



MINUTES
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
MEETING
JUNE 30, 2026
4:00 P.M.

The City of Madeira Beach Civil Service Commission meeting was scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on June 30, 2026, in the Patricia Shontz Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jerry Cantrell, Chair/Commissioner
James “Jim” Paul, Vice Chair/Commissioner
Judithanne McLauchlan, Commissioner
Scott Haufe, Commissioner
Paul Tilka, Commissioner
Clara VanBlargan, Ex-Officio Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Michael Helfrich, City Manager
Attorney Rob Eschenfelder, Trask Daigneault, L.L.P. (via Zoom)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jerry Cantrell called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. 04-20-2026, Civil Service Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Paul moved to approve the Civil Service Commission Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner McLauchlan. The motion carried 5-0.

5. HR REPORT

HR Staff Megan Powers reviewed the HR Report. Regarding open positions, she noted that recruitment for a building official remains ongoing and has been difficult to fill. Recruitment for the HR director position is being handled by a recruiter, with candidates expected within the next few weeks. The community communications manager position has been filled, with the new hire accepting the offer the previous day and an anticipated start date of July 6th. Additionally, the City recently hired a building compliance supervisor and a part-time Marina attendant, and fully staffed its Recreation summer camp.

On the projects side, Ms. Powers reported that she had reformatted the department's standard and safety procedures, noting that the existing documents were significantly outdated and needed retyping. The Commission was invited to offer suggestions for further improvements. Regarding training, sexual harassment training was distributed to all employees in January; cybersecurity training continues monthly for compliance; and the HR Consortium has been coordinating leadership training opportunities through the Pinellas Cities network.

Responding to a question from Chair Cantrell, the City Manager confirmed that the goal is to have the HR director in place by the end of September 2026, with the process moving as quickly as possible once candidates are received.

6. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. City of Madeira Beach Safety & Accident Prevention Manual

City Manager Michael Helfrich presented a written directive outlining a structured plan to rebuild the City's safety and accident-prevention manual. He assessed the current manual as containing useful baseline content but in need of significant modernization, noting that the referenced technology and procedures are outdated. He emphasized that the goal is not to start from scratch but to conduct a comprehensive rebuild over an estimated 15-week timeline.

The rebuild directive would establish a clear scope and process, distinguishing among policy, procedure, training, forms, and technical appendices to ensure the final document is enforceable and maintainable without conflict with the personnel policy manual or individual departmental SOPs. The Human Resources Director will serve as the designated lead upon onboarding. However, groundwork, including organizing and inventorying existing materials and conducting department head reviews, would begin immediately, advancing the process to approximately Step 5 of the outlined framework before the HR Director is on board.

The areas slated for review in the rebuild include, among others: program governance, incident reporting, emergency action and fire prevention, hazardous communication, PPE, fleet and mobile equipment, excavating and trenching, confined space, lockout/tagout, electrical safety, heat and weather protocols, contractor safety, and workplace violence. A key principle throughout is avoiding policy duplication, so that any future modifications need only be made in one location.

Vice Chair Paul asked who would conduct department director interviews before the HR Director's arrival. The City Manager confirmed he would personally meet with directors to assess current procedures and prepare them for the next steps. Ms. Powers agreed that the job description updates, particularly for departments like Recreation and Public Works, are closely tied to this process, as Concentra, the City's occupational health vendor, performs both drug testing and physical evaluations.

Chair Cantrell confirmed that the immediate interim controls listed in Item 7 of the directive, including updates to emergency contacts, workers' compensation reporting, hazard analysis, traffic controls, and excavation/trenching protocols, would take effect immediately, well in advance of September. The Commission expressed its intent to receive a full update at the September meeting.

8. PROGRESS REPORT

A. 2026 Progress Report

The City Clerk presented the 2026 Progress Report, which summarized items for future discussion, prior meeting outcomes, and completed items. She reviewed each category with the Commission.

Items pending or continued for future discussion include:

- The Madeira Beach Safety & Accident Prevention Manual (addressed at this meeting and to be returned with revisions at a future date)
- Individual department policies (to be returned to the Civil Service Commission with the recommended revisions)
- The standardized exit-interview process for voluntary resignations.

Prior meeting outcomes reviewed included:

- The Commission's August 5, 2025 visit to the safety manual
- The Commission's recommended formatting and organizational standards for individual department procedures (consistent section numbering, uniform formatting, effective dates, position titles rather than employee names, and cross-references using sections rather than page numbers)
- Items from the December 2, 2025, and April 20, 2026, meetings, including exit interview development, new job description formatting, clarification of the drug-free workplace policy, Civil Service Commission rules, hearing officer agreements, and quarterly personnel policy compliance check-ins.

Completed items of note included

- Adopted Ordinance 2025-01, the new Employee Personnel Handbook, on April 2, 2025.
- Adopted Ordinance 2025-02, updating Civil Service Commission Rules on April 2, 2025.
- Adopted Ordinance 2025-03, establishing the grievance hearing process on April 2, 2025.
- Regarding Ordinance 2025-03, the Board of Commissioners approved two hearing officer agreements on June 10, 2026.
- The formal incorporation of the drug-free workplace policy into the new Personnel Policy (Ordinance 2025-01) renders the standalone 2007 policy obsolete.

Commissioner McLauchlan expressed appreciation for the comprehensive summary and asked whether the report would be shared with the Board of Commissioners. The City Clerk confirmed that the report would be included in her monthly report to the Commission at regular meetings. The Civil Service Commission unanimously consented.

Drug-Free Workplace Follow-Up:

- Chair Cantrell raised a follow-up item from the progress report regarding Concentra's compliance with the current drug-free workplace policy rather than the outdated 2007 version. Attorney Eschenfelder clarified that when the City contracted with Concentra, the concern was whether the vendor had been provided with the updated 2025 policy. He noted that the updated policy contains detailed procedures governing the Medical Review Officer's role, how employees are informed of a positive result, and the employee's appeal rights, procedures that may differ from or not exist in the 2007 version. He emphasized that the vendor simply needs to be provided with the current policy chapter and directed to follow it going forward. The City Manager confirmed he would take responsibility for the follow-up, as it had not yet been completed by Chief Belk. Ms. Powers added that she would coordinate directly with the Concentra representative.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next Civil Service Commission meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 22, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

Commissioner McLauchlan introduced a Fulbright scholar studying government who was in attendance, visiting from Belarus.

The City Clerk said she is working on a labor-attorney training course for Civil Service. She reminded the Commission of the Ethics training on July 15.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cantrell adjourned the meeting at 4:33 PM.

ATTEST:

Jerry Cantrell, Chair

Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk/Secretary Ex-Officio