

MINUTES
CITY OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
Civic Auditorium/Commission Chambers
1507 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach, Florida 33785
Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present:

- Commissioner Hilary King
- Commissioner John Bigelow
- Commissioner Jude Bond
- Vice Mayor-Commissioner Janet Wilson
- Mayor-Commissioner Denise Houseberg

Also present: Acting City Manager Dan Carpenter, City Clerk Lorin Kornijtschuk, Public Works Director Dean Scharmen, Administrative Assistant Mishelle Hargett, and City Attorney Matthew Maggard.

For continuity, items are listed in agenda order, although not necessarily discussed in that order..

1. PRESENTATIONS

A. Report of Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's representative reported no significant uptick in criminal activity, with only occasional trespassing or vehicle-related arrests at beach accesses. No reports of open carry incidents were observed.

B. Report of Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District

No representative was present.

C. Presentations by IRB Home and Action 2000

- **Sarah McIntyre**, President of IRB Home, announced collaboration with the City and Action 2000 on *Hallowfest 2025*, each organization contributing \$3,000 toward the event. She thanked City staff for their partnership and support.
- **Paul Zagami**, President of Action 2000, also presented a check for \$3,000 for *Hallowfest* and thanked the City for their partnership in preserving and beautifying Indian Rocks Beach.
- **Added Presentation – Proclamation Honoring City Clerk Lorin Kornijtschuk**
Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg presented a proclamation honoring City Clerk Lorin Kornijtschuk upon earning the Certified Municipal Clerk designation, recognizing her dedication and service to the City. City Clerk Kornijtschuk expressed appreciation to the Commission and staff for their support.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Michelle Hargett, 1901 1st Street, thanked Acting City Manager Dan Carpenter for his service to the City and dedication to the Finance Department.
- Nancy Obarski, 708 Beach Trail, discussed concerns regarding Pinellas County's handling of easements for beach renourishment, citing property rights and communication issues with the Army Corps of Engineers. She urged the city to challenge the Corps' policy going forward.
- Don House, 2104 Beach Trail, spoke about community relations with short-term renters and emphasized treating visitors as welcome guests.
- John Pfanstiehl, 448 Harbor Drive S., expressed contrasting concerns over the impact of short-term rentals on residential neighborhoods, citing noise and disruption.

Public comment was closed by Mayor -Commissioner Houseberg.

3. REPORTS OF:

A. City Attorney – Matthew Maggard

1. Requested consideration of City Clerk salary increase per her employment contract, which stipulates a salary review upon completion of her Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) designation. Noted that the City Clerk is a charter seat position with a salary set exclusively by the Commission, and Commissioners had received salary comparison data from surrounding area municipalities.

- Commission discussion emphasized recognition of professional certification and alignment with comparable positions in similar-sized municipalities. Consensus emerged that a salary adjustment to \$100,000 would fairly recognize the achievement while maintaining internal equity.

Motion: Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson motioned to increase the City Clerk's salary to \$100,000 per year.

Second: Commissioner Bigelow seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

2. Executive Session Request: The City Attorney requested scheduling an executive session to discuss pending litigation. The City Clerk will coordinate availability.

B. Acting City Manager – Dan Carpenter

- Welcomed staff and residents back to City Hall after renovations, thanking Public Works Director Dean Scharmen and staff for their efforts.
- Announced *Hallowfest* scheduled for Saturday, October 25, 2025, from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at City Hall.
- Acknowledged A2K and IRB Home for event sponsorship.
- Reported tentative mid-November start for the *Beach Renourishment Project* and post-Veterans Day commencement of Duke Energy's work on the *Underground Utilities Project*.

- Discussed post-hurricane rebuilding efforts, noting approximately 40+ demolition permits issued and continued monitoring of unpermitted repairs to maintain floodplain compliance.
- Discussed the floodplain management process, including letters being sent to property owners who may have completed repairs without obtaining required permits. The County is taking a soft approach through December 31st, encouraging voluntary compliance through "after the fact" permits without penalties, though regular permit fees will apply
- Expressed gratitude to the Commission and residents for their support during his tenure as Acting City Manager, marking his final meeting in that capacity.

Public Works Director Dean Scharmen reported:

- Beach renourishment was tentatively scheduled to begin on October 13th, but the contractor shifted to Indian Shores and then to Sand Key. The City is now tentatively scheduled for mid-November, with work starting at the north end and progressing south.
- Underground utilities project: The City's work has been completed for approximately 90 days. Duke Energy confirmed that it will begin its portion of the work right after Veterans Day, including street lighting installation.

C. City Commission

- **Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson:**

- Praised the success of Oktoberfest with an amazing turnout.
- Announced IRB Home's Putt Putt Pub Crawl scheduled for November 15th.
- Reported on Florida League of Cities legislative committee work, noting she serves on the Development, Code Compliance, and Redevelopment Committee. Described the structure of five committees that develop legislative priorities and policy positions, with staff coordination for Tallahassee visits and lobbying efforts.
- Announced plans to work with the new City Manager to rejoin the Suncoast League of Cities (Pinellas, Pasco, and Hillsborough counties) to strengthen the City's voice in Tallahassee.
- Will provide a Property Tax Toolkit next month explaining the impact of proposed legislative tax amendments.

- **Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg:**

- Reported on discussion with Senator Nick Desigli regarding moving municipal elections to November instead of March, likely to take effect in the election cycle after the upcoming one. She also praised the success of *Oktoberfest 2025*.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: None.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of September 9, 2025, Closed Executive Client Session Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of September 9, 2025, Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes
- C. Approval of September 10, 2025, Special City Commission Meeting Minutes
- D. Approval of September 24, 2025, Special City Commission Meeting Minutes
- E. Authorization for Acting City Manager to sign amended Interlocal Agreement with Pinellas

County Building and Development Review Departments.

F. Proclamation: *Breast Cancer Awareness Month*.

Motion: Vice Mayor Wilson motioned to approve all Consent Agenda items.

Second: Commissioner Bond.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg noted she requested the Breast Cancer Awareness proclamation as a two-time breast cancer survivor. She shared that she was diagnosed with breast cancer when she first became a commissioner and never missed a commission meeting despite undergoing surgeries and treatments, which is why many may not have known about her diagnosis.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. ABT CASE 26-2025 QUASI-JUDICIAL PROCEEDING- 501 GULF BOULEVARD- F & J MARKET LLC d/b/a GULF MARKET- 2 APS: Beer; wine. Package sales for off-premises consumption, for the Gulf Market, located at 501 Gulf Boulevard, Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, and legally described HAVEN BEACH SUB BLK 3, LOTS 1, 2 & 3 LESS RD R/W AT SW TOGETHER WITH THAT PART OF CANAL AVE ADJ ON N PER O.R. 5378 PG 1612 [Parcel Number: 12-30-14-37764-003-0010].

City Clerk Kornijtschuk reported compliance with City Code and no objections received.

- **Applicants Falah and Jamie Hussein** addressed questions about the property, explaining that the Shell gas station will handle all fuel tank inspections and compliance with state requirements. They hope to open by November 1st and expressed excitement about serving the community, noting they have successfully operated another location for 35 years.

Motion: Vice Mayor Commissioner Wilson motioned to approve the request with the stipulation that repeated or intermittent nuisance activity or unlawful noise may result in revocation.

Second: Commissioner King.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

7. OTHER LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

A. Ordinance No. 2025-05 – PUBLIC HEARING / FIRST READING Appropriating funds for operating expenses and adopting a budget amendment for the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, for Fiscal year 2024-25

Acting City Manager Carpenter presented the budget amendment for FY 2024-25, explaining it was necessary due to hurricane-related expenditures. The amendment increases the general fund by \$2.691 million and the solid waste fund by \$3.1 million, totaling \$5.791 million in additional appropriations. The City has received over \$3.1 million in reimbursements to date, including property insurance payments and partial FEMA reimbursement (\$1.05 million of a \$3.1 million project). Staff continues working with FEMA and the Department of Emergency Management to secure full reimbursement.

Public Comment:

Lee Lieberman, 2507 Bay Boulevard, commended the Commission for their responsiveness, noting that a streetlight he reported at a previous meeting was repaired the next day. He suggested the City consider requesting donations from people who park at churches near beach accesses, as many use the parking without contributing. He also praised the Sheriff's deputies for their service and professionalism.

Public comment was closed by Mayor -Commissioner Houseberg.

Motion: Vice Mayor Commissioner Wilson motioned to approve Ordinance No. 2025-05 on first reading.

Second: Commissioner King.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

8. WORK SESSION ITEMS

DISCUSSION - Paid Parking Implementation

Acting City Manager Carpenter presented information on implementing paid parking throughout the City. The research identified 376 public parking spaces: 182 at Beach Accesses, 106 in the Business District, 22 at the Nature Preserve, 18 at Kolb Park, 46 at City Hall/Public Works, and 9 at Brown Park. Currently, only the Pinellas County-owned lot on 17th Avenue has paid parking (\$2.50/hour), generating over \$220,000 annually, with the City retaining 60% after paying 40%.

The commission needed to provide direction on three key issues: (1) which locations should have paid parking, (2) hours of operation, and (3) hourly rate.

Acting City Manager Carpenter noted:

- Current staffing may be insufficient for enforcement, particularly outside normal business hours
- The 71 existing resident-only parking spots should remain unchanged
- If residents with decals are allowed to park free in paid spots, it would reduce potential revenue
- Various cities use different systems, with Park Mobile being common among neighboring municipalities

Public Works Director Scharmen noted:

- Enforcement and hours are critical considerations
- Different facilities have different natural operating hours (e.g., Nature Preserve 7 AM to dusk, parks close at specific times, but beach visitors may park nearby)
- Street parking would require delineated spaces if made paid parking
- Significant paving work would be needed around Kolb Park for paid parking implementation

Public Comment:

- Daniel Mynsberg, 442 Harbor Drive North, expressed concern that if only beach parking is paid, visitors will park at City Hall and walk to the beach, suggesting all spots should be paid, with residential exceptions.
- Kelly Cisarik, 448 Harbor Drive South, raised concerns about Park Mobile being a private monopoly and noted accessibility issues for those without cell phones or credit cards, suggesting a cash alternative like St. Pete Beach offers. She requested City Hall parking remain free for residents attending meetings.

- Beth McMullen, 481 Harbor Drive South, emphasized the critical importance of enforcement, noting current resident sticker violations often go uncited. She requested better enforcement and suggested using paid parking revenue to hire dedicated parking enforcement personnel.
- Bob Copelan, 447 20th Avenue, supported paid parking but requested a detailed map showing parking space locations. Suggesting fines should be high enough to encourage payment.
- Kellee Watt, 431 Harbor Drive South, asked whether golf cart parking spaces would also require payment.
- John Pfanstiehl, 448 Harbor Drive South, agreed with previous speakers and strongly suggested golf cart parking be resident-only, citing safety concerns about unregistered golf carts from neighboring areas holding up traffic.
- John Thayer, 1819 Bay Boulevard, expressed concern about enforcement capabilities, noting difficulty enforcing existing rules, like dogs on the beach.

Public comment was closed by Mayor -Commissioner Houseberg.

Commission Discussion:

Commissioner Bond:

- Supported paid parking at all 376 locations at \$4 per hour
- Suggested resident decals allow free parking in any paid spot as an easy way to gain public support
- Noted the City needs revenue, and this would help offset costs while addressing traffic and parking concerns
- Proposed allowing traditional street parking for residents only (requiring resident stickers), which would solve rental property parking conflicts
- Suggested 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM hours for most locations to accommodate evening ball games

Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson:

- Supported \$4 per hour rate
- Strongly supported opening all paid parking spots to residents with decals for free parking
- Emphasized that visitors should help pay for rebuilding 26 Beach Accesses, not just residents
- Suggested 5:00 PM cutoff around parks to accommodate Little League start times
- Supported uniform pricing across all locations
- Advocated for January 1st implementation target
- Recommended consulting neighboring cities about their enforcement practices and costs

Commissioner King:

- Supported paid parking at all 376 spots identified by the Public Works Director
- Agreed with \$4 per hour rate
- Suggested matching the County Park rate for consistency
- Supported paid parking revenue funding additional enforcement staff if financially feasible
- Noted that other cities successfully implement different hours at different locations

Commissioner Bigelow:

- Opposed \$4/hour, preferring \$8/hour
- Supported paid parking at Beach Accesses and commercial areas
- Questioned whether the City owes the county anything from new revenue (confirmed: no)
- Asked about potentially reducing the County's 40% share to 20% at the existing lot
- Suggested free parking at City Hall, parks, and non-beach locations

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg:

- Supported \$4 per hour rate
- Suggested phased implementation, starting with Beach Accesses rather than city-wide rollout
- Asked about timeline, with Public Works Director indicating March 2026 as realistic
- Questioned enforcement capabilities and costs

City Attorney Maggard noted:

- Emphasized the critical importance of considering enforcement costs to avoid legal consequences from having unenforceable ordinances
- Noted Ryan Henderson (incoming City Manager) suggested either conducting a parking study or implementing a pilot program
- Confirmed all approaches are legally permissible
- Indicated an ordinance would require two readings before implementation

Acting City Manager Carpenter and Administrative Assistant Hargett noted:

- Approximately 2,000 resident parking stickers are issued annually
- Enforcement challenges exist with sticker sharing and improper attachment
- Current Code Enforcement staff of three would be stretched thin with expanded hours
- Park Mobile offers piggybackable contracts with predictable pricing
- St. Pete Beach uses both app-based and cash payment systems
- Revenue projections and enforcement cost analysis needed before final decisions

Consensus Reached:

The commission reached consensus on the following through polling:

1. **Rate:** \$4 per hour (**4-1 vote, Commissioner Bigelow dissenting**)
2. **Locations:** All 376 spots identified by Public Works Director (**unanimous**)
3. **Resident Benefits:** Resident decals would allow free parking in all paid spots (**consensus**)
4. **Hours:** To be determined after further study, considering different facility hours and enforcement capabilities
5. **Payment System:** To be researched, with Park Mobile and cash alternatives to be evaluated.

City Clerk Kornijtschuk summarized that staff would return with information on hours of operation and payment system options for further discussion.

9. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Vice Mayor Commissioner Wilson motioned to adjourn the meeting at **7:58 P.M.**

Second: Commissioner Bigelow.

Vote: Unanimous approval by acclamation.

Date Approved

Denise Houseberg, Mayor-Commissioner

Attest: _____
Lorin A. Kornijtschuk, City Clerk