

City of Melbourne, Florida
Minutes – Regular Meeting Before City Council
March 10, 2026

A regular meeting of the City Council was held in the City Council Chamber, 900 East Strawbridge Avenue, and was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Paul Alfrey.

A. OPENING

1. The invocation was given by Chaplin Norman Desrosiers.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

Present:

Paul Alfrey	Mayor
Julie Kennedy	Vice Mayor
Marcus Smith	Council Member, District 1
Mark LaRusso	Council Member, District 2
David Neuman	Council Member, District 3
Rachael Bassett	Council Member, District 4
Mimi Hanley	Council Member, District 5
Jenni Lamb	City Manager
Joan Junkala-Brown	Deputy City Manager
Adam Conley	City Attorney
Kevin McKeown	City Clerk
Rebecca Thibert	Assistant to the City Manager

4. Proclamations and Presentations

City Manager Jenni Lamb called Fire Chief Shane Leech forward and discussed his history with the City of Melbourne. Mayor Alfrey presented Chief Leech with his fire bugle pins, and Chief Leech's wife Luon pinned his badge. Mrs. Lamb then administered the oath of office and swore in Chief Leech as the city's next Fire Chief. Chief Leech thanked his family and those in attendance for the support.

5. Approval of Minutes – February 24, 2026 Regular Meetings.

Moved by Smith/Alfrey for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

6. City Manager's Report

City Manager Jenni Lamb reported that a public meeting relating to the Fire Station 72 replacement project will be held on Monday, April 20 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber. Additionally, she noted that the proposed discussion item

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regarding the city's code enforcement process is being proposed for the March 24 Council meeting agenda.

Finally, Mrs. Lamb stated that the city just found out from the TPO that there is funding available for an ITS expansion fiber project; however, an application is needed by Friday. She asked for Council's consensus to move forward with this opportunity, which will include a future budget amendment resolution seeking formal authorization. Council expressed consensus for staff to move forward.

Council Member Mark LaRusso stated that he will be attending the TPO meeting on Thursday and asked that Mrs. Lamb write up any talking points that he should bring with him to the meeting. He asked that the information also be sent to Council Members Marcus Smith and Mimi Hanley as representatives on the TPO.

City Attorney Adam Conley reported on a previous request from City Council to merge the Zoning Board of Adjustment into the Planning and Zoning Board and noted that both boards are called out in the City Charter, which would require an amendment to change. He reminded Council of that process, which includes an ordinance to be adopted and a referendum to appear on the November general election ballot. Attorney Conley noted that he would take City Council direction on how to move forward, especially with regard to previous conversations about another proposed charter amendment that relates to the appointment/removal of volunteer advisory board members.

Council Member David Neuman asked if a special meeting on advisory boards would be warranted since there have been multiple conversations on multiple topics related to boards.

Mr. LaRusso stated that the language referenced by Attorney Conley has been in the charter for a long time. He noted that there are pros and cons with putting this idea on the ballot and asked if the city is being pushed by Tallahassee or approached by someone in particular to move forward with this idea.

Attorney Conley replied that conversations about advisory board began after the receipt of an attendance report requested by Mr. Neuman. He further discussed previous Council conversations about consolidation of boards and opportunities for increased efficiency.

Mr. LaRusso stated that the idea of a referendum could get complicated and expressed his concern with moving forward with the idea about merging the aforementioned boards.

Council Member Mimi Hanley noted that the Zoning Board of Adjustment doesn't meet regularly because the board only meets when there is a need. She recommended leaving the board the way it is.

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Council Member Marcus Smith agreed with Mr. Neuman's idea of a special meeting. Mayor Alfrey asked for Mr. Neuman to put something together and noted that a discussion may be better suited for before a regular Council meeting or during a meeting with a lighter agenda.

Mr. LaRusso asked if the Planning and Zoning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment were merged, how would appeals of the board work. Attorney Conley replied that he would have to review the charter language as well as City Code; however, there is a discrepancy on how City Council gets involved in these appeal decisions. He stated his preference that Council be removed from the Planning and Zoning Board's appeal process. Mr. LaRusso stated that would not be his recommendation.

Attorney Conely continued regarding the timeframe, which appears to be a discussion item by City Council, direction provided by staff, and then two readings of an ordinance regarding a potential referendum. He noted that the Supervisor of Elections has deadlines to get this information on the ballot, so it is reasonable to assume that a decision would need to be finalized by early to mid-August.

Ms. Hanley asked the cost of adding a referendum to the ballot. Attorney Conely replied that he was unsure of the cost.

Vice Mayor Julie Kennedy asked if a similar model could be followed like when City Council serves as the Community Redevelopment Agency. Attorney Conley stated that a charter amendment would likely still be required.

Mrs. Lamb noted that looking ahead on the rolling agenda, the April 28, May 12 and May 26 agendas do not have discussion items listed yet, so there are potentially some opportunities at these meetings to have a discussion.

Discussion continued. Council expressed consensus with having a discussion item in this timeframe to further explore the topics related to volunteer advisory boards.

Mrs. Lamb introduced the new Executive Director for Melbourne Main Street, Amil Cordova. Mr. Smith asked if there is a timeframe for him to provide a presentation to Council like he did for the Melbourne Downtown CRA Advisory Committee. Mrs. Lamb replied not at the moment.

Mr. Neuman thanked staff for various issues that were brought to his attention and ultimately resolved, including an issue on Roxy Avenue and graffiti within the veterans memorial park.

7. Public Comments

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David Carroll, 1396 Arnold Drive, handed out emails between him and the Melbourne Police Department and discussed the progress on traffic calming for his street. He noted some of the findings of the first report and stated that he will be back at the March 24 City Council meeting since there will be an agenda item on the topic.

Mayor Alfrey stated that he would be moving Items 14 and 15 up on the agenda to be heard next on the agenda.

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. **Ordinance No. 2026-05 (AV2025-0005):** (First Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance to abandon and vacate a 30-foot-wide street right-of-way and a 15-foot-wide alleyway right-of-way at 2528 S. Harbor City Boulevard.

Attorney Conley read the ordinance by its title. There were no disclosures by Council and no comments during the public hearing.

Moved by LaRusso/Neuman for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-05. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Bassett, Hanley, Smith, LaRusso, Neuman, Kennedy and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Ordinance No. 2026-06, Ordinance No. 2026-07, and Ordinance No. 2026-08, Aloha Pet-Bird Hospital:** (Second Reading/Public Hearing) Ordinances providing for Annexation, Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and Zoning designation on a 0.28± acre subject property, located at the northeast corner of East Eau Gallie Boulevard and San Juan Drive. (Owner/Applicant - Aloha Real Estate Holdings, LLC/Manuel J. Pepen) (Representative - Frank Plata, P.E., Plata Engineering, Inc.) (P&Z Board - 2/5/2026) (First Reading - 2/24/2026)
- a. **Ordinance No. 2026-06/ANNX2025-0005:** (Second Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance providing for the annexation of 0.28± acres of property into the City of Melbourne corporate limits.
 - b. **Ordinance No. 2026-07/MAP2026-0002:** (Second Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance establishing a General Commercial Future Land Use.
 - c. **Ordinance No. 2026-08/MAP2026-0001:** (Second Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance establishing C-2 (General Commercial District) zoning.

Attorney Conley read the ordinances by their titles. There were no disclosures by Council and no comments during the public hearing.

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Moved by LaRusso/Smith for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-06, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Bassett, Hanley, Smith, LaRusso, Neuman, Kennedy and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by LaRusso/Alfrey for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-07, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Bassett, Hanley, Smith, LaRusso, Neuman, Kennedy and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by LaRusso/Alfrey for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-08, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Bassett, Hanley, Smith, LaRusso, Neuman, Kennedy and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

10. **Ordinance No. 2026-09:** (Second Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance amending Sections 2-29, 2-572 and 2-581 of the Melbourne City Code; amending the engineering and construction contract threshold for City Council approval and increasing the purchasing award threshold for the City Manager to \$100,000. (Requested by City Council - 1/13/2026) (First Reading - 2/24/2026)

Attorney Conley read the ordinance by its title. The Mayor opened the public hearing. There were no comments from the audience.

Moved by Smith/Alfrey for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-09. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Bassett, Hanley, Smith, LaRusso, Neuman, Kennedy and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

C. NEW BUSINESS

11. Task Order No. KH-C-2025-002 to the Continuing Contract for Professional Engineering Services for Holmes Park Public Plaza Space, Project No. 13026, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Melbourne, FL - \$299,048.

City Engineer James Ennis reported that on May 13, 2025, Melbourne Main Street presented a conceptual vision to City Council to redefine Holmes Park into

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a public gathering place. The conceptual vision included: a terraced amphitheater; a family play zone; an event area; a prefabricated restroom building; removable bollards on Melbourne Court and Henley Court; landscaping, hardscaping and preservation of the existing mature trees within the park. The design of the new Holmes Park Public Plaza Space project was budgeted in the FY25/26 capital improvement program.

The scope of services in this task order includes preliminary and final design of Holmes Park, including surveying, geotechnical, foundation, electrical and lighting design based upon the concept vision. The park will include an underground stormwater chamber system to meet the latest environmental permitting rules and a stormwater baffle box to accommodate the future Downtown Melbourne Streetscape project. Kimley-Horn will provide final construction plans, an engineer's estimate of probable costs, bidding services and construction observation. There will be one public workshop held during a CRA Advisory Board Meeting to present the 30% phase of design and a City Council presentation to report on the findings. The services rendered under this task order shall be completed within 275 calendar days from Notice to Proceed.

Mr. Smith asked about the timeframe of the project. Mr. Ennis replied full design completion should be done in 275 days and stated that permitting will be the most difficult part of the process.

Ms. Hanley stated that with what is being proposed for the elimination of property taxes, she has reservations about moving forward. She suggested postponing the request until after the legislative session ends.

Mrs. Lamb stated that in the discussion about the downtown streetscape later in the agenda, staff will go into the financials. The Melbourne Downtown CRA is a bit more insulated from the property tax proposal, which makes it a concern but not as critical as it is for a project like the downtown streetscape.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Task Order No. KH-C-2025-002 to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Melbourne, FL for professional consulting services for Holmes Park Public Plaza Space, Project No. 13026 in the amount of \$299,048. Motion carried unanimously.

12. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Purchase of VuSpex software for integration with EnerGov to conduct virtual inspections for the Code Compliance (Building) Division, VuSpex Virtual Inspections Inc, Watsonville, CA - First year cost of \$24,500; estimated total five-year contract cost of \$103,590.80.
- b. Utilization of the State of Florida contract for temporary staffing for the Information Technology Department, multiple vendors - amount not-to-exceed \$280,000.

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- c. Professional Services Selection for the Pavement Management Plan and authorization to negotiate a contract with Michael Barker International, Inc., Jacksonville FL.
- d. Contract Award for the Annual Installation, Maintenance and Emergency Repair for Navigational Aids and Channel Markers, In Depth, Inc., Bunnell, FL.
- e. **Resolution No. 4411:** A resolution providing for the cancellation of the June 23, 2026 regular City Council meeting.

Moved by Hanley/Neuman for approval of the consent agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

- 13. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA
- 14. **Resolution No. 4410:** (Public Hearing) A resolution authorizing the disposition of real property located at 2265 North Harbor City Boulevard; approving the donation of the property; authorizing the City Manager to execute, accept and record related documents; and authorizing the City Attorney to execute closing documents.

Mr. LaRusso came forward to discuss the history of this request and noted that with this transaction, the organization can now apply for state and federal grants.

Attorney Conley reported that at the October 14, 2025 City Council meeting, City Council approved to waive the competitive bidding requirements and directed the City Manager and City Attorney to return to Council with a resolution for the donation city-owned property located at 2265 North Harbor City Boulevard. The property is currently leased by J.L. Golightly Chapter 32, Disabled American Veterans, Inc. ("DAV"). The DAV has leased the city-owned property since 1978 and requested that the city either donate or sell the property to their nonprofit organization.

The deed to transfer the property has been prepared, as well as an Access and Public Drainage Easement to grant the city an easement for stormwater infrastructure and a baffle box located on the property. The current lease agreement for the property will also be terminated with this action.

Pursuant to Section 2-645 of Melbourne City Code regarding disposition of city-owned property, the purchase price of the conveyance must equal or exceed the city's estimate of fair market value of the city property, except for good cause shown to serve a public purpose. The proposed resolution includes language for City Council to find that the donation of the property to the DAV furthers the public interest of providing non-profit services to local disabled American veterans, constituting good cause shown to serve a public purpose. As the estimated fair market value of the property is over \$100,000, notice of this

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proposed disposition was also published and posted pursuant to Sec. 2-645, City Code.

Mr. Smith asked for clarification on the reverter. Attorney Conley replied that it is in perpetuity but will be at the future city administration's discretion to exercise it. He also added that the structure known as "the Big Orange" is intended to be preserved and that there is language in the deed addressing this as well.

The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Tim Thomas, representing the DAV, stated that the City Council has always expressed its support of military veterans and thanked Council for moving this item forward.

Moved by LaRusso/Neuman for approval of Resolution No. 4410. Motion carried unanimously.

15. **Ordinance No. 2026-10, Wholeness to Freedom School (First Reading/Public Hearing):** Conditional Use request to allow a vocational school in C-R-1A (Single Family Low Density Residential with a Conditional Use to allow a church and school) on a 0.75± acre portion of an overall 3.49± acre property with site plan approval to renovate existing buildings accessory to the church into a vocational school on the overall 3.49± acre property, zoned C-R-1A (Single Family Low Density Residential with a Conditional Use to allow a church and school) and C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial District) located on the south side of Aurora Road, east and west of Ferndale Avenue, west of League Avenue (1619 Ferndale Avenue). (Owner - James Begley, Wholeness to Freedom Ministries, Inc.) (Applicant/Representative - Jake Wise P.E., Construction Engineering Group) (P&Z Board - 2/19/2026)

Community Development Director Cindy Dittmer reported that Wholeness to Freedom Ministries owns 3.49± acres on both sides of Ferndale Avenue and would like to operate a vocational school on the west side of Ferndale Avenue as a second principal use on a portion of the existing, developed church property. Approximately 2.74± acres of the property is zoned C-1, which permits both the church and a school use; however, both require conditional use approval on the remaining 0.75± acres of the property zoned R-1A. City Council gave conditional use approval for a church and school in 1973 and the site has been used for both since that time; however, the church is now proposing a vocational school for adult women that also includes converting the existing 3-story educational building into a dormitory. Consequently, a conditional use must be applied to the 0.75±-acre portion of the property (west of Ferndale Avenue) zoned C-R-1A. Staff review of the business plan and supporting documents found the non-traditional educational program to be most like a vocational school, as it is for adults, providing hands-on, specialized training, and emphasizing practical skills to enter the workforce.

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The applicant has submitted a formal site plan describing the interior modifications to the existing accessory church buildings. Educational classrooms will be held in the main, two-story building that includes the church sanctuary and fellowship hall. This building will provide for the church services (held weekly on Sunday), the early childhood learning center and after-school programs, and student classrooms for both Still Waters Brevard and for the Chesapeake Bible College distance learning. The existing three-story educational building will be renovated for student housing with a total of 18 dorm rooms (17 for students and 1 for the Resident Assistant), with 27 adult sleeping spaces that are accessory to the school. Renovations will be interior to the existing structure. The first floor will include the kitchen/dining area, common area, a computer lab, a handicap-accessible dorm room and the Resident Assistant (RA) quarters. The second and third floors will provide for dorm rooms and a common room on each floor.

The educational program addresses six key areas: financial, educational, careers, relational, spiritual, and health, equipping students with essential knowledge and practical skills to achieve long-term self-sufficiency. The maximum students per class is 12 and the teacher/student ratio is one teacher per six students. In order to graduate, students must complete a structured set of credit hours with benchmarks to move forward toward final certification.

The existing church and educational buildings exceed the front setbacks (20 feet) where abutting Aurora Road and Ferndale Avenue and the parsonage exceeds the building setbacks located on League Avenue. The buildings identified for the sanctuary, educational facilities and dormitory have an existing 14.73±-foot setback to the west property line, where abutting the single-family homes. This is non-conforming to today's residential setback requirement of 25 feet. However, the adjacent plat (Catalina) was recorded in 1964, which is after the church was originally constructed, and the abutting residential structures were constructed between 1977 and 1986 (according to the Brevard County Property Appraiser), which is after the conditional use approval to allow the three-story educational building.

An alternative parking analysis identified a reduction in actual parking for the school, including the required on-campus housing for up to 27 adult students. Existing stabilized parking is provided north of the office building on the east side of Ferndale Avenue for worship services in the sanctuary, with paved parking to the south of the office. The paved parking will be modified to accommodate 13 paved parking spaces, including one handicap-accessible space and a new code-compliant dumpster. Upon approval, the property owner will be required to submit an engineering construction plan to the Engineering Department and corresponding permits for any applicable site improvements.

The neighboring properties to the west and north, along Aurora Road, are zoned C-1 and C-C-1. Across League Avenue to the east, the property is zoned R-2 (developed with apartments). The educational buildings are abutting a residential

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subdivision, zoned R-1A and the closest single-family residential home is approximately 29.3± feet from the existing educational buildings.

Staff supports the request as a vocational school with an accessory dormitory, as the applicants have demonstrated the necessary components of a vocational school, including an application/registration process, streamlined coursework with rubrics and assessments, both a classroom environment and hands-on learning, qualified staff and educators, and a graduation process. The proposed vocational school use, as proposed, has a limited number of students, is a low traffic generator and is a reduction in trips from the K-12 school previously co-occupying the site with the church. Additionally, the property has previously housed a K-12 private school that has operated for more than ten years.

At the February 19, 2026 meeting, following review and discussion, the Planning and Zoning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of these requests.

The Mayor called for disclosures. Mr. Smith noted that he met with this non-profit about a year ago and had a conversation about the general idea of this project. (Note: Mr. Neuman was not present in the chamber when the Mayor called for disclosures.)

The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Jake Wise, representing the applicant, discussed the history of this project and the interior renovations planned. He thanked Council for its support of the project.

Beverly Squire-Wiggins, representing the applicant, thanked the Community Development staff who have helped them through this project as well as the multitude of partners that are involved. She discussed the purpose of the program and thanked Council for its support.

Council asked general questions about class sizes, accreditation, curriculum, stabilization of participants, and faculty.

Kristy Stuart, representing Love INC. of Brevard, expressed her full support of the project.

Brittany Hill, representing the applicant, expressed her support and discussed the impact that the school has had in the community.

Buddy Morrow, representing CITA Rescue Mission, discussed the need for these services in the community and asked for Council to consider adopting the ordinance.

Moved by Hanley/Bassett for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-10 with PLAN2024-0011, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. Motion carried unanimously.

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At this point, Council returned to the normal order of the agenda, starting with Item 8.

16. **Ordinance No. 2026-11, Capital Improvements Element:** (First Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance amending Chapter X of the Melbourne Comprehensive Plan entitled "Capital Improvements Element" to reflect the annual update of the Capital Improvements Schedule. (Applicant - City of Melbourne)

(Council Member Rachael Bassett stepped out of the chamber at 8:02 p.m.)

Attorney Conley read the ordinance by its title. Mrs. Dittmer reported this action is required annually by Section 163.3177, Florida Statutes.

The CIE is a required component of the city's Comprehensive Plan. The CIE contains those capital improvement projects that are necessary to maintain adopted level-of-service requirements established in the Comprehensive Plan and to implement the goals, objectives and policies of the plan.

The projects included within the schedule originate primarily from the approved five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that is contained in the city's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 budget, and from the city's Mobility Plan and the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization's Transportation Improvement Plan.

Florida Statutes allow the annual update to the CIE to be adopted by ordinance without prior review by Florida Commerce. The adoption of the implementing ordinance will be the final action regarding this amendment.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. There were no comments from the audience.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-11 based upon the findings contained within the staff memorandum. Motion carried unanimously.
Ms. Bassett was not present for the vote.

(Ms. Bassett returned at 8:04 p.m.)

17. **Ordinance No. 2026-12 (AV 406):** (First Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance to abandon and vacate a 50-foot-wide portion of Terrence Avenue right-of-way along the south side of the Charles Drive right-of-way.

Attorney Conley read the ordinance by its title. Mr. Ennis reported that the applicant, William Schnatz, requested the vacation of the 50-foot wide unimproved portion of the Terrence Avenue right-of-way as created by the Almar Subdivision Section B plat, between Lot 1, Block T and Lot 2, Block U of said plat. The applicant is the owner of Lot 1, Block T and submitted a request to vacate the portion of Terrance Avenue right-of-way in July 2019.

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In 2019, the application received objections to the request from Spectrum, the Streets/Stormwater Division, and the Water/Sewer Division due to utilities in the vacate area. The request also received an objection from a property owner that abuts the vacate area. That property owner objected due to their private sewer located in the vacate area and because they did not believe they would gain any value in obtaining a portion of the vacated area. Due to the utilities and the private sewer line in the vacate area, both abutting property owners would need to grant an easement in place of the right-of-way to resolve the utility objections. The applicant was notified of the objections on several occasions, with the last communication occurring in July 2020. No further contact was received from the applicant and no clear resolution was given by the applicant regarding the objections at the time.

In January 2026, the applicant contacted the Engineering Department regarding the request and was informed that the objections were still unresolved and that the request had been closed due to lack of communication since July 2020. The applicant acknowledged the objections and stated he would grant the easement in question. He requested the vacate request be heard by Council on the earliest possible date.

Due to the unresolved utility objections and the objection of the other abutting property owner who is unwilling to grant an easement, the Engineering Department recommends denial of the request in order to protect the public utilities and private sewer line in the vacate area.

Attorney Conley referenced the review criteria and his recommendation that Council include a finding that the application does not meet that criteria as utilities in the area would be impacted by this request.

There were no disclosures by Council and no comments during the public hearing.

Moved by LaRusso/Smith for denial of abandon and vacate request AV No. 406 and denial of Ordinance No. 2026-12 based on the finding that the application does not meet the review criteria set forth in City Code. Motion carried unanimously.

18. **Ordinance No. 2026-13, Beautification and Energy Efficiency Board:** (First Reading) An ordinance providing for the dissolution of the Beautification and Energy Efficiency Board.

Attorney Conley read the ordinance by its title. City Clerk Kevin McKeown reported that at its February 10, 2026 regular Council meeting, City Council directed staff to prepare an ordinance to provide for the dissolution of the Beautification and Energy Efficiency Board (BEEB). Additionally, Council

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requested that the BEEB be invited to attend the Council meeting for which this item would occur in order to hear from the BEEB members directly.

Nicholas Sanzone, 1539 Croftwood Drive, a member of the BEEB, discussed the cost saving measures recommended by the board and the good work that the board has accomplished. He stated that in his opinion, the board members have felt limited in their scope and that his recommendation would be to widen the scope and duties of the board.

Mr. Neuman stated that the letter received by the board stated that the board was frustrated that they weren't being told what to do and that Council was not questioning their recommendations. Mr. Sanzone replied that in his opinion, communication back and forth between Council and the board was lacking and that there is not enough support from Council in giving the board more direction.

Mr. Smith reiterated that an overall discussion about an overview of advisory boards is warranted.

Mayor Alfrey asked how Mr. Sanzone would move forward with regard to the scope of the board. Mr. Sanzone replied that increasing the scope of the board to allow for goals that are more long-term in scope or adjusting the mission of the board to help beautify the city in a better way.

Mr. Neuman replied that this is basically the first item in the list of the board's duties.

Mayor Alfrey recommended postponing the discussion about how to amend the scope of the board. Mr. Neuman stated that the discussion could occur during Council's broader discussion on boards at the end of April.

Discussion continued.

Moved by Smith/Bassett for denial of Ordinance No. 2026-13. Motion carried.
Mr. Neuman voted nay.

19. Discussion regarding the Downtown Core Streetscape Project.

Mrs. Dittmer reported that at the December 12, 2023 City Council Meeting, City Council/CRA adopted the conceptual design for the Downtown Core Streetscape Project provided by Inspire Placemaking Collective, Inc., the city's continuing planning consultant. Inspire held several stakeholder meetings during the conceptual design process to gather input on the proposed project.

The scope of the project includes the segment of East New Haven Avenue, from Livingston Street to Front Street, along with Municipal Lane and a portion of Melbourne Court. The conceptual design also proposed the options of several phases divided into zones based upon the context/improvements of the street blocks. The proposed conceptual design anticipates complete renovation of the

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roadway and sidewalk areas, along with underground infrastructure replacement. The outcome of the project will be: wider sidewalks; new lighting; new landscape; enhanced crosswalks; updated street furniture and a stronger pedestrian connection to the City Hall Parking Garage along Municipal Lane. The project will also connect and blend into the Holmes Park Plaza project, located to the south and east of Melbourne Court.

Funding for the Downtown Core Streetscape engineering design was programmed into the CRA Five-Year Capital Improvement Program and currently has a budget amount of \$3.1 million. Staff is preparing to issue an RFQ for engineering design in March, which would return to City Council for award in approximately June. The length of time for the full engineering design will be approximately 12 to 18 months. The estimated total project cost, based on the conceptual design, is approximately \$24 million. Construction for the project is estimated to occur during the FY 2028 budget through a mixture of tax increment funding, water and sewer user fees, stormwater fees, and a bond or note, secured with repayment from tax increment funds collected through the end of the CRA sunset year of 2042.

Community Development and Finance staff met to discuss the ability of the CRA to accommodate an appropriately sized indebtedness for the Downtown Streetscape project based on forecasted revenues and expenditures through the remaining life of the CRA. Based upon construction estimates for currently identified projects in the capital improvement plan, commitment to the Downtown Streetscape project will greatly limit future capital improvement projects, absent changes to the CRA's operating programs currently proposed.

Mr. Neuman asked for clarification on Council's consensus. Mrs. Dittmer replied that staff is looking for affirmation of the project before the RFQ is issued and future guidance as staff prepares the upcoming budget. Mrs. Lamb added that the question is whether Council is committed to the \$3 million design for this project. If so, staff will present to the CRA Advisory Committee the current plans on the books and how to amend the project list by the addition of this project.

Discussion continued about current projects in the CRA, parallel parking, and how the proposed elimination of property taxes would play into this project.

Following discussion, Council expressed consensus for staff to move forward with this project.

20. Revision of City Council Policy #10 regarding Critical Community Needs funding.

Assistant to the City Manager Rebecca Thibert reported that there is no longer a competitive grants-in-aid funding source, staff is requesting to amend City Council Policy #10 to remove the competitive annual process. Elimination of the competitive grants-in-aid process will also remove the need for the Grants-In-Aid Committee, which will streamline the process by allowing City Council to hear

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directly from applicants and authorize staff to prepare a Critical Community Needs Funding Agreement to be brought back for their consideration at a future Council Meeting.

Under the current process, when a request for a Critical Community Need is received by the city, an agenda item is presented to City Council. Council then declares the Critical Community Need and refers the application to the Grants-In-Aid Committee for evaluation. A committee meeting is then scheduled to review the application, and a determination is presented back to City Council in the form of a funding agreement, if the application is recommended for approval by the Committee; however, staff believes that the Grants-in-Aid Committee's review is redundant. By the time the Grants-in-Aid Committee is directed to review the application and recommend approval or denial, City Council has already declared the Critical Community Need, effectively approving the application. Therefore, the same application has been presented twice to City Council. The Grants-in-Aid Committee's review also delays approval of the funding agreement because the Committee meeting must be scheduled and publicly noticed.

To streamline the process, staff has proposed revisions to City Council Policy #10 to eliminate the process for competitive grants-in-aid requests and the Grants-In-Aid Committee. As proposed, requests for Critical Community Needs funding would be processed by receipt of a Critical Community Need Funding Application. The completed application will be assigned to the City department that would be most knowledgeable of the funding applicant's critical community need. The department will guide the applicant through the process and schedule the application to be heard at a future City Council meeting. City Council would then review the application and identify the public purpose and the funding amount. The funding award would then be memorialized in a funding agreement to be considered at a future City Council meeting. Once approved, the award is monitored to ensure funds are used in accordance with the agreement.

Moved by Bassett/Alfrey for approval of City Council Policy No. 10 Critical Community Needs Funding, as revised. Motion carried unanimously.

D. PETITIONS, REMONSTRANCES, AND COMMUNICATIONS

At Council Member Neuman's request, Council expressed consensus to move forward with adjusting the Central Business Overlay Zone north to Hibiscus Boulevard and east to U.S. 1.

Ms. Bassett stated that she attended the police awards ceremony on February 26 and congratulated the winners.

Ms. Hanley discussed an invitation she received to serve on the East Coast Resiliency Commission.

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Mr. Smith commented on his attendance at the EDC meeting in Cocoa Village, stated that the American Legion is celebrating its 107th birthday, and discussed throwing the first pitch at the Eau Gallie Little League opening ceremony. He also discussed attending the Space Coast Chamber breakfast and thanked police and fire employees for their service to the community.

Mr. LaRusso discussed the need for an AI business plan and at his request, Council expressed consensus to move forward with a future discussion item on e-bikes, including information from other local and statewide communities on how those communities address this issue. He also discussed the upcoming St. Patrick's Day parade and the planning of an event for the naming of Paul Gougelman Park.

James Coleman, Melbourne, asked for an update on the paving of Hoag Avenue. Mrs. Lamb replied that a task order will be on the March 24 agenda related to the design of the project.

Mayor Alfrey commented on the wonderful turnout at the Eau Gallie Little League opening ceremony.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

/s/ Kevin McKeown, City Clerk – March 18, 2026

Approved by Council: March 24, 2026