



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 * 6:30 PM
MINUTES

Present was:

Mayor – Jason Carson
District 1 Commissioner – Frank Vertolli
District 2 Commissioner – Holly Bobrowski
District 3 Commissioner – Karl Shuck
District 4 Commissioner – Bobby Lance
District 5 Commissioner – Beth Lowell
District 6 Commissioner – Stan Smith
District 7 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Carson called the 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 Grimms, Attorney Langley, Public Works Director Phil Price, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag

Comm Lowell led the invocation and Pledge to the Flag.

3. Presentations

Mayor Carson opened for presentations. There being none, he closed the section.

4. Public Comments & Announcements

Mayor Carson opened for public comments and announcements. There being none, he closed the section.

5. Consent Items

- a. Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes - January 6, 2026
- b. Approval of Edited City Council Meeting Minutes - November 4, 2025
- c. December 2025 Monthly Reports: PD, Finance (<https://cleargov.com/florida/orange/city/belle-isle>), and OC Fire

Mayor Carson called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Comm Bobrowski requested to pull item A for review and discussion.

Comm Smith moved to approve the consent agenda items B and C as presented.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0

Comm Bobrowski moved for approval of the following changes to the meeting minutes of January 6, 2026,

- Comm Bobrowski stated that an email was received from a resident who was unable to attend the meeting and raised concerns regarding items omitted from the minutes. She notes that the items should be addressed and reflected in the record. First, she clarified that she, Commissioner Bobrowski, not Commissioner Lowell, asked whether UES maintains dedicated staff for Belle Isle. UES responded that they attempt to maintain consistency by assigning the same staff when possible; however, all UES staff are capable of supporting Belle Isle.

- Second, she noted that during responses to Commissioner Partin's questions, UES stated that the typical response time from permit application submission to permitting is approximately 10 days. Comm Bobrowski requested that this statement be included in the minutes for the public record.

After further discussion, the motion was seconded by Comm Partin and approved unanimously 7:0.

6. Unfinished Business

a. 3904 Arajo Court Update

City Manager Rudometkin opened the discussion and noted that he had forwarded pictures to the Council showing the progress on the home and the garage door changeout. He welcomed Bernard Turner, the contractor on the project, to answer Council questions and to speak on the progress of the home.

Comm Lowell asked for one of the items requested at the last meeting: a list of items to be repaired or replaced in the home.

Mr. Turner said he has been kind of frustrated dealing with everything and everybody and trying to make sure the project moves forward. He provided an update on the project status and events to date. He stated that work on the project was temporarily paused due to disorganization, coordination issues with subcontractors, and the need to ensure accurate and reliable information is provided to the City. He said he finally got the garage door installed. He further noted that he advised the owner that he could invest in the property, but he wanted to make sure that if he did put his name on the property and something happened to her, he would be able to get his money back.

Mr. Turner explained that, as of today, the property owner executed a quitclaim deed transferring ownership of the property to him. He stated this step was taken so he could take control of the project, invest funds, and move the work forward while complying with City requirements. He noted that the quitclaim deed has not been notarized and will be recorded following notification to the mortgage lender and title company.

Mr. Turner stated that the remaining mortgage balance is approximately \$25,000 and that discussions are ongoing with the lender regarding next steps. He further explained that a previously planned refinancing was canceled and that he is prepared to fund completion of the project without refinancing if necessary. He advised that an agreement is being prepared with the assistance of an attorney, allowing the former owner to continue residing in the home, with provisions to ensure mortgage payments are made, and the owner is protected.

Regarding construction, Mr. Turner stated that the rear wall of the structure will be demolished and rebuilt due to deterioration, pending review by an engineer. He advised that permit revisions are required, which contributed to the pause in work. Updated plans and a project timeline are expected to be provided later in the week.

Attorney Langley stated for clarification that Mr. Turner paid zero for the property, and the property owner is still on the hook to pay the mortgage. Mr. Turner said that they both would pay the mortgage. Council recommended that he notify the mortgage lender and title company and properly document all agreements to protect all parties involved. Mr. Turner acknowledged and agreed.

Comm Smith asked about the status of financing associated with the property. Based on the contractor's statements, the existing SBS loan would be resolved; however, concern was raised regarding a previously discussed \$200,000 mortgage, as the former owner no longer holds title to the property. Mr. Turner clarified that the \$200,000 refinancing was initiated prior to the ownership transfer and stated that it is no longer necessary and should be canceled, as he intends to fund the project's completion. Comm Smith stated that the Council gave 30 days to present a complete schedule, and now Mr. Bernard is requesting an unlimited amount of time due to the new ownership. He noted that throughout the process, the Council's primary concern has been the protection of both the residents of Belle Isle and the former property owner, and

emphasized the importance of transparency, accurate information, and established timelines. After the discussion, Mr. Bernard acknowledged the Council's concerns and stated that he is making efforts to remain transparent, provide complete and accurate updates, and move the project forward in compliance with the City, while avoiding further delays. Mr. Bernard asked for Council consideration by Friday to provide complete information as it becomes available later in the week.

Commissioner Smith asked the City Attorney whether the recent change in property ownership affects prior legal actions taken by the City or limits the City's ability to proceed if compliance is not achieved. Attorney Langley advised that the City's enforcement order has been recorded and runs with the property, and that a change in ownership does not negate the order. He further noted that, while modifications or partial corrections could potentially create disputes over the status of violations, the underlying enforcement action remains in effect. Attorney Langley also stated that existing liens for other property violations remain valid and may be subject to foreclosure if unresolved.

b. OCPS Esteem School Update

CM Rudometkin provided an update regarding the vacant Orange County Public Schools property located north of CCA. He advised that City staff, the Police Chief, and consultants recently met with Orange County Public Schools officials, their architect, and project management staff to discuss proposed development plans for the site. The School District presented conceptual plans for a specialty STEAM school, which are further along in design than previously anticipated. The proposed campus includes a new building, parking, outdoor recreation areas, and secured fencing. District representatives stated they intend to move forward with the project.

The proposed school would serve a small student population and provide specialized educational services. District representatives indicated that the campus would be a closed campus and that traffic impacts would be minimal. A preliminary traffic analysis has reportedly been conducted, and a designated drop-off area is planned off Waltham Avenue to minimize traffic impacts. The District indicated they have previously met with nearby residents and plan to hold an additional community town hall meeting in the coming months. No variance requests have been submitted at this time, and the project remains in the conceptual phase pending formal permitting through the City. Council noted that while the property is owned by the School District, the project will be subject to the City's permitting process. CM Rudometkin stated that additional information will be provided to the Council as it becomes available.

Chief Grimm said that when the School District initially presented the project, the City inquired whether it would be required to provide a School Resource Officer (SRO). At that time, the District indicated that law enforcement services would be provided by the School District or the Orange County Sheriff's Office. However, during the most recent meeting, the District stated that the City would be responsible for providing an SRO, which represents a change from prior discussions. Regarding traffic, the Chief noted that conducting a definitive traffic study is challenging at this time, as traffic patterns related to CCA are not yet finalized. The District advised that the proposed school would serve a limited student population, with more faculty than students, and that some instruction would take place off-site with assigned teachers or mentors. Chief Grimm stated that, based on the information provided, the campus is not expected to generate significant daily traffic. District representatives indicated that on-site faculty meetings would occur periodically and that drop-off and pick-up operations have been planned to minimize traffic impacts.

CM Rudometkin explained that Orange County has not communicated any plans for the use of the existing building, which may result in a new but vacant facility. CCA has reportedly been coordinating with Orange County Public Schools regarding the use of nearby property for parking. Parking will shift to the new building south of Fairlane/Randolph, with additional parking planned once the gym is completed. If funding issues arise, there is limited action the City can take regarding the building, though future outreach from interested parties is possible. Regarding the conceptual plans, the District confirmed that the existing auditorium and

other nostalgic structures will be removed entirely, and the site will be redeveloped as a completely new facility.

Mayor Carson shared that they contacted several Orange County School Board members to better understand the purpose of the school. It was explained that the school is intended to support students who are academically capable but struggling in their current environments due to issues such as anxiety or self-esteem. Students would attend the program for approximately two weeks to receive individualized support before returning to their home schools. The school is not intended to be disciplinary in nature. Mayor Carson noted that concerns were raised about traffic impacts and questioned why existing or less centrally located facilities were not utilized. According to the School Board, however, they remain committed to developing this specific property despite those concerns. Mayor Carson said, reading in the Orlando Business Journal, the notice to proceed with construction in June of 2026 and have substantial completion by June of 2027

Comm Vertolli expressed concern about the decision to invest approximately \$50 million in a new facility while other schools are being closed due to declining attendance, and expressed frustration with the financial decision.

Comm Partin stated they were not aware of any public hearings or meetings related to the project and confirmed that no formal notification had been received. The only discussion occurred during a Zoom meeting, where a potential property swap was briefly raised at the request of Commissioner Vertolli, but it did not progress. He noted that if such an option had moved forward, it would have been brought to Council for consideration. Comm Partin stated that had City leadership or the Mayor been aware earlier, coordination with the County Commissioner, who is closely connected to the Pine Castle area, might have helped address concerns and could still do so. The speaker emphasized that taxpayers have a right to question the decision to spend \$50 million on a new facility while the school system faces significant budget shortfalls. He noted that additional concerns were raised regarding community outreach, noting that while some neighborhood meetings reportedly occurred, residents impacted by traffic issues near CCA do not appear to have been consulted.

c. Review of Lease With Pioneer Days

CM Rudometkin gave an overview of the lease agreement with Pioneer Days. He welcomed Billy Morgan, Board member of the Pine Castle Pioneer Days (PCPD), to answer any questions the Council may have.

CM Rudometkin reviewed prior Council direction regarding the lease terms, including a \$1 lease rate, an initial three-year term followed by a ten-year term, and confirmation that the lease commencement date will be March 1, 2026. The proposed event schedule provided by the PCPD executive board was included in the agenda packet and will be incorporated into the lease as Exhibit B. He noted that one remaining issue discussed with the PCPD board concerns fencing requirements around the Lancaster House. Under the prior amendment, a six-foot fence was required; however, PCPD indicated this was not included in their budget and requested that the City cover the cost. CM Rudometkin clarified that the City would not incur additional expenses and that such costs would be the responsibility of PCPD.

After further review with CCA staff and legal counsel, it was determined that fencing is only required on two sides of the property—along the south side adjacent to the new gymnasium and the east side adjacent to the parking area. PCPD plans to install a white picket fence on the north and west sides. The remaining question for discussion is responsibility for funding the required two-sided fencing.

Bill Morgan clarified that the Pine Castle Pioneer Days Board did not state that the City should pay for the fencing, but rather questioned who would be responsible for the cost. They noted the project has been in development for several years, with funding already set aside, and that the original plan, developed under a prior City Manager, did not include a six-foot steel fence. The PCPD Board objected to the fencing

requirement because it was not budgeted, is inconsistent with the historic restoration of the 1885 home, and would detract from the property's authentic appearance. The fence on all four sides was viewed as excessive and visually unappealing. He noted that limiting the fence to two less-visible sides was considered more acceptable; however, the cost remains a concern, particularly if the fencing is primarily for Cornerstone's benefit.

Additionally, the PCPD Board raised objections to contract language requiring the fence to be installed before restoration work begins. They emphasized that fencing should be installed later in the construction process, after major work is complete, to avoid interfering with contractors and site work. Discussion ensued about aligning the fencing requirement with a construction schedule. Mr. Morgan noted that they can't really move forward with our grant writing until we have a lease in place.

Mr. Morgan explained that work is underway with the City to advance the project, including applying to have the house listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A key issue identified is confirming the official address of the property, which is required for the National Register application, utility accounts, and grant documentation. There is confusion between addresses currently associated with the site (5903 Randolph versus 5867 Randolph), partly due to past mail routing connected to CCA. He noted that ownership approval will also be required for National Register applications and related approvals. Mr. Morgan expressed enthusiasm and readiness to move forward once the address and approvals are finalized, so restoration work, such as utilities, scraping, and painting, can begin.

Comm Bobrowski agreed that the proposed fence is not period appropriate and it will take away from the feel of the neighborhood. She asked if there were any legalities tying the PCPD fence to the CCA fence. Comm Bobrowski asked whether PCPD could submit for a Bing Grant. She noted that, even though they are a non-profit group, the approval would improve District Two. Attorney Langley said he does not know the grant program's qualifications; however, the Council creates programs and can vote to allocate funds for a public purpose because the property is city-owned. A brief discussion on costs ensued. CM Rudometkin noted that he will consult with CCA and the vendors to request an estimated cost for the fence.

Comm Bobrowski raised a question for the City Attorney regarding whether the organization's 501(c)(3) nonprofit status should be included in the lease or related contract documents for transparency or verification purposes. Attorney Langley acknowledged that such information is not typically a requirement in lease agreements and does not affect land ownership.

- d. SECOND READING AND ADOPTION: ORDINANCE 2026-01 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 42, ARTICLE III, TO CREATE A NEW SECTION 42-73 TO ESTABLISH REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFIED RECOVERY RESIDENCES, INCLUDING A PROCESS FOR REQUESTING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AS REQUIRED BY CHAPTER 2025-182, LAWS OF FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING FOR A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROCESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE LAW; PROVIDING FOR APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS, REVIEW PROCEDURES, AND DEADLINES; PROVIDING FOR REVOCATION AND REINSTATEMENT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

CM Rudometkin read Ordinance 2026-01 by Title.

Mayor Carson called for a motion to adopt.

There being no public comment, Comm Lowell moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-01 as presented.

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

7. New Business

- a. Arbor Day 2026 Proclamation

Council approved the proclamation as presented.

Mayor Carson read the Proclamation in Celebration of Arbor Day for the record.

b. Consideration of Resolution 26-01 Approving Chapter 164 Process and Procedures - Jetport Drive Road Ownership

Mayor Carson called for the adoption of Resolution 26-01
CM Rudometkin read Resolution 26-01 by title.

CM Rudometkin described ongoing roadway and sidewalk issues along Jetport Drive near Regal Boats, particularly in the area approaching SR 528, where heavy truck traffic is causing repeated damage to the pavement, delineators, shoulders, and adjacent areas. The asphalt in this section frequently deteriorates due to truck loads and traffic patterns, creating persistent maintenance problems. A jurisdictional dispute exists between the City and Orange County regarding responsibility for repairs. The County has stated that the roadway and sidewalk are the City's responsibility. The City disputes this, noting unclear boundaries involving multiple entities, including the County, the City of Orlando, FDOT (SR 528), and annexed properties. After some research, we found that County records show extensive maintenance activity in the area over time. The complaint began with a call from a Regal Boats employee about sidewalk conditions, prompting the County to perform repairs after initially stating the City was responsible. Staff have spent significant time coordinating with the County to resolve the matter. Staff requests Council authorization to meet with Orange County to clarify jurisdiction and responsibility for this section of roadway, emphasizing concerns about the long-term financial and maintenance burden if the City is deemed responsible for an area subject to constant heavy-traffic damage.

The City Attorney explained that Resolution 26-01 initiates the formal governmental conflict resolution process under Chapter 164, Florida Statutes, to address a long-standing dispute with Orange County over jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for Jetport Drive. The resolution authorizes the City Manager to send a certified notice to Orange County and directs City officials to take necessary actions to pursue the resolution. Attorney Langley outlined that this dispute has existed for decades, with historical correspondence showing ongoing disagreement between the City and County. Orange County's position is that Jetport Drive became the City's responsibility when the Regal property was annexed; however, the City strongly disagrees. State law provides that road jurisdiction remains as it existed in 1998 unless a formal agreement transfers responsibility, and no such agreement exists between the City of Belle Isle and Orange County. Additionally, Jetport Drive was not included within the City's annexation boundaries and remains in unincorporated Orange County. Records indicate the road was formerly a state (FDOT) roadway transferred to and accepted by Orange County, further supporting the City's position that it is not a local city road. The City Council has never accepted responsibility for this roadway, and doing so would create a significant and ongoing financial and liability burden.

CM Rudometkin noted that, after months of unsuccessful administrative attempts to resolve the issue and with the County maintaining that the road is the City's responsibility, the City Attorney recommended initiating the statutory conflict resolution process. This process allows for formal meetings between City and County leadership and, if necessary, a joint public meeting between the City Council and County Commission. If resolution cannot be achieved through these steps, litigation may ultimately be required to have a court interpret the statute and determine responsibility. Further discussion ensued on other jurisdictional roads of the city.

Attorney Langley clarified the distinction between law enforcement jurisdiction and operational/maintenance jurisdiction over roadways. Law enforcement authority is triggered by annexation into city limits, allowing the City to enforce traffic laws even on state or county roads within its boundaries. However, this does not obligate the City to operate or maintain those roads.

Regarding Jetport Drive, Attorney Langley said that operational and maintenance responsibilities have never been transferred to the City. The road was originally a state (FDOT) roadway and was formally transferred to Orange County, which accepted responsibility. Under Florida law, transferring maintenance responsibility to a city requires a formal agreement between the City and County, and no such agreement,

deed, or council action exists. He further noted that counties often continue to maintain high-volume roads that run through city limits. Orange County's argument that Jetport Drive is a "local road" that automatically became the City's responsibility upon annexation was disputed, as Jetport Drive is a high-traffic connector and does not meet the definition of a low-volume local or residential road.

After further discussion, Comm Vertolli moved to adopt Resolution 26-01 to initiate governmental conflict resolution procedures pursuant to Chapter 164, Florida Statutes, with Orange County, regarding jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for Jetport Drive. Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.

- c. RES 26-02 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING AND RESTATING RESOLUTION 23-02 CONCERNING THE CREATION OF AND DUTIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE CITY BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Mayor Carson called for the adoption of Res 26-02.
CM Rudometkin read the Resolution by Title.

CM Rudometkin said that Resolution 26-02 amends and restates Resolution 23-02 to update the structure and procedures of the City Budget Advisory Committee. The change addresses the Secretary position, which became vacant when the previous Secretary resigned. One committee member was temporarily serving as Secretary, but the committee sought a more sustainable solution for taking meeting minutes. The proposed resolution eliminates the Secretary position for this committee and designates the City Clerk as responsible for recording minutes. An alternate from among the Budget Committee members would serve if the City Clerk is unavailable. This change applies only to the Budget Committee and requires a formal resolution because the current charter specifies officer positions for committees. The resolution also maintains the Chairman and Vice Chairman roles.

Council discussed the procedures for taking minutes for the City Budget Advisory Committee under the proposed resolution. The Council noted that the City Clerk is designated to take minutes for the committee. In the event the Clerk is absent from a meeting, the Committee Chair may appoint a committee member to serve as an alternate minute taker. "Absence" was clarified to mean unavailability for the meeting, not merely not being physically present. Council clarifies that this provision is specific to the Budget Committee due to the technical nature of its work and is not intended to apply to other advisory boards.

Comm Bobrowski noted that while committee members could take minutes themselves, assigning a trained staff member is appropriate for this committee, given the importance and complexity of its financial work. Several Council members emphasized that this arrangement should not be interpreted as a precedent for other advisory committees, which typically do not require staff support for minute-taking. There was a discussion regarding the Secretary position. Since committee members are not used to taking minutes and do not know the parameters of good minutes taking, Comm Bobrowski finds this to be appropriate.

Following discussion and clarification of responsibilities, Comm Vertolli moved to approve Resolution 26-02 as presented. The motion was seconded by Comm Lowell and passed 5:2, with Comm Smith and Comm Shuck voting nay.

8. Attorney's Report - na

9. City Manager's Report

- a. City Manager's Report and Work Plan

CM Rudometkin announced that Heidi Peacock has resigned to focus on other career opportunities in the HR Field. Staff wishes her the best.

b. Chief's Report

Chief Grimm reported that the City is losing one employee but welcoming back former officer Britsy Diaz, who was sworn in earlier today. Officer Diaz previously left the department for medical reasons and was exploring other career opportunities, but has returned to her law enforcement role. Chief Grimm noted that the departmental report has been distributed for Council review and encouraged Council members to reach out with any questions.

Chief Grimm also discussed plans to develop a public dashboard summarizing key police activity. Staff will survey both the Council and the community to determine the most relevant topics to include, such as traffic stops, violent crimes, or traffic accidents. The goal is to highlight the six to seven most meaningful metrics. The survey will be distributed soon to refine the dashboard based on the results.

c. Public Works Report

Phil Price, Public Works Director, reported the following,

Council received an update on ongoing and upcoming public works projects:

- Jetport Drive: Council members have been coordinating internally to address ongoing issues in this area. Efforts continue to work through outstanding matters.
- Sidewalk Repairs: Work on sidewalk repairs will resume following the holiday pause. The contractor has been contacted, and repairs will continue from where they were previously halted.
- Orange County Forest Main Project (Conway Lakes): Restoration efforts are underway, including sodding. Once the work in Conway Lakes is completed, the contractor will move to the Judge Street section. Only minor work remains in the Randolph area. The project is expected to be completed within a few weeks.
- Nela Bridge Lighting: Replacement of the bridge light poles has been delayed due to difficulty removing the old globes. Contractors will install new globes and bulbs, which will require removing some of the existing globes. Work is scheduled to move forward shortly.
- City Fountain: A leak issue with the fountain has been diagnosed, and repairs are planned. The fountain will be restored to full operation once completed.

10. Mayor's Report

Mayor Carson noted that there was not much to report this evening, but expressed appreciation for the thoughtful discussions and differing opinions shared during the meeting. The Mayor emphasized the importance of considering multiple perspectives when making decisions for the City. Mayor Carson recognized Ms. Peacock for her contributions during his tenure and expressed gratitude for her support. He noted that she will be missed at City Hall but wished her well in her new career opportunity.

11. Commissioners' Report

The Council expressed its support and gratitude to Heidi Peacock and wished her well in her new duties.

- Comm Lowell thanked all staff and gave a shout-out to Officer Shabazz for his assistance with an oversized vehicle passing on the Nela Bridge.
- Comm Lance gave a shout-out to Duke Energy for their assistance on a Sunday afternoon with tree limbs on the road. In addition, he noted that he will be out of the country on Feb 3, 2026.
- Comm Bobrowski thanked Phil Price for going beyond and assisting her with a resident concern just outside the city limits.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Council moved to adjourn at 8:45 pm.