



Minutes – Beautification and Energy Efficiency Board

City Hall Council Chamber
900 E. Strawbridge Avenue
Melbourne, FL 32901

August 21, 2026 – 2:00 p.m.

A. Opening

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

Present:

Nicholas Sanzone, chair
Wade Senti, vice chair
Stephen Newman
George Kobosko
Austin Ekonomou
Hunter Benninger

Absent: Tyler White (excused)

The following staff members were also present:

Megan Ruben
Todd Cook
Cheryl Caldwell
Michael Gosselin

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by S. Newman/ G. Kobosko to approve July 17, 2026, regular meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment

No comment.

B. Presentations

6. Brooke Blosser, Science Communications & Outreach Coordinator with the Marine Resources Council (MRC) talked about the MRC and their goals of improving water quality, protecting and restoring fish and wildlife resources of the lagoon's coastal waters and the watershed by advocating and using sound science education and public engagement. The three main pillars of the organization are the mangrove restoration nursery, their low impact living program, and their water quality monitoring program.

C. Unfinished Business

7. BEEB Updates

a. Sustainable action plan- Nicholas Sanzone

Ms. Ruben reminded the BEEB that copies were sent to the board for review and comment. Clarification is needed before the report can be presented to city council. Mr. Newman was concerned because climate change and carbon neutrality were not addressed. Mr. Kobosko asked if dates and page numbers could be added so it is clear what version is being discussed. Mr. Sanzone encouraged all board members to review entire document again, including the definition of sustainability, and email any thoughts, suggestions, or changes to Ms. Ruben for the next meeting.

b. Update on data for strategic goals

Mr. Newman volunteered to spearhead this category. Ms. Ruben will send him the previous tracking data that Dr. John Windsor compiled in the past.

c. Beautification program & living medians project - Austin Ekonomou

Mr. Ekonomou asked if any edits were submitted for the document he created about the living medians project. Ms. Ruben stated there were none. Mr. Ekonomou clarified some language pertaining to right of ways and swales. Mr. Newman suggested recommending that no new curbs are built to allow runoff to flow into the swales. Mr. Ekonomou will also be adding dates and version numbers to the documents. Mr. Sanzone suggested renaming the project due to the focus changing to right of ways and swales. Ms. Ruben suggested streetscapes due to the engineering department using that verbiage for the downtown Melbourne design that is being developed. Living streetscapes was decided to be used in the future.

d. Gems award- Todd Cook

Mr. Cook reached out and confirmed with Mr. Shackleford from the Melbourne Founder's Museum about the Gems award being presented to him on Saturday, September 26 at 10:00 A.M.

e. Clean energy awards – Nicholas Sanzone

Mr. Sanzone had no nominations for this month and asked the board for suggestions. Mr. Benninger asked about the police building and staff will check on the completion date due to the criteria of the clean energy awards. Mr. Kobosko asked about the criteria and Ms. Ruben will send copies to the board.

f. Litter reduction – Stephen Newman

Michael Gosselin, Code Enforcement Inspector for the City of Melbourne, was available for questions about this topic. Mr. Gosselin spoke about the code enforcement department and the lack of manpower to be proactive. They rely on the community to help keep the city clean and report code violations. Mr. Newman suggested a disconnect between citizens, realizing that they need to be a part of the solution. Having to state your name for complaints can inhibit citizens from calling issues in. Ms. Ruben pointed out that this was state law. Mr. Newman made a motion to design a flyer encouraging people to interact with code enforcement regarding litter issues. Mr. Kobosko suggested adding the same type of information to city newsletters. Ms. Ruben can add information to newsletters and social media once BEEB develops the message. Mr. Newman suggested landscaping and tree service companies receive a notice of best management practices (BMP) upon business license renewals. He will work on the language for the BMPs for board approval and distribution. Mr. Newman asked about chronic violators with regards to derelict properties. Mr. Gosselin and his department are aware of many of the properties and work as fast as possible while conforming to the law and budgets. A police department representative will be at the next meeting to discuss enforcement of litter laws.

Moved by S. Newman/A. Ekonomou to develop information to be distributed with the water bills, newsletters, and social media encouraging people to interact with code enforcement regarding litter. Motion carried unanimously.

g. Future speakers

Mr. Sanzone suggested a member of the FDOT for a possible partnership with BEEB. The waterway warriors and other non-profits were discussed as future speakers as well. Mr. Sanzone asked for other suggestions from the board. Mr. Kobosko suggested Native Butterfly Flowers that could talk about native plants that could be used in the board's beautification projects.

h. Annual report

Ms. Ruben mentioned the annual report for city council due in March. Mr. Sanzone asked that she send over a copy of last year's for him to look over and write up the first draft to present to the board at the next meeting.

D. New Business

8. Items for next agenda

Landscape BMP's and a final draft of the sustainability action plan for board approval. Ms. Ruben is working on a proposal for plastic reduction during city events that she would like the BEEB to make recommendations for.

9. Board announcements and comments

Mr. Benninger will be leaving the BEEB for the city council, district six, in November due to running unopposed in the recent election. Mr. Sanzone spoke about the Lagoon Fest event at Front St. Park on Saturday, October 17 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. that will include live music, vendors, speakers, and lots of fun celebrating the lagoon. He also talked about an event at Captain Hiram's on August 26 for environmental professionals. He will send the information to Ms. Ruben to share with the board.

D. Adjournment

Mr. Sanzone adjourned the meeting at 3:34 p.m.
Cheryl Caldwell, Recording Secretary