

**City of Melbourne, Florida**  
**Minutes – Regular Meeting Before City Council**  
**March 24, 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 Council Member Marcus Smith.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

Present:

Paul Alfrey	Mayor
Marcus Smith	Council Member, District 1
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
Richard Broome	Deputy City Attorney
Kevin McKeown	City Clerk
Justice Stevens	Assistant City Clerk
Rebecca Thibert	Assistant to the City Manager

Absent:

Mark LaRusso	Council Member, District 2 (sick)
Julie Kennedy	Vice Mayor (out of town)
Adam Conley	City Attorney (sick)

4. Proclamations and Presentations

Mayor Alfrey presented a proclamation declaring April 2026 as “Water Conservation Month” to Environmental Outreach Manager Megan Ruben and Jim Cannon with the St. Johns River Water Management District.

(Note: the presentation for Justin Jennings was cancelled due to a work conflict.)

5. Approval of Minutes – March 10, 2026 Regular Meetings

Moved by Hanely/Neuman for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

6. City Manager’s Report

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City Manager Jenni Lamb reported that the U.S. Treasury has refined the federal Opportunity Zone (OZ) Program as created under the Tax Credit and Jobs Act of 2017. The OZ Program is designed to encourage investors, businesses, developers, financial institutions, and other investors to reinvest capital gains into distressed census tracts to foster job creation. The benefits are deferral, reduction, and potential elimination of taxes on capital gains and not rebates or grants.

Under OZ 2.0, the One Big Beautiful Bill of 2025 makes the program a permanent part of the tax code and further refined the program. Local governments have the ability to nominate same and/or new census tracts to the Governor, as the previously nominated census tracts will sunset on December 31, 2026. New OZs will be nominated by state Governors starting July 1, 2026 through October 31, 2026, qualified by the U.S. Treasury by December 31, 2026, and will take effect on January 1, 2027. Governors can only nominate 25% of their states' eligible census tracts for designation as an OZ. Under the new Program, OZs will be nominated and designated every 10 years. More restrictive eligibility criteria will be applied to qualify new census tracts, including a lower median family income threshold less than 70% (previously median family income of less than 80%) and elimination of contiguous tracts.

Staff is seeking Council consensus for the Mayor to sign a Letter of Support identifying new eligible census tracts, to include re-nominating existing census tracts. This Letter of Support must be submitted to the Governor via an online survey by April 1, 2026. Staff will return at a future Council meeting with a copy of the LOS and the list of census tracts nominated.

Council Member Marcus Smith ask for clarification on if the city is adding to the census tracts. Mrs. Lamb responded no, but shared that not all of the zones currently qualify. She noted which zones in the agenda package are eligible to apply for the new designation.

Council Member Mimi Hanley asked why parts of Melbourne outside of the Downtown and Eau Gallie area (around Aurora Road) have been neglected. Mrs. Lamb noted that portions of this area will be a part of this designation.

Mr. Smith asked what the benefits of the opportunity zones are. Community Development Director Cindy Dittmer noted that this is a federal program that incentivizes job creation and revitalization. This would increase the city's tax base and provide developers benefits to expand into these zones.

Mrs. Lamb noted that Crystal Plain, founder/President/Executive Director and Producer of Black Brilliance on the Rooftop, is requesting a Letter of Support for their grant application for the Community Quarterback Grant for Small Business funded by Truist. Black Brilliance on the Rooftop is a Brevard County-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to expanding economic opportunities for Black and minority-owned small businesses. The organization works to strengthen the local,

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small business ecosystem by connecting entrepreneurs with community organizations, chambers of commerce, and economic development partners to improve access to resources, education, and capital readiness.

Through the Community Quarterback Grant for Small Business funded by Truist and administered by The Coalition, the organization proposes to serve as a regional convener that helps coordinate existing resources and support systems. The initiative includes quarterly ecosystem roundtables, business fundamentals education, capital readiness support, and strategic networking opportunities designed to improve collaboration and increase access to programs for under-resourced entrepreneurs in Brevard County. Additional information is included in the agenda package.

Staff is seeking Council consensus for the City Manager to sign a Letter of Support for Black Brilliance on the Rooftop's grant application. Council expressed consensus.

Mrs. Lamb also noted that the Melbourne Orlando International Airport is seeking a letter of support from the City Manager for a five million dollar federal funding request for terminal infrastructure improvements. Council expressed consensus for this letter.

7. Public Comments

Ann Marie Toraya, unincorporated Brevard County, and Vickie Dittman, West Melbourne, shared their concern about a plumbing problem they are facing at Ms. Toraya's rental property. After some discussion, it was noted by Mrs. Lamb that the leak in Ms. Toraya's plumbing is on the private side of the line. Mayor Alfrey also noted that he would follow up with Ms. Toraya and Ms. Dittman to see how he can help.

Gracie Smith, Palm Bay, formally invited Council to Ebony News Today's red carpet gala for their transition from a paper publication to television streaming.

Levin Jomon and Jomon Lukose, 2903 S. Harbor City Blvd., shared their concern with the current FDOT project on S. Harbor City Blvd. as the project has blocked entrance into their business.

Helen Voltz, 778 Wyatt St., was in attendance to support Ms. Toraya and asked that Council go through their voicemails on their city phones as most are full and do not allow citizens to leave a voicemail.

Bruce Buggs, 2701 S. Harbor City Blvd., shared his support with the Marathon Gas Station (Mr. Jomon and Mr. Lukose) and hopes that the traffic issue can be resolved.

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- 7.1 **Presentation to Council:** The City of Melbourne's 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the two Community Redevelopment Agency's Financial Reports.

Christine Noll-Rhan, Carr, Riggs & Ingram and auditor for the 2025 ACFR and two CRA 2025 Annual Financial Reports, discussed where the city sits financially and expanded on details of the city's audit.

- 7.2 **Presentation to Council:** Asset Mapping and the Melbourne Resources Collaborative.

Megan Starnes, Love INC., provided some history on asset mapping in Brevard County over the last year. She reported that monthly, Love INC. has been collaborating with other organizations to gather information on all available resources in the City of Melbourne. In April, these organizations will be hosting a volunteer expo at the Eau Gallie Civic Center and asked if Council would waive the fees to rent the facility for this event. Council expressed consensus to waive the fees as requested.

Mr. Smith noted his support for waiving the fees for their event.

Council Member David Neuman asked how much the fees are to host their event at the civic center. Mrs. Lamb responded that she does not have a direct amount, however, fees have been waived before for other not for profit organizations like the DAV.

Council expressed consensus to waive the fees to host their event at the Eau Gallie Civic Center.

**B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

8. **Ordinance No. 2026-10, Wholeness to Freedom School:** (Second 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) (First Reading - 3/10/2026)

Deputy City Attorney Richard Broome read the ordinance by its title.

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Mr. Neuman asked if a condition could be added that states if there are issues with the dormitory portion of the project causes issue, the item can be revisited. Mrs. Dittmer noted that the conditional use is for the school use and within the city's zoning code a dormitory is an accessory use to a school.

Mayor Alfrey noted that there are other organizations in the city that are performing similar functions and there have been no concerns.

Ms. Hanley asked how many students would be housed. Mrs. Dittmer noted that there would be 18 dorm rooms with 17 students and one resident assistant would be living at the facility.

There were no disclosures by Council. The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Susan Begley, 1619 Ferndale Ave., noted that on the third floor of the building there are eight rooms with 16 women housed and on the second floor there are eight rooms with single women with their children.

Ms. Hanley asked if housing children at this facility is following state code. Mrs. Dittmer noted that if this project is approved by Council, the applicant would need to obtain building permits and this would be covered under these codes.

Ms. Hanley then asked if any of the staff is certified in mental health. Mr. Begley noted that she is a certified mental health professional and there will be other mental health professionals at the facility.

Mr. Neuman asked for confirmation on how many adults will be living at the facility. Ms. Begley noted that there are 26 students living in the dormitories plus any children that will be housed with some of the women.

Mr. Smith shared his support for this project.

Mrs. Dittmer noted that the conditional use supports 18 rooms. She also noted that the city and applicant have had robust discussions to ensure every aspect is covered and follows all requirements from the city.

Mayor Alfrey shared his support for this project

Beverly Squire-Wiggins, 1619 Ferndale Ave., was there to answer any further questions.

Stefan Hartman, 2196 Colony Dr., noted that as a Planning and Zoning board member, he fully supported this item. He also asked where the students will be housed following the program.

Ms. Squire-Wiggins noted that the process to get into the program is robust. She described the process and noted that the school is not a recovery program and

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shared that the school's collaboration with other non-profits help keep the students on track once they complete the program.

Mrs. Lamb proposed the addition of a condition that the applicant follows the business plan that was submitted to the city and approved by the city.

Attorney Broome asked if the applicant had a rebuttal to any of the comments that were made. She noted that she did not.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-10 with PLAN2024-0011 based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum with the addition of the condition that the applicant must follow the business plan that was submitted in June of 2024. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Hanley, Smith, Neuman, Bassett and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Ordinance No. 2026-11, Capital Improvements Element:** (Second 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) (First Reading - 3/10/2026)

Attorney Broome read the ordinances by their titles. The Mayor opened the public hearing and there were no comments.

Moved by Smith/Neuman for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-11 based upon the findings contained within the staff memorandum. The roll call vote was:

Aye: Hanley, Smith, Neuman, Bassett and Alfrey

Motion carried unanimously.

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

10. Task Order No. CDM-08 to the Professional Services Agreement for the Water Production Wellfield Improvements Production Wells No. 1 and No. 2 Generators, Project No. 31223, CDM Smith, Inc., Maitland, FL - \$327,322.

Public Works and Utilities Director Jennifer Spagnoli reported that the Joe Mullins Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant (ROWTP) currently utilizes four existing Upper Floridan Aquifer (UFA) production wells, with two additional production wells under construction. Production Wells No. 1 and No. 2 currently share one emergency generator. For redundancy, each well should have its own backup generator. The city was approved for a Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMGP) through the Florida Department of Emergency Management, to replace the

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existing generator with two smaller generators. The city needs electrical improvements for Production Wells No. 1 and No. 2 to accommodate new standby generators and future well pump improvements.

The scope includes geotechnical, design, permitting and bidding to upgrade the electrical and emergency power systems to provide dedicated standby generators for Production Wells No. 1 and No. 2. The project is expected to take approximately 305 calendar days from Notice to Proceed.

Moved by Hanley/Bassett for approval of Task Order No. CDM-08 to CDM Smith, Inc., Maitland, FL for the Water Production Wells No. 1 and No. 2 Generators, Project No. 31223, in the amount of \$327,322. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Hoag Avenue Roadway Improvements, Project No. 04126.
  - a. Creation of the Hoag Avenue Roadway Improvements for the FY26 Capital Improvement Project Budget and a transfer of \$125,800 from the Unpaved Roads Program, Project No. 64219.
  - b. Task Order No. DRMP-I-2025-007 to the Continuing Contract for Professional Consulting Services for the Hoag Avenue Roadway Improvements Project, Project No. 04126, DRMP, Inc., Merritt Island, FL - \$125,800.

City Engineer James Ennis reported that in April 2025, Engineering Department staff and the City Manager met with Mr. Tom Nance, a representative of the Christian Fellowship Church of 1409 Hoag Avenue, to discuss the church's request to pave Hoag Avenue east of US Highway 1. Staff informed and explained the petition paving process established by City Council Policy #22 "Paving of Dirt Streets". A petition package identifying the affected properties, required signatures necessary for collection, and preliminary estimated construction costs was provided to Mr. Nance on August 25, 2025. The petition package included an explanation of the unpaved road petition process, a petition form for signatures, and a breakdown of the estimated costs for each affected property owner. On November 19, 2025, the city received the completed petition form package from Mr. Nance. Staff verified that the petition successfully met the seventy percent threshold of required support for the petition paving request to proceed to the design of the road.

On December 9, 2025, Council discussed Council Policy #22 following public comments from affected property owners requesting the status of paving Hoag Avenue and their concerns about paying the thirty percent cost-share. The Mayor requested that the City Manager provide City Council with additional information about Council Policy #22. That information was provided on December 11, 2025. On February 10, 2026, Council Member Smith sought Council consensus to discuss changing the policy's requirement for the thirty percent cost-share; however, Council did not provide consensus. At the February 10, 2026 meeting,

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the City Manager offered to provide updated cost estimates for paving of unpaved roads to City Council and that was provided on March 10, 2026 under separate cover. Staff is seeking to clarify if Council would like to proceed with the attached task order, understanding that there may not be a desire from property owners to contribute to the thirty percent cost-share for construction.

Council should be aware that there are uncertainties regarding the extent of stormwater treatment that will be required for the conversion of Hoag Avenue from an unpaved road to a paved road. This uncertainty will not be resolved until the initial design meetings are held with the permitting agencies. Depending on the level of treatment required, the construction cost may increase substantially. The likely cost of construction could range from around \$400,000 to in excess of \$800,000, which would have an impact on the thirty percent cost-sharing percentage that the residents are required to contribute pursuant to City Council Policy #22 "Paving of Dirt Streets".

The item report describes details of the task order for the design of the Hoag Avenue Roadway Improvements. The scope of services under this task order includes preliminary and final design of Hoag Avenue, including surveying, geotechnical design, and environmental permitting with the St. John's River Water Management District and other agencies. The roadway design will include approximately 1,000 feet of 2-lane roadway with associated stormwater treatment and conveyance, signage, striping, and utility design for sewer lateral installations. Additionally, technical specification preparation, bid document preparation, and bid support services are included in this scope of work. Work under this task order is to be completed within 300 days of issuance of notice to proceed.

Tom Nance, Palm Bay, shared his support for this project.

Council Member Marcus Smith asked for a discussion item to be placed on a future agenda to amend Council Policy #22. Council shared consensus to have this discussion.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Creation of the Hoag Avenue Roadway Improvements project (Project No. 04126) an administrative budget transfer of \$125,800 from FY19 Unpaved Roads Program (Project No. 64219). Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Neuman/Bassett for approval of Task Order No. DRMP-I-2025-007 with DRMP, Inc., Merritt Island, FL for professional Consulting Services for the Hoag Avenue Roadway Improvements, Project No. 04126, in the amount of \$125,800. Motion carried unanimously.

12. CONSENT AGENDA:

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- a. Increase annual spend by \$500,000 for Horizontal Directional Drill Services up to 8-inch Diameter for the Water Distribution Division, Timeline Group, LLC, Melbourne, FL (Primary) and Concurrent Utility Services, LLC, Rockledge, FL (Secondary) - estimated total annual amount of \$1,000,000.
- b. Second Amendment to the contract for the purchase of new fire hydrants for the Water Distribution Division, Fortiline, Inc. d/b/a Fortiline Waterworks, Inc., Daytona Beach, FL - estimated annual amount of \$198,437.40.
- c. Purchase of bulk gasoline and diesel fuel for various City Departments, Palmdale Oil Co. LLC, Ft. Pierce, FL and Sunoco LP, d/b/a Sunoco LLC, Newtown Square, PA - total estimated annual amount of \$860,000.
- d. Fifth Amendment to the contract for mowing of utility sites to add additional areas for various locations, Florida Premier Outdoor Services, LLC d/b/a Hannah's Lawn Service, Palm Bay, FL - estimated annual contract amount of \$290,274.
- e. Professional Services Selection for the Stormwater Quality Master Plan and authorization to negotiate a contract with Geosyntec Consultants, Inc., Titusville, FL.
- f. Contract award for Paving Services and Asphaltic Concrete, V.A. Paving, Inc., Cocoa, FL.
- g. Acceptance of the City of Melbourne's 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the two Community Redevelopment Agency's Financial Reports.

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

13. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

14. **Ordinance No. 2026-14, Ordinance No. 2026-15 and Ordinance No. 2026-16, 1634 Pine Hill Drive:** (First Reading/Public Hearing) Ordinances providing for annexation, Comprehensive Plan amendment and zoning designation on 0.20± acres located on the north side of Pine Hill Drive, east of North Wickham Road, and south of Kingston Lane. (Owner/Applicant - Margaret Spillers) (P&Z Board - 3/5/26)

- a. **Ordinance No. 2026-14/ANNX2026-0002:** (First Reading/Public Hearing) An ordinance providing for the annexation of 0.20± acres of real property into the City of Melbourne corporate limits.

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- b. **Ordinance No. 2026-15/MAP2026-0005:** (First Reading/Public Hearing)  
An ordinance establishing a Low-Density Residential Future Land Use.
- c. **Ordinance No. 2026-16/MAP2026-0006:** (First Reading/Public Hearing)  
An ordinance establishing R-1A (Single-Family Low Density Residential District) zoning.

Attorney Broome read the ordinances by their titles. Mrs. Dittmer reported that the property owner has requested to be annexed into the City of Melbourne and has submitted a voluntary annexation petition in order to connect to the city's water system. City Code requires property owners that are contiguous to the city's municipal boundary to voluntarily annex into the city in order to receive a connection to Melbourne's water or sewer systems.

(Mayor Alfrey stepped out of the chamber at 8:12 p.m.)

The property currently has a single-family residential home on-site. The requested Low Density Residential Future Land Use (maximum density of 6 units per acre) is an appropriate designation for the subject property since the Brevard County designation of NC (Neighborhood Commercial) has a similar residential density allowance. Additionally, the proposed R-1A zoning is similar to the existing county designation of RU-1-7. The current lot dimensions meet the minimum lot size requirements for the requested R-1A zoning (7,500 square feet). The property is bordered by single-family homes zoned R-1A to the north, and single-family homes to the east, west, and south, zoned RU-1-7 in the unincorporated county.

On March 5, 2026, the Planning and Zoning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the requests.

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

Moved by Smith/Bassett for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-14, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Alfrey was absent for the vote.

Moved by Smith/Bassett for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-15, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Alfrey was absent for the vote.

Moved by Smith/Bassett for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-16, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board memorandum. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Alfrey was absent for the vote.

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15. **Resolution No. 4412, The Pines West PUD:** (Public Hearing) A resolution transmitting a Comprehensive Plan Amendment \*Major Amendment\* to the Florida Department of Commerce for review. (P&Z Board – 3/5/2026)

Mrs. Dittmer reported that the subject property is located in unincorporated Brevard County and is proposed as a phase of a future single-family development project, The Pines, which will also include approximately 304± acres of additional land to the east within the City of Melbourne city limits. Applications for the proposed development within the city limits are under review; however, the subject property will need to be annexed into the city and receive a future land use designation, which is a major map amendment due to the size of the property. Upon future annexation of the property, the property will be located in Council District 5.

(Mayor Alfrey returned to the chamber at 8:18 p.m.)

A major map amendment is required to be reviewed first by the Florida Department of Commerce and other State agencies, through the transmittal of a resolution by the city. After review by the State, the final consideration of the Low Density Residential future land use designation will be considered by City Council with two readings of the ordinance. Final consideration of the annexation, designation of the Low Density Future Land Use, designation of the zoning of the property as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and the Preliminary Development Plan on the subject property, will occur concurrently with consideration of similar applications for the overall “The Pines” development.

The applicant is requesting to designate the 120.65± acres subject property as Low Density Residential, allowing a maximum density of six dwelling units per acre. The preliminary development plan that is under review indicates that the single-family development will contain 273 lots at a density of 2.27 units per acre, well below the maximum density allowed. The property to the east is proposed for 538 single family lots on approximately 304± acres. The Pines subdivision overall will be approximately 425±-acres with 811 single-family lots at a density of 1.9± units per acre and the entire development will adhere to the development regulations outlined within the Comprehensive Plan for the Platt Ranch Activity Center (PRAC).

The preliminary development plan under review shows access for the subdivision from an extension of Norfolk Parkway only. There is not a proposed connection to the north or along Ranch Road. The traffic study submitted by the applicant indicates the ability to address all project-related traffic through the extension of the existing two-lane segment of Norfolk Parkway to the subdivision, and an eventual two-lane westward extension of Norfolk Parkway to the St. Johns Heritage Parkway. Details of required roadway improvements and the timing will be incorporated into the Developers Agreement, which will be considered with all above-referenced applications at a future Council meeting.

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During the March 5, 2026 Planning and Zoning Board meeting, several residents spoke to identify their concerns regarding any access to their subdivision located to the north on Ranch Road (National Police Home Foundation Subdivision).

After review and discussion, the Planning and Zoning Board voted 4 to 3 to recommend approval of both the annexation request and the Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment.

A valid "Intent to File a Petition" letter against the proposed Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment was filed by a property owner within 500 feet of the subject property, and a petition was submitted on March 12, 2026. The petition was signed by 13 property owners who represent 7.16% (nine parcels) of the land area within 500 feet of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment request. Since this is below the required twenty percent threshold, a 6/7ths vote of City Council will not be required for approval of the comprehensive plan request during the second reading of the ordinance (which will not occur until all development requests return to City Council in several months).

Mr. Neuman asked for clarification that Ranch Road is to only be used for utility purposes. Mrs. Dittmer confirmed.

The Mayor called for disclosures. Mr. Neuman and Mr. Smith noted that they met separately with the developer and had conversations about the general idea of this project.

The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Mary Johannessen, Brevard County, shared her concern with the large amount of development in the area of the project. She also shared her concern with emergency services accessing the area.

R. Paul Johannessen, Brevard County, also shared his concern with this project.

Mayor Alfrey noted that there is a traffic issue in the project's area and asked if there is a plan to tackle the issue. Mrs. Dittmer noted that the city is working with the developer, the City of West Melbourne and Brevard County on this issue. The intention is to extend the dead-end of Norfolk Parkway first. There is currently a traffic study occurring for the extension of Norfolk Parkway to St. Johns Heritage Parkway. She also noted that all of Platt Rach is already in the City of Melbourne. She also noted that with the traffic study nearing completion these concerns will be addressed.

Mrs. Lamb noted that there have also been discussions between the developer and the City of West Melbourne to widen their portion of Norfolk Parkway that will address some of the traffic concerns as well.

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Ana Saunders, B.S.E. Consultants, noted that the traffic study is still in progress but once it is finalized there will be various components of the improvements that will be required and the phased improvements that are identified in the traffic study will be outlined in the development agreement.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Resolution No. 4412, based upon the findings contained in the Planning and Zoning Board Memorandum. Motion carried unanimously.

16. Amendment to Melbourne City Code, Chapter 54, Economic Development Tax Exemption Program, Section 54-146 and Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program Guidelines.
  - a. **Ordinance No. 2026-17:** (First Reading) An ordinance amending Chapter 54 of the City Code to update the statutory definition references of "new business" and "expansion of a new business."
  - b. **Resolution No. 4413:** A resolution amending the Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program Guidelines to provide updated average annual wage data.

Attorney Broome read the ordinance by its title. Mrs. Dittmer reported the State of Florida revised the definition of "Target Industry Business" and relocated it to Section 288.005 of the Florida Statutes. The ordinance will amend Chapter 54, updating the reference to the correct statute. Within the statute, the State identifies the following "Target Industries" and "Sector Specific Target Industries": Cross-Cutting Target Industries to include: corporate headquarters, logistics – including shipping, distribution, packaging, processing, manufacturing, research and development and Sector-Specific Target Industries to include: aerospace and aviation – including maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO), pilot training, air traffic control, advanced air mobility (AAM), unmanned aircraft system/unmanned aerial vehicle (UAS/UAV), AgTech – including emerging technologies, timber, aquaculture, etc., energy security – including semiconductors, superconducting, nuclear, hydrogen, energy storage, etc., financial services – including insurance, FinTech, information technology – including emerging technologies, cybersecurity, life sciences – including pharmaceuticals, medical device technology, digital health, maritime – including commercial and industrial base shipbuilding, MRO, military and defense – including dual use tech, law enforcement tech, modeling, simulation and training.

The Florida Department of Commerce (Florida Commerce) calculates the average annual wages for each county in the state. The Labor Market Statistics Center within Florida Commerce uses data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics to generate updated wage information. These wages fluctuate in response to national, state, and local economic conditions. Florida uses these average wage figures to determine eligibility for the state's economic development programs, including the level of financial support available.

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For Brevard County, the average annual wage requirement has increased from \$57,927 in 2021 to \$68,052 in 2024. The proposed Resolution will adopt the updated wage thresholds for the city's Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program.

The City of Melbourne incorporates average wage data as a key criterion in its Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program. The primary factors used to determine the level of tax abatement available to new or expanding businesses are average wages, capital investment, and the number of new employees.

Florida Department of Commerce (formerly the Department of Economic Opportunity) has historically allowed the city to use its Ad Valorem Tax Exemption as the required local match for companies seeking state incentives. Therefore, it is important to maintain consistency between state and city guidelines when evaluating incentive packages for new or expanding businesses.

Recent examples where the city's Ad Valorem Tax Exemption has helped leverage state incentives include projects with Embraer, L3Harris, and Northrop Grumman. The updated city guidelines, reflecting the revised wage thresholds, are attached as Exhibit A to the resolution.

The Mayor opened the public hearing and there were no comments.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Ordinance No. 2026-17. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Neuman/Smith for approval of Resolution No. 4413. Motion carried unanimously.

17. Discussion of Downtown Melbourne CRA Small Business Workshop.

Mrs. Dittmer reported that on October 28, 2025, Council provided staff direction to explore a potential business incentive program of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). This direction came following a discussion item by Council Member Smith regarding a proposed Melbourne Small & Developing Business Program and the direction from Council that CRA should hear and vet such a program.

This item is for Council discussion regarding the recent Downtown Melbourne Small Business Workshop that was hosted by the city and held on February 10, 2026. Mrs. Dittmer summarized the memo that was provided in the agenda package, staff's actions and the workshop, along with a potential alternative incentive program that would be eligible under Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes relating to Community Redevelopment Agencies, for which the primary purpose is to prevent and eliminate slum and blighted conditions within the CRA.

Mr. Neuman and Mr. Smith shared their appreciation for this project and for staff.

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Mr. Smith also discussed how when this discussion arose, he was proposing a small business incentive program with weVENTURE. He agreed that the facade program will be helpful for revitalization, but having a small business incentive program will be helpful to start businesses in the downtown area.

Mayor Alfrey shared his concern of having to select winners for a small business incentive program and finding the money to fund it.

Ms. Hanley noted her concern with utilizing CRA money for private businesses, but she would like more information before making a decision. She also noted that she would appreciate more welcoming facades for the businesses that are closed.

Mrs. Dittmer noted that the city is working on the improvement of facades at vacant businesses. She noted that her staff will be performing a walk through with the city's Code Enforcement to address these issues.

Discussion continued.

Mr. Neuman expressed his support for building improvements downtown and asked if a code change can be implemented that would provide certain parameters on how vacant storefronts look. Attorney Broome noted that staff can research how to implement further parameters to the aesthetics of external facades of downtown businesses.

Lisa Herendeen, 233 E. New Haven Ave., shared an example of how to help small businesses downtown. She also shared that she doesn't believe this discussion is going help the issue at hand which are the landlords of the buildings downtown.

Following discussion, Council expressed consensus for staff to provide an ordinance that will amend code to regulate the external appearance of businesses that are closed/properties that are vacant.

18. Discussion of Traffic Calming Methods and Policy.

Mr. Ennis reported that during the last year, traffic calming requests and speed complaints, primarily Holland Street and recently Arnold Drive, have been brought to Council's attention multiple times by residents during the public comments portion of City Council Meetings. At the February 10, 2026 Council meeting, City Council requested that a discussion item be prepared to review the traffic calming policy and practice for the City of Melbourne. The attached memorandum outlines the city's traffic calming policy for the implementation of traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, speed cushions, or speed tables. Also included in the agenda package are the policy description and traffic calming request form that can be found on the city's website.

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The Engineering Department coordinates with the Police Department when a traffic calming request is received. The Police Department may deploy the speed trailer or have patrol presence in the area if the initial review does not indicate that a full study is needed.

Much like traffic signal requests, traffic calming requests must be evaluated to determine whether physical traffic calming measures are warranted. Furthermore, physical traffic calming measures must be designed by a professional engineer that certifies the roadway features are in substantial compliance with state and federal minimum design standards. Additionally, when considering the installation of traffic calming, devices must be analyzed to determine how those improvements will impact the roadway system in order to prevent unintended consequences or impacts to the roadway system.

Finally, traffic calming studies and analyses require considerable staff time and resources to perform. If City Council desires to expand, or accelerate, the number of streets that are analyzed for installation of traffic calming measures, staff can utilize consultant services and an estimate of cost can be provided. However, this will have budgetary impacts that will require consideration and budget allocation.

Mayor Alfrey asked why there are traffic controlling devices in some developments and not others. Mr. Ennis noted that when assessing the ability to place speed humps, drainage, curving of the road, and other factors determine if a speed bump can be placed. He also noted that it is costly to physically do the study to determine if a traffic controlling device is necessary.

Mayor Alfrey also shared his concern with speeding and shared some streets that he believes should have traffic calming devices.

Ms. Hanley noted that she has a concern that traffic calming devices will create additional noise to communities. She also asked if speed trailers could be added instead of speed bumps. Mr. Ennis noted that speed trailers have some positive effects and staff can look into this option.

Mrs. Lamb noted that staff will explore the option of adding speed trailers to Creel Street, Arnold Drive and Leewood Boulevard.

David Carroll, 1396 Arnold Dr., shared his concern about number of vehicles that drive on his street.

19. Selection of Exceptional Citizen Award for 2026 Q2.

City Clerk Kevin McKeown reported that in the current quarter, one nomination has been submitted for Samuel Plummer who was submitted by Lisa Good, Regulatory Compliance Coordinator.

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Moved by Hanley/Neuman for approval of Samuel Plummer as this quarter's recipient of the Exceptional Citizen Award. Motion carried unanimously.

**D. PETITIONS, REMONSTRANCES, AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Neuman asked Mrs. Lamb to investigate why the streetlights are not operational on U.S.1 from Strawbridge Avenue to Post Road. He also requested that following the presentation of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's award to Dorothy Linson, Colbert Circle be honorarily renamed to Ms. Dot Circle. Council shared consensus.

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

/s/ Justice Stevens, Assistant City Clerk – April 3, 2026

Approved by Council: April 14, 2026