

**City of Melbourne, Florida**  
**Agenda**  
**Melbourne Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Committee**

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

**November 7, 2025 • 8:00 AM**

1. A meeting of the Melbourne Downtown Redevelopment Committee was held in the Council Chamber at 900 East Strawbridge Avenue and was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Lisa Herendeen.
2. All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. The following members were:

Present: Lisa Herendeen, Chair  
Bert Luer, Vice Chair  
John Lucas, Member  
JoAnn Davis, Member  
Marva Murray, Member  
Brett Miller, Alternate Member

Absent: Chris Adams, Alternate Member (excused)  
Gerry Smith, Member (excused)

Also Present: Cindy Dittmer, Community Development Director  
Robert McKinzie, Economic Development Manager  
Marcus Smith, City Council Member  
Mary Wolak, Recording Secretary

4. **Approval of Minutes – October 3, 2025**  
**Moved by Herendeen/Luer to approve the October 3, 2025 meeting minutes as presented.**  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

5. **Melbourne Main Street Update**  
*Kim Agee, Executive Director, Melbourne Main Street*

Ms. Agee discussed the Melbourne Main Street (MMS) CRA Annual Budget, highlighting some significant changes underway, including the decision to outsource the Food & Wine Festival. This event, which previously represented an expenditure of approximately \$200,000, had been putting a strain on MMS's cash flow. The Food & Wine Festival will now be held Downtown on January 31st.

Ms. Agee praised the large team that will oversee and execute the event, while emphasizing that MMS will still benefit financially from the festival for the first three years. By outsourcing this event, MMS will be able to focus more effectively on the core needs of Downtown, such as working closely with business owners on revitalization efforts, while also streamlining the management of other events.

Ms. Agee discussed the cultural grant received from Brevard County, which is helping to support the Candlelight Shopping and Botanical Festival. She mentioned that the revenue from these events will not be reflected until the first quarter of 2026. Additionally, Ms. Agee shared that Health First has generously sponsored MMS's Candlelight Shopping event with a \$7,500 contribution, which should fully cover the event's costs. Typically, only a small portion of revenue is generated from MMS events.

She also provided a condensed version of the P&L but noted that more detailed financial information is available upon request.

Ms. Davis inquired about the income generated from MMS membership. Ms. Agee responded that while there has been a slight decline, new businesses typically join as soon as they open. Overall, membership numbers remain fairly consistent with last year, despite the challenges many businesses are facing. Ms. Agee emphasized that increasing revenue is the Board's top priority and will be a key focus at the upcoming MMS committee retreat. Ms. Davis requested that next year's report include a comparative chart showing year-to-year differences.

Ms. Dittmer mentioned that Staff requested a simplified presentation of the annual budget for the CRA committee by providing broad categories of revenues and expenditures. She also noted that staff receives the full quarterly financial reports throughout the year.

Ms. Herenden remarked that the holiday lights on the light poles look stunning this year. She thought it would be a great idea to have white lights up year-round - they really help brighten Downtown up. Ms. Dittmer responded that this idea had been considered previously, but there were concerns about potential vandalism and maintenance if the lights were left up year-round.

The discussion continued regarding the cost of the holiday lights. Ms. Agee explained that MMS is leasing both the decorations and the lighting, and while they have conducted a thorough comparison of prices, the current rates seem to be in line with industry standards.

There were comments noting that Halloween trick or treat in downtown was exceptionally busy, with over 1,500 visitors of all ages, creating a vibrant, multi-generational crowd.

Mr. Miller inquired about the various MMS membership levels and the advertising opportunities available. Ms. Agee provided an overview of the different levels and the associated benefits of each sponsorship. Mr. Miller then thanked Ms. Agee for her excellent efforts.

Ms. Agee announced that the Candlelight Shopping event is approaching, featuring four themed evenings: Tree Lighting, Mistletoe Madness/Reindeer Games, Cookie Crawl, and Stocking Stuffer Saturday. She also shared upcoming events: the Food & Wine Festival on January 31st, Putta Palazzo on February 7th, the Art & Craft Show on February 21-22, and the Botanical Festival on April 11th. Additionally, the new Visitor's Guide will be released, which will include a special pullout highlighting local restaurants.

Ms. Agee highlighted that MMS continues to support the City's Community Development team on the parking management project. As part of this effort, a survey is being conducted with business owners to assess the impact of street closures. She also mentioned that the Business Advantage Program is progressing well, with participants gaining valuable insights into their businesses. MMS plans to offer this program again in the future.

Mr. Miller suggested that the Guinness World Record Mistletoe Group Kissing Challenge could be an interesting opportunity to explore. He noted that if this year sees a strong turnout, it could be worth pursuing further, given the significant advertising potential and the possibility of statewide publicity. The Committee agreed that it could generate considerable attention and create valuable opportunities for Downtown Melbourne.

## **6. Parking Management**

Mr. McKinzie, the City's new Economic Development Manager, introduced himself and spoke on behalf of Carmin Velasquez, the newly appointed Redevelopment Planner, who was unable to attend.

Mr. McKinzie reported on the Parking Stakeholder meeting held on October 29th, where the group discussed several key topics, including employee parking, the overall parking experience and accessibility, lot improvements, additional parking options, and concerns about security and safety measures.

Staff has contacted Florida East Coast Railroad (FEC) to explore the possibility of leasing or potentially purchasing their property on Depot Drive to expand parking availability. They are currently working to identify which department within FEC owns the property.

Ms. Dittmer explained that the City's Attorney's Office has been reviewing Florida Statute regarding parking enforcement in the right-of-way and the City's options for moving forward with the parking management. Initially, staff had considered contracting with a third party; however, the statute stipulates that the parking enforcement specialist must be a city employee. As a result, staff will need to reassess their approach. Only city employees have the authority to issue parking tickets and violations within the right-of-way. Additional research will be required, including budget development. For now, the parking management project is on hold, and once estimated costs are determined, the proposal will be presented to City Council for further direction.

There was discussion about how the parking management program is likely to operate at a budget deficit, even with revenue generation. The group also discussed which parking areas should remain free and which should implement 3-hour parking enforcement to ensure sufficient parking for visitors. Additionally, the City Hall Surface Lot will require further review to ensure that customers have access to parking when conducting business at City Hall.

Ms. Dittmer and the Committee also discussed various paid parking options, including apps, kiosks, and the associated costs for equipment and setup. These systems would likely need to be implemented in a more localized area, where

assigned space numbers could be used. They compared similar experiences in other towns, noting that this approach would require further detailed consideration.

There was consensus by the committee that the implementation for paid parking on New Haven Avenue should be explored sooner rather than later.

## **7. Program and Project Updates**

Ms. Dittmer reported that a recent meeting took place between Melbourne Main Street's design team and the City's Engineering Department regarding Holmes Park. Design funds have been allocated in this year's budget, and the project is moving forward. The scope of services for engineering is expected to go to Council for approval by the end of January.

Mr. Lucas inquired whether there was a historical significance behind the name "Holmes Park." Ms. Dittmer explained that there is some type of naming rights, established many years ago, and staff would need to review the original agreement to confirm the details. Mr. Lucas expressed that the name no longer seemed as fitting or prominent for the park today.

Ms. Dittmer reported that staff is currently drafting a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to hire a design team for the Downtown Core Streetscape Project, which is slated to be issued by the first quarter of 2026. The project will involve a full replacement of utilities, including water, sewer, and stormwater systems. The existing pipes, dating back to the 1950s, will need to be replaced before any major work begins. Property owners will incur some costs for connecting from the City's pipes within the right-of-way to the water meters and into their buildings.

Mr. Lucas inquired whether the project could be completed in phases. Ms. Dittmer responded that, similar to the 1990s when the entire sidewalk (curb-to-building) was removed, the project will follow a comparable approach.

Mr. Lucas suggested starting a funding program to assist property owners who may not be able to afford the costs of the piping connections. Ms. Herendeen agreed, noting that the expenses could become quite burdensome for some property owners. The cost of new water and sewer lines will not be funded by the CRA but by utilities funding.

Mr. McKinzie noted that there may be federal grant opportunities available to help offset costs for property owners, and staff will be exploring these options.

## **8. Additional Business**

Ms. Dittmer reported that there were no significant changes to the budget. The FY 2026 budget was approved by City Council on September 24, 2025, with a total of approximately \$3.1 million. Tax Increment Revenue (TIF) increased by \$248,554, or about 10.4%. Of the total budget, \$1.9 million is allocated for capital projects, with the only change being the addition of design funding for the Holmes Park project.

Ms. Davis inquired whether the Gateway US 192 and US 1 University signage were included as part of the capital projects. Ms. Dittmer clarified that these are

two existing separate projects. One involves signage at the east end of New Haven Avenue at Front Street, while the other pertains to the existing south US 1 signs. Ms. Dittmer also mentioned that the Parks Department has proposed a sign design, and the current signs need to be replaced due to damage. Ms. Davis agreed and suggested that the new sign design be presented to the Melbourne Main Street Design Committee for review.

At Ms. Davis' request, Ms. Dittmer provided an update on the South Expansion Sidewalk Connections. She explained that the project covers areas along W.H. Jackson Street, Lipscomb Street, Stone Street, and Brothers Avenue where sidewalks can be added will be the first step.

Staff recognized Ms. Murray for her five years of dedicated service to the Committee and presented her with a commemorative pin.

Ms. Dittmer reported that Red Tail Brewery appeared before the Planning & Zoning Board the previous evening to request a conditional use permit, as there were concerns about meeting the 51% food sales requirement. The applicant plan to establish a new microbrewery and pizzeria, offering both indoor and outdoor seating. This project represents a significant opportunity to improve a property with longstanding code issues. The Planning & Zoning Board failed to approve the request. The item will be presented to City Council on November 25th for further consideration.

Ms. Davis noted that her business is located near this property and expressed surprise that the project hadn't been brought before the CRA Advisory Board for a recommendation to City Council. She believes the project would be a positive enhancement to the neighborhood and suggested adding a condition requiring the installation of new sidewalks along the property's frontage.

Ms. Dittmer clarified that land development reviews fall under the authority of the Planning & Zoning Board, this committee does not review such applications, even if they are within the CRA district. She explained that if the Committee wishes to express support for the project, staff can include that in the City Council memorandum, but the Committee does not have a formal role in the recommendation process.

During conditional use reviews, staff must adhere to City Code requirements and cannot impose conditions, such as replacing sidewalks, unless engineering determines that the existing sidewalks do not meet current standards.

Ms. Dittmer provided a floor plan for the board to review.

Ms. Herendeen disclosed that she is the listing agent for the property. She expressed strong support for the project, highlighting that the applicants intend to invest \$2 million in an area that is in need of revitalization and have already dedicated significant time and resources.

Mr. Luer expressed his support for the project, noting its potential to bring significant benefits to the south side of town.

Ms. Herendeen suggested that if Melbourne aims to eliminate blight, zoning regulations should be reassessed to determine what is permissible in different areas. She noted that some properties feel "boxed in" by current zoning. She also agreed that zoning and land development matters should not come before this board, given that applicants already undergo an extensive four-to-six-month review process.

**There was consensus by the Committee to support the conditional use request and for the proposed Red Tail Brewery restaurant and microbrewery application.**

**9. General Public Comment**

Mr. Herendeen expressed disappointment with the Planning & Zoning Board's decision to reject the Red Tail Brewery project. He emphasized that it is a strong initiative with the potential to revitalize the neighborhood and steer it in a positive direction.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Herendeen at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Wolak*  
Mary Wolak, Recording Secretary