**CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL**

# CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, October 20, 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 meeting to order at 6:31 pm, and the Clerk confirmed quorum.
   City Manager (CM) Rick Rudometkin, Attorney Langley, Chief Grimm, Public Works Director Phil Price, Code Compliance Officer Maureen McKuhen, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. **Invocation and Pledge to the Flag** - Comm Bobrowski led the invocation and Pledge to the Flag.

3. **Public Comments & Announcements**
   Mayor Carson opened for public comments and announcements.
   - Todd Zimmerman, residing at 6517 Cay Circle, shared his concerns regarding the City's building permit fees and recent changes to Florida law. He referenced House Bill 399, effective January 1, 2027, stating that fees associated with development permits and development orders must reasonably relate to the direct and indirect costs of reviewing, processing, and determining applications and may not be based on a percentage of construction costs or project valuation. Mr. Zimmerman expressed concern that certain provisions in the City's FY 2026–2027 Fee Schedule, particularly those referencing review fees calculated as a portion of the total construction value, may not be consistent with the new legislation. Based on his professional experience with building inspections and private providers, he encouraged the City to review its permitting fee structure to ensure compliance with state law.

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

4. **Presentations**
   a. Special Events Calendar Updates – The members were not present to provide updates. CM Rudometkin stated that the items could be placed on the November 5, 2026, City Council agenda, if necessary.

5. **Consent Items –**
   a. Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes - September 23, 2026
   b. Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes – October 6, 2026
   c. September 2026 Monthly Reports: PD, Finance (https://cleargov.com/florida/orange/city/belle-isle), and OC Fire

**Mayor Carson called for a motion to approve Consent items a-c.**
**Comm Lowell moved to approve Consent items a-c as presented.**
**Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.**

**6. Unfinished Business** - na

**7. New Business**

a. Creation of Citizen Group Discussion

CM Rudometkin introduced a discussion about forming a Citizens Advisory Committee, noting the idea was briefly discussed in previous Council discussions about reviewing the City Charter and Code and encouraging greater resident involvement. He stated that he had discussed the concept with the Mayor as a potential way to involve residents in the review process. CM Rudometkin explained that the proposed Citizens Advisory Committee would include one resident selected by each Council member to represent their district during the Charter and Code review process. The representatives would participate in Council workshops and the planned retreat, provide input and ideas, help gather feedback from residents, and help communicate information throughout their districts. He clarified that the committee would be established specifically for the Charter and Code review. If approved by Council, staff would issue an electronic alert and coordinate preparations for the first Saturday workshop. Each Council member would be asked to submit their selected representative to the City Manager and City Clerk. Staff would then meet with the representatives to explain their responsibilities, provide copies of the Charter and Code, and encourage them to begin reviewing the documents and gathering input from residents.

Mayor Carson expressed support for establishing a Citizens Advisory Committee, with one resident from each district, to participate in the City's Charter and Code review process. He emphasized the importance of gathering resident perspectives and ensuring potential changes reflect the community's needs and concerns. Mayor Carson noted that, although Council members communicate with their constituents, residents may identify concerns or issues that Council has not considered. He emphasized that the review would be an involved process and that residents' participation could provide valuable insight and help Council consider each district's needs.

Vice Mayor Lowell expressed support for the proposed Citizens Advisory Committee, noting that it would give residents an opportunity to get involved without a long-term commitment. She hopes multiple residents would be interested in participating and asked how representation would be handled if a district did not have a volunteer, including whether another district could appoint a second representative or whether that district would remain unrepresented.

CM Rudometkin clarified that the recommendation was for each Council member to select a resident from their district, even if no volunteers initially came forward. He suggested considering residents who have previously expressed interest in City matters or who may be interested in serving on a City board, committee, or Council in the future, as participation would provide an opportunity to become familiar with the process. He emphasized that staff recommended maintaining one representative from each district to ensure equal representation, although Council could consider an at-large approach or another structure if desired.

Mayor Carson further explained that the recommendation for one representative from each district was intended to ensure balanced representation, recognizing that some districts are more vocal and actively engaged than others. He noted that the committee would promote transparency and greater community involvement by allowing residents to participate in the Charter and Code review discussions without making the full commitment required of an elected official. He emphasized that the goal was to give residents an opportunity to understand and contribute to the process, rather than having Council members conduct the review alone.

Comm Bobrowski suggested issuing an e-lert system to inform residents about the proposed Citizens Advisory Committee, including a description of its purpose and the names and contact information of Council members for residents interested in participating. She noted that commissioners may not personally know every

resident in their district and asked whether the committee would have a minimum residency requirement for participation. She supported the proposed committee and suggested that, although each district would have only one appointed representative, other interested residents could still participate by discussing issues and sharing their perspectives with that representative. The representative would then serve as the district's spokesperson during committee meetings, helping ensure that a broader range of resident concerns and ideas were considered throughout the Charter and Code review process.

CM Rudometkin clarified that each Council member would select their district representative directly, without a formal application process. He explained that interested residents could contact their commissioner following the City's electronic notification, and commissioners could meet with interested individuals before selecting one representative. Other interested residents could continue participating by sharing their input with the selected representative.

Comm Gold said each Council member should have the discretion to select their district representative and set any qualifications or criteria they consider appropriate, including residency requirements. He encouraged commissioners to prioritize selecting a resident from their own district, while suggesting some flexibility to consider a qualified resident from another district if no suitable representative could be identified. He also encouraged Council members to seek input from additional interested residents, neighborhood groups, and homeowners' associations, noting that representatives could consult with others to gather broader community perspectives. He referenced the early development of the Budget Committee as an example of residents working together to provide valuable input.

Comm Partin asked who would lead and coordinate the proposed Citizens Advisory Committee and whether its members would independently recommend Charter and Code changes or review specific areas identified by Council. CM Rudometkin explained that the committee was intended to serve as an informal resource for Council members, rather than operate under a rigid structure. Each commissioner could direct their selected representative to review the Charter and Code, gather feedback from district residents, and offer recommendations or concerns for Council consideration. Representatives would also participate in Council workshops and discussions to share perspectives gathered from the community.
CM Rudometkin confirmed that he would guide the representatives, communicate meeting dates, explain their roles, and remain available to answer procedural questions. He emphasized that the overall goal was to encourage community input and provide Council with additional perspectives to support meaningful discussions during the Charter and Code review process.

Vice Mayor Lowell asked about the anticipated duration of the Charter and Code review process, including how frequently the committee would meet and the overall time commitment expected of participating residents. CM Rudometkin said that the process would begin with an initial workshop or City Council retreat.

CM Rudometkin explained that the Charter and Code review process would begin with an informal Saturday workshop or Council retreat, with participation from Council members and the selected citizen representatives. He said staff would prepare an outline to guide discussions, beginning with the City Code, particularly Section 50 on canopy regulations, because Council previously granted temporary enforcement relief. The Charter review would follow. He noted that the review would be an extensive process and that the frequency and scheduling of future meetings would be determined during the initial workshop, taking participants' availability into consideration. He emphasized that the goal was to thoroughly review the regulations and consider recommendations without imposing an unnecessarily rushed timeline.

Chief Grimm reported that he had contacted a local hotel willing to donate a meeting room on a Saturday for the workshop. The hotel requested advance notice of the proposed date to accommodate its scheduling needs.

During discussion, Council suggested providing citizen representatives with specific sections of the Code to review rather than expecting them to evaluate the entire document at once. Mayor Carson supported this approach, suggesting that Council members and their representatives could divide sections for review and bring

recommendations for potential language changes back to the full Council. Comm Gold requested clarification regarding whether the committee would review the Charter or the entire City Code. Staff clarified that both would be reviewed, beginning with the Code to address the time-sensitive canopy regulations, followed by the Charter. Council also discussed the distinction between Code amendments, which do not require voter approval, and Charter amendments, which require a referendum. Comm Gold suggested that Code reviews could become a regular process, potentially annually, while other members recommended first evaluating the effectiveness of the initial review.

**There being no further discussion, Comm. Bobrowski moved to approve establishing a citizens committee for charter and code review.**

**Vice Mayor Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.**

b. Approval of Waltham Avenue Resurfacing

c. Resolution 26-20: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2026, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2027, PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

CM Rudometkin introduced the Waltham Avenue Resurfacing Project, which includes resurfacing and curbing improvements between Hansel Avenue and Randolph Avenue. He explained that funding had been included in the FY25/26 budget; however, the project did not proceed before September 30, 2026, because the required City Council purchasing authorization had not been obtained. He noted that the unused appropriation would not automatically carry forward into FY26/27. Instead, the unspent funds would become part of the City's ending fund balance and subsequently its beginning fund balance for the new fiscal year. A separate resolution was proposed to appropriate $66,000 from available fund balance to fund the project, with the beginning fund balance to be updated once the prior fiscal year's financial results were finalized.

Public Works Director Phil Price explained that the proposed Waltham Avenue resurfacing project would cover the section between Hansel Avenue and Randolph Avenue. Rather than issuing a separate Request for Proposals, staff recommended piggybacking on an existing Seminole County contract with Middlesex Paving. He noted that the approximately $52 million county contract would allow the City to benefit from established pricing for its smaller resurfacing project. He further stated that the City has utilized piggyback purchasing arrangements for other projects and requested Council approval to proceed using this method.

Comm Bobrowski shared her concern regarding the timing of the Waltham Avenue resurfacing project in light of the potential sale of the former Pine Castle Elementary School property to Cornerstone Charter Academy. She asked whether future construction activities could damage the newly resurfaced roadway or curbing and suggested it may be prudent to delay the project until the property's ownership and construction plans are determined.

Mr. Price acknowledged the concern but said that Waltham Avenue is in poor condition, with ongoing complaints regarding potholes and roadway deterioration. He said delaying the project would require continued spending on temporary repairs. He suggested that Council could consider imposing conditions on any future construction approvals for the former Pine Castle Elementary School property, requiring the developer to mill and resurface the roadway rather than simply patch damaged areas if construction activities caused damage to the newly improved street. He also noted that Randolph Avenue could potentially serve as an alternative construction access route. Comm Bobrowski asked whether similar conditions had been imposed during construction affecting Fairlane Avenue; Mr. Price stated that, to his knowledge, they had not. He said that he was not employed by the City when that project began.

Attorney Langley stated that the City's ability to impose conditions related to roadway damage would depend on the type of development application submitted. He explained that a building permit generally cannot be conditioned on roadway maintenance requirements, and the City cannot ordinarily restrict public use of a roadway. However, if the proposed development requires site plan review, the City may have an opportunity to establish conditions regarding construction access and negotiate appropriate measures with the developer.

These could include a maintenance fund or other financial guarantee to address potential roadway damage resulting from construction activities.

Comm Bobrowski asked if there is potential liability associated with the condition of Waltham Avenue. Attorney Langley explained that municipalities generally have sovereign immunity protections; however, liability could arise if the City had knowledge of dangerous roadway conditions and failed to take reasonable corrective action. He noted that the extent of any liability would depend on the circumstances and the severity of the condition, and that engineering staff is better positioned to assess roadway safety. Mr. Price confirmed that Waltham Avenue has existing pavement issues requiring attention, and that delaying the resurfacing project would require the City to spend additional funds on interim repairs.

Comm Partin asked about the project timing and the availability of the Seminole County contract with Middlesex Paving. Mr. Price stated that the contract was in its second year of a five-year term, leaving about three years during which the City could potentially use the piggyback arrangement. However, he acknowledged that the contract includes annual price escalation provisions, meaning that delaying the project could increase costs.

Council expressed differing views on whether to proceed immediately or wait until the future use and potential construction plans for the former Pine Castle Elementary School property were determined. Comm Lance expressed concern about protecting the City's investment from possible construction-related damage, while others emphasized the roadway's deteriorating condition, its use by residents and schoolchildren, and the need to address infrastructure improvements without further delay. During discussion, Mr. Price clarified that the proposed project would involve milling and resurfacing the roadway and restriping but would not include new curbing. Comm Bobrowski identified a developing pothole near the intersection of Wallace and Randolph Avenues. Mr. Price stated that the intersection was not entirely within the City's jurisdiction but agreed to review the concern and potentially coordinate with Orange County.

Comm Lance questioned whether the City could consider vehicle weight restrictions to help protect the roadway, similar to restrictions used elsewhere in the City. Mr. Price indicated that staff could explore the option but did not believe heavy vehicle traffic was the primary cause of the roadway's deterioration. He noted that the City had assumed responsibility for Waltham Avenue when it was already in poor condition.

Comm Partin questioned why the Waltham Avenue resurfacing project had not been presented for approval at the September 23, 2026, Council meeting, noting that Middlesex Paving had submitted pricing earlier that month. CM Rudometkin explained that the project could not be completed before the end of the fiscal year due to the contractor's scheduling limitations and the time needed to complete the purchasing process. He said the project was included in the prior year's paving budget and that the unused funding could be reappropriated in FY26/27. He also noted that staff confirmed the Seminole County contract and pricing had been obtained and reviewed, and that the Finance Department verified the purchasing method for compliance with the City's procurement policy.

Comm Partin discussed potential unforeseen roadway conditions and whether additional base repairs might be necessary. Mr. Price explained that the project would involve milling the existing pavement and applying asphalt leveling material where needed before placing the final surface. Staff noted that they would evaluate and address any significant underlying base issues discovered during milling. Council continued discussing concerns about potential construction-related damage associated with future development of the former Pine Castle Elementary School property. Several members noted that Randolph Avenue provides alternative access to the property, which could reduce construction traffic on Waltham Avenue. Mr. Price also explained that the adjacent property owner would be responsible for certain roadway striping improvements, providing an additional incentive to protect the newly resurfaced road. Council acknowledged that construction vehicles could still use Waltham Avenue and discussed the importance of coordinating with the property owner to encourage appropriate construction access. Mr. Price said that the resurfacing project would maintain the existing roadway footprint. The City would provide the centerline striping and two stop bars, while the adjacent

property owner would provide additional striping along Waltham Avenue. He estimated that the work would take no more than two days, with milling and paving potentially completed in one day if conditions permitted. He said he preferred daytime work to minimize disturbances to nearby residents and discussed scheduling the project during an upcoming school holiday to reduce traffic impacts.

**There being no further discussion, Comm Bobrowski moved to approve the Waltham Avenue resurfacing project with Middlesex Paving LLC in the amount not to exceed $66,075, using an eligible Seminole County Cooperative Purchasing Contract under Section 4.6 of the Purchasing Policy, and to adopt Resolution 26-20, amending the FY26-27 budget to appropriate $66,075 for the project.**
**Comm Oller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.**

d. McCoy and Fairlane Project 2025-2026 Waive Formal Procurement Process and Approval

CM Rudometkin opened the discussion and said that the City included funding for street resurfacing in the fiscal year 25/26 adopted budget. Public Works staff obtained three vendor quotes for each of the McCoy Road and Fairlane Avenue projects in selected Middlesex paving. Four quarter authorizations dated July 9 authorized $91,300 for McCoy Road and $68,875 for Fairlane Avenue. The total at that time was 160,175. At the time, city staff understood the projects to be authorized because funding was not included in the adopted budget. However, Section 5.1 of the city's purchasing policy requires City Council approval for purchases exceeding $60,000, regardless of whether the purchase is included in the budget. The projects were authorized and performed without that prior council approval. Further, the City obtained three vendor quotes rather than completing the formal solicitation procedures required under Section 44. Public Works Director has documented the circumstances and reported that the Public Works Director and the City Manager inspected the completed work and found that. Consistent with authorized proposals, Middlesex Paving has submitted invoices totaling 133,951 for the completed projects and has confirmed that this amount represents the final billing for both projects. Section 4.9 of the purchasing policy permits City Council, by majority vote, to waive formal procurement procedures when deemed in the city's best interest, to the extent not prohibited by general law. Because the projects have already been completed, the City is seeking Council consideration of ratification and an after-the-fact waiver, subject to confirmation by the City Attorney that the proposed actions are legally appropriate.

Public Works Director Phil Price acknowledged that he had misunderstood the City's purchasing approval requirements. He explained that, because funding had already been appropriated in the budget, he believed obtaining three quotes was sufficient to proceed without additional City Council authorization. He accepted responsibility for the oversight and acknowledged that following the proper purchasing procedures would have allowed the project to move forward more smoothly. Discussion ensued regarding previously completed roadway resurfacing projects and compliance with the City's purchasing procedures.

Comm Bobrowski asked whether the Fairlane Avenue resurfacing project was necessary because of construction associated with the school and whether the City paid for improvements beyond the original roadway. Mr. Price clarified that Fairlane Avenue was already in poor condition and that the City's work was limited to milling and resurfacing the existing roadway footprint. He explained that the school was responsible for paving the additional angled parking areas and completing all roadway striping. The City did not pay for the expanded parking areas or striping improvements.

Comm Bobrowski also requested clarification regarding the McCoy Road resurfacing project, recalling a previous discussion about whether the roadway belonged to the City or Orange County. Mr. Price explained that the earlier jurisdictional dispute involved Jetport Drive near Regal, not McCoy Road. He stated that, under an existing agreement, the City is responsible for portions of McCoy Road, Daetwyler Drive, and Judge Road. He confirmed that the resurfaced portion of McCoy Road, between Daetwyler Drive and Via Flora, is within the City's jurisdiction.

Mr. Price explained that the westbound lane of McCoy Road had experienced significant deterioration, requiring Public Works crews to repair potholes almost weekly. Due to the recurring maintenance needs, staff

determined that milling and resurfacing were necessary. He clarified that only the westbound lane was resurfaced because the remaining roadway did not require the same level of immediate attention.

Comm Bobrowski spoke of the City's purchasing procedures. She questioned whether Middlesex Paving had already been paid for the completed work. Staff confirmed that payment had not been issued, as the matter was being presented to Council for approval. Comm Bobrowski expressed concern that the work was completed without prior Council authorization, despite the City updating its purchasing policy in July 2026. She referenced the policy's $60,000 purchasing threshold and questioned why the matter was not brought before Council sooner. Mr. Price reiterated that he had misunderstood the purchasing requirements and acknowledged the oversight. Comm Bobrowski requested clarification from the City Attorney regarding whether retroactive approval would weaken the City's purchasing policy, create an unfavorable precedent, or result in any legal or procedural consequences.

Attorney Langley explained that the matter was being brought before Council transparently at a public meeting to acknowledge and correct an administrative oversight. He said he did not believe approving the expenditure would weaken the City's purchasing policy or set an unfavorable precedent, and that the process showed the policy was functioning, as another staff member identified the oversight and brought it forward for correction. Attorney Langley noted that three bids had been obtained and that the contractor performing the work was also the contractor associated with the piggyback purchasing agreement under consideration. He explained that Council approval was still necessary because of the amount of the expenditure.

Regarding the potential consequences of denying payment, Attorney Langley explained that the contractor could pursue litigation. Although the City might have legal defenses based on sovereign immunity and the absence of a properly authorized contract, he cautioned that refusing payment could damage the City's relationship with an established contractor and discourage future business. Comm Bobrowski clarified that the questions were intended to better understand the purchasing requirements and prevent similar procedural oversights in the future. Attorney Langley said that addressing the matter openly and through the appropriate Council approval process would help reduce the likelihood of a similar occurrence.

Comm Partin asked for clarification regarding why the completed resurfacing project came in under the original estimated cost. Public Works Director Phil Price explained that, although the roadway was in poor condition, less asphalt leveling material was required than originally anticipated once milling began. As a result, the actual quantities used were lower than estimated, reducing the overall project cost. He noted that Middlesex Paving had previously performed work for the City and had been a reliable contractor.

Council discussed the City's purchasing approval and payment procedures. Staff explained that the City Manager authorizes expenditures within his purchasing authority, while expenditures exceeding the established threshold require Council approval. Comm Partin questioned whether the City could approve payment for work completed during the previous fiscal year. CM Rudometkin explained that because the work was performed during FY25/26 and the fiscal year had not yet been fully reconciled, the expenditure could be accounted for using the prior year's budgeted funds.

Comm Partin asked what measures would be taken to prevent similar purchasing oversights in the future. Mr. Price acknowledged that he had misunderstood the revised purchasing policy and believed that obtaining three formal quotes was sufficient once funding had been approved in the budget. He stated that he now understands the additional Council approval requirements. CM Rudometkin also accepted responsibility for the oversight, explaining that his experience with other agencies involved different purchasing procedures, where projects could proceed once the overall budget appropriation was approved. He acknowledged that he had not verified the City's revised purchasing policy before authorizing the project to move forward.

CM Rudometkin clarified that the updated policy establishes different purchasing requirements based on expenditure amounts and that purchases exceeding $60,000 must be brought before Council for approval. He explained that staff identified the oversight before payment was issued, which prompted them to bring the matter forward and ensure the Waltham Avenue project followed the appropriate approval process. Both the

City Manager and Public Works Director acknowledged the mistake, emphasized it was unintentional, and assured Council that they now understood the purchasing requirements and would follow them moving forward.

**There being no further discussion, Comm Partin moved to ratify the city's prior authorization of the McCoy Road and Fairlane Avenue resurfacing projects with Middlesex Paving LLC, originally authorized in the combined amount of $160,175, waive, to the extent legally permissible, the applicable formal procurement procedures pursuant to Section 4.9 of the city's purchasing policy, and approve payment of the final invoices totaling $133,951, subject to the city attorney's review and confirmation of the legally appropriate corrective action. Second. Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.**

e. Discussion to cancel, combine, or reschedule December Council meetings.

CM Rudometkin presented the annual discussion regarding the December 2026 City Council meeting schedule, noting that Council traditionally considers modifying its meeting schedule during the holiday season. He explained that in December 2025, Council held only one meeting and requested direction on whether Council wished to hold two meetings, one combined meeting, or no meetings in December 2026. The Council discussed potential scheduling conflicts with holiday events and expressed support for holding one combined meeting on the regularly scheduled second meeting date.

**There being no further discussion, Comm Bobrowski moved to combine the December City Council meetings into one meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2026, eliminating the regularly scheduled first meeting of the month. Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.**

f. Discussion of Fire Assessment Feasibility Study

CM Rudometkin opened discussion for Council authorization to proceed with a Fire Rescue Assessment Feasibility Study as the next step in evaluating a potential fire rescue assessment. During discussion, Comm Partin asked for clarification regarding the consultant selection process, specifically whether staff intended to issue a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) or identify a qualified consultant and return to Council for approval. CM Rudometkin explained that the City could potentially avoid the two- to three-month RFP process by considering an experienced consultant who had previously conducted similar fire rescue assessment feasibility studies. He suggested that staff could bring the proposed consultant directly to Council for consideration and approval, potentially expediting the study and allowing the City to move forward within the anticipated timeline.

Attorney Langley discussed the timeline for completing the proposed Fire Rescue Assessment Feasibility Study, emphasizing the need to have the study completed by spring 2027 to allow sufficient time for any necessary resolutions and implementation procedures during the summer. CM Rudometkin indicated that using an experienced consultant could expedite the process and stated that staff would work to obtain a proposal for Council consideration as soon as possible. Council discussed the anticipated cost of the study, including whether a consultant with prior experience conducting similar assessments could utilize existing research and methodologies to reduce expenses. Comm Gold expressed concern regarding the estimated $50,000 cost and questioned whether the study could be completed for less. CM Rudometkin stated that the final cost was not yet known and that he would return to Council with a proposed scope of services and pricing.

Attorney Langley explained that specialized consulting firms conduct these studies by evaluating the benefits of fire rescue services to different property classifications, including single-family residences, multifamily properties, and commercial properties. He noted that non-ad valorem assessments differ from ad valorem taxes, as assessment rates may vary based on the benefits provided to different property types. CM Rudometkin recommended proceeding with the feasibility study regardless of the outcome of the proposed November constitutional amendment, emphasizing the importance of evaluating the assessment as a potential future funding mechanism.

During discussion, Council clarified that the authorization being considered was to proceed with the feasibility study process, and that the selected consultant's proposal, scope of services, contract, and final cost would be brought back to Council for approval. CM Rudometkin stated that if the proposed cost exceeded the $50,000 limit, he would return to Council for further consideration and authorization.

The City Clerk requested clarification regarding the statutory advertising requirements and whether delays in consultant selection would affect the City's deadline for adopting a notice of intent resolution. Attorney Langley clarified that the notice of intent process was separate from the feasibility study. CM Rudometkin indicated that the notice of intent resolution would be brought before Council in late November or December 2026, allowing the City to proceed with the required public notification process.

**With no further discussion, Comm Bobrowski moved to approve proceeding with a Fire Rescue Assessment Feasibility Study, not to exceed $50,000, and to authorize the City Manager and City Attorney to move forward with the process. Comm Gold seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.**

**8. Attorney's Report - na**

**9. City Manager's Report**

a. City Manager's Report and Work Plan

CM Rudometkin provided updates on several ongoing City matters, including Hoffner Avenue traffic concerns, the Lancaster House agreement, flood mitigation funding, and the City Council Chambers audiovisual system.

- Hoffner Avenue Traffic Concerns. He reported that staff had received numerous concerns regarding traffic conditions along Hoffner Avenue through social media, emails, and other communications. In response, staff contacted Humberto, an Orange County engineer, to discuss the reported issues and potential improvements. He stated that an initial meeting with County representatives was scheduled for October 29, 2026, with City staff participating to review the concerns and explore possible solutions.
- Lancaster House Agreement – CM Rudometkin provided an update regarding the Lancaster House agreement with Pine Castle Pioneer Days. He reminded Council that, at a previous meeting, the organization requested financial assistance, and Council discussed potential noncompliance with the existing agreement. However, Council had not determined the alleged breach or approved an extension. He reported that the City subsequently issued a letter notifying Pioneer Days of a breach of contract. Pioneer Days responded in writing, disputing the City's position and referencing the activities and progress previously presented to Council. The City Manager stated that the contract compliance matter would return to Council on November 5, 2026, for further discussion and consideration. He confirmed that Billy Morgan, representing Pioneer Days, had been notified and was expected to attend.

- Flood Mitigation Funding – $850,000 Appropriation: CM Rudometkin announced that the City had received confirmation of an $850,000 federal appropriation for flood mitigation, pursued through Congressman Darren Soto's office. He explained that the City had previously requested larger appropriations, including an initial $4 million request that was vetoed and a subsequent $3.6 million request. Although the City received correspondence in May indicating that funding had been awarded, formal confirmation remained uncertain until the appropriation appeared in the federal funding portal approximately two weeks before the meeting. He noted that the $850,000 award does not require matching City funds, making it the City's second HUD-funded project without a local match, following the Judge Road/Daetwyler Drive project. He said staff would work with Public Works Director Phil Price to prioritize the Judge Road/Daetwyler Drive project in 2027, with planning and implementation of the additional flood mitigation project expected to follow. He also noted that the appropriation provides an extended period to complete the project.
- City Council Chambers Audiovisual System - CM Rudometkin addressed ongoing concerns regarding the reliability of the City Council Chambers audiovisual and livestreaming system. He apologized that the issues had not been resolved sooner and explained that staff had attempted several temporary solutions, including improving Wi-Fi connectivity, boosting signal strength, troubleshooting existing equipment, and purchasing a new computer. He

explained that the existing system continues to experience intermittent failures due to connectivity and compatibility issues between older equipment, software, and newer technology. The new computer was not compatible with portions of the existing system, and previous attempts by vendors and IT personnel had not fully resolved the problems. CM Rudometkin reviewed the history of the audiovisual system procurement, explaining that the City initially issued an RFP but received only two proposals despite interest from several vendors. Due to the limited response and estimated costs, staff canceled the solicitation, revised the scope, and reissued the RFP to seek additional competitive proposals. He reported that approximately five vendors attended the recent meeting for the revised solicitation and expressed interest in the project. The proposal submission deadline was November 5, 2026, and staff anticipated presenting the top three vendors and their proposed costs to Council on November 17, 2026, allowing Council members to ask questions and evaluate the proposals. He acknowledged that the replacement system would likely exceed the City's original $50,000 budget estimate. However, he emphasized that continued temporary repairs would not adequately address the compatibility problems and that a complete system upgrade would provide a more reliable long-term solution. CM Rudometkin explained that the improvements were intended to enhance livestreaming capabilities, potentially expand broadcasts to platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, and improve recording and audio functions used by the City Clerk to prepare meeting minutes and maintain records. Mayor Carson supported addressing the audiovisual problems, emphasizing the importance of reliable, uninterrupted public access to Council meetings. He acknowledged the need to evaluate project costs carefully but said providing residents with accurate, dependable access to Council proceedings should remain a priority.

b. Chief's Report

Chief Grimm reminded all of the upcoming special events and public safety activities scheduled throughout the remainder of October. He announced that the City's Recycling Event and Prescription Drug Take Back would take place on Saturday, October 24, with the recycling event scheduled from 9 am to 1 pm. He also encouraged residents to attend the Octoberfest event at the school, noting that participation had increased in recent years.

Chief Grimm reminded Council that Boogie on the Bridge was scheduled for October 28, 2026, from 5:30 pm to 9 pm He advised that the event would require significant road closures and traffic adjustments. He also noted that Octoberfest would involve a smaller road closure along a portion of Randolph Avenue.

Regarding Halloween on Saturday, October 31, the Chief anticipated increased pedestrian activity, neighborhood gatherings, and traffic because the City is a popular trick-or-treating destination. He stated that the Police Department would increase patrols, display public safety signage, and maintain a visible police presence throughout the community. He encouraged motorists to exercise caution and remain alert for children and pedestrians. He also reminded residents that publicly available sexual offenders and predator registries could be consulted when planning trick-or-treating activities.

c. Public Works Report

Public Works Director Phil Price gave an update on preparations for the upcoming Boogie on the Bridge event and the City's ongoing tree canopy trimming program. He reported that a public notice had been issued advising residents of the electrical work scheduled for the following day to repair and replace several bridge step lights before the event. He explained that two lights were not functioning and another had been damaged approximately two weeks earlier, apparently by a passing trailer. Mr. Price said minor traffic disruptions were expected, but the bridge would remain accessible to motorists during the repairs.

Mr. Price also provided an update on the tree canopy trimming program in the Belle West, Belle Pines, and Wind Harbor neighborhoods. He reported that work was completed in two neighborhoods, with the third about two-thirds complete. He anticipated finishing the remaining work within one to two days, after which crews would move to another area of the City. He explained that staff would continue issuing public notices to inform residents of upcoming trimming locations. In response to questions received from residents, Mr. Price clarified that the work involves raising tree canopies to a minimum clearance of 14 feet to prevent damage from passing trucks, as well as removing dead branches that could present safety hazards.

d. Code Compliance Report

Community Compliance Officer Maureen McKuhen provided the Code Compliance activity report for September 2026. She reported that 25 cases were handled during the month, with 13 cases closed and 12 remaining open. She explained that the majority of violations involved overgrown grass, yard debris, trash, and general property maintenance concerns. Most of these cases had been resolved, with only a few remaining open. She noted that several outstanding cases involved vacant properties owned by individuals residing outside Florida. She remained in communication with those property owners, who were cooperating in addressing the violations. Comm Lance raised concerns regarding overgrown vegetation on properties near Daetwyler Drive, Trentwood Boulevard, and McCoy Road, including areas affecting residents along Flower Tree Road. He asked whether these locations fell within the City's Code Compliance jurisdiction. Officer McKuhen confirmed that the areas were within her jurisdiction and assured Council that she was aware of the concerns and actively working to address them.

**10. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Carson provided additional information regarding the upcoming Electronics, Medication, and Textile Recycling Event. He explained that accepted items. He noted that items not accepted included CRT televisions, rear-projection televisions, bed pillows, large area rugs, foam-containing items, and materials contaminated with chemicals or bodily fluids. Mayor Carson encouraged residents to participate as the event would provide a convenient opportunity to dispose of multiple categories of recyclable materials at one location.

Mayor Carson said he participated in a meeting earlier that day with representatives from neighboring municipalities and Tiffany Moore Russell, a candidate for Orange County Mayor, to discuss ongoing concerns about the cost of fire rescue services provided by Orange County. He stated that the meeting was productive and that Ms. Moore Russell was receptive to the concerns presented. Mayor Carson noted that Edgewood Mayor John Dowless and Oakland Mayor Shane Taylor joined him and shared similar concerns about the financial impact of Orange County's fire rescue funding structure on their municipalities. He stated that Belle Isle and the neighboring municipalities were not seeking to eliminate or reduce the importance of fire rescue services. Rather, they were requesting a fairer, more equitable method of calculating municipal fire rescue costs, particularly in light of each municipality's actual service demands and emergency call volumes. He explained that fire rescue expenses currently represent approximately 26% of Belle Isle's budget and have increased substantially over the past five years. He said these increases have placed a significant financial burden on the City, particularly when emergency service call volumes have not increased proportionately. He noted that these meetings provide opportunities to strengthen relationships, increase awareness of Belle Isle's concerns, and establish communication with individuals who may hold future leadership positions within Orange County.

Mayor Carson thanked staff and Police Chief Grimm for their assistance with research, coordination, and participation in these discussions. He expressed appreciation for Council's support of the City's ongoing efforts and indicated that progress was being made toward establishing productive conversations regarding the fire rescue funding structure.

**11. Commissioners' Report**

- Comm Bobrowski provided an update regarding the Commissioners' Tent at the upcoming Boogie on the Bridge event, scheduled for October 28, 2026. She thanked donors and reported that approximately 460 candy bags, each containing a small Halloween-themed rubber duck, were prepared for distribution. Additional treats would also be available for dogs attending the event. She encouraged fellow Council members to participate by volunteering at the tent, greeting residents, and distributing candy bags. She emphasized that the tent was intended to give commissioners an opportunity to engage with the community during the event.
- Comm Lance shared appreciation for the City's reputation as a safe and welcoming community for Halloween activities. He noted that the number of families visiting Belle Isle for trick-or-treating reflects parents' confidence in the City's neighborhoods and public safety efforts. He thanked Police Chief Grimm and

the Police Department for their continued commitment to maintaining a safe environment for residents and visitors. Comm Lance said he attended the Tri-County League of Cities meeting, hosted by the City of Oakland, the previous Thursday, along with Cindy. The meeting featured a presentation by Jennifer Rupark of the East Central Florida Regional Resilience Collaborative, titled Measuring Risk, Strengthening Prosperity. The presentation focused on evaluating community risks associated with wind, rain, and flooding and using data-driven assessments to improve resilience and potentially reduce insurance costs. He noted that similar efforts reportedly helped the City of Cocoa and its residents achieve approximately 20% in insurance savings and would share the information with the City Manager for further consideration, noting that the City could participate in the program at no cost.

- Comm Lowell shared concern regarding an apparent increase in door-to-door solicitation throughout the City, particularly from roofing companies and other service providers. She noted that residents working from home may be experiencing more frequent visits from solicitors. She encouraged fellow Council members and residents to remain informed about the City's solicitation requirements and to ask individuals conducting door-to-door sales whether they have obtained the necessary registration or authorization from the City. She suggested that the Police Department consider providing additional public information regarding solicitation regulations, including signage and registration requirements. She also acknowledged that certain activities, such as religious outreach, may be subject to different requirements and encouraged residents to report questionable solicitation activity to City staff or the Police Department to help monitor and address concerns.

  Comm Lowell thanked her fellow Council members and City staff for their understanding and support during her absence from the previous meeting due to a family matter. She expressed appreciation for everyone's continued dedication to the City as the year approached its conclusion.

**14. Adjournment**

With no further business, Mayor Carson moved to adjourn, and the motion passed unanimously at 8:20 pm.