



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, June 02, 2026 * 6:30 PM
MINUTES

Present was:

Mayor – Jason Carson
District 1 Commissioner – Ed Gold
District 2 Commissioner – Holly Bobrowski
District 3 Commissioner – Karl Shuck
District 4 Commissioner – Bobby Lance
District 5 Commissioner – Beth Lowell
District 6 Commissioner – Christopher Oller
District 7 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Carson called the Council Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and the City Clerk, Yolanda Quiceno, confirmed the presence of a quorum. City Manager (CM) Rudometkin, Chief Grimm, Attorney Shaffer, Public Works Director Phil Price, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag - Comm Jim Partin, District 7, led the invocation and Pledge to the Flag.

3. Public Comments & Announcements

Mayor Carson opened the floor for public comments and announcements.

- Rick Miller, residing at 2001 Nela Avenue, Belle Isle, FL, commented on two items. Regarding the stormwater study, he noted that, upon reviewing the report, additional information on planned capital projects would be helpful. Mr. Miller suggested that a more detailed discussion of those projects could provide a better understanding of what future stormwater fee increases would fund. He suggested evaluating whether debt financing should be considered to accelerate the completion of needed capital improvements. Regarding storm debris management, he raised questions about the vendor selection process and the criteria used during evaluation, and that the highest-scoring vendor was not the recommended vendor, and asked what additional factors were considered in making the recommendation. Mr. Miller stated that no additional criteria were identified in response to a public records request. He added that if factors such as proximity, response time, or the speed of debris pickup were considered, they should have been included in the published scoring criteria. As a recommendation, he said he would like the City Commission to have input on the development of future RFP evaluation criteria to ensure they reflect the community's needs and priorities. He noted that to make sure that there is a balance, if evaluation factors other than the published criteria were used, the solicitation should be reissued with revised criteria so that all vendors compete under the same standards.

There being no further comments, Mayor Carson closed the public comment section.

4. Presentations

FDOT D5 on School Speed Zone Study - Todd Davis, Protean Design Group, Inc.

Chief Grimm provided background on the proposed school zone improvements along Hansel Avenue. He noted that the Police Department has been seeking additional safety measures in the area for some time, including discussions about school zones and other traffic-control improvements. Chief Grimm stated that the City received multiple complaints this year regarding pedestrian safety and children crossing near the roadway, particularly as school enrollment has increased. In response, staff worked with FDOT to evaluate the area. With assistance from Public Works Director Phil Price, the City coordinated with FDOT and consultant Todd Davis, who observed traffic conditions and student dismissal activity firsthand. Chief Grimm explained that the purpose of the study was to assess existing conditions and identify appropriate safety improvements.

Todd Davis, Consultant from ProTean Design Group, accompanied by FDOT District Five representative Tammy King, presented the findings of the Hansel Avenue School Zone Study. Mr. Davis explained that the study was conducted in response to concerns regarding traffic and pedestrian safety near the school. The evaluation included traffic counts, pedestrian activity observations, and speed studies conducted at various times throughout the day.

The study focused on the northbound section of Hansel Avenue adjacent to the school and considered existing traffic patterns, student pick-up and drop-off operations, pedestrian movements, and roadway conditions. Mr. Davis noted that while speeding concerns were observed outside of school hours, traffic speeds generally decreased during school arrival and dismissal periods. Based on the findings, FDOT recommended establishing a northbound school zone on Hansel Avenue, including school zone signage, flashing beacons, pavement markings, and pedestrian warning signs. Additional recommendations included installing a "Do Not Block Intersection" marking at Wallace Street to improve vehicle and pedestrian safety. Existing signage would also be adjusted to reduce driver confusion and improve visibility of school-related traffic controls. Mr. Davis advised that pavement markings, signage, and school zone markings could be installed through FDOT maintenance programs, while flashing beacons would require a separate project and additional time for implementation. He also noted that speed feedback signs were recommended, but would be the City's responsibility to fund and install. The recommendations are intended to improve pedestrian safety and traffic operations near the school while avoiding the need for additional traffic signals in the corridor.

Mayor Carson asked for clarification on the use of the 85th-percentile speed metric. Mr. Davis explained that the analysis does not rely on the highest recorded speeds but instead uses the 85th percentile speed. He noted that the metric is commonly used to determine whether the posted speed limit is appropriate for a roadway. Under FDOT guidelines, the posted speed limit may be evaluated within a range of plus or minus eight miles per hour of the 85th percentile speed. The analysis helps determine whether the current posted speed limit is appropriate for the corridor.

Comm Lance asked whether the existing traffic signal at Fairlane Avenue remains necessary now that Fairlane operates as a one-way westbound roadway. Comm Lance noted that the signal previously served two-way traffic and questioned whether relocating the signal to Wallace Street would provide greater benefit by addressing traffic concerns in that area and serving the community beyond school-zone operations.

Mr. Davis explained that traffic signals must meet specific warrant requirements, including sufficient traffic volumes over an extended period. Based on the available data, Wallace Street does not appear to generate enough traffic to justify a signal. He also noted that the existing signal at Fairlane provides important pedestrian protection at the school's primary entrance and crossing location. Relocating the signal to Wallace Street would move that protection away from the area where most students cross and could require changes to current pedestrian routes and crossing guard operations. Mr. Davis added that it is not just one thing; traffic safety relies on a combination of engineering measures and enforcement efforts. You can't do one without the other.

Comm Lowell asked whether they knew the approximate cost of the speed signs. Tanya King with FDOT District Five said she can research and forward the information.

Comm Bobrowski said she agrees with Comm Lance on moving the traffic signal light down to Wallace. She noted that only a small percentage of Belle Isle residents have children attending Cornerstone Charter Academy, while school-related traffic significantly impacts motorists in the area. She noted that one of the most common complaints she receives involves difficulty crossing Hansel Avenue from Orange Avenue to Wallace Street. She questioned whether modern traffic technology could coordinate signals at both Fairlane Avenue and Wallace Street, with the Fairlane signal operating primarily during school hours to accommodate student crossings. Comm Bobrowski suggested that relocating or adding signalization at Wallace Street could provide greater benefit to the broader community while still maintaining pedestrian safety for crossing students. Mr. Davis spoke briefly on traffic scenarios from Orange Avenue to Wallace. Mr. Davis noted that it comes down to balancing, and we must consider how it will affect the lights at Hoffner and Fairlane. Considering how close these intersections are, it would not provide as much benefit from a safety perspective. Discussion ensued.

Comm Lowell asked if he would have to involve the school in the decision. Davis stated that this is a state facility and does not have to deal with outside parameters. The change is to provide safety.

Stormwater Management Study – Tara Hollis, Engineering Consultant from Wildan Financial Services

CM Rudometkin gave a brief overview and noted that one of the main reasons for the study is related to pervious and impervious ratios and ensuring that everyone is being billed properly.

Tara Hollis presented the findings and noted that the purpose of the study is to review customer classification and ERU assignments, evaluate current assessment revenues, final projections, and propose a fee adjustment. After the presentation, the recommendations from the Study include implementing a Fee Plan with annual monitoring costs, refining ERU assignments, and finalizing research on impervious area data. In addition, the study showed that, to maintain current funding methods, the City should develop a credit policy and conduct periodic reviews.

Comm Lance asked whether the referenced cities were using the ERU system. Ms. Hollis said yes, I believe they are to provide a credit program for businesses and non-residential properties, with a suggestion that a similar program for residential properties be considered in the future for fairness.

Comm Oller asked about the maintenance for the 522 per year. What was used to get to that number with virtually no growth? Why does it continue to grow all the way through until the end? And does it include reserves? Ms. Hollis said the projections are based on the current budget and include personnel costs, engineering services, maintenance activities, and required fees, including those associated with the Chain of Lakes. The increase in projected costs is driven by inflationary factors such as rising labor, engineering, supply, repair, and maintenance expenses. It was noted that Exhibit 1 of the report provides a detailed breakdown of these budget line items and the annual adjustments applied to them.

Comm Lowell asked if there was a secondary recommendation, like if we said we maybe wanted to do 12.5 and 12.5 next year, versus the full 25, or the opposite end of that, or go 35% the next year and then lower each year after that. Are there any adjustments that you know of? Ms. Hollis said this is a range plan, but yes, you could look at different scenarios. Ms. Hollis noted that they recommend the first year be used for catch-up. Just remember, the more you delay, the more you're actually going to have to do more later, just because of the compounding effects. Discussion ensued on historical increases and on nutrient overload in Lake Conway.

After discussion, Comm Partin moved to approve and accept the stormwater rate study as presented. Implementation of any rate increases will be brought back to the council for approval in the annual budget process. Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.

5. Consent Items.

- a. Approval of City Council Meeting Minutes - May 19, 2026

Comm Lowell moved to approve the consent items as presented.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. Unfinished Business

- a. Possible Contract Award of RFP 2026-01 Emergency Debris Hauling and Disposal Services

CM Rudometkin said the item was brought back before the Council after being tabled at the previous meeting to allow additional time for review of the proposals. The current debris cleanup contract remains in effect through September 30, and a new vendor is needed beginning October 1. No changes have been made to the recommendation since the last meeting. Staff requested Council approval of a vendor selected through the RFP process for future debris cleanup services. A rating sheet summarizing the scores of the top four recommended vendors was provided for the Council's review.

Comm Bobrowski asked for clarification on Page 80 of the RFP regarding white goods debris removal, eligible dead animal removal, and other debris removal. Are we not talking just organic? Are we also talking about construction removal, roof damage removal? Is that all of the contract? CM Rudometkin said Yes, it has to be all put into the RFP process, because there's a potential that you could have something like this to be removed, but historically here in Belle Isle, it's been just vegetative debris. CM Rudometkin spoke briefly about previous FEMA events and stated that the RFP is not the final contract but rather a guideline for selecting a vendor. Once the vendor is selected, the contract process starts.

Comm Lance noted that, after further research, he found that other companies outside the City may experience delays due to other contracts they are also serving during weather events. Comm Lance said he keeps circling back to the safety factor of 24 hours being here, being a local resident, their whole family of residents here, they contribute to the

community, they give back, they, they're not just residents, they're vested in this community, and they have been for many, many years, and I physically have seen them do a lot of community work in the past, and also I also believe that they don't have any contracts anywhere else besides Belle Isle, maybe Edgewood, if Edgewood calls them, but Belle Isle is their community that they live in, and they're going to take care of our community just like you or anybody else would.

Comm Lowell requested consideration of language that provides cost parameters while maintaining flexibility as cleanup progresses. Reference was made to concerns previously raised regarding having dollar amounts associated with the work. It was also asked whether costs could be structured by storm phases or categories, while recognizing that storm categories do not always correspond to the amount of damage caused. Second, she inquired about subcontractors, safety, and insurance. She also agreed with Comm Lance on the 24-hour response time and not choosing someone who is overzealous.

Attorney Shaffer stated that cost thresholds could potentially be included in the contract negotiations, but noted there are limitations on withholding payment for work that has already been completed. It was suggested that the contract could require an initial cost estimate and Council pre-approval, with additional approval required if costs exceed certain thresholds. Attorney Shaffer noted that such a process could slow response times but would provide greater oversight. It was further suggested that final costs could be reconciled after the work is completed, while including provisions requiring Council approval when specified cost limits are exceeded. CM Rudometkin noted that the total fees are based on quantities and the severity of the storm.

Attorney Shaffer noted that subcontractor language is very common in service contracts and is also an integration with the city's processes. Chief Grimm noted that Orange County shuts down if the winds are 55mph or greater; once it slows down, the county is then reopened for emergency operations at first check.

Comm Partin noted that the evaluation criteria were outlined in the proposal documents and referenced the recommendation memorandum, which stated that selecting a contractor solely on price could expose the City to compliance issues, legal risks, and potential fines. The memorandum further indicated that proposals were evaluated based on what best serves the interests of the City and its residents while ensuring operational readiness. Comm Partin emphasized the importance of considering factors such as a contractor's ability to stage resources, respond quickly, and past performance. Reference was made to a previous event in which a contractor was unable to respond because resources were committed elsewhere. It was also noted that the City has historically been cleaned up more quickly than other areas in Orange County. He observed that pricing appeared to lower Madison's evaluation scores and suggested that, if price were not a significant factor, the rankings may have been closer. The Commissioner stated support for Commissioner Lance's recommendation.

Comm Shuck confirmed that the new contracts will be signed before the end of the fiscal year, when the current contracts expire. Attorney Shaffer said the execution date of the contract and the term of the contract are necessarily coterminous, so it's the fact that you have a signed contract that begins October 1 that means all the material terms of that contract kick in once that start date is reached.

Comm Bobrowski asked whether the city will be in a liability situation due to the wording of the RFP not selecting the highest-tabulated vendor. Attorney Schaffer stated that if vendor selection were based solely on bid tabulation, City Council approval would not be necessary. The RFP process provides recommendations rather than automatic awards, allowing the Council discretion in evaluating the proposals and making a final decision. The Attorney noted that if the Council selects a vendor other than the top-ranked recommendation, it may need to justify its reasoning, particularly in the event of a bid protest. However, the Council retains the authority to exercise its judgment and evaluate the criteria when making the final award decision.

There being no further discussion, Comm Lance moved to award the RFP 2026-01 for Emergency Debris Handling and Disposable Services to Pete Madison Management Incorporated, an authorized city manager, and the city attorney to negotiate and prepare a three-year agreement for services, with the final contract to be brought back before the city council for review and approval. Second from Commissioner Oller, which passed 6:1 with Comm Lowell, nay.

7. New Business

- a. Approval of Budget Hearings and Change of City Council Meeting Dates
CM Rudometkin presented the FY 2026/27 Budget Calendar and meeting schedule for consideration.

Comm Bobrowski moved to reschedule the City Council meeting from August 18, 2026, to August 20, 2026, due to the General Elections. Seconded by Comm Lance, unanimously approved 7:0.

Comm Lance moved to reschedule the City Council meeting from September 1, 2026, to September 9, 2026. Seconded by Comm Partin, unanimously approved 7:0.

Comm Partin moved to reschedule the City Council meeting from September 15, 2026, to September 23, 2026. Seconded by Comm Bobrowski, unanimously approved 7:0.

Comm Partin moved to approve the Budget Calendar schedule for Fiscal year 2026/2027 as presented. Seconded by Comm Oller, unanimously approved 7:0.

8. Attorney's Report

Attorney Schaffer stated that a mediated settlement agreement has been negotiated and provided for review. The details were not discussed publicly. The Attorney requested that Council reconvene in a closed executive session on Thursday or Friday to discuss the agreement, followed immediately by an open public meeting for approval or denial. He noted that timely direction is needed because certain deadlines begin the following week, which could result in additional costs and activity for the City if the agreement is not addressed. CM Rudometkin said the special-called session can be scheduled during the day or evening.

After discussion, Comm Partin moved to hold the Executive Session on Thursday, June 4, at 6 pm. Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.

9. City Manager's Report

- a. City Manager's Report & Work Plan
 - CM spoke briefly on the Property Tax Reform, which passed in the Senate. He addressed briefly the calculations and timing of the November ballot.
 - The City received an appropriate grant for Marine Safety equipment and is currently under review at the Governor's office. Chief Grimm provided the necessary report to the Lobbyists for the Governor's consideration.
 - Vulnerability Assessment Online Study 2nd outreach meeting will be held on June 11 at 6 pm.
- b. Chief's Report
Chief Grimm reported on the following,
 - Memorial Day – no big issues.
 - Presented the newly formatted Dashboard, Monitoring Reports, and a link to the City's website.
- c. Public Works Report
Phil Proce reported on the following.
 - Pipelining for St Regis is on the way to completion and will help the water flow to the lake.
 - Completed the sidewalk project in the Landings. The remaining area is around City Hall.
 - Reminded all of Hurricane Season and the importance of yard, tree, and debris clean up.

10. Mayor's Report

Brief discussion on the clean out of the baskets with the NAV Board. It was noted that OC is currently looking for a new vendor. Mr. Price noted that he will follow up with the NAV Board. Mayor Carson thanked all staff and the council for their support.

11. Commissioners' Report

- Comm Gold notes that there is some interest in having the Public Works Department create a monthly dashboard as well.
- Comm Lance noted that cleaning out the baskets is very important and valuable to our lakes.
- Comm Lowell reminded all of the submittal of Form 1.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Carson called for a motion to adjourn, which was unanimously approved at 8:50 pm.