



**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026 AT 6PM
ABITA SPRINGS TOWN HALL
22161 LEVEL ST., ABITA SPRINGS, LA 70420**

Posted: February 2, 2026 11am

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Curtis
INVOCATION: Alderman Boudreaux
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Alderman Templet

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1.) In Memoriam – Sherry Firmin 2.) Update - Water Interconnection 3.) Push Mow Parade 4.) Planning & Zoning Comprehensive Land Use Plan

ROLL CALL:

Call for Agenda Modifications
Accept January 2026 Town Council Meeting Minutes

REPORTS:

- Marshal
- Chairmen

NEW BUSINESS:

1. DISCUSSION OF GOLF CARTS
2. DISCUSSION OF 4TH OF JULY
3. CONSIDERATION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ALTERNATE MAGISTRATE.
4. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SELECTION OF THE CPA FIRM OF GRIFFIN & FURMAN TO CONDUCT THE TOWN'S ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS PURSUANT TO R.S. 24:513.

OLD BUSINESS: None

OPEN/ADJOURNMENT:

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT US AT (985) 892-0711.
PLEASE CONTACT TOWN HALL AT THE SAME NUMBER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THIS AGENDA.

An ordinance to amend Part 5 Chapter 2 Traffic Regulations

WHEREAS, pursuant to state law (LA. R.S. 32:299.4) the operation of golf carts upon public roads and streets is prohibited except when the relevant governing authority has designated streets for the operation of qualified cards; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Alderman desires to authorize, under specific conditions, the operation of golf carts upon certain town roads and streets.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Alderman that it does hereby amend the town's Code as follows:

Golf Cart- Definitions.

A *golf cart* means an electric four-wheeled vehicle originally intended for use off-road on golf courses and other green spaces whose maximum speed is twenty-five miles per hour. The term *golf cart* shall not include lawn mowers, tractors, four-wheelers, ATVs, go-carts, or other motor propelled carts.

A reflective triangle is a "slow moving vehicle: sign that is mounted to the rear of the golf cart and is clearly visible at all times. The reflective triangle must be a minimum of 12 inches by 12 inches.

Section 5-209 of Part 5 Chapter 2 of the Code, previously reserved, is added to read:

The operation of any golf cart with the following minimum and functioning motor vehicle safety equipment; a seatbelt for each passenger, efficient brakes (including a parking brake), horn, reliable steering apparatus, safe tires, rear view mirror, red reflectorized warning devices in both the front and rear of the vehicle (to include a reflective triangle on the back of the golf cart), front and rear turn signal lamps, tail lamps, brake lamps, headlamps, and vehicle identification number or serial number; and

The golf cart is being operated by a person with a valid driver's license; and

The golf cart operator is covered by a policy of liability insurance, with respect to the golf cart, with at least the minimum amounts as required by the provisions of La. R.S. 32:900(B); and

The golf cart is registered with the state of Louisiana through the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, office of motor vehicles, as an off-road vehicle and displays the requisite decal issued by the office of motor vehicles; and

The golf cart is registered with the town and displays the requisite decal issued by the Town of Abita Springs or its designed; and

The golf cart may only be operated on a public road or street with a speed limit of twenty-five (25) miles per hour or less.

Occupants of the golf car are seated and buckled, the number of passengers in the golf cart does not exceed the amount for which the golf cart is designed, an no passenger is riding on the lap of any other passenger.

Section 5-210 of Part 5 Chapter 2 of the Code, previously reserved, is added to read:

Prior to initial registration of a golf car with the town, the cart must pass inspection by the Town of Abita Springs or its designee.

Registrations shall be issued on a biennial basis from, at the earliest, July 1 of an odd-numbered year through June 30 of the next odd-numbered year, except that the first registration period for those registering on or before July 1, 2023, shall be the date of registration through June 30, 2025, and any renewal registration may be obtained up to sixty (60) days prior to expiration of the then current registration.

A biennial registration fee of \$100.00 shall be payable at the time of registration and for each renewal period thereafter. Registrations obtained for a registration period for which there is less than one (1) year remaining in the biennial period may be obtained for \$50.00

Registrations are non-transferable and non-assignable. Any new golf cart owner must obtain his or her own city registration if he or she intends to operate the golf cart on public roads or streets within the town.

The town may refuse to issue a town registration for a golf cart, or it may revoke a previously issued registration, if the golf cart or the owner of same is involved in two or more violations of the golf-cart related provisions of this article within a one-year period. Said denial or revocation shall be effective for up to one year.

The Town of Abita Springs administration may develop, implement, and update, from time to time as may be necessary, forms and processes to carry out the provisions of this section and may set the implementation date for the first registration period. The Town of Abita Springs administration may also designate the location on the golf cart on which a registration decal must be displayed.

Section 5-211 of Part 5 Chapter 2 of the Code, previously reserved, is added to read:

Golf carts may only be parked in the same manner and at the same places designated for parking of motor vehicles or in parking spaces specifically designated for golf carts.

Operators of golf carts shall be subject to the provisions of La. R.S. 32:2999.4, as amended, and the rules and regulations for golf carts promulgated by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

Operators of golf carts shall be subject to all traffic, open container, and alcohol and drug laws of the city and the state of Louisiana to the same extent as an operator of any other vehicle on the roads and streets of the town.

The public roads and streets of the town do not include town sidewalks, parks, or trails. Golf carts are not allowed to be operated on public sidewalks, parks, or trails in the town.

License, insurance, and registration information must be in immediate possession of the operator of the golf cart.

Any person who operates, or rides upon, a golf cart within the town assumes the risk of such activity. The regulation by the town of the golf cart operations on town roads and streets, as set forth in the preceding sections is not a determination by the town that any such operations are safe or advisable. The town has no liability and assumes no liability, under any theory, for permitting golf carts, in conformity with state law, to be operated on its public roads and streets.

Golf Cart Research Packet

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen requested staff to research Louisiana state law, surrounding municipalities, and common policy considerations related to allowing golf carts on public streets. This packet is intended to support informed discussion and decision-making. It does not recommend a specific course of action.

AUTHORITY TO ALLOW GOLF CARTS

Under Louisiana Revised Statute §32:299.4, golf carts may only be operated on public streets when:

- The local governing authority has formally authorized their use by ordinance, and
- Operation is limited to streets designated by the municipality.

Golf carts may not operate on state highways, unless specifically permitted by state law. This is particularly relevant for Abita Springs, which is divided by three state highways.

STATE-LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

When permitted locally, golf carts typically must comply with:

- Registration with the Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV)*
- Liability insurance
- Safety equipment requirements (lights, reflectors, mirrors, brakes, etc.)
- Operation by a licensed driver (if required by local ordinance)

COMPARISON: NEARBY MUNICIPALITIES

Mandeville

Mandeville has adopted a formal ordinance allowing golf carts under defined conditions:

- Golf carts are permitted only on city streets with speed limits of 25 mph or less
- Operation is prohibited on higher-speed roads and state highways
- Carts must be registered with OMV and display proper decals
- Liability insurance is required
- Operators must hold a valid driver's license
- The city reserves the right to restrict use for public safety

Covington

- Covington does not appear to have a clearly published golf cart ordinance specific to city streets
- Community reports suggest carts must meet street-legal standards, but there is no readily available ordinance formally designating permitted streets
- Residents are generally advised to consult the City Clerk or Police Department

Madisonville

- No known formal ordinance permitting golf carts on public streets
- Previous discussions reportedly occurred, but no adopted policy has been identified

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ABITA SPRINGS

Infrastructure & Geography

- Abita Springs is divided by three state highways, which do not allow golf cart travel or crossing
- This presents enforcement, access, and safety challenges
- Designating allowable streets may result in disconnected zones

Public Safety

- Interaction with regular vehicular traffic
- Visibility during nighttime or low-light conditions
- Enforcement responsibility and capacity

Licensing & Operation

- Should carts be limited to daylight hours only
- Driver's License and minimum operator age requirements

Equipment & Inspection

- Required safety equipment (lights, seat belts, reflectors, mirrors)
- Whether inspections would be required
- Who would conduct inspections (Marshal, third party)

Child Safety

- Should children be permitted as passengers
- Requirements for seat belts or restraints
- Prohibitions on children driving carts
- Limits on standing passengers or riding in non-seated areas

Enforcement & Liability

- Responsibility for enforcement (Marshal)
- Liability exposure for the Town
- Insurance verification and compliance

ALTERNATIVES TO FULL AUTHORIZATION

If the Board chooses not to broadly allow golf carts, alternatives may include:

- Allowing carts only for special events
- Temporary permits for festivals or parades
- Restricted-use days or routes
- Continued prohibition on public streets
- Conditional Use for Civic or Town Business
- Use would be limited to designated routes/parking areas to maintain safety & compliance with state law
- Golf carts could be permitted for specific purposes, such as civic groups (KAB) executing town-related tasks

This allows operational flexibility without fully legalizing street use for general purposes

PARKING AND STORAGE CONSIDERATIONS

If golf carts are permitted for operation on Town streets, parking and storage present additional policy and enforcement considerations:

On-Street Parking

- Whether golf carts may park in standard vehicle parking spaces
- Prohibition of parking in travel lanes, sidewalks, bike paths, or right-of-way areas

- Time limits or location-based restrictions (e.g., downtown core, parks, municipal facilities)
- Visibility requirements when parked (reflectors, flags, lighting)

Off-Street Parking

- Requirement that carts be parked on private property when not in use
- Prohibitions on parking in front yards, drainage areas, or public easements
- Compliance with existing zoning and nuisance ordinances

Commercial and Event Areas

- Designated golf cart parking zones for festivals, special events, civic tasks, or high-traffic areas
- Temporary signage or barricades during events
- Coordination with event permits and public safety planning

Storage and Overnight Parking

- Whether overnight parking on public streets would be permitted
- Secure storage requirements to prevent theft or vandalism
- Noise and nuisance considerations related to charging or maintenance

Enforcement Considerations

- Responsibility for enforcement of parking violations
- Use of citations, warnings, or towing for improperly parked carts
- Consistency with enforcement of standard motor vehicle parking rules

Clear parking standards may reduce conflicts with pedestrians, motorists, and property owners, and help ensure consistent enforcement.

POLICY OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

For clarity of discussion, the following options are presented as possible paths forward. These options are provided for consideration only and are not recommendations.

1. Adopt an Ordinance Allowing Golf Carts
Pass an ordinance permitting golf carts on streets where the Town has authority, subject to conditions established by the Board.
2. Do Not Adopt an Ordinance
Take no action, resulting in the continuation of current practice and existing state law limitations.
3. Adopt an Ordinance Prohibiting Golf Carts
Pass an ordinance explicitly prohibiting the operation of golf carts

SUMMARY

Louisiana law allows municipalities to permit golf carts by ordinance, but requires careful consideration of safety, infrastructure, enforcement, and liability. Nearby towns vary widely in their approach, from formal ordinances to no authorization at all. Abita Springs' unique layout, particularly the presence of state highways, adds additional complexity.

** State Statute (RS 32:299.4)*

Louisiana law clearly states that any golf cart operated on a parish or municipal street that has been designated for golf cart use must be registered with the State of Louisiana through the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV) as an off-road vehicle and must display an OMV decal. That requirement is explicit in the statute and is the baseline state requirement.

What the OMV Registration Means

- “Registered with the OMV” means the golf cart must be titled/registered by the state’s motor vehicle office, not just with the city or parish
- The OMV issues an off-road vehicle decal that must be displayed on the cart
- Louisiana’s administrative code also lays out the OMV titling/registration process, including forms, proof of ownership, and insurance requirements

Local Practice (Municipal Inspection)

Many local governments layer additional steps on top of the state requirement. What they commonly do in practice:

1. You first complete the OMV registration (title/registration through OMV and receive the state decal)
2. After the OMV step, the local parish/municipality often requires an inspection by a sheriff’s deputy or municipal inspector to confirm the cart meets equipment requirements (lights, brakes, mirrors, etc.)
3. Once inspection is passed locally, the sheriff or local authority issues a local decal or permit in addition to the OMV decal

For example, St. John Parish requires OMV registration first, then a local inspection and issuance of a parish decal

Similarly, St. Charles Parish also requires state registration and then a sheriff’s inspection and local deca



**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS,
REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ALTERNATE MAGISTRATE**

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the Town of Abita Springs, the Honorable Daniel J. Curtis makes the following appointment:

As Alternate Town Magistrate:

Michelle Ricca

WHEREAS, this appointment has been presented to the Board for approval.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Alderman of the Town of Abita Springs does hereby approve of the appointment of the Alternate Magistrate at an hourly rate not to exceed that established, as the maximum, by the State of Louisiana Attorney General.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Honorable Daniel J. Curtis, Mayor of the Town of Abita Springs, is hereby granted all authority necessary to execute any documents in connection with these appointments.

It was duly moved by Alderman , seconded by Alderman that this resolution was adopted on the ____ day of _____, 2026.

A vote haven been taken on the matter with the following result:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST

Leanne Schaefer

Michelle Ricca is a partner with the Adam Davis Law Firm based in Abita Springs.

Michelle graduated, *magna cum laude*, from Massachusetts Maritime Academy in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering and a minor in Energy Management. As a licensed unlimited vessel engineer working at Otto Candies LLC from 2012 to 2021, she led a team of engineers, managed vessel maintenance, and oversaw complex operations including fuel, chemical, and cargo handling, as well as shipyard inspections and retrofits. Her early experience as a Cadet Intern at Tyco Telecommunications further honed her technical skills in marine engineering.

Michelle graduated magna cum laude and in the Top 10% from Loyola University College of Law, New Orleans, Louisiana. She was also an active member of the Loyola Law Review and has been published in the Loyola Law Review Journal. After law school, Michelle served as a Judicial Law Clerk for the Honorable Carl J. Barbier at the United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, where she worked on both criminal and civil matters, assisted in legal research and drafting and editing opinions.

Education

- Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, New Orleans, Louisiana
 - Juris Doctor, May 2024
 - Civil Law Division
 - *magna cum laude*
 - Rank: Top 10% (18/183)
 - Lawyering I (Legal Research and Writing), Earned "A-"
 - Lawyering III (Professional Ethics), Earned "A*"
 - Torts I, Earned "A"
 - Member, Loyola Law Review
 - 2021-2022 Warren E. Mouldoux Professional Responsibility Award Recipient
- Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts
 - Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering, June 2012
 - Minor in Energy Management
 - *magna cum laude*
 - 2nd Refrigeration Rate, Leadership Position onboard T/S Kennedy

Admissions

- Louisiana
- Eastern District of Louisiana
- Middle District of Louisiana
- Western District of Louisiana
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Memberships & Affiliations

- Louisiana State Bar Association
- St. Thomas More-Loyola Law American Inn of Court



**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS,
LOUISIANA, APPROVING THE MAYOR'S SELECTION OF THE CPA FIRM OF GRIFFIN &
FURMAN LLC TO CONDUCT THE TOWN'S ANNUAL AUDIT**

WHEREAS, Louisiana State Law requires municipalities to undergo an annual audit conducted by an independent certified public accountant (CPA); and

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the Town of Abita Springs has selected the firm of Griffin & Furman LLC, a reputable CPA firm with expertise in municipal audits, to conduct the Town's annual audit for the fiscal year ending 2025; and

WHEREAS, Griffin & Furman LLC has agreed to perform the necessary auditing services in accordance with the applicable standards set forth by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's office and other state laws governing municipal audits; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Aldermen has reviewed the selection of Griffin & Furman LLC and finds the firm to be qualified and capable of performing the audit in compliance with Louisiana State Law; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Aldermen understands that the audit is essential for maintaining transparency, accountability, and compliance with all financial regulations applicable to the Town of Abita Springs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Abita Springs, Louisiana, in a duly convened meeting on this 3rd day of February 2026, that:

- The selection of Griffin & Furman LLC as the independent CPA firm to conduct the Town's annual audit for the fiscal year ending 2025 is hereby confirmed and approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

This resolution was adopted on a motion of Alderman _____, seconded by Alderman _____.

The vote was:
Yeas:
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent:

ATTEST

Leanne Schaefer, Town Clerk