



MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MARCH 26, 2025 4:00 P.M.

The City of Madeira Beach Board of Commissioners held a budget workshop meeting at 4:00 p.m. on March 26, 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
Thomas Trask, City Attorney

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. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. FY 2026 Budget Workshop #1

City Manager Robin Gomez reviewed the item and said they must adopt a balanced budget.

1. 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan Initial Discussion

The Snack Shack Facility item can be disregarded and will be removed from the budget.

Commissioner Ghovae asked when they will start earning revenue again on the parking lot at Archibald Park. The City Manager said he had examined the work going on and they should be up and running in about two weeks. The restrooms will also be working.

Mayor Brooks asked if they could recoup the milling and resurfacing costs of the Archibald Park parking lot from FEMA. The City Manager said it would be submitted.

Commissioner Ghovae asked why they have to defer the military honor court so far into the future. The City Manager said it could be finished this fiscal year, but if not, they would carry the funding into the next fiscal year.

The City Manager said the majority of the capital budget for the next fiscal year will go toward road resurfacing under the Stormwater Fund.

Vice Mayor Kerr asked if they were applying for funding for the street improvements. Public Works Director Megan Wepfer said they applied for \$5.2 million through the Florida Department of Commerce. They did not feel confident the road projects would be considered with their grant, so they are applying everywhere they can.

2. EOG DOGE Letter to Local Officials

The City Manager said in the letter that they asked if the City had any financial emergencies. They will send a letter to the governor's executive office in response. The City is audited every year and has not had any of them. They are in good financial status for their City and will continue to do so. If they come and audit, they welcome it and will do whatever they need to comply.

The City Manager said one of the biggest decisions to be made regarding the budget is the millage rate.

The City Manager said the property appraiser lists refund amounts that appear lower than anticipated. The City's impact will appear less, and he hopes to have more information at the April 16th workshop. The credits applied to the future property tax distributions will not significantly impact the budget.

Director Wepfer said fewer than a dozen residents applied for the reduction in sanitation fees, and none qualified.

The City Manager said they are not collecting the revenue from the permit fees, so there will be little impact.

Mayor Brooks asked if there is a system in place to identify the properties that have changed hands so that the new owners doing the remodels are being charged. The City Manager said yes. The Mayor asked if they were going to bill for those who were able to get permits without paying. The City Manager said they would assess the fees.

The City Manager said they issued 117 full demo permits, of which about 50 have been demolished. They reassess the property value about January 15th of each year. If there are 50 properties, there should not be that much of an impact. They will not see that until about January 2027. Going forward, they should not see as much impact as originally thought.

The City Manager said that once they reopen the Archibald parking lot, they will be back to recovering revenue for 110 spaces. Then, the Tom and Kitty Stuart parking lot will still be left to reopen. Since they raised the hourly rate in October from \$3 to \$4, they almost collected the same revenue in February 2025 as in February 2024.

Residents have asked what type of audits the City has. It has an annual external financial audit. Each department is responsible for making sure it is complying and not wasting money. It does not have an internal audit function, as that would be expensive. The finance department constantly monitors it.

Vice Mayor Kerr said it is disturbing to hear that people are selling their homes after pulling the permits. Mayor Brooks clarified that properties have been sold, and the new buyers got permits and were not charged. The new buyers have taken advantage of paying no permit fees. There was no system in place to capture that revenue.

Mayor Brooks said that in order to sell and get the best market value for the house, the new owners must prove that they can do the remodel.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if there are any plans for beach cleanup. When he walks the beach, he sees a lot of dilapidated debris on the water's edge that needs to be removed. The City Manager said Public Works picks up large items Monday through Friday. Director Wepfer said they run a mechanical beach rake along the wrack line Monday through Friday from 155th Avenue to John's Pass Park. The City Manager said that once Archibald is reopened, a lot more cleanups will occur.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if he had any thoughts on where to cut some spending to let them know in the future. The City Manager said they will look at it. They will look at contracts and agreements for certain services to see what they can cut. Some donations and contributions, such as to the Chamber of Commerce, can be cut. The other thing is making sure they go out to bid more often and get lease agreements. It is always good to return to the market to find the same type of service for less.

The City Manager will bring that back to the April workshop. There are some things they need to do, and some they do not. Governments typically spend the most money on personnel rather than capital projects. The City is small and not heavy on staff. It was not fully staffed in community development until a year ago. He is looking at the building side.

The City Manager said they had deferred some capital projects and were fortunate to receive an advance from FEMA, so the reserve revenue did not have to be used. They received a \$6.4 million deposit into their bank account and used about \$3.3 million on debris removal.

Mayor Brooks said at the Big-C meeting today that she learned that our City is the only one that took the FDEM class and was the only one to get the early payment. There might be more money for them if they need it.

3. FY 2026 Budget Workshop & Adoption Timeline –

- Budget Workshop #2 – April 16, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Review the 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan and discuss departmental capital improvement and equipment requests
- Budget Workshop #3 – May 28, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Updated Capital Improvement Plan
 - Position Listing & Benefits Overview
- Budget Workshop #4 – June 25, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Preliminary Budget Document
- Budget Workshop #5 – July 23, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Ad valorem tax analysis
 - Preliminary Budget Book – Summary of Changes
- Budget Workshop #6 – August 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Tentative Budget Book – Summary of Changes
- Public Hearing #1 – September 10, 2025 at 5:45 p.m.
 - 1st reading and public hearing – Adopt FY 2026 tentative millage rate ordinance and FY 2026 tentative budget ordinance
- Public Hearing #2 – September 24, 2025 at 5:45 p.m.
 - 2nd reading and public hearing – Adopt FY 2026 millage rate ordinance and FY 2026 budget ordinance

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

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brooks adjourned the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

ATTEST:

Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor

Clara VanBlargan, MMC, MSM, City Clerk