



MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 8, 2025 6:00 p.m.

The City of Madeira Beach Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. on January 8, 2025, in the Patricia Shontz Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor
David Tagliarini, Vice Mayor/Commissioner District 1
Ray Kerr, Commissioner District 2
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
Thomas Trask, City Attorney

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

City Attorney Tom Trask gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

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

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Brooks added a presentation by Senator Nick DiCeglie to the agenda.

Commissioner Ghovae motioned to approve the agenda with the added presentation. Commissioner Kerr seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner Kerr	"YES"
Commissioner McGeehen	"YES"
Vice Mayor Tagliarini	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

5. PROCLAMATIONS

There were no proclamations.

6. PRESENTATIONS

Senator Nick DiCeglie thanked Mayor Brooks for speaking with him a couple of weeks ago about what is going on from the City's perspective in relation to the permits, storm debris collections, and other things that Madeira Beach has been experiencing due to the recent hurricanes. He lives in Indian Rocks Beach and is going through the same. He offered his assistance and asked to consider him as a resource to help do whatever is necessary to help Madeira Beach move forward. He is the chair of the Appropriation Committee on Tourism, Transportation, and Economic Development, and he will be responsible for a lot of the hurricane recovery that will be coming through his committee. They are focusing on appropriation and policy with the Legislature. If any infrastructure projects were impacted by the storm that the City would need help with from an appropriation standpoint such as stormwater or any infrastructure, it is now the time to let him, or his staff know what those projects are and the cost of those projects. They are there to facilitate and help get that into the hopper so they can go through that funding process. From a policy standpoint, he wants to create a uniform set of standards, guidelines, or some system where local governments have resources during post-storms. After the initial emergency response, they all can start hitting the ground running. The State is going to provide resources. He has a language for bill drafting and works with Senate staff. He will send it to the Mayor for Board feedback when that is ready. Anything found to conflict with FEMA will be removed from the beginning. The most disappointing thing is that what they decide to do from a policy standpoint will not impact the residents of Pinellas County. He spoke to a large group today and was asked why the Legislature had not addressed the permitting issue after a storm like Ian. He does not represent that area of the State and has no answer. It is clearly an issue that is required and necessary. Still, it needs to be fine-tuned, so if it happens again, it has the least impact on the residents in one of the most difficult scenarios and experiences they would ever face: storm recovery and trying to get back in their homes. He is trying to make it better for all Floridians. He has the full support of leadership in Tallahassee, which is always a plus. They have a great delegation in Pinellas County as well. Representative Cheney represents the area in the House of Representatives and is very compassionate about the issue and making things right for our residents. The appropriation opportunity for them in Pinellas County is unique. They have great leadership skills in key positions.

Senator DiCeglie responded to questions and comments from the Board and said he looked forward to working with everyone.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Threasa Nelson, 140th Avenue, Madeira Beach, thanked the City for its help in getting the residents back into their homes so that they could have some stability within their lives. Businesses are an important aspect as well. She has about 40 years of experience in environmental health and safety and spent her last 10 years in the military as the DOD (Department of Defense) representative to FEMA between the Commonwealth of Virginia and FEMA. What is seen in Madeira Beach has been the worst. Regarding public safety and how citizens can do more to help with recovery, many containers of paint and chemicals are still left behind, and many are sitting by the homes where there are no longer people. Federal and State laws exempt household hazardous waste, which must be picked up. When the weather gets hot again, the containers could pressurize and burst. The rain will cause it to go into the waterways. They need to start looking at the long-term recovery for the community. If there is anything that she and other people can do to help, please let her know.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. 2024-12-11, BOC Regular Meeting Minutes

B. 2024-12-11, BOC Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Kerr motioned to approve the meeting minutes as written. Commissioner McGeehen seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Kerr	"YES"
Commissioner McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Vice Mayor Tagliarini	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. ABP 2025-01 Dockside Dave's Restaurant

City Attorney Tom Trask said the applicant is Dockside Dave's Restaurant, LLC located at 14701 and 14703 Gulf Blvd. Madeira Beach, Fl 33708. He read the summary of the Code, Article 6, Division 6, Alcoholic Beverages, and the following five factors in Code, Section 110-532 for consideration of the alcoholic beverage application:

1. The extent to which the location and the extent to which the proposed alcoholic beverage request will adversely affect the character of the existing neighborhood.
2. The extent to which traffic generated as a result of the location of the proposed alcoholic beverage request will create congestion or present a safety hazard.
3. Whether or not the proposed use is compatible with the particular location for which it is proposed.
4. Whether or not the proposed use will adversely affect the public safety.
5. No application for review under this section shall be considered until the applicant has paid in full any outstanding charges, fees, interest, fines or penalties owed by the applicant to the City under any section of the Code.

Mr. Trask said the burden of proof is set out in Section 2-10 A, of the City's Code, Burden of proof; conditions; rezoning, stated as follows.

The applicant shall have the burden of proof at the hearing to show by the greater weight of the evidence that the application is consistent with the city comprehensive plan and complies with all procedural requirements of law. Conditions may be suggested by the applicant, the City or any party, or may be imposed by the Board, which are intended to assure consistency and compliance.

Mr. Trask said there are two parties that are identified tonight: Dockside Dave's Restaurant LLC and the City. There have been no notices of intent filed with the City. The order of presentation normally would be the applicant first and then the City, but pursuant to Section 2-9 F, of the Code, he has the ability as the City Attorney to modify the presentation. It would be easier for City staff to present first and then the applicant, and they will do that.

Mr. Trask read the quasi-judicial proceedings as follows:

The Board of Commissioners acts in a quasi-judicial rather than a legislative capacity stating that the hearing is not the Board's function to make law but rather to apply law that has already been established. In the quasi-judicial hearing, the Board is required by law to make findings of fact based upon the evidence presented at the hearing and apply those findings of fact to previously established criteria containing the Code of Ordinances to make a legal decision regarding the application before it. The Board may only consider evidence at the hearing that the law considers competent substantial and relevant to the issues. If the competent substantial and relevant evidence at the hearing demonstrates that the applicant has met the criteria establishing the Code of Ordinances, then the Board is required by law to find in favor of the applicant. By the same token if the confident substantial and relevant evidence of the hearing demonstrates that the applicants failed to meet the criteria established in the Code of Ordinances then the Board is required by law to find 'against' the applicant.

Mr. Trask asked the Commissioners if they received or needed to disclose any ex parte communications that they had with the applicant or any conflicts of interest to disclose. There were none.

Mr. Trask administered the Oath to the witnesses present at the meeting: the applicant (Brandon Nazzario) and the City staff Andrew Morris.

Mr. Trask asked staff to make their presentation. He said the packet is in front of them and asked if the City would be asking for it be received as evidence. Mr. Morris said he would like it to be received into evidence.

City Staff Presentation

Andrew Morris presented the item and read the staff memo into the record, which included the five factors and staff recommendations for the Board to consider when approving the item.

Staff Memorandum to Board of Commissioners – Meeting Details, January 8, 2025

Background:

Pursuant to Land Development Code Article VI, Division 6, Alcoholic Beverages, the applicant for ABP 2025-01, is seeking a Special Food Service Establishment (4COP) alcoholic beverage license for the sale of beer, wine, and liquor for consumption on premises at Dockside Dave's Restaurant of Madeira Beach located at 14701 Gulf Blvd and 14703 Gulf Blvd Madeira Beach, FL 33708. Dockside Dave's Restaurant currently has a 4COP alcoholic beverage license (ABP 2024-02) and is requesting to enlarge the area where alcoholic beverages are sold. Section 110-535. - Expansion of alcoholic beverage zoning of the Madeira Beach Code of Ordinances requires approval of the Board of Commissioners to enlarge the area for the sale of alcoholic beverages, including consideration of all requirements under Section 110-532 – Consideration of alcoholic beverage application. Dockside Daves is in the C-3, Retail Commercial Zoning District with a future land use designation of Residential/Office/Retail (R/O/R). Notice was mailed to properties within 300 feet, and posted on the subject property, at the Gulf Beaches Public Library, City Hall, and the City of Madeira Beach website.

Discussion:

When considering the alcoholic beverage license application, the Board of Commissioners shall consider the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the location and the extent to which the proposed alcoholic beverage request will adversely affect the character of the existing neighborhood.

Dockside Dave's alcohol expansion to the adjacent property will not negatively impact the existing neighborhood character. The existing neighborhood is mostly commercial or multifamily uses, and the existing restaurant already has a Special Food Service Establishment (4COP) alcohol license to serve beer, wine, and liquor on the premises. Additionally, The Reef Bar and Grill located next to this property already serves liquor.

(2) The extent to which traffic generated as a result of the location of the proposed

alcoholic beverage request will create congestion or present a safety hazard.

Dockside Dave's does meet the parking requirements located in (Sec. 110-971). The business owner has an agreement for 11 additional parking spaces at a nearby commercial property for employee parking. Customer parking is located on the property. The proposed alcohol use does not present a safety hazard or lead to additional congestion.

(3) Whether or not the proposed use is compatible with the particular location for which it is proposed.

This proposed expansion of alcohol use is compatible with the location. The expansion to the adjacent property is zoned for commercial use. Nearby businesses like the Reef Bar and Grill already serve liquor.

(4) Whether or not the proposed use will adversely affect the public safety.

Public safety should not be adversely affected by Dockside Daves Restaurant expanding their alcoholic beverage zoning for serving liquor for consumption on the premises. The restaurant is more than 300 feet away from any established church, synagogue, temple, or place of religious worship, public or private school operated for the instruction of minors, or youth recreation (community) center. This 300-foot requirement is the minimum distance required for bars and clubs located in the C-3, Zoning District (sec. 110-530) and does not need to be met for restaurants. Dockside Dave's is currently classified as a restaurant.

(5) No application for review under this section shall be considered until the applicant has paid in full any outstanding charges, fees, interest, fines or penalties owed by the applicant to the City under any section of the Code.

The applicant has no outstanding fines or penalties owed to the City under any section of the Code.

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the approval of ABP 2025-01 with the following conditions:

1. The approval of this expansion of alcohol beverage zoning use is not an approval of the remodel permit for the properties.
2. The stop work order for the properties will need to be resolved before City Staff can sign the state application for extension of licensed premises.

Attachments:

Local Application
Parking Agreement
Proposed Site Plan State Application
Public Notice Mailing and Posting

Mr. Morris said that it concluded his presentation.

Questions from the Board of Commissioners

Mr. Trask asked if there were any questions from the Commission for City staff.

Vice Mayor Tagliarini asked if the applicant would have to resolve the stop work before they could move forward or if it is there that they must understand they will have to do that at some point.

Mr. Morris said they understand they must do that to move forward with fixing and getting the restaurant back up and running.

Commissioner Kerr said that 11 spots for offsite parking are in agreement with another commercial establishment. He asked what would happen if that agreement was no longer in effect or if the adjacent commercial property were sold to a different owner. Is there a stipulation in the agreement that other offsite parking will be made available? Is it a temporary thing, 6-month, or 60-year type of agreement?

Mr. Morris, referencing the monthly parking agreement, said he would have to ask the applicant if it was monthly. They are paying the owner each month, but he does not know the terms of the agreement, whether long term or not. They would have to clarify that.

Commissioner Ghovae said on the application that they reference the number of employees to be 30, and on the site plan, it says 10. Mr. Morris said it is usually 10 on a shift but 30 in total. The application would need to clarify that.

Commissioner Ghovae asked how they calculated the parking requirements for the particular use. Mr. Morris said that in the section of the Code they have for restaurant use, they must calculate both the seating for the employees and any dance floor type used. He had to calculate a parking spot for every four seats and every two employees. There are some parking credits related to bike racks. They needed additional offsite parking for the employees to meet the number for the expansion. Commissioner Ghovae said that the plan references the total parking requirement of 42 but does not say how the 42 was achieved. Mr. Morris said he did an Excel spreadsheet of the parking count but did not include it with the staff report. He will include it with future alcohol permits. The additional parking is what fixed it. He does not have the exact count with him.

Mr. Trask asked for confirmation that his testimony meets the parking requirements as required by the Code. Mr. Morris said yes. He did an Excel spreadsheet and made the calculations based on what they gave him, including the additional 11.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if they also met the 50% FEMA rule. Mr. Trask said that was a building issue and it would be when the building permit is considered. That could be made as a condition of the application. They will be required to meet all Florida Building Code requirements. Mr. Morris said correct. The FEMA 50% rule must be met if the application permit gets approved.

Mr. Trask said the applicant, Mr. Nazzario has been sworn under Oath. It is his opportunity to first

ask Mr. Morris any cross-examination questions. If there are no questions, he could give any presentation he wants.

Applicant Presentation

Brandon Nazzario said he followed all the criteria and all the guidelines. The packet presented shows how many parking spaces they have, and it is numbered on their exactly how they are laying it out, which includes the bike racks, motorcycle parking, and excess parking. He wanted a place for his employees to go so they could take care of as many guests as possible. They already utilize the building next door for storage, walk in coolers, and freezers. It is not currently being used, so he wanted to incorporate it. During the two-month season, their restaurant is completely slammed. People are wall to wall and hanging out in the street. He wanted to give them a place to hang out. He can incorporate the building to make it a more beautiful area. Utilizing the space would help the business.

Mr. Nazzario said they have 30 employees in total, 10 employees per shift. He was happy to abide by the FEMA 50% rule condition. He will follow all the building codes on what they need to do to ensure they do it right.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

The City Attorney said the item is back before the Commission for consideration and approval of the application. It would be done by motion. Staff are recommending two conditions to be placed on it, which is shown in the packet on Page 26, and a third condition recommended by Commissioner Ghovae:

City staff recommendations:

1. The approval of this expansion of alcohol beverage zoning use is not an approval of the remodel permit for the properties.
2. The stop work order for the properties will need to be resolved before City Staff can sign the state application for extension of licensed premises.

Commissioner Ghovae's recommendation:

3. The property owner must comply with the Florida Building Code and the 50% FEMA Rule.

The Commission made comments in favor of the restaurant and the expansion.

Commissioner Kerr thought the Board had already approved it a few months before the recent storms and did not know how it differed. Perhaps the storm changed some things, and they had to reapply. He would be in favor of approving with the recommendations set.

Mayor Brooks said the Board had previously approved their liquor permit. Then the hurricane came, and after reviewing the plans, it was realized that the use of that building was fantastic. Parking is a big deal, and they should always be conscious of following the rules. She has eaten there many times, and many people who go there walk to the restaurant. She and her husband ride their bicycles there.

Vice Mayor Tagliarini motioned to approve ABP 2025-01 for Dockside Dave's Restaurant with the indicated conditions. Commissioner Ghovae seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Vice Mayor Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner McGeehen	"YES"
Commissioner Kerr	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. John's Pass Dredging Update

The City Manager presented the item and gave an update on John's Pass dredging project. They would not know the hurricane's exact impact until next week's meeting with the Department of Environmental Protection. The condition is similar to what it was before the hurricanes. Without any type of study or investigation under the water, it is difficult to determine. The contractor, Aptim, has also been out to the site, but they do not yet know the assessment. Nothing has happened in the area since 2018 regarding any type of dredging or sand removal. The Department of Environmental Protection asked that they obtain a right of access or a construction easement from the adjacent property owner. It was not an issue with the property owner. The dredging will occur over the next several months. At the next workshop, Nicole Sharp, on behalf of Aptim will be there to provide an update.

Mayor Brooks opened to public comment.

Chuck Dillion, a resident of Madeira Beach, asked if any plans or studies were being done as to why it happened. When they moved there 13 years ago, the bridge had just been constructed, and now they must re-dredge it. If they are doing it again in the next 10 or 12 years, they might want to consider doing something to keep it from returning.

Mayor Brooks said in a conversation with the city manager that she recalled it mentioned that the County would maintain dredging once they did the dredging. The City Manager said he and Megan Wepfer are meeting with the County tomorrow to discuss the next item on the agenda and will ask about it and bring that information to the Board. It had been communicated to him that the permit would be for ten years, so if any dredging was needed during that time, they would not have to go through the permitting process with the Army Core again. They would need a DOT permit. They

are not as extensive as those from the Department of Environmental Protection or the Core. Mayor Brooks said she would go back and look at her notes. She recalled it being said that it would be maintained and re-dredged by the County at the County's expense and not the City's. The City Manager said they will find that out.

Mayor Brooks asked if Aptim would manage the bid process and how long it would take. The City Manager said Aptim would manage the bid process, which should only take a few weeks. Mayor Brooks said because it has been such a touchy subject with the community, she is not sure where the communication breakdown is from Aptim to the City, but the level of miscommunication given to the community is an opportunity for them to figure out how they did that to correct it for future projects to be sure that when they put something out there that it is accurate. She does not blame anyone, but information is important to be correct.

Commissioner Kerr said he recalled that the permit was for an extended period, like for 10 years. They were not privy to the fact that the County would pick up the bill for future dredging in the next 10 years. The Mayor said that was her understanding. The City Manager said he would clarify it. Commissioner Kerr said the project is long overdue.

Commissioner Ghovae said he understands that the \$1.55 million grant is available until June 30, 2025. The City Manager said yes. They have been told they would grant an extension if they needed it. Commissioner Ghovae asked what that meant construction-wise. The City Manager said it is to be completed by June. If they need to extend it, there have been no issues in extending it. Commissioner Ghovae asked how long they would have to request the extension. The City Manager said it could be just a few weeks. Commissioner Ghovae said they needed to be sure of that. The City Manager said it had happened twice already, which is why he had mentioned it before.

Commissioner Ghovae asked about the depth of the sand to be removed. The City Manager said due to the storms, they do not know. They are waiting to determine the exact depth originally. They were told to be about 20 to 30 feet, which is how they determined the 13,000 cubic yards of sand removal.

Commissioner McGeehen wanted confirmation that the dewatered sand would be going north on the City's beach after the dredging. The City Manager said that is the plan.

B. John's Pass Park Jetty Repair

The City Manager said last week that the city staff had removed the remaining broken concrete and the rebar. It has been used considerably within the last couple of weeks. He showed pictures of what it now looks like: a sand walkway. They need the Board's direction on moving forward to bring back a cost at the workshop meeting. Should they leave it as is, add a sidewalk, or add a Mobi mat for the entire way? Tomorrow, they are meeting with the County for suggestions or any requirements. They will not need a permit from the US Army Corp because their jurisdiction is the waterway.

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

Vice Mayor Tagliarini said he appreciated how soon it was done and made it available to the residents. He is not opposed to rebuilding the sidewalk and is in no hurry because it now looks like the passes in other areas. It is rocks and sand.

Commissioner Kerr asked if they received any input from the community. A sidewalk would give easier access, especially for people who need help. However, he would like to hear input from the community.

Commissioner McGeehen said he understands that it must be ADA compliant and asked if it included all the way down to the water as far as handrails, etc. The City Manager said if you look at their two miles of beach and 20 plus miles of sand on the coast to see what is not required. They would need to verify the details. A Mobi mat is an option to allow someone to get on the sand. It would be difficult without it. None of their access down to the beach has that. The City will be putting back the Mobi mats that were destroyed by the storms. There is no requirement to make it accessible and to what point down to the water. They will research that for the workshop.

Commissioner Ghovae said he did not favor a Mobi mat because it is flimsy and can easily be removed by wave action wind. He would be in favor of a sidewalk. The sidewalk would be a barrier between the sand and the boulders. If left as it is, a lot of erosion could happen in the sand, and it would get washed into the bay. Regarding ADA, there are a lot of sidewalks abutting seawalls, and with seawalls, there are no handrails, so ADA would not be a big concern in this case. If building waterward of the CCC (Coastal Construction Control) Line, they would need a DEP permit. It is important they have all the permits prior to construction. He would favor an eight-foot-wide sidewalk for people to walk down and enjoy the beach. The sidewalk also gave access leading to John's Pass.

Mayor Brooks said she has spent more time at the jetty since it was jackhammered out than before. She had the opportunity to speak to many fisher people fishing there who lived in other cities, such as Orlando. It is amazing how many people go down and enjoy that area. She would love to see a sidewalk go back not necessarily for the person who is going to fish because many who fish there do so off the rocks and not the sidewalk. If in a wheelchair or handicap, the only way to access the end of the jetty is a sidewalk. A Mobi mat is a neat alternative until they get the sidewalk built. She would like to have whatever information they get from the County at the workshop because what is decided to do there would depend on the costs. Depending on the costs, they may be unable to commit to it this year. They must know what they will build and how to build it. They need solid information to move to the next step.

The City Manager said mobility mats are considerably less expensive than sidewalks. A 6.5-foot wide Mobi mat is under \$5,000 per one hundred feet. The estimated distance of the previous sidewalk was just under 200 feet. They would need to determine how far down to the sand a Mobility mat would need to go. It would be subject to environmental conditions. They would remove it from an impending storm to keep it from being destroyed. A sidewalk is much more expensive, but it allows people to walk all the way out. The end of the sidewalk would require safety rails like before the storms damaged that. He will bring all the information back to the workshop in two weeks.

Following the discussion, Public Works Director Megan Wepfer said it is much easier to get a mobility mat today than before because it only requires a field permit. Commissioner Ghovae said DEP will not allow concrete waterward of the CCC line. The City Manager said they would discuss that to see what they suggest.

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

C. Hurricane Updates – Recovery, Rebuild, Permitting, FEMA, FDEM

The City Manager gave an update on the item. They had heard everything post-storm from Senator DiCeglie. The City's goal has been and continues to be to repair, restore, get everybody back into their homes, and make the City look better. During the past two months, through repairing, rebuilding, and getting people's property cleaned out and debris removed, they have removed about 140,000 yards. Their debris removal contractor company, DRC Emergency Services, will be collecting hazardous containers left at the curb mentioned during public comment. That will be forthcoming after the remaining debris has been picked up. A majority of debris has been picked up. They are working through their repair mitigation to the City's infrastructure, including the parking lots, parks, and softball fields, to put back as before. Staff is getting quotes and issuing bids for repairs to be made at City Hall, Recreation Center, Archibald Park, etc. They are reviewing the road infrastructure to make sure that what needs to be repaired is repaired. The City is involved with FEMA to get the expenses reimbursed. The cost for reimbursement will be for the debris removal. That is part of the public assistance program. They will continue to provide information to the public on individual assistance so they know what to do and where to go. The biggest one that Senator DiCeglie talked about is the FEMA 50% permit rule. They continue to provide the number of permit applications received, the number of permits issued, and the number of substantial damage notifications that have gone out. All staff have been working on it. It takes everyone to put the City together. They will continue doing that, for that is the commitment going forward.

Marci Forbs in Community Development provided an update on the permitting workflow process. By the end of the week, they should have over 900 substantial determination letters gone out. After meeting with the professionals and receiving feedback, they are now able to accept appraisals better than before. The decisions made impact the residents. With the additional staff, they are working together, and it looks to be going well. They are looking to provide more robust hours to help people. They learned better ways from the County to do things. Leadership through the process has been phenomenal.

The City Manager mentioned the teardown and the rebuild program. The housing assistance program will end in January. Elevate Florida, mentioned earlier today in the County's update, reiterated that the State, through the Florida Division of Emergency Management, had the ability to provide grants. You will be excluded if you are in the V-zone. There is no cap for the grant if you are going to elevate your home. If people participate through the teardown and rebuild mitigation program, grants will be available for up to \$220,000. They would have to sign up through the Florida Division of Emergency Management. The State has allocated \$400 million for that program, specifically for the teardown and rebuilding. The City has been distributing the information and making the flyers available explaining it. The county continues to share

information on what is available and how it would work. The City will no longer be a passthrough. People would go directly to the Florida Division of Emergency Management to receive the information and to follow up on it. The Board has approved waiving the permit fees for a rebuild for a year through September. They are starting to receive questions regarding sanitation services. Single-family homes that are not occupied continue to receive their bill. He will bring something back to the workshop about that, and the Board can decide what to do. It might take an amendment to the City's Code.

The City Manager and Ms. Forbes responded to questions and comments from the Board.

Mayor Brooks said she has seen a high level of commitment from City staff. Employees have been trained in other departments to do new things and are happy about it. The leadership within their City has been fantastic. She thanked everyone for their hard work and their caring for doing that.

The City Manager said he received a request from dozens of individuals wanting the City to keep the laundry and shower trailers. He forwarded that information to the Board. The trailers were set to be demobilized this Saturday, January 11, according to the timeframe given to them by the Florida Department of Emergency Management. The owner said the trailers could stay. The State said they could only remain if the City took over their agreement. Currently, the State pays the cost, and the City pays the cost. That cost has not been provided yet. The ones that the City paid for with the first storm were like \$160,000 for a month. There were six trailers, two for showers and four for bathrooms.

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

Vice Mayor Tagliarini said he would be in favor but would need time certain of when to stop and the cost. He asked if they would be reimbursed for the costs. The City Manager said he would not know. The Florida Divisions of Emergency Management stated they were ending the mission as a resource. Finance Director Andrew Laflin said he did not think the cost would be reimbursed because the State was providing that resource and is cutting it off for a reason.

Mayor Brooks said one of the statements made at an emergency meeting, Director Guthrie had stated that at some point, you must stop. The disaster is a disaster, and at some point they must stop the comfort centers along with other things. If not, people would become dependent on it. The City Manager said there is a pay laundry facility on Gulf Blvd near the intersection of 150th. They could try it through the end of January or February and see what it would be like. The cost could be about \$150,000 to the end of February. Mayor Brooks said that it was a lot of money.

Commissioner Tagliarini said he would need the cost to determine what to do.

The City Attorney said the item was not on the agenda. They do not have a contract, they do not have a cost, and they no longer have an emergency. The Board will be violating its Code to approve continuing something, especially in the range of \$150,000, without the information and without following the Code. He strongly recommended that they do not go down that path. They could discuss it but cannot go down that path until properly vetted.

Commissioner Kerr said he agrees with Mr. Trask. They must follow the State guidelines. It is what it is. There are commercial laundry facilities available. They want to be compassionate, but at some point, they want to return to normal.

Commissioner Ghovae said they need to listen to their city attorney.

12. CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS

A. Approval to purchase a JCB 35Z-1 Compact Excavator

Public Works Director Megan Wepfer explained the item. The fiscal impact would be \$59,040. It was budgeted for \$65,000 in the FY 2025 budget. Staff recommended approval of the purchase. She explained the purpose and responded to questions and comments from the Board. The equipment would continue to be used and is for city use only. They would not need to get three bids because it is a piggyback off the Sourcewell contract.

Mayor Brooks said she will not open to public comment since there is no public in the audience.

Commissioner Kerr motioned to approve the purchase of a JCB 35Z-1 compact excavator in the amount of \$59,040. Vice Mayor Tagliarini seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Kerr	"YES"
Vice Mayor Tagliarini	"YES"
Commissioner Ghovae	"YES"
Commissioner McGeehen	"YES"
Mayor Brooks	"YES"

The motion carried 5-0.

13. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2025 Florida Legislative Session

City Manager Robin Gomez said the Legislative Session begins in less than two months. They have worked with the Legislative Delegation to attempt to secure funding. The City had some success last year in obtaining funding for the dredging and the seawall repair and replacements this year. They have been working with the Big-C on common issues. For example, the short-term rental proposed legislation and other proposed legislation involving changes to the building codes. They also received funding for street repairs that are part of the stormwater project. This item is to get feedback due to the time constraint. The Legislature has been working on resiliency, so they need to suggest anything related to resiliency. They have made requests in the past, specifically for appropriations for a public works/fire department joint building. They did not receive any appropriations for that. As they go forward, they would like to request funding for road projects to alleviate future flooding impacts from the storms they have experienced. Anything they can share

with Shumaker, the City's lobbyist group, would be helpful. He is trying to get the lobbyists to come to the January workshop.

Vice Mayor Tagliarini asked if they could fix the Madeira springs in front of the Daiquiri deck. The City Manager said they addressed it with FDOT. It is not a specific Legislative action, but it has been an annoyance for about a decade. FDOT made a significant repair last year, but it has returned. Director Wepfer said FDOT spent \$250,000 on underdrains to repair it, but it needs to be repaired again due to Hurricane Debby.

Commissioner Kerr said he wanted to suggest putting it on the workshop agenda when Senator DiCeglie was speaking. He had asked for the City's infrastructure funding requests. The federal government authorized a huge amount of funding a few months ago for power infrastructure. That has always been off the table when speaking to the delegation, but now that federal funds are available, at least request them. If not requested, they will not get it. There is plenty of roadway infrastructure they need to do, such as road elevations. That is just a quick shortlist. He has an email saying that FEMA announced \$1.35 billion to increase climate resilience nationwide. He would think that climate resilience has something to do with road elevations and their stormwater.

Commissioner McGeehen said he would like to see a quick study of the basic infrastructure and what improvements need to be made to decrease flooding.

Commissioner Ghovae asked if they planned to go to Tallahassee this year. The City Manager said no. Commissioner Ghovae said it would be a fantastic idea. A lot of cities go to Tallahassee and meet up with the Legislators. It would be a great time to get to know them, and they know us, and to show support. He has been in Tallahassee about every other year for many years. If they do not have it in their schedule this year, he would recommend making a habit and going this year during this season. They could set up meetings ahead of time to meet with their senators and representatives. They could get a lot of mileage by doing that.

The City Manager said they have hired Shumaker for several years to go on the City's behalf. Commissioner Ghovae said that is something different. He suggests a personal connection between the Commission and the State Legislators.

Mayor Brooks asked if going as a group would violate the Sunshine Law. The City Attorney said it would not violate the Sunshine Law if they met individually.

Mayor Brooks said they should work more with their relationship with their representatives. Over the years, the City has had strong ties with our State representatives. The relationships seem to change based on who sits on the Commission, which is a shame. They sit there serving the residents of the City. It is their job to do that. There is no reason they cannot individually have that relationship on any given day. She does not know what going to Tallahassee as a group would look like, so she would need to understand that more because relationships are great. What she would like to see in the department budgets over the next several years are projects they have planned and which would be best for the lobbyist to help get funding for. She understands that without the help of Representative Linda Cheney, they would not have gotten the funding for the John's Pass dredging. She wanted to know what the lobbyist does for the City. The City Manager

had mentioned earlier that he was trying to get the lobbyist to the meeting. They should not have to try to get the lobbyists there because they work for the City. She would like to understand the role of the lobbyist.

Commissioner Ghovae asked how much the City paid the lobbyist and what they got for the money. The City Manager said it was about \$50,000 a year. The Mayor said that in 2022, they got \$1.5 million for John's Pass dredging only with the help of Representative Cheney. In 2023, they got nothing. In 2024, they got \$100,000. The Board knows what is needed, but the city staff knows what funding they need because they are in it daily. She was not saying that the lobbyist did not help in that. They need to know what to push the lobbyist to do for them. And, in conjunction with their elected officials, to have those conversations.

Director Wepfer added that they had three project appropriations, but she does not know the years. The beach groins were \$1.75 million, Area Six \$1 million, and Area Three \$549,400.

The City Manager said the Florida League of Cities is a legislative platform to preserve existing or propose changes such as property taxes to add more exemptions. Although exemptions lower revenue for the City, they save property owners on property taxes.

The City Manager said he would have Shumaker at the meeting to give an update. Commissioner Kerr said he understands that their representative with Shumaker has changed, but they have never met them. Mayor Brooks said that should be high on the list.

14. AGENDA SETTING

- A. Ordinance 2025-06, CIP Update in Comprehensive Plan
- B. Ordinance 2025-04, Planned Development
- C. City Information Dissemination
- D. Grant Writing
- E. Military Court of Honor
- F. FY 25 1st Quarter Financial Update
- G. John's Pass Dredging Update
- H. Post-Hurricane Update
- I. Presentation: Advanced Engineering Design, Rebuilding Madeira Beach
- J. Ordinance 2025-05, Temporary Structures on Residential Property after Natural Emergencies
- K. Mulch
- L. New Website Quotes
- M. Information Officer
- N. Task Force Committee

The City Manager reviewed the list.

Items added to the workshop agenda:

City Manager

- Amendment to the City's adult use establishment ordinance - There was a legislative change last year that requires the City to update its ordinance on adult use establishments because they increased the minimum age.

Commissioner Kerr

- 2025 Florida Legislative Session
 - Infrastructure funding request for Senator DiCeglie
 - Create a preliminary list they can discuss and add to it so they can get that ready to send off at the end of the workshop.
 - If they are interacting with FEMA about the insurance, let them know that it is ridiculous to elevate four feet above base flood elevation and not calculate it into the insurance premium. Homeowners will be elevating their homes at a very high cost and then hit with \$8,000 to \$10,000 insurance premiums when there is nothing they are insuring. It is excessive.

Commissioner Ghovae

- Tom and Kitty Stuart Park discussion

Mayor Brooks

- Department heads to give updates on damage due to the hurricanes and the storms they are making. She is unsure if everybody knows about all the damage so that it would be informative. For example:
 - Public Works Director Megan Wepfer
 - Walkovers that are damaged and options available instead of rebuilding the walkway
 - Putting in a Mobi mat
 - Rebuilding down the road so the walkways are accessible now.
 - Recreation Director Jay Hatch
 - Rec Center and fields
 - Community Development/Building Department
 - Update on the repairs downstairs

15. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

- **Board of Commissioners – 2025 Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule**

The Board changed the Wednesday, October 8, 2025, BOC Regular Meeting to Wednesday, October 1, 2025 because the Mayor would not be able to attend the meeting.

- **City Attorney**

No report.

- **City Clerk's Report – January 2025**

The City Clerk reviewed her January 2025 report. The Oath of Office for the encumbrances will be on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, along with the appointment of a Vice Mayor. A reception will be held before the meeting. The Laserfiche Public Records Search Portal for the public should be available to the public tomorrow. Documents will continue to be uploaded.

- **City Manager**

The City Manager thanked the Commission for their continued support and interactions with the residents and businesses. It has been extremely helpful with post storms. City staff said they appreciated the snacks brought in on Fridays from one of the Commissioners.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brooks adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Anne-Marie Brooks, Mayor

ATTEST:

Clara VanBlargan, MMC, MSM, City Clerk