



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL SECOND PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, October 6, 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 6 Commissioner – Christopher Oller
District 7 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

District 5 Commissioner – Beth Lowell

1. **Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum**

Mayor Carson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and the Clerk confirmed quorum.

City Manager Rick Rudometkin, Attorney Langley, Chief Grimm, Public Works Director Phil Price, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. **Invocation and Pledge to the Flag** - Comm Gold 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, spoke on the accessory structure code violation considered at the September 23rd City Council meeting. He referenced the resident's statement that their canopy had been in place since May 2024 and Council's 4-2 vote to allow the noncompliant accessory structure to remain for six months while suspending further fines during the City's review of the Code. Mr. Zimmerman stated that he agreed with the Council members who opposed the action because he believed additional information should have been available before Council made its decision. He questioned whether the accessory structure had been permitted when installed in 2024, whether a variance had previously been requested, whether other similar violations had been cited during the same period, and whether those property owners had complied with their violation notices. He stated that he searched the City's permit portal and did not find a permit for an accessory structure at the property, although he acknowledged that this did not necessarily establish that a permit had not been obtained. He suggested that additional research should have occurred before the matter was presented to Council. Mr. Zimmerman acknowledged that the City Code may have gray areas and supported reviewing and improving those provisions. However, he asked Council to consider whether the City's internal process could also be improved. He questioned whether certain matters should first be presented to the Planning and Zoning Board and encouraged the City to empower and support City staff, Code Enforcement, the Building Department, and the Planning and Zoning Board in carrying out their respective responsibilities. He referenced comments from the prior meeting about building permit requirements, including permits for ceiling fans. He stated that matters governed by the Florida Building Code should be left to the Building Department. As an example of the importance of permitting requirements, he described deficiencies he discovered after purchasing a Belle Isle home in early 2025 where prior improvements had reportedly been completed without permits, including structural, electrical, and other construction-related deficiencies. Mr. Zimmerman said that while he supports listening to residents who bring concerns before Council, he believes Council should have sufficient information available before taking action. He questioned whether staff reports and recommendations from Code Enforcement, Planning,

and the Building Department could be provided to Council in advance and encouraged the City to maintain processes that allow those departments and the Planning and Zoning Board to effectively perform their roles.

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

4. Presentations

- a. Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) Scott Howat, Chief Communications Officer - Penny Tax
Mr. Howat presented on the renewal of the one-mill operating millage appearing on the November 3 ballot. He reported that the District has maintained an “A” rating for three consecutive years and has a 97.2% graduation rate. He addressed declining enrollment, which has fallen by about 15,000 students over the past four years. Factors cited included declining birth rates, reduced housing turnover, changes affecting immigrant families, and increased use of Family Empowerment Scholarships. Mr. Howat stated that declining enrollment resulted in an approximately \$64 million financial impact last year. He explained that the one-mill funding primarily supports teachers, instructional positions, employee compensation, academic programs, arts, athletics, and student activities, with charter schools also receiving a proportional share. For a home with a median assessed value of approximately \$355,000, the millage costs approximately \$28 per month. The ballot measure continues the existing millage, which voters must renew every four years. During discussion, Council raised questions regarding accountability and ensuring the funds benefit teachers and schools. Mr. Howat stated that the District is required to account for the millage annually and publishes a report detailing how the funds are spent.
- b. Proclamation: Celebrating Week of the Family Nov 7-14, 2026
Mayor Carson presented a proclamation recognizing November 7–14, 2026, as Week of the Family in the City of Belle Isle, with the theme “Families Have Fun Together.” The proclamation recognized the Week of the Family’s mission to strengthen family relationships through education, wholesome activities, fitness, and community service and emphasized that strong families are the foundation of strong communities. Mayor Carson encouraged residents, organizations, and agencies throughout the community to participate in activities that honor, strengthen, and celebrate families.

5. Consent Items –

- a. Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes - September 9, 2026
- b. RESOLUTION NO. 26-17 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE FOURTH AMENDMENT TO THE CREDIT AGREEMENT WITH SOUTHSTATE BANK, N.A. TO EXTEND THE \$750,000 REVOLVING LINE OF CREDIT; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
- c. Resolution 26-18 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING, SUPERSEDING, AND REPLACING THE CITY’S CONSOLIDATED FEE SCHEDULE; ADOPTING THE FEE SCHEDULE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND PROVIDING FOR ADOPTION.
- d. Request and Certification of Specific Law Enforcement Trust Fund Expenditures
- e. RESOLUTION NO. 26-19: 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.

**Mayor Carson called for a motion to approve Consent items a-e.
Comm Gold moved to pull item c for consideration.**

**Comm Gold moved to approve Consent items a, b, d, and e as presented.
Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 6:0.**

Mayor Carson called for a motion to excuse Comm Lowell from tonight's meeting.

Comm Bobrowski moved to excuse Vice Mayor Lowell.

Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 6:0.

6. Unfinished Business - na

7. New Business

Resolution 26-18 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING, SUPERSEDING, AND REPLACING THE CITY'S CONSOLIDATED FEE SCHEDULE; ADOPTING THE FEE SCHEDULE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND PROVIDING FOR ADOPTION.

Comm Gold responded to earlier public comments about permitting requirements for work such as installing a ceiling fan. He explained that his comments were prompted by experiences with unsafe electrical work discovered in older homes, including improper wiring, and said qualified homeowners or licensed professionals may be able to correct certain issues without unnecessary City involvement. Comm Gold said he would like the City to further examine permit requirements, fees, and enforcement, with input from residents on what they believe is reasonable. He suggested tabling the fee schedule item to provide additional opportunity for public review and feedback before Council takes action. He emphasized that he was not proposing a specific change at that time but wanted Council to consider the appropriate balance between City regulation and allowing homeowners to make decisions regarding work within their own homes.

CM Rudometkin clarified that Council had already approved the fee schedule and that the resolution before Council was an administrative action to formally memorialize the previously approved fee schedule. He said the concerns raised about building permits and building code requirements were separate from the resolution and could be discussed at a future meeting. He also noted that the City must comply with applicable state building codes and laws. Comm Gold said he would like to hold a future workshop or advisory discussion with informed residents about building permit requirements and opportunities to improve the process for residents while remaining compliant with state requirements.

After discussion, Comm Gold moved to approve the resolution as presented.

Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 6:0.

a. Informational: E-bike Micromobility Community Input - Chief Grimm

Chief Grimm presented a draft ordinance addressing e-bikes, e-scooters, and other micromobility devices. He said staff worked with legal counsel and reviewed ordinances from Orange County, Winter Park, Winter Garden, Ocoee, and other municipalities to prepare the draft. Chief Grimm recommended that Council take approximately a month to review the ordinance before bringing it back for consideration, either at the end of October or the first meeting in November. He cautioned against rushing the ordinance, noting that some municipalities had adopted regulations in response to problems and later had to revise them. He emphasized that Belle Isle is primarily residential and that Council should consider how restrictions could affect children using e-scooters and similar devices in their neighborhoods. Chief Grimm stated that, in the meantime, we would focus primarily on education, particularly regarding careless operation, rather than enforcement while the City develops its ordinance. He offered to provide Council with additional talking points and answer questions before the ordinance returns for further discussion.

b. Reschedule/Cancel City Council Meeting Nov 3rd Due to City Hall General Election Polling Location

CM Rudometkin noted that the November 3, 2026, City Council meeting conflicts with Election Day and asked if the Council would like to cancel the meeting or move it to another date, and noted that the items anticipated for the meeting could be postponed if necessary. He noted that the November 17 meeting would include discussion regarding Amendment Three following the election. Council discussed several alternative dates and reached consensus on Thursday, November 5, 2026, as the rescheduled date.

Comm Bobrowski moved to reschedule the November 3, 2026 City Council meeting to Thursday, November 5, 2026, due to the election. The motion was seconded by Comm Lance and passed unanimously 6:0.

c. Charter/Code Review - Schedule Discussion

CM Rudometkin opened discussion regarding a Charter and Code review schedule, noting that the original intent was to begin reviewing the Charter during the new fiscal year. Based on recent Code issues brought before Council, he suggested expanding the review to include provisions addressing canopies, RVs, parking on grass, and potentially building-related requirements. He asked Council for direction regarding how it would like to conduct the review, including whether to hold separate daytime or evening workshops, incorporate workshop discussions into regular Council meetings, or schedule a longer half-day session. He noted that the review would be an involved process and would require multiple discussions. CM Rudometkin encouraged Council members to gather suggestions from their constituents and bring those ideas forward during the initial discussions. He suggested that Council first identify the areas and changes it wishes to consider and could subsequently hold a workshop inviting public participation and input. He noted that a Council retreat-style workshop has been effective for similar reviews in the past. He suggested setting aside about four hours or more, allowing Council to meet with all necessary materials and focus exclusively on the Charter and Code review. CM Rudometkin said that this format would allow Council to exchange ideas and work through potential changes in greater detail without being limited to a short discussion during a regular Council meeting.

Mayor Carson expressed support for the Charter and Code review, noting that some provisions may be outdated and that there are opportunities for change and improvement. He stated that the review should be a priority and could have a significant positive impact on the City. Mayor Carson recommended that, before the first workshop, each Council member review the Charter and Code, identify potential changes, and seek input from constituents within their districts. This would allow Council to begin the process with specific ideas and have a more productive initial discussion. He also supported public involvement and was open to scheduled daytime and weekend meetings with lunch provided for staff and Council.

Discussion ensued. Council discussed how to structure the Charter and Code review process and supported seeking resident input early in the process. Comm Gold suggested using the City's e-alert system to solicit ideas and concerns from residents. CM Rudometkin agreed that resident comments could be collected and provided to Council for consideration during the initial review, with the option of holding a broader public workshop later. Council discussed holding a retreat-style workshop on a Saturday, noting that this could provide sufficient time for focused discussion while avoiding conflicts with Sunday activities and weekday work schedules. It was clarified that the meeting would be properly advertised and conducted in compliance with Sunshine Law requirements. Council also discussed whether to review the Charter, Code Compliance provisions, and building-related matters together or separately. Council generally agreed to address one area at a time, beginning with Code Compliance, including the canopy regulations that had recently come before Council. CM Rudometkin said that staff would provide Council with the applicable Code provisions in advance so members could review them and make notes. Staff would also identify potential Saturday dates and work on an e-alert seeking resident input regarding the Code, and additional meetings could be scheduled as necessary to continue the review.

d. Pine Castle Pioneer Days, Request for Payment/Donation

CM Rudometkin introduced the Pine Castle Pioneer Days request for financial assistance related to fencing at the Lancaster House. Comm Lance advised that, because he serves on the Pioneer Days Board, he would abstain from voting and withdraw from the discussion to avoid the appearance of a conflict.

CM Rudometkin reviewed the Lancaster House lease requirements, including the requirement that restoration and rehabilitation improvements commence within six months of the commencement date. He stated that, based on his interpretation of the lease, no physical rehabilitation work had commenced within that period and Pioneer Days did not meet the lease requirements. He acknowledged that Pioneer Days had

undertaken administrative and planning activities but stated that Council would need to determine whether those activities constituted commencement of the required work. He clarified that Pioneer Days does not qualify for the BING Grant program under the existing eligibility criteria, although Council could consider providing assistance directly to the nonprofit organization.

Billy Morgan, representing Pioneer Days, provided an update on the Lancaster House project. He reported that the organization had established a utility address, obtained liability insurance naming the City as an additional insured, hired grounds maintenance, consulted contractors and historic preservation specialists, developed exterior and interior renovation plans, and was working toward an application for the National Register of Historic Places. Pioneer Days had also obtained pricing for exterior repairs, painting, windows, trim, porch work, and other improvements. He explained that the renovation schedule changed when Pioneer Days was advised that the fencing needed to be completed sooner because the Cornerstone Charter Academy gymnasium was being completed sooner. After obtaining multiple quotes, Pioneer Days determined that the required fencing was effectively sole-sourced through Abbott Fence to match the school's fencing and maintain the warranty. The initial fencing cost \$14,479.36, and Pioneer Days requested approximately 50% assistance from the City. He explained that some donations Pioneer Days already received were restricted to specific renovation work and could not be redirected to the fence.

Comm Partin questioned the lease status and the project deadlines. He noted that Pioneer Days had known about the fencing requirement when the lease was approved and asked why the matter reached October before the organization requested City assistance to pay for the fence, particularly when Pioneer Days had known by May that the fencing needed to be addressed. He referenced previous representations that funding had been raised or committed to the Lancaster House project. Comm Partin shared concern that the lease established requirements and deadlines for the rehabilitation project and stated that the City had not received the plans and permitting contemplated by the agreement within the six-month period. He noted that the City had not been advised that the project was behind schedule and said staff could have worked with Pioneer Days if those issues had been raised earlier.

Mr. Morgan disagreed with the characterization that Pioneer Days had failed to comply with the lease. He stated that the organization had remained in communication with the City and had completed several activities, including obtaining insurance, maintaining the property, developing renovation plans, consulting contractors, and preparing for exterior rehabilitation. He explained that Pioneer Days had been prepared to enter into a construction contract in May but redirected its efforts after being advised that the fencing needed to become the priority because of the accelerated completion of the Cornerstone gym. He also explained that some funds raised for the project were restricted by donors for specific improvements and could not simply be redirected to the fencing.

CM Rudometkin said that the more recent communications with Pioneer Days had primarily concerned the fencing, and that the City had not received the required rehabilitation plans or seen physical work commence on the exterior of the Lancaster House. He noted that there had been earlier meetings and communications regarding the project, but reiterated that his interpretation of the lease was that the required rehabilitation work had not commenced within the specified timeframe.

Council discussed whether the lease requirement that improvements "commence" within six months could include the planning and preparatory activities described by Pioneer Days. Comm Lance stated that he considered the language unclear and believed the activities described by Mr. Morgan could potentially constitute commencement. CM Rudometkin stated that his interpretation was based on the lease language, while acknowledging that Council could determine whether the work completed to date satisfied that requirement. Council discussed alternatives to a direct donation for the fencing, including a short-term loan to Pioneer Days. A Council member suggested that a loan would allow the project to move forward while ultimately returning the funds to the City. CM Rudometkin said staff would need to determine the appropriate accounting mechanism, and Attorney Schafer advised that a straightforward, interest-free repayment agreement would be simpler to

structure. Council discussed the appropriate repayment period. CM Rudometkin recommended a minimum of 120 days, while Council also discussed extending the period to 180 days. Mr. Morgan stated that Pioneer Days had not come prepared to discuss loan terms but was interested in moving forward quickly because the fencing required a 50% deposit and approximately six weeks for fabrication and delivery.

Attorney Shafer stated that if Council established the specific loan terms through its motion, he could prepare a simple agreement memorializing those terms, and Council could authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement without requiring the matter to return at a subsequent meeting. Council expressed interest in this approach to avoid additional delays in ordering the fence.

Comm Lance asked for clarification on the amount to be financed. Mr. Morgan indicated that the requested assistance would be approximately 50% of the initial fencing cost. Comm Lance also noted that Council may need to address the applicable lease deadlines or provide an extension because ordering and installing the fencing will take time. CM Rudometkin stated that the original lease included the fencing requirement and required Pioneer Days, at its expense, to install the specified fencing. He expressed particular concern regarding the deadline requiring the fencing to be completed by the opening of the new Cornerstone gym or completion of the Lancaster House exterior, but no later than December 2026. He noted that Council may ultimately need to consider extending the applicable lease deadline, depending on the timing of the fencing and rehabilitation work.

Comm Gold asked whether the assistance should instead be provided as a donation, with Comm Bobrowski also expressing a preference to provide the funds without requiring repayment. CM Rudometkin noted that previous financial support associated with Pioneer Days had generally been provided as event sponsorships rather than donations.

After further discussion, Comm Partin moved to provide a loan to Pine Castle Pioneer Days in the amount of \$7,241, to be repaid within 180 days of receipt, to pay for the steel fencing on the two sides of the Lancaster House property adjacent to Cornerstone Charter Academy. The motion also authorized the City Attorney to draft and the City Manager to execute an agreement memorializing the loan terms. Comm Bobrowski seconded the motion, and it passed 4:1, with Comm Oller nay and Comm Lance abstaining.

After the vote, Mr. Morgan said the agreement would still need to be presented to the Pioneer Days Board. CM Rudometkin clarified that the loan would be made directly to Pioneer Days rather than the fencing contractor. Mr. Morgan stated that Pioneer Days had sufficient funds for the required 50% deposit and would contact the contractor to begin the fencing process. CM Rudometkin also noted that any necessary extension or modification of the Lancaster House lease deadlines would be addressed separately.

8. Attorney's Report

Attorney Schafer discussed the draft micromobility ordinance, explaining that it was developed using provisions from ordinances prepared for Winter Park and Winter Garden. He said the draft was intended as a starting point and could be modified based on Council's direction and Belle Isle's specific needs. He said Orange County's micromobility regulations already apply within the City, and Council could choose not to adopt a separate City ordinance. He explained that adopting a City ordinance would allow the City to enforce it, rather than relying on County enforcement. He encouraged Council members to provide comments and questions regarding the draft so that it could be tailored to the community.

9. City Manager's Report

a. City Manager's Report and Work Plan

CM Rudometkin reported that the City recently received an additional \$100,000 in Hurricane Irma reimbursement funding and had also received full reimbursement of approximately \$80,000 expended for the City's Vulnerability Assessment Grant. He provided an update regarding the former elementary school property for which the City had submitted a Letter of Intent. He read correspondence from Orange County Public Schools advising that the District intends to present to the School Board a proposed sale of the property to Cornerstone

Charter Academy, citing Florida law that makes surplus or unused school district property available for charter school use. The City Manager stated that, based on this response, the City would no longer be pursuing the property. CM Rudometkin also reported that Orange County had scheduled a tentative Zoom meeting for October 23 regarding the canals, with City staff, including the City Manager, Public Works, and the City Attorney, participating, with the Mayor also invited to listen. The City Manager said he would report the meeting results back to Council.

b. Chief's Report

Chief Grimm reminded Council that October begins a busy period for City special events, including homecoming activities, the DEA Drug Take Back in conjunction with the recycling event, Oktoberfest, and Boogie on the Bridge, followed by Thanksgiving and December events. Specific dates would be provided separately.

Comm Partin reported receiving concerns regarding individuals sleeping or staying near Conway Road and entering the wooded area behind Windsor Place, as well as activity near Judge Road and Conway Road. Chief Grimm said that the City could address activity occurring within its jurisdiction and coordinate with Orange County or the City of Orlando for areas outside Belle Isle.

Comm Shuck also asked how the City's proposed micromobility ordinance would interact with Orange County regulations, particularly along portions of Matchett Road within County jurisdiction. Chief Grimm explained that the City's ordinance would apply within Belle Isle once adopted, while Orange County regulations and enforcement would continue to apply within the County's jurisdiction. He anticipated that the City's regulations would not vary significantly from the County's requirements.

c. Public Works Report

Public Works Director Phil Price reported that Orange County Utilities was scheduled to begin repair work at the intersection of Trentwood Boulevard and Flower Tree Road, with work beginning the following day and expected to continue through October 14. A road closure on Trentwood was anticipated, and the City Clerk had distributed an e-alert regarding the work. Comm Lance asked if the Clerk could provide the notice directly to the Daetwyler Shores Association. Mr. Price noted that the new budget year had begun and staff would begin moving forward with additional projects. He also reported meeting with the Special Events Committee to prepare for the upcoming Boogie on the Bridge event and stated that City staff would assist with preparations as needed.

10. Mayor's Report

Mayor Carson reflected on the Week of the Family proclamation, emphasizing the importance of residents taking time to spend with their families despite busy schedules. He noted that Belle Isle provides many opportunities for families to enjoy the community together and encouraged residents to make time for family, particularly with the upcoming holiday season. He expressed appreciation for the Special Events Committee and the upcoming community events, including Boogie on the Bridge, which he stated has become an enjoyable event for residents.

11. Commissioners' Report

The Mayor and Commissioner thanked the City Council, Police Department, and City staff for their continued commitment and contributions to the City.

- Comm Gold reported receiving a resident concern regarding dangerous and illegal passing on Hoffner Avenue. He shared concerns that slower-moving traffic may contribute to driver frustration and unsafe passing behavior. He suggested asking FDOT and/or Orange County, as appropriate, to consider whether the speed limit along the straight portions of Hoffner Avenue could be returned to 35 mph, while maintaining the lower speed limit in areas where it is warranted. Comm Gold stated that the straight section previously had a 35 mph speed limit and requested that staff consider pursuing the matter with the appropriate agency.

- Comm Bobrowski expressed concerns regarding the vision and future direction of the City and stated that the Sunshine Law limits the ability to discuss those concerns individually with other Council members. She requested that an executive session be scheduled as soon as possible to allow Council to openly discuss its concerns and how to move forward in a positive and proactive direction and proposed that the session include the Commissioners, City Attorney, and City Clerk for minutes, and asked the other Commissioners to support the request.
- Comm Lance reflected on Belle Isle's character as a residential and family-oriented community, noting that many families have multiple generations who continue to live in or return to the City. He shared his appreciation for the discussion and actions taken by Council during the meeting, including Commissioner Partin's suggestion of a loan as an alternative approach for the Pioneer Days request. He said he missed the previous meeting while traveling but was able to watch the entire meeting through Facebook Live from overseas. He thanked the City Clerk and staff involved with the broadcast and reported that the audio and video worked well and allowed him to follow the meeting clearly.
- Comm Oller thanked the public for their comments regarding Code Compliance and expressed support for maintaining strong Code enforcement throughout the City. He said the Code Compliance Officer is doing a good job, putting forth a strong effort, and should continue to receive Council's support. He thanked residents who regularly attend Council meetings and expressed appreciation to fellow Council members for the time and commitment they devote to City business.
- Comm Partin expressed appreciation that the Pioneer Days discussion resulted in an approach that could help move the Lancaster House project forward, stating a desire to preserve the City's history for those who value it. He thanked fellow Council members for the time spent researching and preparing for City matters, noting that residents may not always realize how much preparation is involved. Appreciation was also expressed to the Mayor for allowing Council members the opportunity to fully discuss and work through issues during meetings.

14. Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Carson moved to adjourn, and the motion passed unanimously at 8:30 pm.