



CITY COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DEPARTMENT: Commission

DATE: May 12, 2026

SUBJECT: Discussion and possible action on overhauling the City’s Special Event ordinance to more accurately reflect differences between business, commercial, and residential events, the resources required, and penalties for violations. –
Commercial Shrouder

RECOMMENDATION:

Commissioner Shrouder is requesting a discussion and possible action regarding a comprehensive review and possible overhaul of Section 9-28 of the City Code, entitled “Special Events; Regulations; Enforcement,” to ensure the ordinance more accurately distinguishes among business, commercial, nonprofit, institutional, residential, and community-based events, accounts for the City resources required to review, monitor, and support such events, and establishes appropriate penalties for violations.

BACKGROUND OF ITEM:

Section 9-28 of the City Code currently regulates special events and temporary outdoor sales to protect public health, safety, and welfare. The section defines a “special event” broadly as any meeting, activity, parade, or gathering of persons, animals, or vehicles, or a combination thereof, occurring on public or private property, including sidewalks, parks, rights-of-way, lakes, buildings, or other locations, when the activity substantially inhibits normal pedestrian or vehicular travel, occupies public space, preempts the normal use of property, or deviates from the established permitted use of a space or building.

The ordinance requires a special event permit before participating in, advertising, promoting, organizing, managing, or inducing participation in a special event. Applications are generally required to be filed at least sixty days before the event, unless the City Manager approves a shorter period. The Growth Management, Building, Police, and Fire Departments review special event applications.

The current ordinance also includes requirements for site plans, property owner authorization, food service, food trucks, alcohol, insurance, security bonds, indemnification, traffic control, sanitation, building permits, public right-of-way closures, police services, fire rescue services, and payment of City service costs.

While the existing ordinance provides a framework for regulating special events, the current structure may not adequately distinguish among event types, sizes, locations, purposes, and impacts. For example, a small residential or community event may require a different level of review and City involvement than a commercial promotional event, a large outdoor sale, a festival, a race, a parade, or an event involving road closures, amplified sound, alcohol, food trucks, large attendance, or significant police and fire resources.

ANALYSIS:

The current special event ordinance applies broadly and may benefit from a more detailed structure that recognizes the practical differences between:

- Residential or neighborhood-based events;
- Commercial or business promotional events;
- Nonprofit, school, religious, or institutional events;
- Large-scale public events
- Events requiring public safety staffing, road closures, fire inspections, traffic control, or sanitation planning; and
- Events occurring on City property, private property, commercial centers, common areas, or public rights-of-way.

Additionally, the current penalty provision establishes a \$50 fine if paid before issuance of a notice to appear, with additional penalties available under Section 1-8 of the Code, concurrent enforcement under Chapter 162, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 13, Article VI of the City Code.

Given the administrative burden and public safety considerations associated with special events, the Commission may wish to evaluate whether the current penalty structure adequately deters violations, including holding events without a permit, exceeding approved event conditions, failing to provide required sanitation or security, failing to obtain required inspections, or creating unauthorized traffic, parking, noise, or public safety impacts.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Section 9-28, City code of Ordinances
2. City of St. Pete Beach Guide to Special Events