

# Foley Newsletter

## MAYOR

Ralph G. Hellmich

## COUNCIL

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Richard Dayton  
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## CITY

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Hello, all. Now that the Fourth is over, most of us are looking ahead to the beginning of the school year and the fall season.

Again this August, we have the honor of hosting the Teacher Institute for the Baldwin County Schools at the Foley Event Center. Up to 4,000 teachers, administrators and staff from across the county will meet to kick off the school year. We are fortunate to have a facility large enough to host the entire group.

A delegation of Foley students and teacher chaperones has just returned from a visit to Foley's sister city of Hennef, Germany. The students described the opportunity to visit Germany and build relationships there as life-changing. Students from Germany will be visiting our city in October.

When school starts on Aug. 9, school buses will again be out on the roads. Please be patient and watch for students, especially the youngest ones.

The Foley Lions football season tickets are on sale. Let's get behind our mighty Lions again this year.

A number of city projects are underway. I'm pleased to share the following updates on our progress.

The East Verbena Street improvements near Portabella's are almost complete. The paving of East Jessamine connecting North Chicago and North Cypress should be completed soon. This connector will be pedestrian friendly, providing a safe, walkable passage to the library and city hall from Heritage Park, and to our city schools via the pedestrian bridge.

City workers are finishing many sidewalk projects, including those near the Florence B Mathis School that will help students get safely to school. Thank you to the council for funding an ambitious sidewalk program. Adding sidewalk



## Mayor's Notes

connectors across the city will help us become a more walkable city.

Two large projects that are moving along smartly are the new Public Works Campus on North Poplar Street, and the new restrooms in Heritage Park.

Two more significant projects will begin soon. One is the new library that will be located just east of the Foley Dog Park. We are excited that this will be one of the new generation of

libraries that serves the community in a variety of ways. We can't wait to share the details when the time comes.

The second project is a Safe Room Building that will house front-line city employees during extreme weather. This sturdy structure will be wired for communications and will allow critical employees to begin operations in a central location as quickly as possible. During other times of the year, it will serve as training and meeting space.

Park upgrades that include new restrooms are underway in Beulah Heights and Aaronville. The creation of a new park in the Mills community is also in progress.

The long-awaited safety and repaving improvements are beginning on the Foley Beach Express. The ATRIP Grant upgrade for the County Road 12/Highway 59 intersection will be bid in September.

Foley Main Street is responsible for the new pedestrian way-finding signs that will soon be installed. These signs will help visitors locate restaurants, businesses and points of interest across our historic downtown area.

I hope that you enjoy the rest of your summer!

Mayor Ralph G. Hellmich

# State takes over Beach Express bridge

The State of Alabama agreed to take over the Foley Beach Express bridge and end tolls on the highway in May.

In a ceremony at Foley City Hall on May 22, the governor signed documents accepting the transfer of the bridge to the state. She said the move will be a benefit to the entire state and beyond. Tolls were discontinued May 23.

“This is good news for locals, for Alabamians across the state and for our visitors from near and far,” Ivey said.

Foley Mayor Ralph Hellmich said the cooperation between local government and the state has been a key to the region’s success.

“We are partners in progress,” Hellmich said. “As we move forward here in Baldwin County, we are setting records for growth. Everybody in this room knows

it and we want to continue that progress. We love where we live and we’re looking forward to the future ALDOT participation in projects that we have. We’re all here as partners in what we’re going to call progress.”

The Foley City Council voted May 6 to transfer the city-owned section of the highway, located between Alabama 59 and Baldwin County 12, to the Alabama Department of Transportation.

The city is now repaving and widening the Foley Beach Express. The repaving



project is scheduled to be completed in 250 working days. The state will take over the Foley Beach Express when the improvement project is completed. ■

# Colt Grill opening in 1925 Foley Bakery building

After being closed since 2007, one of Downtown Foley’s oldest buildings will reopen later this year as the Colt Grill Barbecue and Spirits restaurant.

Renovation work has been going on for more than a year at what was originally the Foley Bakery at the corner of North Alston Street and West Laurel Avenue.

The Colt Grill is scheduled to open in the fall.

Mayor Ralph Hellmich said residents have been waiting for many years for the Foley landmark to reopen.

The restaurant will specialize in smoked meat barbecue and will also offer entrees such as hamburgers, salads and tacos.

The building in which the Colt Grill will be located was constructed in 1925 and served as a bakery for many years. It was most recently the site of the Cactus Cafe restaurant, which closed in 2007.



The Colt Grill Barbecue and Spirits restaurant will open in the old Foley Bakery building later this year. The building, which was built in 1925, has been vacant since 2007 and has been in the process of renovation for more than a year. ■

# Foley improving police pay, opportunities

Many Foley police are getting better pay and opportunities in an effort to recruit and retain officers to meet the demands of the growing city.

A new pay plan approved by the Foley City Council increases the starting pay level for non-certified and certified officers while providing more opportunities for growth and development within the agency. Officers will see an expansion of specialty opportunities which will be used to suppress crime and foster strong relationships with the community.

“This is the type of program that we want to do to make sure that we have the very best and are able to maintain the accomplishments and

advances we’ve done over the past 20 years in our department. That’s why we brought this program forward,” Mayor Ralph Hellmich said.

Under the new plan, entry-level non-certified officers have a starting salary of \$55,206.

Foley is also expanding the number of corporal positions from six to 10. The maximum pay for a corporal is \$102,253 under the Foley pay plan.

The new incentives are in addition to the benefits that police and all Foley employees receive, such as annual merit raises, cost of living adjustments, insurance and retirement programs.

More information on the plan and police opportunities is available at [cityoffoley.org/police-department](http://cityoffoley.org/police-department). ■



# Foley Library Summer activities

The Foley Public Library recently concluded their annual Summer Reading Program, which reached thousands of people in our community. During the months of June and July, the library offered story times, activities and weekly shows every day of the week for children, tweens, or teens. The Library keeps a jam-packed schedule full of weekly story times, activities and events for children and adults. Visit the website at [foleylibrary.org](http://foleylibrary.org). ■



Councilman Charlie Ebert, Fire Chief Joey Darby, Mayor Ralph Hellmich and Councilman Richard Dayton pose with Foley's newest fire truck.

## Foley dedicates new fire truck

Foley's newest fire truck is now here and helping to meet the growing demand for services in the city.

The Foley Fire Department dedicated the new pumper May 8 with a ceremony at the city's main fire station.

"Our demand for services has increased drastically," Fire Chief Joey Darby said. "We're up about 70% over the last five years, so we need to make sure that the trucks that we get are built the right way and that they are going to be good service trucks for us."

The 2023 custom-built fire truck is a Rosenbauer Minnesota Commander EXT pumper. The unit has a pumping capacity of 1,500 gallons a minute and a 750-gallon water tank.

At the event, firefighters, city officials and guests helped push the vehicle into the station to mark the truck's activation. Darby said the ceremony dates back to the 1800s when horse-drawn fire engines were pushed back into the station by hand.

"It's a great example of our mayor, council and city administration supporting us in all the things that we do to try to make sure that we have the equipment that we need to service this growing community," Darby said.

Darby said ordering and building a new fire truck takes more than two years. The cost of the truck was about \$600,000. The cost of the same truck today would be between \$800,000 and \$850,000.

He said the department will also add equipment worth between \$100,000 and \$150,000 to the unit. ■



## Foley expanding sidewalk programs

Sidewalks are under construction around Foley as part of a \$1 million project approved by the City Council. Foley is also seeking funding to build more sidewalks to improve access throughout the city for pedestrians and cyclists. ■

## We want to hear from you!

The City of Foley is gathering input on what the community wants to see in its new aquatics center. Go to <https://cityoffoley.typeform.com/to/Yqestm1T> or scan the QR code to share your thoughts. ■



F.Y.I.

## ADEM Burn Ban

The Foley Fire Department reminds you that the annual Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Burn Ban for Baldwin County is currently in effect in an effort to improve air quality. Open burning of debris is prohibited until Nov. 1 with only a few exceptions (recreational/ceremonial/cooking fires; agricultural/silvicultural burns). These exceptions may also be restricted by the Fire Chief via a local burn ban when necessary.

## Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives

The Foley Fire Department reminds you to make sure your smoke alarms are operational. This means testing smoke alarms monthly and replacing batteries twice a year or when a low-battery alarm chirps. Smoke alarms over 10 years old should be replaced. Reminder: A smoke alarm disabled because of nuisance alarms provides no protection at all.

## Storm Preparedness and Safety

As we are now in another potentially active hurricane season, we want to remind you to stay alert and prepared. Download a reliable weather app for your mobile devices or purchase a weather radio. After Hurricane Sally, many residents purchased portable generators to use at home during extended power outages. Be sure to use these devices in well-ventilated outdoor areas. Also, working carbon monoxide detectors are important when running generator engines for extended periods of time. Look for current models that have an automatic shutoff carbon monoxide sensor. Contact our office at 251-943-1266 for more information on these items, and turn your attention to fire prevention! ■

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

FY 2023/24 Annual Report (Oct. 2023–June 2024)

- 524 Single-family Permits—\$171,292,284 Valuation
- 394 Single-family Rentals—\$64,590,351 Valuation
- 2 Duplex Permits (4 units)—\$781,416 Valuation
- 116 Multi-family Permits (501 Units)—\$83,195,885 Valuation
- 21 New Commercial Permits—\$35,182,795 Valuation (includes Fairfield Inn & Suites, Cobblestone Inn & Suites, Ocean Marine, Publix, Stowaway Storage, Tractor Supply)
- 38 Commercial Addition/Remodel Permits—\$4,961,835 Valuation
- 4,811 Total Permits—\$396,266,621 Valuation
- 3rd in the nation in FORTIFIED construction

Visit [cityoffoley.org/Community-Development](http://cityoffoley.org/Community-Development) or call 251-952-4011 for more information. ■



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## Upcoming Events

Foley Events Updated Daily [VisitFoley.com](http://VisitFoley.com)  
Foley Public Library [FoleyLibrary.org](http://FoleyLibrary.org)  
Foley Senior Center [CityoffFoley.org](http://CityoffFoley.org)  
Foley Sports Tourism [FoleySportsTourism.com](http://FoleySportsTourism.com)  
Graham Creek Preserve [GrahamCreekPreserve.org](http://GrahamCreekPreserve.org)

### Foley Public Library

New hours: 9 a.m.–7 p.m. Mon.–Thurs.; 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Fri.–Sat. Monthly programs, Makersaurus Time, adult arts and crafts, family bingo night, lunch and learns and other clubs.

### Downtown OWA

Live shows: Brandon Styles, magician/comedian and other special events.  
For info and times: [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

### Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market

Local produce, fresh seafood, homemade goods and more. Open Sat. 9 a.m.–2 p.m.  
781 Farmers Market Ln.  
[CoastalAlabamaMarket.com](http://CoastalAlabamaMarket.com)

### Foley Senior Center

Adults over 50 meet at the Foley Senior Center every 1st and 3rd Saturday evening with live entertainment for dancing. Doors open at 6:00, band begins at 6:30. \$7 per person. Bring refreshments of your choice.

### Aug. 15 Foley Art Center Artist Reception

5 p.m. Meet artist Steven Dark and enjoy hors d'oeuvres. Foley Art Center.

### Sept. 2 Labor Day

City offices closed (except emergency services). Visit [cityoffoley.org/sanitation](http://cityoffoley.org/sanitation) for garbage/recycle pickup information.

### Sept. 19 Foley Art Center Artist Reception

5 p.m. Meet artist Cathy Calvin and enjoy hors d'oeuvres. Foley Art Center.

### Oct. 2, 9, 16 & 23 Midday Melodies

11 a.m.–2 p.m. in Heritage Park.  
[VisitFoley.com](http://VisitFoley.com)

### Oct. 3–5 USA Archery Collegiate 3-D Championship

Graham Creek Nature Preserve. Final showdown at the Foley Event Center.  
[foleysportstourism.com](http://foleysportstourism.com)

### Oct. 4 Golf FORE! Education

8 a.m. Fun and games on the course and a silent auction. [sbchamberfoundation.org](http://sbchamberfoundation.org)

### Oct. 5 Oktoberfest 5K Run

Come dressed in your German Oktoberfest attire. Beer and pretzels will be available.  
[foleysistercities.com](http://foleysistercities.com)

### Oct. 12, 19, 26, 27, 30 & Nov. 2

*Graham Creek's Haunted Forest*  
SLASH and REWIND. Join us as we bring back the classics from the 1970s and '80s for a truly nostalgic and terrifying experience.  
[GrahamCreekPreserve.org](http://GrahamCreekPreserve.org)

### Oct. 18 Chicago Street Supper Club

7 p.m. Elegant outdoor dining experience in the heart of downtown Foley.  
[sbchamberfoundation.org](http://sbchamberfoundation.org)

### Oct. 19 Pumpkin Play Day

10 a.m.–12 p.m. Carnival games, candy prizes and fun for the whole family.  
[GrahamCreekPreserve.org](http://GrahamCreekPreserve.org)

### Oct. 24 Shred It Day

3–5 p.m. Foley Civic Center  
Bring your old documents to be shredded and recycled.

### Oct. 24 Hometown Halloween

5:30–8 p.m. Downtown Foley  
[VisitFoley.com](http://VisitFoley.com)

### Oct. 26 Foley Witches Ride

5 p.m. Ride with the witches through Downtown Foley.  
[foleywitchesride@gmail.com](mailto:foleywitchesride@gmail.com)

### Nov. 1–8 2024 Sun Belt Women's Soccer Championship

Practices and games throughout the week.  
[foleysportstourism.com](http://foleysportstourism.com)

### Nov. 8–Dec. 23 Trim-A-Tree

Tanger Outlet Mall. Mon.–Sat. 10 a.m.–7 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.–6 p.m.  
[Foleyartcenter.com](http://Foleyartcenter.com) or Facebook

### Nov. 9 Burgers, Brats & Beer Fest

10 a.m.–6 p.m. Heritage Park

### Nov. 11 Veterans Day

City offices closed (except emergency services). Visit [cityoffoley.org/sanitation](http://cityoffoley.org/sanitation) for garbage/recycle pickup information.

### Nov. 23 Tree Lighting Ceremony

Enjoy a snowy, family-friendly event.  
[VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)

### Nov. 23 Harvest Festival

9 a.m.–2 p.m. Everything you need for the perfect Thanksgiving feast and help us crown the CAFFM Harvest Queen.