

DRAFT



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH TOWN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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

Date: September 02, 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 Donald Peters
Vice Mayor David Stern
Mayor Natasha Moore
Town Manager Marshall Labadie
Town Attorney Leonard Rubin
Town Clerk Lanelda Gaskins

ABSENT
Commissioner Judith Goldberg

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

4. INVOCATION

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Peters/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

6. PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

A. EPOC Blood Analysis System Presentation

Assistant Fire Chief Tom McCarthy presented information about the EPOC Blood Analysis System. He explained that the primary benefit of the system is that it allows for emergency point of care testing. This information is particularly valuable for Highland Beach's community.

Assistant Chief McCarthy shared photos of training sessions with Siemens, the manufacturer of the device, and noted that department staff had conducted in-house qualifications on blood draws with successful results. The benefits of the system include real-time diagnostic information, improved patient outcomes, and alignment with the department's commitment to providing the highest level of service.

The data collected by the EPOC system is stored in a database within the device and transferred to a dedicated laptop computer during shift changes. The information can be imported into the Electronic Patient Care Report system and transmitted to receiving hospitals when patients are transported.

Mayor Moore opened public comments.

Mr. Rick Greenwald from Tranquility Drive asked several questions about the implementation of the system.

Fire Chief Glenn Joseph addressed the concerns. He explained that the medical director was involved and excited about the project; the assistant medical director has pathology training and will serve as medical director for this project; the Fire Department has received CLIA certification; training will be conducted internally with no external costs; each test card costs approximately \$12; and the cost will be billed to Medicare and insurance companies, not borne by the town. The test takes only 30 seconds to run once the 3-minute machine warm-up is complete, so it does not delay patient care; quality control checks are performed monthly and sent to an outside facility for validation. He also explained that Highland Beach Fire Rescue will be the first department in Palm Beach County and the third in the country to implement this technology. The Highland Beach Foundation funded the equipment.

The Town Commission expressed pride in the department's innovation and commitment to providing excellent care for the community.

Commissioner Chudnofsky explained that the Highland Beach Foundation met and asked questions about the system. They support the system.

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

There were no additional 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.

A. August 05, 2025 Town Commission Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Peters/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve the August 05, 2025 Town Commission Meeting Minutes (Consent Agenda as presented). The motion passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

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

None.

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

A. Consideration to cancel the September 16, 2025 Town Commission meeting.

Mayor Moore read the title of Item 10.A., followed by Town Manager Labadie explaining that the September 16th meeting could be canceled due to light agenda items and the fact that budget meetings will be lengthier than usual.

MOTION: Peters/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to cancel the September 16, 2025 Town Commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

B. Request for land filling approval for a portion of the property located at 2564 South Ocean Boulevard.

Town Planner Ingrid Allen presented the request for landfill approval for the property at 2564 South Ocean Boulevard. She explained that on August 14, 2025, the Planning Board had approved a special exception request for this property, which included: installation of a 105 linear foot seawall and seawall cap, a 275 square foot dock, and a 33-pound capacity boat lift.

The special exception approval was subject to Town Commission approval of the landfill, in compliance with Chapter 14 of the code.

The applicant proposed 1,000 square feet of fill from the existing retaining wall to the rear property line, plus an additional 360 square feet of fill abutting the property line, for a total request of 1,360 square feet. Town Planner Allen confirmed that the applicant had received Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Army Corps of Engineers approvals for the project.

In response to a question about elevation, Town Planner Allen explained that the fill would reach about 6.21 feet, with a step up to match the seawall at 7 feet. The town code requires that seawalls be at base flood elevation.

MOTION: Peters/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve the land fill request for 2564 South Ocean Boulevard. Upon roll call: Commissioner Peters (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

C. Resolution No. 2025-021

A Resolution of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida, authorizing the Town Manager to finalize and execute the recognition acknowledgement petition related to the Highland Beach Professional Firefighters, Local #5504 Union; providing for conflicts; and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Moore read the title of Resolution No. 2025-021.

Town Manager Labadie presented this item noting that he had received information from the Fire Chief that 27 of 28 members had signed to form a union. The town had consulted with its labor attorney to confirm that captains could be included in the group due to its small size. Mr. Labadie explained that this was the first step in approximately eight steps the union must complete to be formalized and ratified as a collective bargaining unit by the state.

He noted that while the town could choose not to act, doing so would only slow the process and potentially aggravate the membership. He stated that the creation of a union was an expected development following the establishment of the town's fire department.

In response to a question about benefits, Town Manager Labadie explained that while there might not be many immediate benefits, the union provides representation for the members' interests if future relations with management become difficult. He mentioned that some language regarding grievances and protocols would be addressed in the collective bargaining process.

MOTION: Peter/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2025-021. Based upon roll call: Commissioner Peters (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed unanimously on a 4 to 0 vote.

12. TOWN COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Jason Chudnofsky commented that the theme of safety, health, and financial security is being well-communicated to the community and appreciated the Town Manager and Mayor for driving these priorities.

Commissioner Donald Peters thanked the firefighters and police officers of the town and expressed support for the new union.

Vice Mayor David Stern echoed these comments and expressed appreciation for the public safety departments.

Mayor Natasha Moore expressed pride in the recent police department accreditation, and the implementation of the EPOC system.

13. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

At the July 15 commission meeting, Town Attorney Rubin presented legislative updates. There were discussions concerning temporary sign regulations and Senate Bill 180 which prohibits local governments in Florida from adopting more restrictive or burdensome land development regulations or comprehensive plan amendments. At that time, the Town Commission directed Attorney Rubin to research the definition of temporary signs.

He reported today that further research/reflection showed that Senate Bill 180, the land development regulations include sign regulations. He explained that the town cannot make them any more restrictive. This prohibition is in place until October 1, 2027.

Attorney Rubin noted that any regulations adopted between August 2024 and the present that were more restrictive would be null and void. He mentioned that some local communities are challenging this law in court, with a law firm filing a lawsuit claiming it removes local zoning authority. Therefore, the sign regulation is moot at this point because the town cannot reduce the number nor the size of the temporary signs.

Town Manager Labadie will follow up with the individual groups and will put out general communication concerning the prohibition related to the sign regulations. He will add the sign regulations to the strategic priorities plan.

14. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Labadie discussed the following:

Property Taxes: He noted that a blue ribbon team appointed by the Speaker of the House will begin meeting in September to discuss property tax changes, which could include modifications to homestead exemptions or complete elimination of taxes on homestead properties. These changes could significantly impact the town's ability to provide police and fire services. He plans to share educational materials from the Florida League of Cities to help residents understand the value provided by local government.

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) RRR Project: He reported that communication with residents about the A1A project has improved, but completion

dates have been pushed to late October or November. He expressed concern about potential flooding issues in the right-of-way and on bike paths. The town met with nine FDOT representatives the previous week but remains concerned about how the project will be completed. The delays are also affecting the town's sanitary sewer project, and Labadie is working to protect the town's interests and ensure FDOT honors its commitments.

Fire Department Compliance: In response to Vice Mayor Stern's question about compliance with fire department violations, Labadie reported that while specific numbers were not available, about 8-10 buildings are fully compliant. He noted that false alarms are a significant issue, with some condominiums experiencing as many as 12 false alarms, which ties up resources. The town is changing its fee structure to address this problem.

Fire Chief Joseph added that most buildings are becoming safer, with some undertaking major infrastructure work. He mentioned that during a recent storm, the town had to call for mutual aid from Boca Raton to assist with elevator rescues in a building where the elevator was not connected to the backup generator. The department is encouraging condominium associations to put elevators on generators, though this requires significant infrastructure upgrades.

Town Manager Labadie also reminded residents to regularly check their irrigation systems for leaks, as the town's two-month billing cycle means problems may not be detected quickly.

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

September 16, 2025 1:30 P.M. Town Commission Meeting (Tentative)

September 18, 2025 5:01 P.M. Town Commission Second Public Hearing Budget Meeting

Board Action Report

None.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:32 PM.

APPROVED: October 07, 2025, Town Commission Meeting.

Signed Minutes on file in the
Town Clerk's Office

ATTEST:

Natasha Moore, Mayor

Transcribed by
Lanelda Gaskins

10/07/2025

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

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