



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, May 19, 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 Langley, Finance Director Tracey Richardson, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag - Comm Christopher Oller, District 6, led the invocation and Pledge to the Flag.

3. Public Comments & Announcements - Mayor Carson opened the floor for public comments and announcements. There being none, he closed the public comment section.

4. Presentations

a. McDimit Davis – 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

Tammy Campbell from McDimit Davis presented the results of the City's 2025 Annual Financial Statement Audit. She reported that the City once again received an unmodified audit opinion, which is the highest level of assurance that can be issued. Ms. Campbell stated that the audit reports on internal controls and compliance contained no current-year management comments, indicating that internal controls were operating effectively and no issues were identified during the audit process. She also noted that a new accounting standard was implemented during the current fiscal year for calculating vacation and sick leave liabilities. The updated standard changes the calculation methodology to better reflect earned leave and anticipated employee usage in the upcoming year rather than solely projected payouts at retirement or termination. She explained that while the change increased reported liabilities, it is not expected to impact future cash flow because employee leave usage is already incorporated into annual personnel budgeting.

Ms. Campbell further explained that the audit identified two significant standard risk areas commonly reviewed in governmental audits: revenue recognition and management override of controls. She stated that these are routine audit risks used to guide audit testing and that no concerns or issues were identified related to either area during the audit. In reviewing the City's financial condition, Ms. Campbell reported that the General Fund balance has increased over the past several years, with the majority of the balance classified as unassigned, meaning it is available for general use without restrictions. She also noted that a portion of the fund balance has been assigned by the City for future capital improvement projects. Revenues in the General Fund continued to exceed expenditures, although the margin was smaller than in prior years, and she encouraged continued monitoring during future budget planning. Ms. Campbell stated that public safety remains the City's largest expenditure category, consistent with most local governments. She also noted the City maintains some debt service expenditures related to lease obligations and note payments. In addition, Ms. Campbell reported that stormwater fund revenues have exceeded expenditure over the past several years, allowing the City to rebuild reserves after operating at a deficit in 2023. She encouraged the City to continue monitoring stormwater fee levels to ensure sufficient funding for future capital projects and system needs.

5. Consent Items

- a. Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2026.
- b. April 2026 Monthly Reports: PD, Finance, and OC Fire
Comm Shuck moved to approve the consent items as presented.
Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.

6. Unfinished Business – na

7. New Business

a. Discussion and Approval of Updated Credit Card Policy

CM Rudometkin stated that, at the end of the previous year, the Council reviewed the City's credit card redemption practices and authorized staff to amend the policy to address those procedures. CM Rudometkin presented the staff's proposed revised policy for Council approval. He noted that staff believe the updated policy is comprehensive and provides clear guidance regarding credit card use and redemption practices. He also stated that the Finance Director was present to answer any specific questions regarding the revised policy.

Comm Oller moved to approve the consent items as presented.
Comm Partin seconded the motion.

Comm Gold requested clarification regarding the primary updates to the policy. CM Rudometkin explained that the revisions addressed the use and redemption of credit card reward points. The updated policy clarifies that all rewards earned through City credit card usage belong to the City and are to be used for City purposes only. He noted that the City intends to redeem rewards primarily through Amazon gift cards, which can be used to purchase departmental supplies and other operational items, thereby reducing expenditures already budgeted by the City. He added that the City's credit card usage volume is not high enough to justify a different rewards structure, such as cash-back programs. Comm Gold noted that he is happy to see that rewards generated from City expenditures are public assets and are not retained or used by individual employees or officials for personal benefit. Staff confirmed that all rewards are retained by the City and used solely for the City's benefit.

After discussion, the motion passed unanimously 7:0.

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

CM Rudometkin addressed correspondence received from resident Rick Miller and Bill Moore regarding Hurricane Ian reimbursement matters. He acknowledged that he had delayed responding to Mr. Miller's email and apologized to both Mr. Miller and the Council. He explained that he declined a requested meeting with Mr. Miller because the City has repeatedly reviewed the Hurricane Ian reimbursement issues over the past several years, and FEMA is still reviewing submitted documentation. He advised that if additional information or concerns arise through a public records request, staff would be willing to review and discuss any new findings.

CM Rudometkin presented the recommendation to award RFP 2026-01 for Emergency Debris Hauling and Disposal Services. He provided background information for Commissioners Gold and Oller regarding the City's past experiences with FEMA reimbursement following Hurricane Ian and the operational improvements made during Hurricane Milton. He explained that following Hurricane Ian, the City experienced reimbursement issues related to documentation, truck check procedures, and FEMA procurement compliance requirements. During Hurricane Milton, the City improved its oversight, documentation, and operational procedures, resulting in full FEMA reimbursement of approximately \$360,000 within seven months of project completion, while the reimbursement matters for Hurricanes Irma and Ian remain under FEMA review. He stated that the City's current debris removal contract expires September 30, 2026, requiring the City to secure a new vendor for future storm debris removal operations. Staff issued an RFP for debris hauling and disposal services and received eleven proposals, including one from the City's current vendor. An evaluation committee reviewed and scored the proposals based on established evaluation criteria and identified four qualified finalists:

- Peter Madison Management Incorporated
- Southern Disaster Recovery
- Grubbs Emergency Services
- Dynamic Recovery Solutions

CM Rudometkin noted that all proposal materials were included in the agenda packet and stated that Council could select any of the four recommended vendors for contract negotiations. He explained that recent emails regarding

the RFP process incorrectly suggested it was improper. He clarified that staff have the authority to issue RFPs and return recommendations to Council for final consideration and approval. He stated that the City expects to receive additional reimbursement related to Hurricane Irma once FEMA resumes processing those claims. He recommended that Council select a debris removal vendor so staff and the City Attorney could begin contract negotiations and ensure a new contract is in place beginning October 1, 2026, to avoid delays if an event should occur.

Comm Lowell stated that it was important to recognize the many changes that have occurred within FEMA over the past several years, noting that staffing changes and shifting requirements have often complicated the reimbursement process. She noted that different FEMA representatives have requested additional documentation or revisions at various stages, contributing to delays and frustration during the reimbursement process. Comm Lowell noted that FEMA now places greater emphasis on independent debris monitoring services, which provide additional oversight and accountability during disaster recovery operations. Having an outside monitoring company helps ensure transparency and compliance throughout the debris removal process.

Comm Lowell commented that the City's evaluation process for the RFP was open and structured, with proposals reviewed and scored using an established point system by an evaluation committee rather than by a single individual. She expressed appreciation to the staff for addressing the concerns and information raised regarding the process and stated that the City appears to be in a much better position, moving forward, to properly document and obtain reimbursement for future disaster recovery efforts, if needed. Comm Lowell asked the City Attorney whether the proposed contract would include detailed compliance and termination provisions to protect the City in the event of any future improprieties or contractual issues.

Attorney Langley stated that the contract would be drafted to specifically address the compliance and operational requirements discussed by Council. He explained that many of the issues experienced in the past were not necessarily the result of deficiencies in the contract itself, but rather failures to properly follow the required procedures and processes during implementation. He noted that some of the concerns raised in recent correspondence referenced items that would not typically be included within City code or ordinances. Instead, those detailed operational and compliance requirements are generally addressed in the RFP documents and the contract itself, as they are specific to the services being provided. He emphasized that the detailed protections and requirements would be incorporated into the contract that will be negotiated and prepared once Council provides direction on which vendor staff should proceed with for contract negotiations.

Comm Partin asked whether the previously identified issues had already been addressed in the prior contract and questioned whether a failure to follow the required procedures could itself constitute a breach of contract. Attorney Langley explained that some of the required procedures were included in the prior contract, while others were not. Specifically, the procedures related to load tickets and documentation requirements were included in the contract; however, those procedures were not properly followed during the debris removal operations by the contractor, and also in the City's oversight.

The Council agreed that they feel better about the process knowing there is an outside monitoring company.

CM Rudometkin stated that the staff will work with the vendor and ensure that they abide by the contract and FEMA guidelines. He believed any of the four recommended companies could do the job, and having a monitoring company would give us an even greater edge, showing we did it right and ensuring they adhere to the rules.

Comm Gold asked what the latest possible timeframe would be for Council to make a decision on the debris removal vendor selection, and whether the item could be postponed to allow additional time for review. CM Rudometkin noted that while the item did not have to be decided that evening, staff recommended moving forward as soon as possible due to the start of hurricane season in June and the need to begin contract negotiations in advance of the current contract expiration on September 30, 2026, and the new contract in place by October 1, 2026.

Comm Gold stated that due to moving and work responsibilities, he had not yet had the opportunity to review all four proposals in detail and wanted additional time to read them before making a decision. He noted that he understood the importance of the item and wanted the opportunity to personally evaluate the proposals. He further commented that using a debris monitoring company made sense from a compliance standpoint and compared the process to oversight practices commonly used in government and defense contracting. Comm Gold asked about the potential cost and limits associated with the monitoring services.

CM Rudometkin explained that the pricing proposals are based on time, materials, and event scope, and that the total cost would depend on the size and duration of a storm event. He noted there is no fixed upper limit

because the extent of services required cannot be determined in advance. FEMA reimbursement eligibility depends on strict compliance with all required procedures and documentation standards.

Attorney Langley clarified that Council was not approving a final contract that evening but rather selecting a preferred proposer so staff could begin negotiations and prepare a formal agreement to return to Council for final approval. He explained that the Council would have another opportunity to review the actual negotiated contract before execution.

Comm Bobrowski moved to postpone the selection of a debris removal vendor until the next scheduled Council meeting to allow all Commissioners adequate time to review the proposals and be fully prepared.

Comm Gold seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Comm Lowell raised a question about whether postponing the item would affect the City's current debris removal coverage during hurricane season or create a gap in services. CM Rudometkin clarified that the City's current debris removal contract remains in effect through September 30, 2026, due to a previously approved contract extension. Staff explained that the City would continue to have a debris removal vendor under contract for the current hurricane season, and that moving forward now would allow sufficient time to negotiate and finalize a new agreement before the current contract expires on October 1, 2026. Comm Partin requested that staff provide information on the evaluation process and scoring results for transparency, including how the selection committee ranked and evaluated the proposals.

c. Possible Contract Award of RFP 2026-02 Emergency Monitoring Services

Comm Gold moved award RFP 2026-02 for Emergency Debris Monitoring Services to United Freight Services and authorized the City Manager and 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.

Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.

Comm Gold asked if there was any way the City could place a cap dollar amount on the approved amounts. The Council discussed the total cost and oversight, which is based on the type of event. CM Rudometkin noted that until the monitoring contract is in place, City staff will be responsible for monitoring efforts if an event occurs before that date.

8. Attorney's Report

Attorney Langley asked for Council consideration to appoint the City Manager as the City's representative for an upcoming mediation in the case involving the City. He explained that, due to Sunshine Law requirements, the appointed representative would attend solely to participate in the mediation and could not independently settle the matter; instead, they would provide recommendations to the Council for consideration at a public meeting. He stated that this approach is preferred due to availability and to avoid Sunshine Law complications that could arise if multiple council members attended and later communicated individually about the proceedings. Attorney Langley further advised that, in addition to the mediation, a summary judgment hearing is scheduled for Thursday of this week, and the case is set for a two-week trial in late July. The anticipated trial length is one to two days, though the outcome and timing of any court ruling remain uncertain, as decisions are typically issued after the hearing in written orders. He stated that he will provide updates to the Council as information becomes available following the court proceedings.

9. City Managers Report

a. City Manager's Report and Work Plan

CM Rudometkin stated that the stormwater resetting item has undergone some changes over the past week but will be finalized and placed on the agenda for June 2. He noted that the contractor, Wildan, will be present to make the presentation and thanked staff for their work in preparing the item. CM Rudometkin also noted that all other agenda items are generally on track. He shared a personal update regarding his mother's health, stating that she is currently not doing well. He stated he is taking things day by day and will keep Council informed if anything changes.

b. Chief's Report

Chief Grimm provided a new formatted Dashboard. He stated that a few months ago, Comm Partin requested the development of a public-facing dashboard. Staff explored several options and refined the concept into a one-page summary format. The intent is to present key statistics already included in the Chief's report in a simplified, visual format suitable for social media and the City's website. The dashboard will not be a permanent or fixed product and can be adjusted based on Council feedback or suggested changes. It will also include selected highlights from the

Chief's report, including notable cases, incidents, and community events. Chief Grimm noted that detailed reports will remain available in the agenda materials, as the social media version is intended as a condensed overview rather than a full report. Chief Grimm added that this approach is intended to improve public communication while avoiding overly detailed postings that may not be well-suited for social media engagement. The first version is expected to be posted following completion of the next Chief's report cycle.

Chief Grimm provided operational updates, including planning for the Memorial Day holiday water patrol. The Police Department will deploy two officers on the water daily, with support from the County and potential assistance from FWC. Message boards will be placed at boat ramps to notify the public of ramp closures and required off-water times based on sunset. This information will also be shared through social media and email. Additional updates included Click It or Ticket, running May 18–31; the last day of school on May 27; and reduced traffic impacts during the summer school period at Cornerstone. Chief Grimm further reported on a recent crash on Hoffner involving newly installed delineators. The incident was investigated using Flock cameras, which helped identify and arrest the subject. The department continues to use camera systems to support investigations and, when appropriate, shares notable arrest information with the public on social media.

c. Public Works Report

Mr. Price was not present due to other obligations. CM Rudometkin reported on his behalf and reported that no replacement or repair has yet been completed regarding the reported issue on Hoffner Ave. Phil has already coordinated with Orange County, and a work order has been submitted to address it. The matter is currently in progress with the County, though no specific timeframe for completion has been provided.

CM Rudometkin provided updates on ongoing public works projects, noting that the sidewalk replacement program has been restarted and is expected to be completed within the current fiscal year. He also reported that a new concrete pad was installed in the area to the left of City Hall, replacing a former dead palm location. The intent is to reinstall the City's heron monument at that location, complementing the nearby American flag display. Staff is currently working to determine the proper mounting method for the statue, as the installation requirements are unclear, and vendors have been contacted for guidance. Public Works Week is currently underway, and we are recognizing staff for their work. Additional updates included progress on the City's asphalt improvement projects within the Capital Improvement Program, including review of priority areas such as McCoy for pothole repairs and other resurfacing needs, depending on available funding, and that the St. Regis pipeline lining project is moving forward, with final quotes being obtained as part of the CIP.

10. Mayor's Report

Mayor Carson asked if it was possible to include DUI metrics on the dashboard. Chief Grimm noted that the report will not just be static information and that Stats can change month to month.

Mayor Carson extended belated Mother's Day greetings to residents and noted spending the holiday weekend on the water, observing a positive police presence throughout. With Memorial Day approaching, the Mayor reminded residents to practice water safety and encouraged those able to donate extra bottled water to drop it off at the Police Department due to the increasing heat. He acknowledged National Police Week and expressed gratitude to law enforcement for their role in maintaining public safety in the City.

11. Commissioners' Report

Comm Bobrowski reported observing several upper-grade students crossing Fair Lane near Cornerstone outside of designated crosswalks, stopping in the roadway, and gathering in groups, raising concerns about pedestrian safety and traffic flow. She requested that additional attention be given to encouraging safer crossing behavior in the area. Chief Grimm noted this is a recurring issue at the end of the school year and stated that School Resource Officers will monitor the area and address concerns as needed.

The City Manager also provided an update that FDOT will present the results of a traffic study for the Hansel area, including proposed changes to school zones and updated signage. FDOT consultant Todd Davis is scheduled to present at the June 2 Council meeting to explain the findings and recommendations. A request was made to notify the public of this upcoming presentation due to community interest in traffic and school zone safety.

Comm Shuck reminded all residents to speak to their children about e-bike and scooter safety.

Comm Lance asked whether the CM will provide new meeting dates for the upcoming budget sessions. CM Rudometkin stated that it will be on the next agenda.

Comm Partin noted that a resident inquired if the school made an offer/bid on the OCPS property with a possible intent to develop an athletic complex. CM said that the staff had not heard any information. Comm Partin expressed general appreciation for City staff's accessibility and responsiveness, particularly the ongoing communication with the Police Chief. He referenced feedback from residents about interest in a simplified "dashboard" or quick-view summary of City activity, noting that such a tool could provide a high-level overview while allowing residents to access full reports as needed. Comm Partin commented on the City's FLOCK camera system, stating that it has been a valuable public safety tool for monitoring and assisting with investigations, and that it may help deter criminal activity by increasing situational awareness.

Council thanked staff for their continued support and a reminder for Memorial Day, honoring those who gave their lives in service, and extended thoughts and prayers to Rick and his family regarding his mother.

Adjournment

There being no further items for discussion, Mayor Carson called for a motion to adjourn, passed unanimously at 7:41 pm.