**MINUTES**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
**REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING**
**JULY 22, 2026**
**4:00 P.M.**

The City of Madeira Beach Board of Commissioners held a regular workshop meeting at 4:00 p.m. on July 22, 2026, in the Patricia Shontz Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor
Eddie McGeehen, Vice Mayor/Commissioner District 3
David Tagliarini, Commissioner District 1
Charles "Chuck" Dillon, Commissioner District 2
Housh Ghovaee, Commissioner District 4

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**CHARTER OFFICERS PRESENT:** Michael Helfrich, City Manager
Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk
Thomas Trask, City Attorney
Andrew Laflin, Finance Director Consultant

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brooks called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

## 2. ROLL CALL

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

## 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

## 4. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### A. FY 2027 Gulf Beaches Public Library Budget

The City Manager presented the FY 2027 Gulf Beaches Public Library budget, noting that the city had been asked to pay its 26 percent share of a total library budget of $376,023, resulting in a city contribution of $97,765.98. The City Manager acknowledged that a library representative typically attends these presentations and had been present at the prior meeting to present the budget item by item.

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Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comments. There were no public comments.

The Commission indicated unanimous support for the library budget contribution.

**B. FY 2027 Sheriff's Office Contract**

The City Manager reviewed the FY 2027 Sheriff's Office contract, noting he had compared it to the prior year's contract and found few changes in the services provided. He reported an overall increase of 6.05 percent, which he assumed was attributable to salary increases, though he acknowledged he could not confirm that with certainty.

Mayor Brooks asked whether a representative from the Sheriff's Department would present at the upcoming commission meeting where a vote would be taken. The City Manager confirmed he would request that a Sheriff's Department representative attend.

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

**C. Founders Day Celebration Planning**

The assistant to the city manager, Megan Powers, explained the item. She provided a list of potential events not only for Founders Day itself but also distributed throughout the year as a broader celebration of the city's 80 years of incorporation. They could encourage local businesses to run specials throughout the month of May. They would plan a larger signature event for Founders Day featuring better music, more fireworks, more children's activities, and significantly more marketing to reach residents. She would email the list to the City Clerk for inclusion in the meeting packet.

Commissioner Tagliarini expressed enthusiasm for the concept, noting that all the proposed activities would resonate with residents. He recalled prior community events, such as movies in Archibald Park, and Ms. Powers indicated she would explore the possibility of a movie event, including a showing of Jaws, weather and rights permitting.

Ms. Powers said they could develop an 80th Anniversary logo as soon as possible to support branding, employee email signatures, and physical swag such as stickers, patches, and apparel. Commissioner Dillon appreciated that residents and the broader community were being included in the planning. Mayor Brooks noted that residents at a recent community conversation had raised many of the same ideas independently, saying, "It doesn't just have to be a day" and that the celebration could span from January 1 through the year.

Ms. Powers confirmed that the Recreation team would participate in a collaborative effort. The Commission expressed unanimous enthusiasm.

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

**D. John's Pass Village Directory and Wayfinding**

Ms. Powers explained that the John's Pass Merchants had requested that the city purchase a directory sign, and a copy of the request had been placed on the dais. The proposal included three double-sided signs and two single-sided signs, with an estimated cost of approximately $31,000 for the shell structure only, before artwork or business listings. Updated materials would be provided online by the City Clerk.

Ms. Powers presented wayfinding sign concepts modeled after the Tarpon Springs Sponge Docks, which she cited as a comparable tourist area with a similar layout of shops, restaurants, and a boardwalk. She described two general options: generic directional signage, such as "Bakery this way" or "Brewery this way," and more business-specific signs that could be mounted on Duke Energy light poles using metal straps for easy removal and replacement. She proposed a two-year contract rotation to give multiple businesses an opportunity to participate, with businesses sharing the advertising cost.

Commissioner Tagliarini expressed support for business-specific directional signs but emphasized that the sign components must be replaceable, as businesses come and go. Ms. Powers confirmed that the pole-mounted signs were designed for easy removal and replacement.

Mayor Brooks offered context, explaining that discussions with merchants attending John's Pass meetings and other stakeholders, as well as with the City Manager, had led to the general understanding that the city, as the owner of John's Pass Park, would provide and fund the directory and wayfinding infrastructure just as a landlord would in any commercial development—while individual businesses would bear the cost of their own signage or listings on those signs.

Regarding the directory sign itself, Mayor Brooks referenced the existing wood-style directory near the bell tower, which she described as still in keeping with the village's character, and expressed a preference for a freestanding structure that maintains a similar aesthetic rather than signs mounted on existing light poles. Commissioner Tagliarini noted that the reference sign was described as a hand-drawn map style and raised the practical concern that, as businesses change, the map would need updating. Ms. Powers agreed, suggesting the map be reviewed annually at most, while individual tenant signage would be updated by the tenant at their cost.

The Commission acknowledged that the John's Pass merchants had provided both the sign design reference and the initial quote. Mayor Brooks noted that she had been researching the map component and was awaiting additional information to share with the City Manager.

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

**E. Kitty Stuart Park Landscaping Plan**

Public Works Director Megan and City Manager presented a draft landscaping site plan for Kitty Stuart Park, including a list of proposed Florida-friendly, drought-tolerant, and salt-tolerant plants. Director Wepfer clarified that this was a conceptual, non-finalized draft intended to solicit Commission and community input on the location and types of plantings.

The City Manager described the green areas on the plan as the available landscaping zones, noting that planting areas were limited. He invited the Commission's input on preferred plants.

A member of the public, Bill Karns of 401 150th Avenue, approached the podium to express that a primary concern among residents was the inclusion of palm trees.

Commissioner Tagliarini expressed support for including notable palm trees wherever the site can sustain them, while raising a concern about muhly grass, noting from personal experience that it rarely achieves the purple color shown in reference photos because temperatures in Madeira Beach are seldom cold enough to trigger that coloration. Director Wepfer confirmed that ornamental grasses pose ongoing maintenance and trash-collection challenges and are not preferred.

Director Wepfer explained that before Hurricane Helene, the park featured Christmas palms and agaves, and that the preferred approach going forward would be to use salt- and drought-tolerant species that require minimal or no irrigation. They flagged the presence of a highly invasive parasitic weed called "dodder," currently being controlled throughout the city, which is particularly attracted to beach sunflower and railroad vine. They cautioned that plant selection must account for this risk. Commissioner Tagliarini added that beach daisies are distinct from beach sunflowers and are extremely low-maintenance, thriving with no care. Director Wepfer confirmed that beach daisies should be added to the list, which was described as a starting point rather than a complete inventory.

Commissioner Dillon, who noted he visits the park nearly every weekend, raised specific concerns about the smallest landscape island near Caddy's, recommending it be left as-is given the heavy foot traffic that crosses it. She supported planting an agave or palm tree there, if anything were planted, given the lack of irrigation at that location. Director Wepfer confirmed that bottle palms and Christmas palms remain small, grow slowly, are self-pruning, and are drought- and salt-tolerant, making them strong candidates for constrained spaces.

Regarding the narrow strip along the right side of the property, Commissioner Tagliarini noted a row of podocarpus planted by the adjacent business directly on the property line, which will grow significantly into the city's buffer area over time. Director Wepfer confirmed the buffer is approximately three feet wide and cautioned that whatever is planted there must be easily maintained from the city's side.

Commissioner Ghovaee proposed adding a bench area near the walkway adjacent to the restroom to give families arriving at the beach a place to gather and organize before heading to the sand, noting the existing 5.4-foot walkway north of the restroom as a potential location. Director Wepfer confirmed that the ADA parking space could not be relocated without moving the existing restroom ramp, but that a bench could be placed along the identified walkway. Commissioner Ghovaee also suggested planting wax myrtle along the southern property line as a buffer with the residential neighbor to the south, describing the trees as intermediate-sized and well suited to a three-foot strip planted approximately ten feet on center. Director Wepfer expressed concern about size but deferred to Commissioner Ghovaee's expertise.

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Mayor Brooks asked whether coconut palms could be planted on the bay side, facing the seawall side of the park. Director Wepfer confirmed this was the intention modeled after Archibald Park and estimated that about five coconut palms could be placed along the seawall side. The Commission found the proposal appealing. Mayor Brooks also asked whether picnic tables could be placed on the beach side; Director Wepfer confirmed that, as long as they were not placed within an active dune and could be moved if necessary, they were permissible, noting that benches are already present along other beach areas.

Mayor Brooks suggested that all Commissioners visit the park before the next discussion to observe what the neighboring property has planted along the shared property line and to assess the size of the planting areas firsthand. Director Wepfer indicated that a finalized landscape plan would be brought back to the Commission at a future meeting.

Director Wepfer noted that the restroom production drawings were nearly finalized, with a structural engineering question to be resolved the following day. Once the drawings are approved, restroom fabrication can begin. Keystone can proceed with foundation construction before the restroom is delivered. Once the restroom is placed by crane, park completion, including sidewalk, site work, and landscaping, would take approximately 60 days. Landscaping and infrastructure will comply with FDOT sight-line triangle requirements.

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

## 5. CITY MANAGER

### A. RFP #26-02 Holiday Decor

Ms. Powers presented two options for the city's annual holiday lighting program, noting that the solar option had been evaluated but deemed inadequate for the current year because the available solar product line included only bows and stars, which were insufficient to create a festive display. Staff had recommended proceeding with USA Voltage to repair and maintain the existing light poles and standard holiday lighting, at a cost of $50,512. Ms. Powers acknowledged she had been advocating for a solar transition for approximately three years and stated she would continue pushing vendors to expand their solar options.

Commissioner Tagliarini noted that a single-pole repair costs $275 and that Duke Energy, which previously performed repairs at no cost, had begun requiring a contract, with the overall cost significantly higher than USA Voltage's. Ms. Powers confirmed that an RFP had been conducted, and the only other responsive bid was over $100,000.

Mayor Brooks said she fully supported repairing the electrical on the poles, noting that inconsistent lighting, where one pole is lit and the next two are not, is one of the most frequent resident complaints during the holiday season. Commissioners Dillon and Tagliarini expressed support.

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

## 6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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## A. Hurricane Relief Use of Properties for Parking

Community Development Director Marci Forbes presented a preliminary concept that would allow property owners along Gulf Boulevard affected by the hurricane to use vacant or cleared lots for temporary standalone parking while they determine their redevelopment plans. The current code does not permit standalone parking in those areas. Multiple property owners have requested the ability to generate income from their properties in the interim. The item is in the early stages and would be returned for further workshopping before any ordinance is drafted.

Senior Planner Kathryn Younkin shared lessons learned from a similar program in the municipality where she previously worked. Temporary parking lots approved for one year have remained in place for five years because overlapping states of emergency, triggered by successive hurricanes, have extended their use. She cautioned that "once it's built in there and operating, controlling that when their time is up, being able to get them not to be in code enforcement because they're continuing to use the property beyond their allowed time" is a genuine challenge. Rather than a one-year time limit tied to a state of emergency, the ordinance could specify a fixed calendar date by which all temporary lots must cease operation. Some temporary lots in the prior city became nuisance properties. Any ordinance must include clear, enforceable operational standards, including hours of operation. The Commission would need to decide whether approvals would go to the Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners, or through an administrative process. The minimum ADA requirement typically requires one paved space and a paved path to the right-of-way.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment.

Mike Wyckoff of 14225 Gulf Boulevard identified himself as an affected property owner who demolished his building due to hurricane damage. He expressed appreciation for the consideration and urged the Commission to go a step further by reviewing C-3 and possibly R-3 zoning to permit parking as a special exception use. He outlined several specific recommendations: allowing stabilized, non-paved surfaces, noting that the city's code requires a stabilized surface, not necessarily full paving; reducing the required drive aisle width from 24 feet to 22 feet to allow 90-degree parking on standard 40-foot-wide lots; creating an administrative approval process for lots meeting all adopted standards; and adopting an interim ordinance effective until the comprehensive code update is complete.

Bill Karns of 401 150th Avenue asked that additional areas beyond Gulf Boulevard be considered, specifically 150th Avenue and Johns Pass. He noted that he currently operates a parking lot in Johns Pass, for which he is being fined $7,500 per month while awaiting the development of a hotel the Commission previously approved.

Bob Bellow of 13301 Gulf Boulevard submitted materials to the Commission and advocated a practical formalization process for parking lots along Gulf Boulevard. He cited substantial visitor parking demand and noted that a centralized parking garage would not address the distributed need across the many beach access points along Gulf Boulevard. He provided maps showing beach access points, existing city and county lots, and currently informal private parking areas. He

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supported allowing gravel or stabilized aggregate surfaces, narrowing the two-way drive aisle requirement for qualifying configurations, and establishing an efficient administrative approval process.

Marcus Winters, 830 Capri Boulevard, Treasure Island and owner of Caddy's local restaurant, expressed support for the concept but recommended a clear time limit and suggested that the ordinance prohibit food trucks from operating in temporary parking lots to protect brick-and-mortar restaurants.

Jeff Beggins of 439 Boca Ciega Drive raised concerns about a future parking shortage in John's Pass that will arise once the approved hotel project displaces the existing parking lot, suggesting that lots on Pelican Lane be used as overflow parking for the area.

Stephanie Berry, a business owner at 205 Boardwalk Place in John's Pass, asked that the ordinance include some regulation of parking rates to prevent the perception of Madeira Beach as an expensive destination from being further reinforced.

Vice Mayor McGeehan asked staff what they considered the primary benefits of allowing temporary parking, beyond what residents and business owners had already articulated. Ms. Younkin responded that providing temporary relief to hurricane-affected property owners makes sense given the prevalence of empty lots, and that offering owners an income-generating option may encourage the demolition of still-standing but severely damaged structures along Gulf Boulevard. The Vice Mayor agreed that this would improve the corridor's appearance.

Director Forbes clarified that the city's code already permits stabilized surfaces for parking, not just pavement, though this had long been interpreted as requiring paving. She confirmed that shell and other materials are permissible for parking areas, except in ADA-designated spaces, which must be paved or concreted. She noted that shell parking areas would not count toward the impervious surface ratio.

Commissioner Dillon expressed conditional support, emphasizing that temporary parking lot pricing should be comparable to city parking fees, that a Business Tax Receipt would be required, that a tight time-frame guideline must be established, and that no business activities, such as food trucks, should be permitted on these lots. He noted he had initially opposed the proposal but shifted to support after further research confirmed that the city itself operates some non-conforming, non-paved lots. He supported a special exception process for the 22-foot drive aisle and 18-foot stall configuration to allow 40-foot-wide properties to function.

Commissioner Tagliarini expressed support for a 2- to 3-year term, with a review at the end of the term.

Commissioner Ghovaee also expressed support, suggesting a limit on the number of cars that could be parked per property, and confirmed that ADA spaces would require a hardened surface, with the required quantity determined by the adopted ADA chart based on the total space count.

Commissioner Ghovaee and the City Attorney discussed compact space requirements. The City Attorney noted that a temporary parking ordinance could include provisions not currently in the code, such as adjusted space dimensions, no landscaping requirements, and permeable surfaces, because it would be a standalone regulatory framework.

Mayor Brooks expressed strong support for moving forward, noting that nearly two years have passed since the hurricanes and that some properties still have severely damaged buildings. She would like a provision in the ordinance explicitly prohibiting food trucks from operating in temporary parking lots, consistent with public comments. She asked the City Attorney to research whether parking pricing can be regulated and expressed interest in tying any price cap to the city's fee schedule. She supported a two-year initial approval period but cautioned against automatic extensions tied to states of emergency, recommending that any renewal beyond two years be tied to specific criteria. She asked staff to bring a draft back at the next workshop, within approximately 30 days, acknowledging the tight timeline while emphasizing the urgency of the matter.

The Commission directed staff to draft an ordinance applicable to C-3 and R-3 zoned properties along Gulf Boulevard and John's Pass, excluding R-1 or R-2 residential zones, that allows stabilized non-paved surfaces, a reduced drive aisle, a BTR requirement, and prohibits food trucks, with a defined temporary period and conditions for renewal, and to return to the next workshop with a preliminary draft.

**B. RFQ for Ordinance Updates**

Director Forbes introduced this item, explaining that the city's land development code is significantly outdated, having last been comprehensively reorganized in 1983, and that subsequent piecemeal amendments have created conflicts, redundancies, and fragmentation across chapters. She described how a single topic may be governed by provisions spread across multiple sections, making it time-consuming and difficult for staff to explain requirements to property owners and for the permitting process to function efficiently. She also noted that AI-assisted permitting tools are becoming more prevalent, but their value depends on the quality of the underlying code.

Ms. Younkin elaborated, noting that regulations for a single issue, such as the minimum number of townhomes, can appear across multiple chapters, creating conflicting requirements. The RFQ seeks to hire a consultant to consolidate, reorganize, and de-conflict the existing code without making substantive changes to height, density, or other "third rail" issues. Those substantive changes would be addressed separately with significant community engagement. She estimated the process would take about six to eight months once a consultant is engaged.

Director Forbes noted that the city remains under Senate Bill 180, which prohibits making land development regulations more restrictive until next fall. By starting this process now, the city could have the cleaned-up code ready for adoption when it exits that restriction.

Mayor Brooks asked whether this could qualify for grant funding. Director Forbes confirmed she had seen small grant opportunities that may be applicable to this type of project and would investigate. The city's ongoing vulnerability assessment work may allow some code-related items to be captured under that grant process.

Commissioner Dillon expressed enthusiasm, noting that some code provisions date to 1987 and that bringing outdated items to the Commission incrementally, chapter by chapter, would allow a smoother, faster process. Ms. Younkin confirmed that this was exactly how a similar project was handled in Treasure Island, where chapters were workshopped one at a time, even though adoption had to occur collectively because provisions were being moved between chapters.

Commissioner Ghovaee confirmed the project is budgeted and requested assurance that the budget estimate is accurate. Director Forbes expressed confidence in the budget allocation. She described the process as issuing an RFQ, selecting a qualified firm, and then entering cost negotiations with the city, with the option to move to the next most qualified firm if pricing is unacceptable.

Commissioner Tagliarini and Commissioner Ghovaee both expressed support. Staff confirmed that the Commission would review items in smaller, digestible segments throughout the process rather than waiting for a single comprehensive final product.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comments. There were no public comments.

## 7. FINANCE

### A. Ordinance 2026-08 Fees and Collection Procedure Manual – FY 2026

Finance Director Consultant Andrew Laflin first addressed a scheduling matter for the TRIM budget hearing calendar. He explained that the second budget hearing, previously tentatively scheduled for September 23, could be moved to Friday, September 18, by advertising on Wednesday, September 16, thereby avoiding a more expensive Sunday ad. The Commission confirmed availability, and Vice Mayor McGeehan noted a preference. The City Attorney confirmed a minor scheduling conflict but indicated he would arrange coverage. The meeting was tentatively moved to September 18 at 5:05 p.m.

Mr. Laflin then walked through the proposed fee changes for Ordinance 2026-08, organized by department, and described the items included in the published packet as well as additional proposals raised since the packet was finalized.

**Parking Fees:** New line items were added to the fee schedule: a $60 parking violation, a $250 parking violation, and a $250 fire lane violation. Wording changes clarified overnight versus 24-hour parking session terminology, with a rate of $96 for a 24-hour period. A new parking prohibition area was added.

A substantial discussion arose about a proposed $250 fine for back-in (reverse) parking. Parking Enforcement Supervisor Jamal Yahia explained that back-in parking had long been part of the ordinance, though signage had not consistently been in place. He cited safety concerns about trucks backing over sidewalks and the future utility of an Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) system as reasons to add a specific fine. Commissioner Dillon and Commissioner Ghovaee expressed opposition, noting that modern trucks with backup cameras make backing in safer than pulling in nose-first, and that backing in is the recommended safe practice in many contexts. Mayor

Brooks agreed, stating she personally backs in or pulls through whenever possible, and that she is not aware of any specific problem the prohibition would solve. She also stated she is not in favor of the ALPR technology, noting she has spoken with multiple municipalities that have used it and found the cost does not justify the benefit. The Commission reached consensus to remove the back-in parking violation from the fee schedule, limiting any restriction to specific problematic locations, such as angled parking stalls, if needed. Mr. Yahia confirmed the prohibition can be isolated to specific lots.

**Stormwater Fees:** The EDU rate will increase from $10 to $20 per month, billed bimonthly, resulting in a $40 charge on utility bills. Mr. Laflin proposed simplifying the rate structure for multi-dwelling and non-residential commercial properties by charging $20 per dwelling unit for residential and $20 per storefront for commercial, eliminating the complex calculation previously coordinated with Pinellas County Utilities. Vacant parcels would be charged the single-dwelling-unit rate of $20. Commissioner Ghovaee asked whether the presence of a retention pond affects the rate; Mr. Laflin confirmed that it does not factor into the current calculation.

**Fire Fees:** An updated schedule was presented with more detail distinguishing between low- and high-hazard fire and life safety inspection fees.

**Marina Fees:** Changes were proposed to transient wet slip daily and weekly rates, boat lift fees, and boat ramp launch fees, described as keeping the city in line with other municipal marinas while remaining below commercial marina rates.

**Recreation Fees:** Mr. Laflin presented proposed increases not yet reflected in the packet, which will be incorporated into the first reading in August. After-school program fees would increase from $9 (resident) and $12 (non-resident) to $10 and $14, respectively. Summer camp session rates would increase from $500 to $625 per session (resident) and from $625 to $750 (non-resident), with full summer rates rising from $1,000 to $1,250 (resident) and $1,250 to $1,500 (non-resident). Recreation Leader III Max Michalski noted that a per-week summer camp option is rarely used and therefore was not included in the schedule. Mayor Brooks asked when recreation fees were last increased; a 2016 ordinance was cited, indicating approximately ten years without adjustment.
Room and pavilion rental rates were proposed to increase by $25 per category across both weekday and weekend pricing tiers. The sand volleyball court rental was proposed for removal from the fee schedule because the volleyball courts at Archibald Park were removed before Hurricane Helene as part of a Pinellas County dune restoration project and had not been properly permitted by FDEP for their seaward location. Mayor Brooks directed staff to pursue FDEP permitting to reinstall the courts, noting that similar courts exist at Clearwater Beach and that, when available, they are used. Staff indicated they would begin that process.

Splash pad rental fees were proposed to double, from $100 to $200 for residents and from $150 to $300 for non-residents, for a two-hour rental. The splash pad, along with tables, chairs, and the patio option, was proposed for removal. Athletic field hourly rental rates would increase by $5 across all resident and non-resident categories.

Commissioner Ghovaee asked about event insurance requirements for facility rentals. Recreation Leader III Max Michalski confirmed that when alcohol is served, renters must obtain an event insurance policy and name the city as an additional insured.

**Community Development Fees:** Director Forbes noted that staff is still working through the requirements of a relevant House Bill on calculating permit and plan review fees, and that those will be included in a subsequent update. She also described plans to add a line item for repeat code enforcement offenders, an escalating fine structure for stop-work order violations, and explicit fines for illicit discharge. She acknowledged being somewhat behind due to the House Bill's complexity.

City Attorney Trask noted that the city already has a statutory provision allowing fines of up to $250 per day and cautioned against setting a fixed fine in the code that is lower than that maximum, which would be a disservice to the city. He recommended against eliminating the courtesy notice process in all situations, advising that code enforcement officers retain discretion, particularly when a courtesy notice may produce voluntary compliance and avoid the cost of certified mailings and staff time. For irreversible violations, such as the removal of a grand oak tree or an illicit discharge, the process can and should move directly to a notice of violation. He confirmed that the city cannot charge magistrate fees under state law.

Commissioner Dillon raised a broader concern that Special Magistrate hearings consume significant staff and legal resources without any direct fee recovery. The City Attorney clarified that although magistrate fees cannot be charged, the city can and should factor in staff, attorney, and special magistrate time when making recommendations on fine-reduction requests that come before the Commission.

The City Attorney noted that the city has collected between $250,000 and $283,000 in code enforcement fines in recent months, and that a separate case yielded approximately $75,000, indicating that significant revenue is being captured. He acknowledged that some fines remain uncollectible because the properties are homesteaded.

Mr. Laflin confirmed that, subject to Commission comfort, the verbally presented recreation fee increases and the forthcoming community development fee additions would be incorporated into the first reading of Ordinance 2026-08 in August, with a second reading and an effective date targeted for early October.

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

The Commission indicated support for proceeding, with Commissioner Dillon's noted preference to remove the back-in parking violation, which was accepted by the group.

### B. Amendment to Consultant Agreement – Finance Director Services

The City Manager introduced this item, explaining that the Finance Director's consultant agreement is renewed annually. The proposed third amendment extends the arrangement through FY 2027 at a fixed monthly fee of $8,800, a 2.3 percent increase from the current $8,600 per

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month. He noted that the first amendment covered FY 2024, the second covered FY 2025, and the third would cover FY 2027.

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

All Commissioners expressed no objection to the increase and indicated support for approval.

## 8. PUBLIC WORKS

### A. Amendment to RFP No. 26-05 – Marina Seawall Replacement #2 to Include 129th Avenue (Area 5) seawall Replacement

Director Wepfer presented an amendment to the Spieler contract approved under RFP No. 26-05. She explained that the 129th Avenue seawall was not included in the original bid scope. A quote was obtained from Keystone through the Area 5 Duncan Drive project piggyback, but it significantly exceeded Spieler's pricing. They then requested that Spieler provide a proposal using the unit pricing from the existing RFP, and the City Attorney reviewed and approved the approach. Commissioner Dillon noted that the cost is high but acknowledged it is lower than the alternative. The Commission expressed support for proceeding.

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

### B. ITB #26-04 Stormwater Backflow Prevention Project

Director Wepfer presented the results of the bidding process for the Stormwater Backflow Prevention Project, funded by a $100,000 FDEP grant and a $100,000 city match, for a total project budget of approximately $200,000. Six submittals were received, with bids ranging from the lowest, slightly above the estimated project cost including contingency, to nearly $400,000. The project involves installing backflow prevention valves at 13 locations across the island, with valve sizes ranging from 12 inches to 36 inches. The remaining bidders were either non-responsive or failed to meet submittal requirements. The recommended low bidder is new to the city but is highly recommended by the city's waste operations representative, who has worked with the contractor at multiple other locations. The second-lowest bidder was approximately $30,000 higher. The contractor will first perform a site inspection to confirm pipe sizes before ordering valves, making the contractor responsible for proper fit.

Director Wepfer described the valve design as a cone-shaped device similar to those installed in the Boca Ciega neighborhood in 2017, which have performed well. Thirteen locations include Harbor Drive, Bay Point, 140th Avenue, North Bayshore, and others. She confirmed that quarterly maintenance cleaning is performed on all valves.

Commissioner Ghovaee asked about the valve location at the intersection of South Bayshore and Island Drive. Director Wepfer confirmed that a valve would be placed at the outfall near that intersection and that an additional valve would be placed on Island Drive. Commissioner Dillon asked about a 30-inch valve on Island Drive, which Director Wepfer confirmed, given the size of that pipe.

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Commissioner Ghovaee expressed reservations about flapper-style valves, noting they could impede drainage during combined high-tide and rain events, and stated he would not vote in favor. Director Wepfer clarified that these are cone-shaped rather than traditional flapper valves and that the 2017 Boca Ciega installation has not experienced significant barnacle growth due to this design. The valves prevent tidal intrusion into streets but can reduce drainage outflow capacity during concurrent rain and high-tide events.

Commissioner Tagliarini asked whether any alternative approach exists. Director Wepfer confirmed that there is no practical alternative to the existing roadway system and pipe infrastructure. Commissioner Dillon noted that the valves are the only available tool given the existing conditions on a barrier island below sea level. Director Wepfer emphasized that resident education on keeping storm drain inlets free of landscaping debris is critical to ensuring the valves function properly.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There was no public comment.

### C. Disaster Debris Management Participation Agreement with DRC

Director Wepfer explained that the Commission had previously approved an interlocal agreement with Pinellas County, which had updated its debris management agreement with DRC to reflect cost increases. This item authorizes the city to piggyback on that updated agreement to ensure the continued availability of debris contractors. The city's existing agreements under the prior agreement remain valid through approximately 2028, and this action is proactive due diligence.

Mayor Brooks opened the floor to public comment. There was no public comment.

## 9. RESPOND TO PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

There were no public comments requiring a response.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

Prior to adjournment, the City Manager invited Recreation Leader III Max Michalski to provide an unagendized update on the upcoming Burger Week.

Mr. Michalski reported that Burger Week is scheduled for August 21–30, with 18 restaurants participating. A kickoff event, "Village Friday," will be held on Friday, August 21, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in John’s Pass and will feature live music. He invited the Commission to join him onstage during the event to officially kick off Burger Week. The Commission confirmed availability after a strategic planning session that day, which ended at 4:00 p.m.

Additional events announced include "Burger with the Board" on Wednesday, August 26, from noon to 2:00 p.m. at the Cambria Hotel, an informal community engagement event modeled after Conversations with the Mayor, where Commissioners may serve burgers at tables. A ticketed "Burger Bus" event was also announced, featuring an ADA-accessible bus tour of multiple

participating restaurants with samples at each stop, with a potential second night if the first sold out. Marketing efforts include collaboration with the Pinellas Suncoast Chamber of Commerce, email outreach to prior participants, and support from Visit Saint Pete Clearwater.

Commissioner Tagliarini confirmed that the November meetings, originally rescheduled from Wednesday to Tuesday due to Veterans Day, would need to be re-examined. After discussion among Commissioners and staff, the Commission agreed to the following modifications to the November and December meeting calendar: the November meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, at 2:00 p.m. as a regular meeting only, with no workshop; the December meeting will be held as a workshop only, with no regular meeting; and January 2027 will begin with a regular meeting based on the December workshop. The City Clerk confirmed she would update the official meeting calendar and present it at the next meeting for confirmation.
Mayor Brooks adjourned the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

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Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Clara VanBlargan, MMC, FCPC, MSM, City Clerk

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