**
Jellyfish Stings: **31**
Water Assists: **4**
Water Rescues: **2**
Animal Assists: **0**
Public Transports: **1**
Missing Persons: **1**
Medicals: **8**
Medicals Requiring EMS: **0**
Jet Ski Assists: **0**

JULY 28 -
AUGUST 3, 2025



- 7 Fire Calls**
- 98 Medical Calls**
- 11 Alarm Activations**
- 1 Elevator Rescue**
- 10 Water Rescues**
- 6 Vehicle Accidents**
- 2 Down Wires**
- 3 HAZMAT Calls**
- 4 Public Service Calls**
- 5 Lift Assists**

The Week with Police

Accidents:

This Week: 1 accident, 1 injury
 2025 YTD: 77 accidents, 9 injuries
 2024 YTD: 78 accidents, 17 injuries
 2024 TOTAL: 104 accidents, 18 injuries

Arrests:

This Week: 9 total – 4 DUIs / 0 Felonies
 2025 YTD: 277 arrests
 2024 YTD: 375 arrests
 2024 TOTAL: 504 arrests

Calls For Service:

This week: 270
 2025 YTD: 9,671
 2024 YTD: 9,911
 2024 TOTAL: 14,588

Citations:

This week: 17
 YTD: 1,031
 2024 YTD: 1,401
 2024 TOTAL: 1,792

Part 1 Crimes									
	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Arson	Motor Vehicle Theft	Total Part 1
2025	1	0	0	1	2	23	0	0	27
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

08/08: Chief Hayes and Assistant Chief Whitley met with Commander Hal Braswell of the Georgia Public Safety Training Center Police Department for an after-action review of Orange Crush 2025.

Three Officers completed FTO training this week. These three officers are now certified to train new officers when they join our team.

All department radars will go through the mandated recertification process on 08/20.

Staffing

The Police Department is currently fully staffed with Police Officer positions. Communications is down two positions. We currently have one applicant in the hiring process. This applicant has completed the psychological evaluation and is scheduled for a drug screen. Due to the shortage of staff and the busy season, former communications officer Sara Benton has returned as a seasonal employee to help fill in during busy times.

Upcoming Events

08/20: Radar Recertification

08/28: Next date for Golf Cart Education and Enforcement.

08/14: Next date for Crosswalk Enforcement

Municipal Court Monthly Report: July 2025

Court was held on Aug. 5, 2025. Below are dispositions from the docket:

Bond Forfeiture	21
Bound over to State Court	10
Guilty as Charged	31
Merged	12
Nolo Contendre	1
Nolle Prosequi	6
Warning	105

Note: Our system does not distinguish between whether a citation was issued as a warning or whether the citation was changed to a warning by the Judge.

Public Defender Gives Notice

Our Public Defender, Jennifer Ozer, turned in notice that she will be terminating our contract on December 31, 2025. She has sent her notice to the City Attorney, who is working on finding a replacement.

Ms. Ozer has worked with Tybee Municipal Court since 2019, and has done an outstanding job. Public recognition at a future Council Meeting is recommended.

The Week in Infrastructure

DPW

- Cleared storm drains of debris in anticipation of storms.
- Completed repairs and general maintenance at the 13th Street crossover.
- Cleaned out ditches, basins, and outfalls island wide.
- Repaired a stop sign on Laurel Avenue.
- Adjusted the road signs on the Four Lanes.
- Repaired a sink hole on 14th street that was caused by an old pipe.
- Installed a new beach sign at the Sandbar as the tide permitted.
- Emptied beach trash barrels five times this week.
- Picked up loose litter along the beach.
- Emptied recycling barrels on beach.
- Operated the sweeper to clear debris from the roadways.
- Pressure washed the foot showers at the North and South end of the island.
- Pressure washed Jaycee Park.
- Removed dirt from the outside of the YMCA due to flooding.
- Made repairs to the basketball court.
- Repaired the A/C at the Marine Science Center.
- Picked up loose litter from parking lots, sidewalks and surrounding areas.
- Cleaned and maintained all public facilities.
- Cleaned and maintained all public restrooms.
- Mowed and trimmed Jaycee and Memorial parks.
- Blew off debris on Tybrisa, south end parking lots for the sweeper, Jaycee Park and Memorial Park.
- Trimmed brush from around the beach crossovers.
- Issued five tree permits and completed seven tree assessments.

Fleet

- Continued maintenance and repairs to vehicle # 501.
- Cleaned and organized all tools and supplies in the Mechanic Shop.
- Initiated repairs on the motor grader.
- Initiated repairs on the John Deere backhoe.
- Repaired the cooling system in vehicle # 268.
- Diagnosed and ordered the necessary parts for the Kubota digger for the campground.
- Replaced the rear tires on the mower for Water and Sewer.
- Changed the oil for vehicles # 193 and #190 for the Police Department.
- Finished repairs on vehicle # 268 by installing a new belt, tensioner, idler pulley, A/C clutch and relay.
- Assisted with watching the scale for the dump

Recycling/Dump

- Picked up and emptied both cardboard trailers and both green recycle trailers.
- Picked up aluminum and oyster shell recyclables from local businesses.
- Completed two bales of cardboard.

- Picked up recycling from Tybrisa and the beach crossovers.
- Sorted cardboard from local businesses.
- Called in containers with household trash, construction debris, yard waste and recycling.
- Assisted residents in unloading trash and recyclables.
- Trained new employees on heavy equipment use and how to call in yard containers for pickup.
- Monitored the scale and charged nonresidential customers.
- Cleaned up debris off the main yard.

Water and Sewer

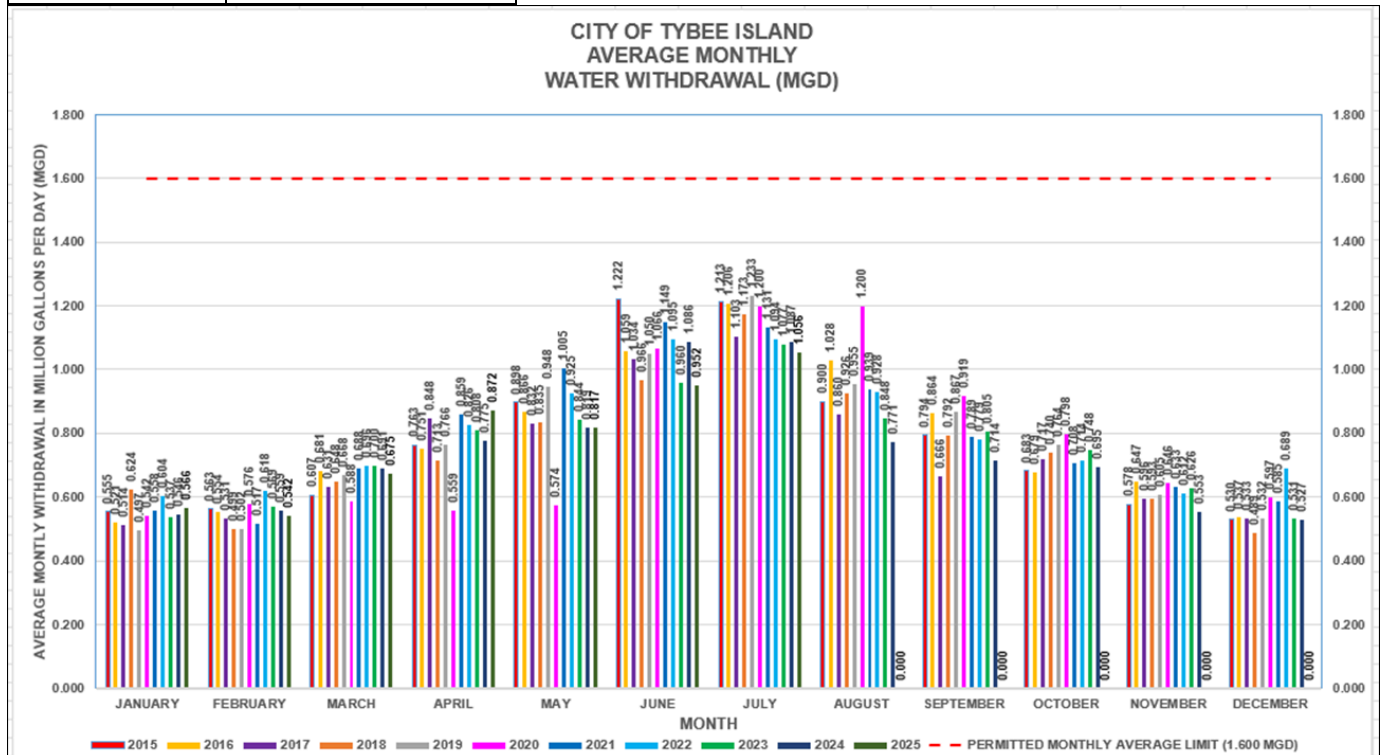
- Performed routine monitoring, maintenance, and inspections on all three wells and lift stations.
- Facilitated ongoing cellular communications upgrade at main well water tower.
- Continued water sampling protocols for sewage spill at 807 Jones Avenue.
- Continued preparing for the three-year Lead and Copper Monitoring Program, which requires water sampling on private property across the island.
- Performed monthly maintenance on backup systems at lift stations and wells.
- Addressed ongoing issues with backup generator at Fort Screven well.
- Worked on the high consumption list
- Continuing to locate 811 ticket requests, as well as locating for LiveOak fiber optic project.
- Made progress on island-wide plan to address intrusion and inflow problems into our sanitary sewer system.
- Changed out broken meter lids, dead battery registers, and met with contractors and sales reps on various subjects.
- Responded to calls from homeowners about various issues.
- Repaired water line breaks throughout city.
- Maintained operations at the wastewater treatment plant.
- Notified United Rental that oil sensor needs to be replaced on the Wastewater Treatment Plant rental generator; part has been ordered. New Tybee-owned generator is scheduled to be installed mid-late September.
- Repaired several breaks on the collections system.
- Cleared a large part of Logan Street sewer system that was filled with sand.
- Performing polymer trials on our dewatering system with several different companies.

July Water Usage

July typically sees the highest water consumption of the year on Tybee Island. This July, we averaged 1.056 million gallons per day. Our permit allows up to 1.6 million gallons per day on average.

Below is July water withdrawals over the past decade.

July Water Withdrawals Comparison	
YEAR	WITHDRAWALS (MGD)
2025	1.056
2024	1.087
2023	1.077
2022	1.094
2021	1.131
2020	1.200
2019	1.233
2018	1.173
2017	1.103
2016	1.206
2015	1.213



Around the Campground

- 69 Arrivals, 309 Site Nights, 43% Occupancy. Up 22% year over year.
- Held Live Music and Paint and Sip Events

- Cleaned out storm drains and weeded ditches.
- Trimmed dead branches on Site 116
- Repaired screen on Cabin 105

Have a great week everyone!




www.cityoftybee.org


Bret Bell

City Manager

403 Butler Avenue
P.O. Box 2749
Tybee Island, Georgia 31328

 bret.bell@cityoftybee.gov

 (912) 472-5070

 (912) 412-4660