

# DRAFT



## TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH TOWN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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

Date: March 03, 2026  
Time: 1:30 PM

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### **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**

Reverend D. Brian Horgan, of Saint Lucy Catholic Church delivered the invocation.

### **5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Goldberg/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented, and it passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

### **6. PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS**

#### **A. Government Finance Professionals' Week Proclamation**

Mayor Moore presented the proclamation recognizing March 16th through March 20th as Government Finance Professionals Week. Assistant Finance Director Suzie Matthews accepted the proclamation on behalf of the department. Additionally, Town Manager Labadie announced that the Town had received the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, crediting Suzie Matthews, and the finance department for maintaining this standard of excellence.

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

Fire Chief Glenn Joseph introduced Captain Michael Benoit as the newest member of the leadership team. He highlighted Captain Benoit's qualifications, including his completion of a master's degree in business, acceptance into the executive fire officer program at the National Fire Academy, and acceptance into graduate school for homeland security studies. Captain Benoit expressed his honor at the appointment and commitment to serving the department and Town.

**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.

**A. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**February 03, 2026 Town Commission Meeting Minutes**

**B. Approve and authorize the purchase of the Holmatro Hydraulic Rescue Tool System from NAFECO in an amount not to exceed \$60,000.00 in accordance with Lake County Contract #22-7301.**

**MOTION:** Goldberg/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda, and it passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

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

**A. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) RRR Project Update**

Town Manager Labadie explained that the Florida Department of Transportation has extended the project by an additional 3–4 weeks, which prevents the Town from commencing the sanitary sewer lining project until the FDOT contractor finishes its work. As a result, the Town must wait approximately one more month before the sanitary sewer lining project can begin. Town Manager Labadie indicated that he would contact state agencies in an effort to expedite the process, though he acknowledged that there is limited recourse due to the contractor's delays.

**B. Building Department Recertification Program Update**

Katerina Jaddaoui, Administrative Assistant/Permit Technician, provided an update on the Building Recertification Program. Overall, the program continues to maintain

a steady and positive trajectory.

**C. Discussion on increasing the maximum square footage requirements, etc. for permanent signs.**

Mayor Moore read the title of this item.

Town Planner Ingrid Allen provided extensive background on the sign ordinance discussion, which originated from a November 2025 public comment by Villa Magna condominium requesting larger replacement signs. The Planning Board reviewed various considerations including appropriate sign standards, size relationships to building scale, color and illumination requirements, safety considerations, and appeals processes.

The Planning Board recommended increasing sign sizes using Boca Raton's code as reference, allowing variance procedures for dimensional requirements, and implementing universal rules across all condominiums with criteria that signs fit the overall property aesthetic.

Mayor Moore proposed following the Planning Board's direction by adopting 32 square feet as the maximum size for all three sign categories (currently 10, 10, and 3 square feet), noting this would accommodate Villa Magna's 24 square foot request while providing consistency. She also recommended adding an appeals process.

Commissioner Stern expressed support for size increases but cautioned against simply copying Boca Raton's ordinance without careful review of all provisions. Vice Mayor Stern wished the Planning Board had provided more specific recommendations rather than general guidance to follow Boca Raton's approach.

Commissioner Goldberg raised questions about measurement standards, particularly for monument-style signs, and suggested establishing a maximum limit for appeals to prevent excessive variance requests. Town Attorney Rubin clarified the difference between variance procedures (requiring hardship standards) and appeals processes, with the Commission preferring an appeals process going first to the Planning Board, then to the Commission.

The discussion addressed concerns about existing nonconforming signs, which would be allowed to remain but must comply with new standards if destroyed or completely replaced.

**MOTION:** Moore/Chudnofsky – A motion was made and seconded for staff to draft an ordinance to increase the maximum area size to be 32 square feet for each of the three scenarios we have and to add a process for appeal where it goes to the Planning Board first and then to the Town Commission for the ultimate decision. Upon roll call: Mayor Moore (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Commissioner Goldberg (Yes); Commissioner Peters (Yes); and Vice Mayor Stern (Yes). The motion passed unanimously on a 5 to 0 vote.

**D. Consideration of Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Strategic Priorities Plan.**

Mayor Moore read the title of this item followed by Town Manager presentation on the final strategic priorities plan, describing it as a dynamic document that changes over time. He announced plans to create a visual dashboard for tracking progress on strategic priorities, updated quarterly and posted on the website. The dashboard will include both strategic priorities and larger capital improvement projects over \$100,000. He also emphasized keeping the strategic planning process simple to avoid analysis paralysis, focusing on outcomes rather than excessive documentation. The plan will be tied to quarterly financial reports, creating a comprehensive progress tracking system that connects to the five-year forecast used for budget planning.

The Commission expressed support for the dashboard concept and integrated reporting approach.

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

**A. Approve and authorize the Mayor to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the Town and South Florida Engineering Services, Inc., to provide ongoing engineering consulting services.**

Mayor Moore read the title followed by Town Manager Labadie commenting that this agreement addresses succession planning challenges in public works, as the Town cannot justify hiring a full-time professional engineer. South Florida Engineering, led by someone with 15-16 years of experience on Town projects, would provide technical review, recommendations, and elevated building engineering services, assist with plan reviews, construction inspections, and professional engineering guidance while ensuring compliance with state CCNA statutes.

Town Commission discussion ensued about using the firm for future projects and hourly rates structure. The rates were deemed reasonable compared to other professional services.

**MOTION:** Goldberg/Stern – A motion was made and seconded to approve the Professional Services Agreement as presented. Upon Roll Call: Commissioner Goldberg (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Commissioner Peters (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed unanimously on a 5 to 0 vote.

**B. Resolution No. 2026-002**

**A Resolution of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida approving an application for financial assistance under the Florida Inland Navigation District Waterways Assistance Program and providing the required certifications and assurances; and providing an effective date.**

Mayor Moore read the title of this item followed by Town Manager Labadie explaining this resolution renews the Town's application for financial assistance under the Florida Inland District Waterways Assistance (FIND) Program for the marine dock project. The renewal became necessary because the Town encountered delays during the permitting process that prevented access to last year's committed grant funds.

He expressed significant frustration with the South Florida Water Management District's permitting process, describing their position as "irrational" for a 32.6 square foot public safety facility. Despite the project having support from multiple agencies and state legislators, the permitting agency was demanding extensive environmental mitigation for minimal impacts to low-density seagrass areas.

The Town has reached out to lobbyists, state representatives, and FIND commissioners for assistance. Town Manager Labadie indicated unwillingness to spend unlimited taxpayer funds on additional studies without guarantee of permit approval, particularly when experts suggest the required seagrass restoration has never been successful in Florida.

A question was asked about legal recourse, with Labadie explaining that formal denial would be required before pursuing administrative appeals or other legal options. The situation has reached a point where outside experts suggest the agency may have bias against Highland Beach.

**MOTION:** Goldberg/Peter – A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution 2026-002. Upon Roll Call: Commissioner Goldberg (Yes); Commissioner Peters (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed unanimously on a 5 to 0 vote.

**C. Resolution No. 2026-003**

**A Resolution of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida, amending Resolution No. 2025-024 to revise Exhibit "C" of the fiscal year 2025-2026 Schedule of Fees establishing fees and charges for the Town services; providing for conflicts; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date.**

Mayor Moore read the title of this item followed by Town Manager Labadie noting this resolution amends the fee schedule to establish costs for the newly contracted engineering consulting services. The changes appear in items 10 and 11 of Exhibit C, covering installation costs and inspection fees. Larger commercial projects require developer-funded escrow accounts for Town oversight, while smaller residential projects will be managed directly by the Town to ensure proper installation by qualified contractors.

**MOTION:** Goldberg/Peter – A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution 2026-003. Upon Roll Call: Commissioner Goldberg (Yes);

Commissioner Peters (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed unanimously on a 5 to 0 vote.

## **12. TOWN COMMISSION COMMENTS**

Commissioner Chudnofsky announced a Police and Fire Foundation initiative to provide AED and CPR training for all high-rise condominiums during March and April, noting that nine associations signed up within hours of the announcement. He also reported that Delray Beach adopted an ordinance requiring AEDs on every other floor of high-rise condominiums, which may serve as a model for other municipalities.

Commissioner Goldberg conveyed support for the AED and CPR training program.

Commissioner Peters commented that he looked forward to participating in the CPR training program and reminded everyone about the turtle season lighting restrictions and ongoing beach monitoring efforts.

Vice Mayor Stern discussed ongoing work to establish guidelines for battery-operated vehicles on the walking path, suggesting they should be restricted to the bike path instead. He proposed developing Town guidelines for FDOT approval and coordinating with Delray Beach and Boca Raton for uniform regulations along the entire corridor.

Mayor Moore thanked the Police and Fire Foundation for the CPR training initiative, praising its potential life-saving impact.

## **13. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Town Attorney had nothing to report.

## **14. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Town Manager Labadie announced the Employee Excellence in Service Awards on March 24<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:30 P.M. at the fire station, recognizing police officer, firefighter, paramedic, and employee of the year.

He expressed concern about the state statute restrictions preventing monetary awards for the employee of year, while the Foundation can provide such recognition for public safety personnel. Town Attorney Rubin clarified that private donations could address this disparity.

Lastly, he shared a positive commendation praising Officer Semple's professionalism during a traffic stop.

## **15. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Moore read the announcements.

