



MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING AUGUST 12, 2026 6:00 P.M.

The City of Madeira Beach Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. on August 12, 2026, in the Patricia Shontz Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor
Eddie McGeehen, Vice Mayor/Commissioner District 3
David Tagliarini, Commissioner District 1
Charles "Chuck" Dillon, Commissioner District 2
Housh Ghovae, Commissioner District 4

MEMBERS ABSENT:

CHARTER OFFICERS PRESENT: Mike Helfrich, City Manager
Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk
Thomas Trask, City Attorney
Andrew Laflin, Finance Director Consultant

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brooks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

City Attorney Tom Trask gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Clara VanBlargan called the roll. All were present.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Tagliarini motioned to approve the Agenda as written. Commissioner Ghovae seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"

Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

5. PROCLAMATIONS

There were no Proclamations.

6. PRESENTATIONS

There were no Presentations.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bob Bello, 13301 Gulf Lane, thanked Public Works Director Megan Wepfer and her team, along with Duke Energy, for their continued work on the undergrounding project. Mr. Bello noted that, as a resident, it was exciting to see tangible progress after coordination challenges and delays. The crews had been out marking sites about two weeks earlier. Another round of site visits was expected the following week in preparation for Phase 1 of the storm damage repairs.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. 2026-07-08, BOC Regular Meeting Minutes**
- B. 2026-07-22, BOC Budget Workshop #4 Meeting Minutes**
- C. 2026-07-22, BOC Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Dillon motioned to approve the meeting minutes as written. Vice Mayor McGeehen seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. ITB #26-04 Stormwater Backflow Prevention Project**
- B. Disaster Debris Management Participation Agreement with DRC**
- C. Amendment to RFP 26-05 – Marina Seawall Replacement #2 to Include 129th Avenue (Area 5) Seawall Replacement**

D. Interlocal Agreement with Pinellas County – Post-Storm Recovery Services within Geographic Pinellas County

Commissioner Ghovae requested that Item A be pulled for separate discussion.

Commissioner Tagliarini moved to approve the Consent Agenda, excluding Item A. Commissioner Ghovae seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

A. ITB #26-04 Stormwater Backflow Prevention Project

The item was removed for separate discussion and a vote at the request of Commissioner Ghovae, who stated his opposition to the project and indicated he would not vote in favor of it.

Public Works Director Megan Wepfer provided the Commission with a video demonstration of how the tide-gate backflow prevention valves operate. She explained that the rubber-gasketed valve is installed at the outfall of a storm drain. It allows water to flow out into the bay during a rain event, while the rising tide pushes the gasket closed, preventing saltwater from reentering the pipe. If a rain event coincides with a high tide, there may be minor roadway flooding because insufficient pressure prevents the valve from opening. Once the tide recedes, the valve opens and allows the roadway to drain. She acknowledged that debris, particularly mulch and landscaping material placed directly on storm drain grates by residents, is the primary maintenance challenge.

Director Wepfer noted that the City currently has seven valves in Boca Ciega and three along 137th Avenue, and that this project would install approximately thirteen additional valves throughout the City. The valves are removable and can be relocated if project areas change in the future. 90 percent of localized roadway flooding is attributable to tidal events, not rainfall alone. A public education effort, similar to one conducted in 2017, was cited as a key component of the program's effectiveness. She also noted that the proposed landscape ordinance being developed by the Community Development Department would help mitigate debris-related valve obstructions.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Ghovae reiterated his concern that when the tide rises, the valve closes, preventing street runoff from reaching the bay and causing water to build up on the roadway. Director Wepfer clarified that without the valve, the same flooding would occur, because bay water would enter the pipe and inundate the road regardless. She added that with the valve in place, any flooding would

be freshwater rather than saltwater, which Commissioner Dillon noted was less damaging to vehicles.

Commissioner Dillon asked how many additional valves might ultimately be needed citywide. Director Wepfer indicated that future valve installations would need to be coordinated with the Capital Improvement Plan to avoid purchasing valves for pipes scheduled for replacement. Director Wepfer also suggested seeking additional funding in the following year.

Vice Mayor McGeehan confirmed that the valves are intended to address nuisance tidal flooding and noted that the project was supported by a \$100,000 FDEP grant, matched by \$100,000 in City funds, for a total of \$200,000. He also inquired about maintenance, and Director Wepfer confirmed that the valves are cleaned quarterly and tracked in the Forerunner system, adding that crews respond immediately if an issue is identified. She said that barnacle growth on the exterior of the valve does not affect its function.

Commissioner Tagliarini moved to authorize the award of ITB No. 26-04 to Randall Engineering and Construction LLC in the amount of \$187,882 and to authorize the standard 10% construction contingency of \$18,780.80, for a total project authorization of \$206,610.80. Vice Mayor McGeehan seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehan	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"NO"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 4-1.

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Ordinance 2026-07, Charter Amendments Relating to Municipal Election Dates, Candidate Qualifying Periods, Term Transition Provisions, and Referendum Questions – 2nd Reading & Public Hearing

City Attorney Tom Trask read Ordinance 2026-07 by title only.

ORDINANCE 2026-07

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH, FLORIDA, SUBMITTING TO THE ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY CHARTER RELATING TO THE DATE OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND CANDIDATE QUALIFYING PERIODS; AMENDING SECTION 3.3, NOMINATION OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, SUBPARAGRAPH (A), FILING, OF THE CITY CHARTER TO CHANGE THE CANDIDATE

QUALIFYING PERIOD FROM DECEMBER TO JUNE; AMENDING SECTION 3.4, MANNER OF HOLDING ELECTIONS, SUBPARAGRAPH A, OF THE CITY CHARTER TO CHANGE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS FROM MARCH TO NOVEMBER TO COINCIDE WITH THE STATE GENERAL ELECTION; AMENDING SECTION 2.2, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CREATED; QUALIFICATIONS; TERM OF OFFICE; AND VACANCIES, SUBPARAGRAPH (B), QUALIFICATIONS AND TERM OF OFFICE, OF THE CITY CHARTER TO PROVIDE FOR CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS, AMENDING SECTION 4.8, INDUCTION OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS INTO OFFICE; MEETINGS, OF THE CITY CHARTER TO PROVIDE CONSISTENT COMMENCEMENT OF TERMS AND INSTALLATION PROCEDURES; PROVIDING FOR TRANSITIONAL TERMS OF OFFICE INCLUDING EXTENSION OF THE TERMS OF COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3 AND COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4 UNTIL NOVEMBER 2027 AND EXTENSION OF THE TERMS OF COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2, AND MAYOR-COMMISSIONER UNTIL NOVEMBER 2028; PROVIDING FOR A REFERENDUM; PROVIDING FOR BALLOT LANGUAGE; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE OF ELECTION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Tagliarini stated for the record that this ordinance would extend current Commissioners' terms by several additional months, potentially five to six, beyond their current terms, acknowledging that this was a one-time occurrence necessitated by the transition. Mayor Brooks noted that holding elections in November, in conjunction with already-scheduled elections, would save the community money by avoiding a standalone municipal election. Commissioner Ghovae added that the change was also expected to significantly increase voter participation.

After the second reading and public hearing, Vice Mayor McGeehen moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-07, Charter Amendments Relating to Municipal Election Dates, Candidate Qualifying Periods, Term Transition Provisions, and Referendum Questions. Commissioner Dillon seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

B. Ordinance 2026-08, Fees and Collection Procedure Manual – 1st Reading & Public Hearing

City Attorney Tom Trask read Ordinance 2026-08 by title only.

ORDINANCE 2026-08

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A REVISED APPENDIX A – FEES AND COLLECTION PROCEDURES MANUAL OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH, FLORIDA; AMENDING THE FEE SCHEDULES FOR THE FIRE, MARINA, PARKING, RECREATION, AND STORMWATER DEPARTMENTS AS SET FORTH IN EXHIBIT A; REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 2025-18; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Ghovae asked where the Wednesday Market would fall within the fee categories and whether vendors were paying fees for solid waste and restroom use. Acting Recreation Director Max Michalski confirmed that, as in the past, Wednesday Market vendors removed their own trash, local businesses along Madeira Way allowed patrons and vendors to use their restrooms at no charge, and the City charged only a street-closure fee, with the market operator running the event as a community service.

Finance Director Consultant Andrew Laflin clarified that the first reading would approve the fee changes presented to date and that additional changes from Community Development and Recreation were forthcoming and would be workshopped before a second reading. Mr. Laflin confirmed that the proposed parking fine for not backing in, which had been discussed at a prior workshop, had been removed from the ordinance and that this enforcement mechanism would not be pursued.

Commissioner Tagliarini inquired about splash pad fees, and Acting Director Michalski confirmed that a reservation fee applies for exclusive use of the splash pad, such as for a birthday party, while general public use remains free. Commissioner Tagliarini also raised the issue of beach wedding permits, noting that a resident with riparian rights on 134th Avenue had experienced issues with wedding parties setting up on private beach areas. Acting Director Michalski confirmed that permits are required even for groups of fewer than fifty people if any structure is placed on the beach, and that all permitted vendors are directed to set up in front of the beach access on City property. He acknowledged that some larger weddings had occasionally drifted from the designated areas and that staff continued to work with wedding planning organizations to reinforce the requirement.

After the first reading and public hearing, Vice Mayor McGeehen moved to approve Ordinance 2026-08, the Fees and Collection Procedure Manual. Commissioner Dillon seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

C. Ordinance 2026-09, Nonconformances and Rebuilding Regulations – 1st Reading & Public Hearing

City Attorney Tom Trask read Ordinance 2026-00 by title only.

ORDINANCE 2026-09

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A REVISED APPENDIX A – FEES AND COLLECTION PROCEDURES MANUAL OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH, FLORIDA; AMENDING THE FEE SCHEDULES FOR THE FIRE, MARINA, PARKING, RECREATION, AND STORMWATER DEPARTMENTS AS SET FORTH IN EXHIBIT A; REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 2025-18; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Dillon opened the discussion by expressing concern about the large number of vacant properties in the City and by noting his hesitation to extend the deadline by a full year, having already extended it once by six months. He also noted that he had been advised to consult with the city attorney regarding Senate Bill 180 and its implications for any action the Commission might take.

City Attorney Trask clarified that Senate Bill 180, which restricts municipalities from adopting regulations more restrictive than the current code, was not implicated here because the ordinance makes regulations less restrictive, not more restrictive. Community Development Planner II Joe Petraglia explained that if the deadline were not extended and a property owner submitted a remodel permit after the deadline, the permit would be denied, which could result in an even longer delay, since new construction plans take longer to prepare than remodel plans. He further noted that Senate Bill 180 is set to lapse in approximately one year, at which point the Commission could adopt more restrictive provisions, including the option to force demolition if desired.

Commissioner Dillon acknowledged these points but reiterated his underlying concern about the high volume of vacant, potentially rodent-infested properties and the negative visual impact on the community and on real estate values.

Mayor Brooks suggested that a more productive path forward would be to dedicate focused time at the next Commission workshop to a detailed discussion of code enforcement, specifically to clarify what the City's ordinances permit staff to do, to establish clear expectations for both internal code enforcement staff and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office deputies, and to develop a reporting mechanism to keep the community informed about enforcement activities. She observed that many residents are still awaiting insurance settlements or approval for assistance programs, and that the one-year extension was intended to provide them breathing room while those processes play out.

Commissioner Dillon agreed with that direction and shared that during a recent ride-along with code enforcement staff, he was impressed to learn that enforcement patrols occur about twice daily. He expressed a desire to give that process greater visibility and to ensure the City has sufficient tools to encourage property owners to maintain their properties.

Commissioner Tagliarini echoed the Mayor's call for a code enforcement workshop and requested that a representative from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office responsible for the City's contract attend to clarify expectations and reporting. City Manager Helfrich confirmed he would arrange it. Commissioner Tagliarini also referenced the forthcoming Pinellas County Sheriff's contract vote and expressed a desire for regular reporting on non-emergency code violations.

Vice Mayor McGeehan requested that the topic of abandoned swimming pools in his district, particularly on 144th and 145th Avenues, be added to the workshop agenda, citing constituent complaints about mosquito breeding. Mayor Brooks indicated that the agenda-setting portion of the meeting would be the appropriate time to formalize those additions.

Mr. Petraglia presented a Forerunner pie chart showing the breakdown of property statuses for 2024 hurricane-damaged properties citywide. The chart covered 5,261 parcel IDs. He acknowledged that the data was still being cleaned and that condominium buildings, which have hundreds of individual parcel IDs, were significantly skewing the numbers, particularly in the "QC" (Quality Control) needed category, which captures post-1975 structures not yet individually reviewed. Mr. Petraglia noted that Forerunner had only recently released the pie chart feature and that this was the first data run using it.

After the first reading and public hearing, Commissioner Ghovae moved to approve Ordinance 2026-09, Nonconformances and Rebuilding Regulations. Commissioner Tagliarini seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehan	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

D. APB 2026-01 Florida Fisherman, Inc.

City Attorney Trask read the quasi-judicial procedures into the record. The application requests authorization for a 2-COP alcoholic beverage license to sell beer and wine by the drink or in sealed containers for consumption aboard a vessel at 112 Boardwalk Place, 124 Boardwalk Place, and 140 Boardwalk Place, Madeira Beach. The applicable standards are those set forth in Section 110-532 of the Code. No notices of intent to become a party were filed.

Each Commission member confirmed there were no ex parte communications or conflicts of interest to report.

City Attorney Trask swore in all witnesses. The applicant was not present at the meeting.

City Attorney Trask said when considering the alcoholic beverage application, the Board of Commissioners must consider the following five factors:

1. The extent to which the location and the extent to which the proposed alcoholic beverage request will adversely affect the character of the existing neighborhood.
2. The extent to which traffic generated as a result of the location of the proposed alcoholic beverage request will create congestion or present a safety hazard.
3. Whether or not the proposed use is compatible with the particular location for which it is proposed.
4. Whether or not the proposed use will adversely affect public safety.
5. No application for review under this section shall be considered until the applicant has paid in full any outstanding charges, fees, interest, fines or penalties owed by the applicant to the City under any section of the Code.

Planner Andrew Morris presented the staff report, noting that this application concerns the Dolphin Quest II vessel and that the license reflects a change of ownership rather than a new operation. Staff reviewed all five applicable criteria: neighborhood character, traffic safety, compatibility, public safety, and outstanding fees, and found the application consistent with each. The vessel is located in the C-1 Johns Pass Village Activity Center zoning district/Boardwalk Character District. It is more than 500 feet from any church, school, or youth recreation center. The vessel is licensed and registered with the U.S. Coast Guard, and the applicant has no outstanding fines or fees owed to the City. Staff recommended approval.

Mr. Morris's staff report was submitted into evidence. No public comment was received.

Mr. Morris responded to questions and comments by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Tagliarini moved to approve ABP 2026-01 for Florida Fisherman, Inc. Commissioner Dillon seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

E. APB 2026-02 Florida Fisherman, Inc.

City Attorney Trask noted that all quasi-judicial procedures, standards, burdens of proof, and party identifications from the previous item applied equally to this application, and that all witnesses remained sworn. The sole distinction from ABP 2026-01 is that this application pertains to the Pirate Ship vessel rather than the Dolphin Quest II. The applicant was not present at the meeting.

Long Range Planner Morris submitted his staff report into evidence without reading it. No public comment was received.

Commissioner Dillon motioned to approve ABP 2026-02 for Florida Fisherman, Inc. Commissioner Tagliarini seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12. CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS

A. AirDNA Software Purchase

Fire Chief Clint Belk introduced the AirDNA software contract, describing it as a tool for identifying short-term vacation rentals listed on platforms such as VRBO and Airbnb. He noted that the City had received public comments and complaints about the legal status and location of short-term rentals. After reviewing numerous presentations from software vendors, the City found AirDNA to be the most cost-effective solution that still provided the core data needed. The contract would be split between the Fire Department and Community Development, each bearing half the cost. Chief Belk noted that, per Florida state statute, short-term rental operators must undergo an annual life-safety fire inspection. Based on preliminary AirDNA data, the revenue from these

inspections was projected to more than offset the City's share of the contract cost and fund an additional 0.5 fire inspector position.

Community Development Director Marci Forbes explained that the software would feed location data in latitude/longitude format into Forerunner, enabling the City to cross-reference listed properties against its zoning map to identify rentals operating in areas where short-term rentals are not permitted, as well as legally operating rentals that may not have obtained a business tax receipt.

Bob Bello, 13301 Gulf Lane, addressed the Commission in his capacity as both a real estate broker and an owner of multiple short-term rental properties. He expressed support for the goal of identifying illegal or unregistered short-term rentals, noting that operators who circumvent the rules negatively affect those who have complied. He raised concerns about the accuracy and reliability of AirDNA data, stating that, in his professional experience, AirDNA's primary function, projecting rental income, was often significantly off. Properties can remain in AirDNA's system even after being dormant for extended periods, citing one of his former properties as an example. He noted that, coincidentally, on the day of the meeting he received a marketing email from a property management company using AirDNA data to project rental income for one of his properties, a property not legally zoned for short-term rental use, illustrating that the platform is unaware of local zoning restrictions. Mr. Bello urged the Commission to ensure appropriate checks and balances are in place before using AirDNA data as the basis for enforcement actions or owner notifications, and to treat the data as an initial screening tool rather than definitive evidence.

Commissioner Tagliarini asked how the software would improve the identification of short-term rentals amid current code enforcement challenges. Chief Belk described a new process being developed in conjunction with PCSO deputies and Community Development to close the procedural gap in which deputies had been responding to complaints about illegal short-term rentals but not reporting their findings to the City for follow-up. He confirmed that fire department staff would be involved in conducting inspections.

Chief Belk addressed Mr. Bello's accuracy concerns by clarifying that AirDNA flags only properties advertised as available for at least one day during a thirty-day period; the City is responsible for its own zoning determination and verification. If a property goes dormant, it is removed from the monthly report. He acknowledged that AirDNA does not have access to the City's zoning data.

Commissioner Ghovae inquired about competing products. Chief Belk confirmed that several alternatives were evaluated, with annual costs ranging from about \$55,000 to well into the six figures, and that none of the additional features offered by higher-priced competitors were deemed necessary for the City's purposes.

Mayor Brooks raised concern about the contract's automatic renewal clause, noting that the City typically does not enter into contracts with such provisions. She proposed removing the 90-day written notice requirement for nonrenewal and requiring that a new contract be presented each year. Chief Belk agreed, and City Attorney Trask indicated that the Chief could inform AirDNA that the Commission's approval would be subject to deleting that language.

Commissioner Tagliarini moved to approve the 12-month subscription agreement with AirDNA,

LLC, with the automatic renewal removed. Commissioner Dillon seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

B. Revision to the Redington EMS Station Funding Agreement

Fire Chief Clint Belk noted that this item was substantially the same as the funding agreement previously approved by the Board. Pinellas County requested a revision to the signature page so the County Administrator could execute the agreement rather than requiring it to go before the full Board of County Commissioners. All other terms remained unchanged: funding is 100% from Pinellas County, and the City of Madeira Beach remains the project manager.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There were no public comments.

Vice Mayor McGeehen moved to approve the Redington Beaches EMS Station Funding Agreement. Commissioner Dillon seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Vice Mayor McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Dillon	"YES"
Commissioner Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

13. NEW BUSINESS

A. Authorization to Proceed with Due Diligence – Proposed Acquisition of 545 150th Avenue

City Manager Helfrich advised the Commission that the City had been pursuing a purchase agreement for the property at 545 150th Avenue, which had been reviewed by both City Attorney Trask and the seller's real estate agent. The City received the signed contract just as the meeting was getting underway, at approximately 6:20 PM, so it had not yet been distributed to all commissioners for review. City Manager Helfrich suggested either a special meeting or an opportunity to review the document that evening, noting that it was approximately 16–17 pages long. He presented the rationale for the acquisition: the property sits between two parcels already

owned by the City, and without it the City would not have a continuous property holding. Additionally, without ownership of this parcel, the west side of the recently purchased 555 property could not be used for docking, limiting the marina to a two-sided rather than a three-sided configuration.

Commissioner Dillon said he felt he was entering the matter without sufficient background, noting that the prior Commission, including four of the five current members, had voted to pursue the 555 property before he took office and that he had not been fully briefed on that purchase. He stated he was not opposed to the concept but needed more information. He also asked what a comprehensive plan for the property would look like, having had prior conversations with City Manager Helfrich about the importance of a master plan before committing to additional acquisitions.

Mayor Brooks provided context, explaining that at community meetings following the purchase of the 555 property, there had been strong resident interest in the City eventually acquiring the adjacent parcel to complete the approximately 10-acre site and give the City full control over the City's entrance. The Commission had previously authorized the City Manager's office to pursue the purchase, and the City Manager had now returned with a negotiated contract that requires formal Commission approval before due diligence, appraisals, environmental testing, and related work can proceed.

Commissioner Tagliarini expressed strong support for the acquisition, calling it a potential "game changer" for the City that would allow the use of all three sides of the marina property for revenue-generating purposes. He noted that all public workshops on the 555 property had been uniformly positive, with no resident pushback. Commissioner Ghovae asked whether the Recreation Department could provide a 10-year revenue projection for the entire property, noting that some numbers had already been presented at prior workshops regarding the two-sided marina.

City Manager Helfrich reported that the City's offer for the 545 property was \$3,500,000. He then addressed the environmental concern raised by Vice Mayor McGeehen regarding historical petroleum discharge noted in the due diligence documents. He explained that the site had a 2,000-gallon underground storage tank that had been removed under a state program administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). A subsequent assessment revealed soil contamination with traces of petroleum, but groundwater sampling from five monitoring wells showed no contamination. He stated that the contamination level did not meet the threshold for FDEP to classify it as an environmental hazard, and that the risk would be elevated only if the building's foundation were demolished and the soil disturbed. Under the existing FDEP program, the state would remove the top two feet of contaminated soil at its own cost if demolition were pursued. He indicated that a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was required under the contract and that, based on what is already known, a Phase 2 may not be necessary. If a Phase 2 is required, the contract provides up to 60 days for that work.

Commissioner Ghovae questioned whether the \$3.5 million was justified given the parcel's wetlands and water relative to the available upland. Commissioner Dillon was not opposed in principle but requested adequate time to review the contract.

Commissioner Tagliarini reiterated his strong support and agreed that a full review of the contract should precede any vote. The Commission discussed scheduling a special meeting for this purpose. After discussion of available dates and times, the Commission reached consensus to schedule a special meeting for Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 5:00 PM.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment.

14. AGENDA SETTING

- A. Temporary Parking
- B. Pinellas County Sheriff's Contract

Added Items

- 1. Abandoned swimming pools

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There were no public comments.

15. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

A. Board of Commissioners – Reports/Correspondence

Commissioner Ghovae presented the prototype Key to the City plaque to the Commission for review. He asked for guidance on what should go on the plaques and how to present them; there will be two plaques, each given to two people from the same entity he has chosen to give them to. Commissioner Tagliarini said he could give it some thought and send it to him. The Mayor said they could have that at their next workshop and then present the plaques at the next regular meeting. The plaque is intended to serve as the standard presentation format for future Key to the City awards.

Commissioner Dillon asked if they had anything showing who they had given keys to. The Mayor said there have been a lot of keys given over the years and that has never been done. They could put something up in the Chamber showing who gets them. Commissioner Ghovae said it would be a good idea to create history.

Commissioner Dillon asked how often they should give a key. The Mayor said a Commission gets to nominate someone who they believe deserves a Key to the City, which they have discussed before, not to give a key to just anyone. In the past, a key was given out for various reasons. This Commission decided that it should be for someone they believe was doing something exceptional.

The Mayor said they should also discuss the ordinances they currently have in place for keys, coins, and awards, etc. at the workshop. That will also help them as they head into the City's anniversary, as they will be presenting awards for that, too.

Commissioner Ghovae noted that August is Purple Heart Month and suggested issuing a proclamation of recognition. Vice Mayor McGeehan noted that he had been working with the American Legion on a related matter involving a Madeira Beach resident who received the Purple

Heart. Mayor Brooks proposed that a proclamation be prepared for the BOC Workshop on August 26. City Clerk VanBlargan confirmed she would prepare the proclamation upon receiving the relevant information.

Commissioner Ghovae raised concerns about the City Clerk's performance evaluation and merit pay. She had not received her merit increase. City Clerk VanBlargan confirmed that she had received the cost-of-living adjustment, consistent with other employees, but that the merit evaluation was due in October 2025; another evaluation is scheduled for October 2026. Salary increases are approved in the budget. The City Manager will address it.

B. Board of Commissioners – 2026 Meetings Report (January - June) - Informational

This item was received for informational purposes.

C. City Attorney

The City Attorney had nothing to report.

D. City Clerk

City Clerk VanBlargan reported that the City Clerk's office was conducting a comprehensive document-scanning project to eliminate off-site records storage and make all documents accessible via the Laserfiche public portal. She noted that the office was also preparing to conduct a "ready scan," in which a company would audit all shared drives and email archives to identify documents not yet in Laserfiche. Afterward, final versions of those documents would be uploaded to the portal for public access. She indicated that the remaining step before the ready scan could commence was for IT to grant the company access to the City's shared drives, which she expected to be completed within about one week. City Clerk VanBlargan expressed enthusiasm for the project's potential to improve public access to City records.

E. City Manager

Acting Recreation Director Michalski reported on athletics, senior program, childcare, Burger Week, and the 45th Annual Seafood Festival.

Public Works Director Wepfer provided project updates on Area 3 drainage improvement, Tom and Kitty Stewart Park, including the landscaping plan, John's Pass Village paving, Bay Point mill and overlay project completion, and the seawall at Tom and Kitty Stewart Park.

City Manager Helfrich provided updates on the strategic planning scheduled for August 21st, John's Pass dredging project, snack shack restoration and the historic designation process, and the ongoing interview and selection for a new recreation director.

16. RESPOND TO PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Mayor Brooks noted that only one public comment had been received during the meeting, Mr. Bello's expression of gratitude to Public Works staff, and thanked him for coming to recognize the staff, noting that they very much deserved the acknowledgment.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brooks adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

ATTEST:

Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor

Clara VanBlargan, MMC, FCPC, FCRM, MSM, City Clerk