

DRAFT



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH TOWN COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

TOWN HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
3614 S. OCEAN BLVD., HIGHLAND BEACH, FL

Date: August 21, 2025
Time: 1:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Jason Chudnofsky
Commissioner Judith Goldberg
Commissioner Donald Peters
Vice Mayor David Stern
Mayor Natasha Moore
Town Manager Marshall Labadie
Town Attorney Leonard Rubin
Town Clerk Lanelda Gaskins

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Town Commission led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

4. INVOCATION

None.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Moore announced a change to the agenda, Item 6.A., EPOC Blood Analysis System Presentation was moved to the next Town Commission meeting.

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as amended, which passed unanimously 5 to 0.

6. PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

A. EPOC Blood Analysis System Presentation

B. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2024 Presentation

Assistant Finance Director Suzie Matthews presented the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2024, beginning with an overview of the audit's purpose in confirming financial accuracy, compliance, and internal controls. She reported strong results across all major funds, noting an 11.7% increase in the Town's net position—from \$26.3 million to \$29.4 million — driven by growth in the General Fund, Building Department Fund, and Water and Sewer Funds. Key contributors included rising property tax revenues, the interlocal agreement with Gulfstream, investment gains, and rate adjustments. She also highlighted a \$6.1 million increase in total value from the completion of the new fire station, the retirement of a water loan, and the issuance of \$4.5 million in new General Fund debt for fire department construction. The audit concluded with a clean opinion and no significant findings. Commissioners unanimously commended the finance team, Town Manager, and staff for their strong fiscal stewardship.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Public Comments will be limited to five (5) minutes per speaker.)

There were no public comments.

- 8. ORDINANCES** (Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Commission initial discussion.)

None.

- 9. CONSENT AGENDA** (These are items that the Commission typically does not need to discuss individually, and which are voted on as a group.) Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Commission initial discussion.

None.

- 10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** (Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Town Commission initial discussion.)

A. Continued discussion on temporary signage.

Town Planner Ingrid Allen continued the discussion on temporary signage regulations, providing follow-up information from the March 4, 2025 meeting. She presented comparisons with the City of Coral Gables, Town of Palm Beach, and Town of Manalapan, noting that Highland Beach's current allowance of 4-square-foot temporary signs is significantly larger than the 40-square-inch real estate sign limits used in other single-family residential areas. Ms. Allen also reviewed how other municipalities differentiate standards by zoning district and sign purpose, whereas Highland Beach applies uniform regulations.

Town Attorney Rubin confirmed that the Town's regulations comply with the 2015 Supreme Court ruling prohibiting content-based sign regulations but noted that some legal flexibility exists to regulate commercial signs differently from non-commercial signs.

The Town Commission discussed potential changes, expressing interest in reducing the size of commercial signs, particularly real estate signs. Mayor Moore supported reducing sign sizes to 40 square inches and requiring stakes rather than posts, with consideration of black-and-white color limitations. Vice Mayor Stern noted concerns about sign stacking and oversized poles. The Commission reached consensus to refer the matter to the Planning Board for review and recommendations.

MOTION: Goldberg/Stern – A motion was made seconded to send the issue of the temporary signs to the Planning Board for further review and comments, including the Commission’s recommendations for 40 square inch commercial signs and two-color limitation. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

11. NEW BUSINESS (Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Town Commission initial discussion.)

A. Consideration to approve the Employee Health Care Program fiscal year 2025/2026 and authorize the Town Manager to execute the program.

Mayor Moore read the title of this item.

Town Manager Labadie presented the employee health care program for fiscal year 2025/2026. The program includes two plan options: a solid base plan with low deductibles and copays, and an advanced program that employees can buy up to at their own expense.

The Town Commission conveyed support for the employee health care program, noting the importance of maintaining quality health benefits to retain staff.

MOTION: Goldberg/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to authorize the Town Manager to execute the Employee Health Care Program for fiscal year 2025-2026. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

B. Resolution No. 2025-020

A Resolution of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida, adopting a merit increase policy for non-union employees excluding Fire Rescue shift personnel and amending the Town of Highland Beach salary table; and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Moore read the title of Resolution No. 2025-020 followed by Town Manager Labadie explaining that the resolution establishes merit increases for non-union employees and adjusts the Town's salary table. He recommended a 6% across-the-board merit increase for all employees with successful evaluations. The salary table would be adjusted according to the 12-month rolling Consumer Price Index (CPI) for South Florida through the end of August.

Town Commission emphasized the importance of compensating employees competitively to retain quality staff.

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2025-020. Upon Roll Call: Commissioner Goldberg (Yes); Commissioner Peters (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed on a 5 to 0 vote.

C. Consideration to approve the fourth (4th) amendment to the Town Manager's Employment Agreement

Mayor Moore presented the fourth amendment to the Town Manager's employment agreement. The proposed changes included extending the contract through September 30, 2030, with automatic 5-year renewals unless either party provides 90 days' written notice of termination; increasing the Town's retirement contribution to the Town Manager's 401 from 20% to 30% of his salary; and granting a 10% merit increase in base salary effective October 1, 2025.

The Town Commission voiced staunch support for Town Manager Labadie, who has served the Town since October 1, 2018. They praised his leadership, vision, accomplishments, and reputation throughout the state. Mayor Moore highlighted the Town Manager's achievements during his tenure, including overhauling the finance department, improving financial reporting systems, and establishing fire rescue services.

Town Manager Labadie graciously thanked the Town Commissioners for their support and leadership.

MOTION: Moore/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to approve the Fourth Amendment to the Town Manager's Employment Agreement with 10% increase of the employee's annual base salary. Upon Roll Call: Mayor Moore (Yes); Commissioner Peters (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Commissioner Goldberg (Yes); and Vice Mayor Stern (Yes). The motion passed on a 5 to 0 vote.

12. TOWN COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Jason Chudnofsky shared impressions from the Florida League of Cities annual conference in Orlando, noting he took the ethics training. He expressed continued optimism about Highland Beach's overall growth and direction.

Commissioner Judith M. Goldberg conveyed that the Florida League of Cities conference was beneficial and appreciated the social atmosphere with the commissioners. She thanked the Commission for her appointment on the Florida League of Cities Policy Committee and noted she would be participating in the Taxation and Finance Committees as well as advocacy efforts.

Commissioner Donald Peters thanked town employees and department heads, expressing gratitude for the rewards approved at the meeting and stating he was glad to live in Highland Beach

Vice Mayor David Stern raised concerns about pedestrian safety in light of the growing use of electric bikes and scooters on sidewalks and within the town's bike lanes. With the bike lane widening underway, he emphasized the need to establish rules and regulations that prioritize safety. He requested a study to identify best practices, noting that different standards may be appropriate for bike lanes—where pedal bikes, e-bikes, and scooters operate—compared to sidewalks. His suggestions included implementing a five-mile-per-hour speed limit for bicycles on sidewalks, requiring audible warnings when approaching pedestrians, and installing signage outlining penalties for violations. He also proposed coordinating with Delray Beach and Boca Raton to ensure consistent regulations from Spanish River Boulevard to Linton Boulevard. The Commissioners expressed support for bringing this topic back for further discussion at a future meeting.

Mayor Natasha Moore had no comments.

13. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Town Attorney Rubin no report.

14. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Labadie thanked the Commission for its support regarding his contract extension before providing several updates. He noted that property taxes will be a major topic in the upcoming legislative session and suggested preparing messaging on the issue. He also confirmed that the e-bike and scooter safety discussion will be added to the strategic plan and initiated with the Police Chief. The Town Manager reported that a change in permit status by the Army Corps of Engineers will delay the marine docking facilities project and related FIND grant funding by about 12 months, though the project appropriation will be extended. He added that the sanitary sewer lining project will begin around September 15, starting on side streets, with communications forthcoming to residents. He also addressed a recent power outage on the 3400 block that left several individuals stuck in elevators lacking generator connections; Fire Chief Matt recommended that older buildings consider upgrading to generator-powered elevators. Finally, he reported a successful police recruitment effort, noting that a highly qualified candidate chose Highland Beach over the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office partly due to the Commission's staunch support for public safety.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Moore read the announcements as follows:

Board Vacancies

Code Enforcement Board

One (1) vacancy for a three-year term

Meetings and Events

September 01, 2025 Closed in Observance of Labor Day

September 02, 2025 1:30 P.M. Town Commission Meeting

September 04, 2025 5:01 P.M. Town Commission First Public Hearing Budget Meeting

September 09, 2025 11:00 A.M. Special Magistrate Hearing

September 11, 2025 9:30 A.M. Planning Board Regular Meeting

August 14, 2025 9:30 A.M. Planning Board Regular Meeting

August 12 through 15, 2025 Florida League of Cities Annual Conference

August 21, 2025 1:30 P.M. Town Commission Meeting (tentative)

Board Action Report

None.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM

APPROVED: December 02, 2025, Town Commission Meeting.

Signed Minutes on file in the
Town Clerk's Office

ATTEST:

Natasha Moore, Mayor

Transcribed by
Lanelda Gaskins

12/02/2025

Lanelda Gaskins, MMC
Town Clerk

Date

Disclaimer: Effective May 19, 2020, per Resolution No. 20-008, all meeting minutes are transcribed as a brief summary reflecting the events of this meeting. Verbatim audio/video

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