



MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING MAY 28, 2025 6:00 P.M.

The City of Madeira Beach Board of Commissioners held a regular workshop meeting at 6:00 p.m. on May 28, 2025 in the Patricia Shontz Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor
Ray Kerr, Vice Mayor/Commissioner District 2
David Tagliarini, Commissioner District 1
Eddie McGeehen, Commissioner District 3
Housh Ghovae, Commissioner District 4

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

CHARTER OFFICERS PRESENT: Robin Gomez, City Manager
Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk
Andrew Laflin, Finance Director/City Treasurer Consultant
Thomas Trask, City Attorney

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brooks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Clara VanBlargan called the roll. All were present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Brooks announced there were no members of the public in attendance.

4. CITY ATTORNEY

A. Resolution 2025-04, Adopting Ceremonial Items Policy

City Attorney Tom Trask said the draft resolution adopts the ceremonial policy. He tried to use the form he had given to the City of Oldsmar and tweaked it based on the direction he was given at the prior Commission meetings. He thought it accomplished what the Board was looking for. There might be ceremonial items listed that the Board might want to delete. He is trying to keep in line with the previous draft he gave the Board. Some of the language used for

the key to the city was different than the language he used in Oldsmar. He specifically addressed how the key to the city is the highest ceremonial item you could give. So, he tried to keep in sync with that thought process of giving it to those who have gone above and beyond.

Commissioner Ghovae said he would like to see a picture of how the key would be constructed. The City Attorney showed a picture on his cell phone that he passed around of the one he received from the City of Safety Harbor a couple of years ago, on a plaque. If the key is presented on a plaque, the reasons why it was given could be listed on the plaque.

Commissioner Tagliarini said he liked the different categories and options for the different levels of recognition and would not consider eliminating any. He also liked the idea of presenting a key on a plaque.

Commissioner Ghovae said it was not just about people who perform well. It is also about the City recognizing wonderful people who serve the community. He has seen them on the walls of representatives from different cities, and to see one from the City of Madeira Beach would make them proud.

Commissioner McGeehen said he liked the idea that the Mayor and Commissioners may nominate a distinguished individual to receive a key to the city. He asked if that would also include groups. The City Attorney said there was nothing to prevent them from doing that.

Vice Mayor Kerr said if they were to give a key to the city, it should be on a plaque. If not, it would not be displayed. He liked the idea that each Commissioner and the Mayor would be provided with three City coins to present. He would think that would be annually because they have elections each year.

Commissioner Tagliarini said he assumed they were doing it as needed and not on a regular basis. The Mayor said that was her interpretation, whether they gave them out or not.

Mayor Brooks said the policy looked great. Once it is passed and adopted, determining the key and how it would be manufactured and the coin is a separate discussion. It would be quicker if they came back to the next workshop with some ideas to decide on.

Mayor Brooks opened to public comment. There were no public comments.

5. CITYMANAGER

A. City Manager Performance Evaluation

The City Manager said that when they amended his employment agreement last year, they added a section stipulating that they would conduct a performance evaluation on the City Manager during a noticed public meeting in May of each year.

Vice Mayor Kerr said the original contract mentioned the same thing, which must be a carryover. He did not recall them ever doing the performance evaluation in a public forum, so he does not know if that was the intent of the contract.

Commissioner Tagliarini said he would prefer to conduct the evaluations one-on-one, as they have for the last three years, and make them a public record. It would be more productive to do them face-to-face in a one-on-one meeting.

Commissioner McGeehen and Commissioner Ghovae were in favor of doing it one-on-one.

Mayor Brooks said she had her one-on-one with Robin this week, and they discussed it. The conversation with him was that it would be in a public meeting tonight, so she prepared hers.

Mayor Brooks read the City Manager's performance evaluation into the record:

"Opening Statement:

I am respectfully submitting this evaluation in accordance with the city manager's contract and for inclusion in the public record. The commission was provided a template by the city manager to use for this evaluation. I have chosen to complete only the narrative portion, as I believe it allows for a more accurate and thoughtful reflection.

This evaluation outlines both the challenges and expectations currently facing the city manager. While there have been notable strengths--particularly his personal dedication during emergencies and his positive rapport with staff--overall performance has been inconsistent. Key concerns include poor follow-through on commission directives, inadequate communication, and the need for a more professional and respectful workplace culture.

Moving forward, it is essential that the manager improve accountability, strengthen communication and demonstrate fairness and professionalism in all public interactions. With deliberate focus and leadership, there is opportunity for meaningful improvement and renewed alignment with the city's priorities.

City Manager Performance Evaluation

1. What would you identify as the manager's strengths, expressed in terms of the principal results achieved during the rating period?

While overall performance has been inconsistent, the city manager has shown strong personal dedication, particularly during emergencies. After the hurricanes, he remained fully committed to city operations, despite his own family being displaced, which demonstrated commendable resilience and work ethic. He also maintains a friendly and approachable demeanor with staff knowing employees by name and generally being well-liked on a personal level.

However, while he fosters individual relationships, stronger leadership is needed in setting the tone for a more respectful and professional workplace culture. His personal dedication is a strength that, if paired with higher standards for staff conduct, could lead to a more effective and unified team.

2. *What performance area would you identify as most critical for improvement?*

The most critical areas for improvement are follow-through, communication, and consistency in public engagement. There have been repeated issues with poor follow-up on projects and tasks requested by the commission, which has caused frustration and delays. Communication with both the commission and staff also needs to be more timely, clear, and consistent to ensure alignment and accountability. Additionally, the city manager must work on treating all residents and business owners with fairness and respect--regardless of whether interactions are difficult or pleasant. Professionalism and kindness should be extended to everyone, even in challenging situations.

3. *What constructive suggestions or assistance can you offer the manager to enhance performance?*

To enhance performance, I recommend that the manager prioritize consistent follow-through on commission directives and project tasks, with clear timelines and regular updates. Establishing a system for tracking action items and reporting progress would increase accountability and reduce delays. Improving communication with both the commission and staff is also essential. More transparent, timely, and two-way communication--especially on key issues--will help build trust and ensure alignment across leadership. Additionally, it's important that the manager set a higher standard for professionalism among staff. Addressing and discouraging negative or disrespectful talk in the workplace will help foster a more respectful and productive environment. Finally, I encourage the manager to approach all residents and business owners with kindness and impartiality, regardless of how challenging interactions may be. Consistently modeling respectful behavior will strengthen public confidence and reinforce the city's commitment to fair and inclusive service.

4. *What other comments do you have for the manager; e.g., priorities, expectations, goals, or objectives for the new rating period?*

Looking ahead, I expect the manager to place a stronger focus on accountability, responsiveness, and professionalism. Priorities for the new rating period should include: improving follow-up on commission requests, increasing transparency and communication with both the commission and staff, and fostering a workplace culture grounded in respect and teamwork. It's

also essential that the manager actively engages with all members of the public--residents and business owners alike--with patience, fairness, and professionalism. This includes handling difficult interactions with composure and empathy. Setting clear goals, regularly reporting progress, and maintaining open lines of communication will be critical to rebuilding trust and moving the city forward effectively. The manager has the capacity to lead well but must take more deliberate steps to meet the expectations of this role and the community we serve."

Commissioner Ghovae agreed with the Mayor and was on the same page. Madeira Beach is a wonderful City; we are all accountable to our residents and responsible for everything happening here.

Commissioner Tagliarini read a comment he received from a citizen, Bob Bello, who said he thought the City Manager had done an excellent job of bringing stability to the City. He was readily available and committed to his community. He navigated very difficult times with the two hurricanes. At the numerous public events he attended, the City Manager was approachable. He appreciates Robin's leadership and hopes his letter of support is considered during the evaluation process.

Commissioner Tagliarini said he would meet with the City Manager one-on-one and provide his evaluation forms. Vice Mayor Kerr said he would do the same.

Vice Mayor Kerr said Madeira Beach was fortunate to have Robin working there. He was dedicated, especially throughout the storm, and always accessible. They could not give enough accolades for that and all the support and direction he gave to the City and staff holding up behind him. There is a lot of respect there that does not come easily. They are not all perfect. They had their criticisms of the relationship with Chaney. Deciding to do the pilings at the beach without first discussing it with the Board was a decision. Not all decisions are always the correct decisions at the time. He could think of a few critical items, but Madeira Beach is blessed to have Robin. He puts his best foot forward and is thoughtful, at least based on what he has seen.

Commissioner McGeehen said he would meet with the City Manager next week to do his performance evaluation one-on-one. He thanked the Mayor for her insight on the City Manager's roles and responsibilities and the expectations that go along with that. Everyone cares about the City Manager. Constructive criticism is important for everyone involved, representing the people of Madeira Beach.

Commissioner Ghovae said he would meet with the City Manager next week to evaluate his performance. The letter that the Mayor wrote was well thought out, and the objectives and ideas that were brought up were extremely valid. Hopefully, Robin will take the constructive criticism seriously and make the necessary corrections. The City is amazing, and leadership is an important part of it. Robin needs to make them all proud.

Mayor Brooks said she was fortunate to be one of the five. They are a City that is not adversely portrayed in the media, and she is grateful for that.

The City Manager thanked the Commission for the comments and feedback, which is the purpose and the role. The comments are important and clear. He will begin to take the steps to make corrections and all the improvements needed. He looks forward to meeting with the Commission individually and going over more details. Whatever they do becomes public. They are there to do the right things and make the City a great place to live, learn, work, and play. It takes everyone to do that. They will continue to move forward.

Mayor Brooks said there was no public in attendance to comment.

B. John's Pass Dredging Update

The City Manager said in communication with Aptim, their consultant, they are approaching the end with the Army Corps. The Army Corps is awaiting a couple of items that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is reviewing and looking to approve. Aptim continues to follow up; hopefully, that will come over the next 30 days. There is a weekly update, which is included in the packet. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection permit application is complete and is undergoing resource agency consultation. Once completed, the Army Corps will complete its review process. Hopefully, permits will be forthcoming. Last week, they received the second agreement between the City and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, extending the funding agreement through December 31, 2026. The goal is obviously to complete the dredging this year, or as soon as permits are issued. He should be able to schedule Aptim for the June 25, 2025 workshop to provide more details.

Mayor Brooks said she wanted to make the public aware that when FDEP issues their permit, that is the last thing the Army Corps is waiting on to process their permits. The grant has been extended to the end of 2026. The goal is to complete the project this year, but if something were to happen, they have until the end of 2026 to complete the project. That is very good news for the City and the dredging project.

C. Grantworks Agreement – Use City of Bonita Springs and Pinellas County Agreements

The City Manager explained the two agreements in the packet. One is from the City of Bonita Springs, and the other is from Pinellas County government. He plans to bring a contract to the Board piggybacking on the two agreements. The agreement with the City of Bonita Springs is to do the overall grant management, like research, and essentially work on any grant they need them to. The other is specific to disaster, recovery, and emergency management. So, in the future, the City will constantly review if they need anything that may come up regarding any mitigation or anything that we could utilize, not in an emergency. They would be able to use those services for that. The agreement will allow for a variety of different fee structures in terms of whether there's an actual dollar fee because they incorporate an hourly fee based on the person doing the work as well as an administrative fee that is part of the grant being applied for and upon award, then the

cost of the work being performed by Grantworks would be covered under the administrative portion of the grant. Each grant would be brought back to the Board for approval.

Vice Mayor Kerr asked if they offered any online services to look for grants they got for other communities to give an idea of what to apply for. The City Manager said they had mentioned they did, and he would get the information from them. The Vice Mayor said it would be nice to research it.

Commissioner Tagliarini said he was ready to move forward with it.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if they were typically state grants. The City Manager said state, federal, and private foundation grants. They will look everywhere they may be available.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if they had discussed any available grants with the TDC, Tourist Development Council. The City Manager said they applied for event funding and are looking to apply for their capital program. It would be funding for ROC Park, the fields, or the concession bathroom building.

Vice Mayor Kerr said he assumed they are using City of Bonita Springs piggybacking for expediency, and at some point, would it make sense for the City to have its own agreement? The City Manager said yes.

Commissioner McGeehen asked if Grantworks would do all the legwork for the City and the communication line would be open so they could check on the progress. The City Manager said yes.

Mayor Brooks said she looked forward to seeing the contract. The departments actively look for grants. They always talked about their available grant program when she attended the Florida League of Cities training. She asked how useful that had been to the City. The City Manager said there were multiple grants. They pull from federal, state, county, and private foundations, similar to what Grantworks will be doing. There are a lot of them, and they are very specific. It is a matter of dedicating the hours to see if something might benefit the City. Mayor Brooks asked if anything that was found that the City applied for. The City Manager said no.

Mayor Brooks said it was understood that the Florida League of Cities assigned them a person to help search through the grants and asked if they were utilizing that. The City Manager said they had not, but the next step is to give them specifics and projects on what to look for. The Mayor said she liked the Grantworks agreement. They get paid if they find something. It would also be good if they could find a way for the Florida League of Cities to be engaged, so they are working for the City. They have elected officials who have offered their services to help write the grants. There are several projects the City wants to do that are quite costly, so it would be every angle they could go at.

D. Snack Shack – Repairs and Agreement Update

The City Manager gave an update on the repairs the contractor has started. They are putting the building back together. The appraisal for that was over \$800,000. They will do the flooring, repair the walls, the electrical, and prepare the structure for the concessionaire. The concessionaire would like an extension or another agreement. They offered to attend the June workshop to talk about it. The current agreement expires on July 31, 2026, and after speaking to the Commission individually, he recommends going out to bid. They had not done that since 2013.

The City Attorney said his advice is to put it out for bid and do an RFP. He is concerned about continuing to extend the contract. There is a provision in the charter that says they are not to enter into contracts that would provide a particular property for lease greater than 10 years. That has happened. It was initially done in 2013, so they are 12 years into it now because of extensions that have been given. He is uncomfortable with extending it again. They have the right to run their business there until July 31, 2026. When bid out, they can submit a proposal with everyone else. The proposals would be weighed, and they could be chosen again. They are legally obliged to bid it out.

Commissioner Ghovae said they needed to follow their City Attorney's directions.

Vice Mayor Kerr said he respected the Attorney's opinion, and if they agree not to grant any more extensions, they get that information to them sooner rather than later. They may have a clause they can get out so the City can bid it out instead of waiting until July next year. They can bid it while still doing repairs and renovations, but leave that to their decision, so they do not put any more time and effort into the space before it is open for business.

Mayor Brooks said she did not think they had done anything. The City Manager said they had cleaned out and removed their items and equipment from the location.

Mayor Brooks said that post-storm, they did not have to pay rent on the building for their space because they had not used it.

The City Attorney said that, looking through the contract, he has not found the provision allowing them not to pay rent. They are contractually obligated to comply with the terms of their contract.

Mayor Brooks said they have an advantage. They know the value of that space and would be better served to bid it and get the long-term new lease. The amount of money they will have to invest would have to be invested either way because the City is not paying for it. The City Manager said they could advertise it now and stipulate when the current lease expires.

Mayor Brooks asked if they had an idea of when the repairs on the Snack Shack would be completed. The City Manager said within the next three to four months.

Vice Mayor Kerr asked if they could take the opportunity to raise the Snack Shack a few feet. The City Manager said it would be very costly to do that.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. Interlocal Agreement Between Pinellas County and Local Governments for Multimodal Impact Fee Coordination

Andrew Morris, Long Range Planner, reviewed the item. They must execute an interlocal agreement before October 1, 2025, to continue Pinellas County's Multimodal Impact Fee Ordinance. Alternative mobility funding systems require local governments to execute the interlocal agreement to continue charging multimodal impact fees. Pinellas County is updating its multimodal impact fee ordinance, but it will not be finished before the October 1, 2025 deadline. Staff recommended approval.

Community Development Director Jenny Silver said they collect it on top of the City's impact fees. So, they keep 50% of the impact fees they collect for the county and give them the other 50%.

Mr. Morris said some capital projects could be for turn lanes, bike lanes, traffic signals, and sidewalks.

Director Silver said they have collected a little over \$42,000 from the county. They should be looking to use it. It must be something specific and be a transportation mobility-related capital project.

Commissioner McGeehen asked if it could be for a pedestrian walkway. Director Silver said it would be a qualifying expenditure but must be included in a capital project.

Vice Mayor Kerr asked if it would go away if they did not use it over time. Director Silver said the City's would go away in seven years, and the county's impact fees would go away in 10 years. The Vice Mayor asked if they were carrying any before 2023. Director Silver said the City started collecting it in 2023.

Commissioner Tagliarini asked if it could be used on the shortfall of the pocket parks that is listed on the agenda. Director Silver said no, but the City's local impact fees would. They have a lot they could use toward projects. Commissioner Tagliarini said that based on their conversation, they should follow the advice of the City staff.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if there were any conflicts in how the City collects the impact fees than how they are collected by the county. Director Silver explained that it was not a conflict but some differences. The county is looking to change their impact fees, but she did not know what that would look like. She could get someone from Forward Pinellas to come and answer any questions the Board might have.

The City Manager said they must use the county's fee table, not the City fee table. Commissioner Ghovae said he recalls them charging impact fees for additional bedrooms in a rebuilt single-family home. The City Manager said that was the City's impact fees. They collect for public safety, culture, recreation, and mobility. The county's would be a fourth one.

Commissioner Ghovae asked what the City charged for a 1,500 square foot structure. The City Manager said it was \$1,350 on a 1,500 square foot structure just for mobility, and then there is public safety and recreation.

Vice Mayor Kerr said that, regarding Commissioner Tagliarni's statement, pocket parks are for street ends; it is a sidewalk, so why would it not qualify? Mr. Morris said they care about capacity projects, which is usually what the county funds. The Vice Mayor said they have \$42,000 to spend, so it is something to consider regarding the over-budgeted item.

Mayor Brooks said it would be interesting to put some thought into the \$42,000 they could use to benefit the City.

B. Impact Fees

Director Silver said they have the county's impact fees and the local impact fees shown in the City's impact fee ordinance in the packet. The City's impact fees calculations are on pp. 201 and 202 of the packet. Culture and recreation are much larger than the mobility impact fees. It is \$8.39 for additional heated and living square feet. On pp. 235 and 236 of the packet, show what has been collected for fire and recreation. For fire, they collected \$17,000; for recreation, it is over \$345,000, and that could be used on things like the pocket parks. On p. 237, the county and the City's local impact fees total \$87,000.

Commissioner Ghovae said if a house was destroyed due to a hurricane and the owner is replacing it, would they get credit for what was there? Director Silver said yes. They keep that in the calculation, and they have the property card from the Pinellas County Property Appraisers when they do that calculation within the PDF they save for each property. It is calculated for residential and commercial.

Director Silver introduced Jerry Murphy.

Mr. Murphy said the county's transportation fee is spent on county roads, not local streets. Using it for a sidewalk in a pocket park that doesn't connect to the Main Gulf Boulevard would probably be improper. The City's impact fees are based on the value of everything acquired over time on the property and buildings. The culture and recreation are high because of the massive amount of cultural and recreational land and buildings. That is great for Madeira Beach. The transportation fee is based on City roads and not county roads. It should be spent on what the City has.

Commissioner Ghovae said the City does not have any county roads. Mr. Murphy said the county is probably spending county funding to maintain those roads and work with FDOT on that.

Mr. Morris said Duhme Road is a county road in the City. The City Manager said the end of the road is from the Angry Pepper south to State Road 666 is City road. It is a few hundred feet.

Mayor Brooks asked if the American Legion was county or City. The City Manager said City.

Mayor Brooks asked that because it did not benefit them, the fees had not been collected in the past. If they can't spend the money, or it is very difficult to spend the money, it might not be worth

collecting the fees. Director Silver said she did not know why they were not collecting them. The Mayor asked why they would want to keep collecting it if they cannot spend it. They could opt out of collecting it if it were a choice to participate in collecting for the county. If it can't be spent, why would they collect it?

Mr. Murphy said they had to collect it because the county required them to collect it. Mayor Brooks said she misunderstood because she thought you could opt into the program or not. She asked if it was optional. If the county says they have to collect it and you can only spend it on county roads, and they only have one county road that's 500 feet long, how is that fair or even just if you don't have the roads for it. She would be interested in understanding better.

Director Silvers said they would do research and bring it back. She will ask Forward Pinellas if it is optional. If it is optional, what projects and roads could they use it for? Mayor Brooks said it would make sense if they could use it somewhere other than on a county road. If not, it does not make sense. They need to make some adjustments.

Mr. Murphy said he was sure the state roads are included and that the county partners with DOT on those improvements, and that's how those improvements get done. The Mayor said that if state roads are included, that's entirely different.

Mr. Murphy said the county has historically not been big on impact fees and has not been updated for a very long time. The last update was to change the name of transportation or traffic impact fees to multimodal impact fees, and they might have thrown sidewalks in there. It was a minimum change. Their attitude has changed, and they are now looking for a more balanced impact fee.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if Forward Pinellas was part of it. Mr. Murphy said no. Forward Pinellas is separate. They have a nice website to show what type of projects they fund.

Commissioner Tagliarini asked if the 500 feet of Duhme Road is in good shape and the money continues to grow, what could they spend it on? He is waiting for an answer. If they cannot spend it on the street ends of parks, not on the City and residential roads, then where can they spend it?

Mayor Brooks said if they are collecting it on behalf of the county and allowing the City to keep 50% of it but can only spend it on county roads, why would they collect it. She would like some clarification on where the money can be spent and whether participating is optional. The City Manager said they would contact the county and other cities to see what it is used for.

Mr. Murphy said they have to think creatively about what they can spend it on. They could put benches and shelters along the main roads.

Back to City's impact fees discussion

Vice Mayor Kerr brought the discussion back to the City's impact fees. He asked if the City would charge an impact fee if you elevate a home, including the garage, with the same footprint and the new garage area becomes an air-conditioned space. Mayor Brooks said they could make it a porch, so it would not be subject to impact fees.

Vice Mayor Kerr said he argues they are not impacting the community, but the family will be charged thousands of dollars because they must elevate their home. If their stairwell is also air-conditioned, then that is more.

Mr. Murphy said that the way the house is used could be occupied by more people if it gets 500 additional square feet. They are looking at investigating a waiver, an exception, or some tax increment financing aspect to waive those fees and cover them otherwise. That is part of the proposal at the end of the package on pp. 239 and 240. They are proposing at the university level to investigate with the City and talk to the residents about their concerns with the fee itself. It has been in place since 2021. You can reevaluate it yearly, but he does not think it is necessary because the discount percentage is increasing. The way it was rolled out it would be worth reevaluating, particularly after the aftermath of the hurricanes, to see if there is a way to find an exception to elevating and enclosing the garage and not having to charge a fee. You are getting a vulnerable structure out of the floodplain and into the air where water can flow through, which is desirable in Madeira Beach.

Vice Mayor Kerr said the residential fees have vastly been more than the commercial fees, which was the idea when they started down the path years ago. They had to reassess the actual cost to the City for transportation and the City parks. He asked how often they could do it. Mr. Murphy said they could do it every year, but the way they drafted it was to do it every seven years. It would be in conjunction with the evaluation and appraisal of the comprehensive plan, which is every seven years. Once you update the comprehensive plan, the statute says you have to update the Land Development Regulations to implement those plan policies. Based on previous conversations with the Commission, they proposed to go ahead and do an update process by talking to the community to see their impressions of the impact fees, what they like to see, what they do and do not like, and how it would be modified. With his floodplain manager hat on, he would say it is a great idea. They can do it as a Board, but research still needs to be done to see whether it would be legal. Given the weather for the past couple of years, the community may desire to promote something like that. They also have to train the Planning Commission to better understand an impact fee and how it needs to be rolled out. That is what they proposed.

Vice Mayor Kerr said if you have a 2,000 square foot home with a 500 square foot, two car garage on it and you elevate it or rebuild that same home, that would take that 500 square foot garage and turn it into living space. You couldn't give a variance for the first 500 to be at zero. Anything above that to be at the going rate.

The City Attorney said he did not believe the code currently allows a variance to anything not in the land development code. That is Chapter 92 of the code, which is not in the land development code. It would have to be in the land development code for the Special Magistrate to hear a variance proceeding on it. Mr. Murphy is asking if there is a way to create an exemption or a waiver for a certain portion of the buildout. It would not be a variance but an exemption or a waiver.

Mr. Murphy said that would have to be done by ordinance. It needs substantial, competent evidence to support it so it is defensible when somebody decides to challenge it. They could get it done

sooner but didn't want to go back and amend it in case of a storm. They can explore it and find out for sure if it can be done. If it can, they will present it along with any options.

Vice Mayor Kerr said he does not want to wait a year. He appreciated Mr. Murphy putting together the plan and the proposal. The proposal is amenable. People will be submitting for permits in the coming days and weeks, not next year. Next year, their houses will already be built and charged.

The City Attorney said they could handle that by way of a refund. They could build in a provision in the ordinance to provide for refunds if the waiver were placed into it. That can be addressed. They would have to pay it upfront, with the possibility of a refund if a waiver is approved. Those are things that need to be looked into. The Vice Mayor said he would be amenable to it.

Mr. Murphy said there is a refund provision in the ordinance, but he is unsure if it would cover that specific instance. It has to be refunded if it has not been spent in seven years. The money sits in a trust fund, gaining interest. You refund them based on what permit collected it.

Vice Mayor Kerr said he would like to put that on an agenda for the Board to look at and vote if they are amenable to the waiver. If it does not go through, it does not go through.

Mayor Brooks said she believed that when somebody lifts their home, it impacts the community. They lowered the permit fees by 1% this past year. They gave a greater discount by doing that because when you collect permit fees, they can only be used by the building department, specifically for them. She does not know if there is a benefit to the community by building another satellite office for the building department, buying another car, or upgrading a truck. There is a greater benefit to the community from an impact fee because it can be used so diversely. It can pay for pocket parks, playground equipment, etc. When they voted to reduce the permitting fees from 2% to 1%, it was a big giveback to the community.

Vice Mayor Kerr said his argument has always been that the few should not have to pay for the services of the many. The few are those who are adding to or rebuilding their home, mainly because they have to. It is the few paying for the many to enjoy, like the pocket parks. It should just be commercial because they are impacting the community. It will probably be coming back to the Board to vote on at the next BOC meeting. They can come back after it is all done, with a waiver to refund those if the community decides they agree with his position on it versus the current status.

Commissioner McGeehen said he would like to see how many residents moved out of the community. New residents are now coming in who paid pennies on the dollar for the houses. They do not deserve any special favor, such as waiving impact fees. The Vice Mayor said they are paying full permit fees. The people who buy them and turn them into Airbnb, he believes, have an impact on the community. An Airbnb is six months. Director Silver said some places are grandfathered but not many.

Commissioner Ghovae said that whether it is a new owner or not, if the house was there historically, impact fees on that house should be credited to the new builder or the new person. That is, whether they are moving in now or have lived there. It doesn't matter. The house has been there. Impact fees should be credited.

Mayor Brooks said the conversation was about whether you should raise your house and enclose the garage, which is between 400 and 600 square feet for a standard two-car garage, although some could be larger. Vice Mayor Kerr believes that if you keep the same footprint and have a 500-square-foot garage, you are enclosing it and making it a livable space. Currently, you pay impact fees on that 500 square feet because it adds air-conditioned space to the house. The garage goes up with the house when they are enclosing it. He would like them to do the study so those individuals would not have to pay impact fees on that garage space.

Mayor Brooks said they are discussing it because Vice Mayor Kerr would like it to come back for them to vote on in two weeks. The discussion is so that everyone can understand when they come back at the next meeting, would they vote yes to spend \$30,000 to do a study to possibly do away with impact fees so that individuals raising their home will not pay the impact fee on that 500 square foot or are they going to vote no.

Vice Mayor Kerr said it would not impact any commercial properties. The whole idea was to rewrite it so that instead of doing it by square feet, they would do it by bed and bath. Mayor Brooks asked how many people have applied to lift their homes. Director Silver said there are about 10 in the queue. Depending on whether they have a garage or not, if turning it into a heated living space, that additional square footage would be charged the impact fees. Giving it a 500-square-foot allowance would not impact the commercial.

Mayor Brooks said she was pro-impact fees, and they should pay. If you increase the square footage of your home and your livable space, it impacts the community.

Following further discussion, Director Silver said the direction she got from the Board is to bring it forward to the next BOC meeting to vote on whether to proceed with the study. Mr. Morris asked if they would be bringing the interlocal agreement back. Director Silver said yes.

C. Building Permit Process

Director Silver said Community Development and the Building Department are now one department. She explained the current process and that they are getting extra help from CAP government. They are recommending additional contracted permit reviewers from Al Carrier. They had difficulty in the past with those who did not know the code. They will start getting that extra help next week to get the permits looked at. It takes a while with the elevating sides.

Mayor Brooks said that at their last meeting, a resident said Treasure Island was issuing permits in a day to raise houses. They are not, never have, not a single one. She went to Treasure Island today and talked with their permit department. They are going to send her the data on how many permits they have issued to raise a home, if there are any. But none has been issued within a day, three days, or even a week. After they no longer received the state help they did not bring them back, creating a backlog for them. So, their Commission voted to bring in extra help so they could get caught back up. It is very expensive, and they are not collecting any permitting fees to pay for that outside help.

Director Silver responded to questions from the Board. They are already paying Al Carrier; he will have extra time next week to help them. He might have one or two people he could bring in to

help. They are looking at three to four days a week at this time. If they are needed, they could come out to open hours. He might have two other people to help. It would speed up the process and get the backlog down.

D. Post-Hurricane Update – Recovery, Rebuild, Permitting, FEMA, FDEM

The City Manager said the County's Community Development Block Grant Action Plan has a website that he will forward to the Commission and post on the City's website. There are 260 applications in Madeira Beach for the Elevate Florida Program on the Florida Division of Emergency Management's website. There are 170 applications for structure elevation, 83 for mitigation and reconstruction, six for wind management, and one for demolition. He gave an update on the building permit data as of May 28. He reminded everyone of the annual Hurricane and Sea Turtle Expo on Saturday, May 31, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The City Manager said he and Commissioner McGeheen attended an FDEM meeting last week, during which Mr. Kevin Guthrie provided a lot of information. They provided a guide on how to request post-storm materials and services, and staff will be trained through the web emergency operations. The other interesting takeaway was the future of emergency management funding. The federal government provides most of the emergency funding to the state and through FEMA for individual assistance. It is believed that in the future, the reimbursement to local governments may be altered in that they may only be reimbursed 50% of expenses post-storm. Mayor Brooks said the state would also reimburse at 50%.

7. FIRE

A. Emergency Operations Plan Amendment for 2025-2028 (Resolution 2025-05)

The City Manager said every year they look at the Emergency Operations Plan and make necessary changes. They are looking at getting staff access to make requests through the County and FDEM.

Fire Chief Clint Belk asked to include another change under the Fire Department. He wanted to remove the address for Calvary Church as the alternate EOC and replace it with verbiage that an alternate EOC would be based on their agreement on the mainland.

Commissioner Tagliarini recommended they go with the recommendation of staff and Chief Belk.

Vice Mayor Kerr asked if the City had an agreement with Cambria. Chief Belk said to use their parking garage for city staff to park their vehicles if they cannot get through and need to come to work. They have not used it yet. They had an agreement with the City of Seminole, but when they had the alternate EOC, they took everything from the City to one location, including staff.

8. PUBLIC WORKS

A. ITB #25-07 Military Court of Honor Discussion & Approval

Public Works Director Megan Wepfer explained the item. The project came in under budget at \$225,823.02 with a contingency with Veracon, LLC DBA Vera Contractors.

Commissioner McGeehen thought they should proceed and get it going as soon as possible.

Commissioner Ghovae asked when they would put a shovel in the ground. Director Wepfer said the bid will come back to the Board for final approval on June 11. Once they give the notice to proceed, they will begin within the next few weeks. She hopes to be started by the beginning of July. Commissioner Ghovae thought it would be a good idea to have a groundbreaking ceremony and a ribbon cutting once it is finished.

Mayor Brooks asked how long the construction would take once they broke ground. Director Wepfer said she thought it would be within 90 days. They have talked about the 911 Ceremony, and the contractor is aware the site will need to be cleaned if they are not finished.

The consensus of the Board was to move forward with the project.

B. ITB #25-06 Boca Ciega Street End Beautification Project Discussion & Approval

Director Wepfer said it did not come in under budget. They are working to reduce the costs by changing some of the plants. They have lowered the plant cost from \$14,950 to \$2,358, but she is still waiting on the contractor's installation cost. She expects it to be in the range of \$25 to \$50 per plant. There is a 10% contingency cost of \$16,114.92 strictly for contingency. She could save \$1,000 by having staff install the furniture.

Commissioner Tagliarini asked if they were going to use the plants that were recommended by the design. Director Wepfer said they would stick to the same planting they have used. She will purchase the plants, and the vendor will plant them. She did whatever she needed to get it within budget.

C. RFI No. 25-09 Engineering Consultant and Design Services Discussion & Approval

Director Wepfer said the purpose is to add engineers to the range of projects, much like the RFI that was put out in 2023. Currently, they have eight or nine contracts that are still in place. It saves time when they have a project and broadens the range. Attorney Trask will review the RFI to ensure it complies with the State Statute.

Commissioner Ghovae asked what the limit of services cost per project would be. Director Wepfer said it is not based on cost but on the firm's qualifications. It allows them to have a list of contracts with their disciplines and access to them whenever there is a project that is more fitting for one firm. The cost per project would come before the Board for approval if it is over \$30,000.

The consensus of the Board was to move forward with it.

9. RECREATION

A. Fitness Center

Recreation Director Jay Hatch explained the item. He provided a quote he obtained from Avaron in response to a bid to upgrade the equipment prior to the storm. Since then, the price has almost doubled. He would need to put it out to bid again because it is over \$30,000. He asked for direction from the Board.

Commissioner Tagliarini asked what budget it would come out of. The City Manager said the Recreation Department in the General Fund. Commissioner Tagliarini said that based on the 190 cards to enter that were distributed, they should continue to offer it to residents. Before they offer it to nonresidents, they should have it open for a while and have quality equipment. He asked what "Misc Machines Commercial Membership 5 Years" meant in the quote. Director Hatch said the machines can be programmed to create accounts and track workouts. It would allow them to institute some fitness initiative programs. Commissioner Tagliarini thought they should move forward and give it back to the residents with good equipment.

Commissioner McGeehen said he was a big proponent of opening the gym to residents. He was in favor of opening it to nonresidents for a fee. It would help cover the cost of equipment. Commissioner Ghovae agreed.

Vice Mayor Kerr said he had been opposed to it from the beginning. He knew they would have to buy new equipment for the few that use it. It will cost tens of thousands of dollars, and they still have the liability if someone gets hurt. He did not think the City needed to be in the business of having a fitness center. He is against it.

Mayor Brooks said she agreed with Vice Mayor Kerr. She was against opening the gym to the public and still feels like it is there for and because of the fire department. They got the equipment through a grant. She asked how many people really use it. Director Hatch said the 190 cards were issued before the storm, and he does not know if they all still live in Madeira Beach. The cards are turned off, but he is able to look at the software to see who has attempted to use the cards since the storm. The Mayor asked what the checks and balances are to see if residents with cards still live here. Director Hatch said they have an annual waiver. It is difficult to track. Since all of the cards are turned off, they could tell residents to stop by the rec center to have it reactivated if they want to rejoin. The Mayor said it would be interesting to know how many would come in to reactivate their card before they go through the bid process. She asked if there would be a grant available for funding. Director Hatch said most of the grants are for lower-income communities, but he will continue to look.

Director Hatch said the equipment is maintained quarterly for safety for \$150 monthly.

Mayor Brooks recommended advertising that the fitness center is open again and see how many residents come in to have their card reactivated. If there is a great interest, then have another conversation. The Commission agreed.

Director Hatch said he would meet with Community Development to discuss the opportunity to use recreation impact fees to upgrade the fitness center because it would increase the services available to the residents.

10. RESPOND TO PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brooks adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

ATTEST:

Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor

Clara VanBlargan, MMC, MSM, City Clerk