



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 11, 2026 * 3:00 PM

MINUTES

Present

Nash Shook-Chairman
John Evertson Vice Chair
Kirk Leff
Sharon Harkey
Nate Davenport

Absent

Kevin Pierre
Chad Rocheford

Also present: City Manager Rick Rudometkin, Chief Grimm, DC Millis, Finance Manager Tracy Richardson, Public Works Director Phil Price, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno.

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Chairman Shook called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. City Clerk Quiceno confirmed quorum.

2. Citizen Comments

Chairman Shook opened for public comment. There being none, he closed the public comment section.

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Approval of the Budget Committee Meeting Minutes – March 9, 2026
Board member Evertsen moved to approve the minutes as written.
Board member Leff seconded the motion, which passed 5:0.

4. Agenda Items

a. Annual Financial Report - Discussion

CM Rudometkin stated that the annual audit for the previous fiscal year was completed, and it was another positive audit for the City. Appreciation was expressed to the staff for their work through the audit process. The audit will be presented to Council on May 19th with no significant issues identified.

Chairman Shook explained that the item was placed on the agenda to encourage committee members to review the audit and, if possible, participate in the Council presentation. Four areas from the audit stood out for future consideration: sustainable revenue sources, continued focus on cost containment strategies, the likelihood of expanded stormwater planning, and the City's vulnerability assessment and potential impacts from future state property tax legislation.

CM Rudometkin noted that the vulnerability assessment currently underway is expected to be completed in June. He also noted that discussions regarding alternative revenue sources are ongoing and consistent with the Budget Committee's role. The committee acknowledged that future budget planning may depend on potential state actions related to property taxes and other revenue matters.

b. Planning for FY26-27 Budget Meeting

CM Rudometkin reported that a draft budget calendar has been prepared and will be presented to Council for approval. The proposed schedule includes three budget workshops this year instead of two, with one workshop planned in July and two in August. The process will begin with the Council adopting the budget calendar, followed by the Budget Committee beginning discussions on budget goals, assumptions, rates, and capital priorities in June. The draft budget is expected to be provided to the committee later in June.

The Committee discussed the possibility of holding a second Budget Committee meeting in July to further review and discuss the draft budget before Council's initial budget workshop. CM Rudometkin noted that the Council will also retain the ability to refer items back to the Budget Committee between workshops if additional review is needed. CM Rudometkin explained that June discussions will focus on major expenditures, capital items, revenue considerations,

and overall budget priorities. It was noted that no major revenue shortfalls are currently anticipated, although long-term impacts from possible property tax reform remain uncertain. The Committee also discussed forecasting operational costs, such as fuel, with staff explaining that projections are based on historical trends and current market conditions, and that any unspent funds return to the fund balance at year-end. CM Rodometkin reviewed the statutory deadlines for hearings in September. The Chairman requested that the finalized schedule and timeline be included in future meeting materials once approved by Council.

c. Revenue Update (reimbursement and fees)

CM Rudometkin reported that the Sol Avenue reimbursement was received in the amount of approximately \$196,000 after an extended process. The funds will be deposited into the stormwater fund and used to support future stormwater projects. CM Rudometkin discussed the ongoing stormwater rate study, which is expected to be presented to Council in late May or early June. The study reviews stormwater fees, including impervious surface calculations and ERU rates. Although a phased increase over five years is being considered, he stated no stormwater fee increase is proposed for the upcoming fiscal year due to the recent reimbursement funding and the possibility of additional FEMA reimbursements.

CM Rudometkin discussed Hurricane Irma reimbursement efforts related to upgraded replacement materials and resiliency improvements. FEMA had temporarily paused reviews due to other national storm events, but remains hopeful that approximately \$140,000 in remaining reimbursements may still be approved for the stormwater fund. It was further noted that no ad valorem tax increases, stormwater fee increases, or other new revenue requests are currently planned for residents during this budget cycle. He notes that the City's vulnerability assessment grant project is expected to be completed by the end of June and may position the City for additional grant and appropriation opportunities in the future. Discussion also included the Hoffner Avenue improvement project. Due to high projected costs for the original roundabout and roadway improvement concept, the scope was revised to focus on more affordable pedestrian safety improvements, including crosswalks, sidewalk widening, lighting, and possible traffic-calming measures. He explained that the revised project maintains the grant funding ratio while reducing the City's required financial contribution. Coordination with Orange County will still be required because Hoffner Avenue is a county roadway. The Committee briefly discussed property tax reform and the potential long-term impacts on local government revenues.

d. Property Tax Reform

CM Rudometkin discussed ongoing state-level property tax reform efforts being advanced by Governor DeSantis. He noted that several proposals remain under discussion, including the homestead exemption, which potentially reduces local government revenues over time. It was noted that the long-term financial impact on municipalities remains uncertain. Discussion ensued on rising property taxes and insurance costs for homeowners, as well as the need to balance resident affordability with the maintenance of local government services. Inflation and CPI trends were briefly discussed. CM Rudometkin stated the staff will continue monitoring trends during the budget process.

The committee reviewed the upcoming budget meeting schedule. It was clarified that the June meeting will focus on budget concepts and priorities, with the draft budget to be distributed later in June. The July meeting schedule may include an additional workshop if needed for further budget discussion.

5. Committee Comments

- The Committee discussed Orange County's consideration of a potential stormwater utility millage increase. It was noted that municipalities with existing stormwater utility fees may already be exempt from certain county assessments, although clarification may still be needed. The Committee discussed continuing efforts to identify cost-saving opportunities and operational efficiencies during the budget process. CM Rudometkin noted that no additional revenue increases are currently proposed for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Attendance was discussed regarding absent committee members. It was noted that repeated unexcused absences could affect membership status under the committee resolution.

6. Next Meeting Schedule – June 8, 2026

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 3:45 pm.