MINUTES
CITY OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, October 13, 2026
6:00 p.m.

The City of Indian Rocks Beach City Commission held a regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. on October 13, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium/Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 1507 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach, Florida.

Call to Order

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Roll Call

City Clerk Kornijtschuk called the roll. A quorum was present

Commission Members Present:

- Mayor Commissioner Lan Vaughan
- Vice Mayor Commissioner Janet Wilson
- Commissioner John Bigelow
- Commissioner Hilary King
- Commissioner Kellee Watt

Staff Present: City Manager Ryan Henderson, City Attorney Matthew Maggard, Administrative Director Robin Gomez, City Clerk Lorin Kornijtschuk, and Public Information Officer Mishelle Hargett.

(To provide continuity for research, items are listed in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.)

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1. Presentations

1.1 Report of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) submitted a written Crime Analysis Report for the month of September 2026.

1.2 Report of the Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District

Deputy Chief Todd Best reported in place of Chief Grimes. The Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District presented a report for the month of September 2026.

Fire Chair Commissioner Betsy McKenna thanked the City and summarized district progress, including the rebuild of Station 28, repairs to Station 27 and planning for a permanent Indian

Shores location. She announced a chain-cutting ceremony for Station 75 on October 16 at 3:00 p.m.

1.3 Presentation from Creative Pinellas and Visit St. Pete/Clearwater

Margaret Murray, CEO of Creative Pinellas, congratulated the City on being named Best Beach Town. She described Art Everywhere, a month-long countywide arts celebration supported by $350,000 in arts grants, including a museum week and the County's first theater week. She highlighted Brushes on the Beach in Indian Rocks Beach, with 30 artists painting along the beach, followed by a sunset sale and celebration at the Beach Art Center. Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan confirmed the event date as Saturday, December 5, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

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2. Neighbor's Comments

Beth Flynn, 914 Harbor House Drive, speaking for the Friends of the Indian Rocks Beach Library, said volunteers will assist at the Hallow Fest petting zoo and pony ride on October 31, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Friends have applied for a 2027 McDonald's Foundation grant to continue Florida Explorer Storytime, funded this year by a $10,000 grant. Upcoming story times are November 14 at 11:00 a.m. (with Tampa Bay Watch) and December 12. Speaking as a resident, she asked for an update on the 2024 Charter Review Committee's work and thanked City staff for supporting A2K.

Don House, 2104 Beach Trail, stated that he filed an ethics complaint against the Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan, citing City legal costs related to litigation involving Homes Not Hotels.

John Phanstiehl, 448 Harbor Drive South, thanked residents who have spent personal time and money on legal actions for the benefit of the community, citing former Commissioner Ed Hoofnagle's past action regarding fire district taxes.

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3. Reports

3.1 City Manager

City Manager Henderson announced Hallow Fest on October 31 at Kolb Park beginning at 10:00 a.m., expanded this year as a Touch-a-Truck event. He thanked IRB Homes and A2K for contributing $3,000 each, and the Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue for providing apparatus. The Neighbor Advisory Board held its first meeting on September 24; the next is Wednesday, October 21, at 6:00 p.m. He introduced Kimberly DeVito of the Beach Art Center and announced a partnership exhibit of artwork in the Commission Chambers beginning in January.

In response to Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan, he said he and Public Works Director Dean Sharmen met with CivilSurv about a speed study. He will bring back a plan of action, including spring speed data collection and alternatives such as speed tables.

3.2 City Attorney

City Attorney Maggard had no updates beyond items on the agenda.

3.3 City Commission

- **Commissioner King** had no report and will raise items under Future Agenda Items.

- **Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson** thanked IRB Homes for the putt-putt pub crawl and A2K for Oktoberfest. She reported on the first Florida League of Cities (FLC) Development, Code Enforcement and Redevelopment Policy Committee meeting, noting affordable housing is likely to be a legislative focus. She will be installed as Third Vice President of the Suncoast League of Cities and has been appointed to the FLC Advocacy Committee. She thanked Michelle Hargett for her work on the Best of the Bay Best Beach Town award.

- **Commissioner Watt** reported on the first FLC Natural Resources Policy Committee meeting, focused on stormwater management; the next meeting in November will select policy priorities. She congratulated staff on the Best Beach Town award and thanked IRB Homes and A2K for their events.

- **Commissioner Bigelow** congratulated A2K on Oktoberfest.

- **Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan**, as chair of Oktoberfest, thanked the community, City staff and volunteers. He announced the City won Best of the Bay Best Beach Town and presented the award to the City Manager for display at City Hall, thanking Michelle Hargett. He noted October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

4. Work Session Items

4.1 Discussion on Retaining a Lobbyist

City Manager Henderson recommended that, instead of a request for proposals, staff select a lobbyist through an existing piggyback contract and bring an agreement to the November 10 meeting so work can begin before the legislative session. He provided a survey showing monthly rates of roughly $4,000 to $7,500 and estimated about $6,000 per month. The lobbyist would also pursue state appropriations and coordinate with the City's communications firm, Catalyst.

Commissioner King asked to meet the recommended firm before a contract is signed; the City Manager offered one-on-one meetings. Commissioner Watt said FLC lobbyists advised against an RFP and supported a staff recommendation. Commissioner Bigelow asked whether an established or newer firm would be better. Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan supported staff vetting candidates, including for conflicts of interest. Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson stressed

the importance of the firm's working relationship with Catalyst. The Commission reached consensus for staff to proceed.

Public comment: John Phanstiehl, 448 Harbor Drive South, supported the effort and suggested engaging the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation. Don House, 2104 Beach Trail, urged the City to partner with other cities for greater impact. Patti Katz, 124 13th Avenue, supported the initiative and spoke in defense of Homes Not Hotels. Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan asked staff to consider firms representing cities with similar challenges.

4.2 Discussion on Residential Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

City Manager Henderson said the City's code has no residential outdoor lighting standards to address light trespass and glare. City Attorney Maggard presented a rough draft compiled by other jurisdictions for Commission feedback. He advised that SB 180 is likely to prevent adoption until its restrictions on new construction expires, so adoption is expected no earlier than mid- to late 2027.

Commission comments:

- Commissioner King asked that the draft go to the Planning and Zoning Board and suggested considering fixture heights, hours of operation and motion sensors. The City Attorney invited Commissioners to email comments for a revised draft.
- Commissioner Watt asked about applicability to residential uses in non-residential districts (confirmed) and whether the draft addresses existing fixtures causing light trespass. The City Attorney is preparing a second draft with a phase-out period for non-conforming lighting and an appeal mechanism.
- Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan supported a "good neighbor" approach protecting homes and wildlife, citing dock lights shining across waterways. He suggested plain-language standards with illustrated diagrams and removing the Community Development Director's extension authority in favor of the Planning and Zoning Board.
- The City Manager noted the land development regulation update kickoff with Kimley-Horn and said the draft would be reviewed with them.

Public comment: Don House, 2104 Beach Trail; suggested that the city pull together with other cities for a common goal. Cathy Gerson, 717 1st Street, Unit A, recommended Dark Sky International; John Thayer, 1819 Bay Boulevard, asked that dock lighting be incorporated, as the current dock lighting provision is minimal; Beth McMullen, 441 Harbor Drive South, noted the turtle lighting ordinance has not been updated since 1999; Beth Flynn, 914 Harbor House Drive, supported the draft.

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5. Consent Agenda

5.1 Approval of September 8, 2026 Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes

5.2 Approval of September 9, 2026 Special City Commission Meeting Minutes

5.3 Approval of September 23, 2026 Special City Commission Meeting Minutes

No items were removed for discussion.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

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6. Public Hearings

None listed. (The City Attorney noted that Item 7.1, as a second reading, required a public hearing, which was held under that item.)

7. Action Items

7.1 Ordinance No. 2026-05 – Second Reading (Public Hearing)

City Attorney Maggard read the ordinance by title, amending Chapter 58, Taxation, Article II, Local Business Tax, Sections 58-46 and 58-49, revising the initial application fee and fee schedule.

Administrative Director Gomez explained the ordinance increases local business tax receipts by 5%, the first increase since 2015.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan opened the public hearing. There were no public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve Ordinance No. 2026-05 on second reading; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

7.2 Ordinance No. 2026-08 – First Reading

City Attorney Maggard read the ordinance by title, appropriating funds for a capital expense and adopting a budget amendment for fiscal year 2025-2026.

Administrative Director Gomez explained the $570,000 amendment records the fiscal 2026 cost of the AquaFence flood barrier equipment and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection grant of $476,250, covering about 85% of the $559,000 equipment cost. The $93,750 balance comes from the Local Option Sales Tax fund balance. Total cost with installation was about $850,000, part of which was paid in 2025.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan opened the public hearing. There were no public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan noted City Hall repairs after Hurricane Helene cost $1,136,949.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve Ordinance No. 2026-08 on first reading; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0 on first reading.**

7.3 Resolution No. 2026-17 – General Election, March 9, 2027

City Attorney Maggard read the resolution by title, calling a general election to fill two at-large Commission seats for two-year terms, establishing the qualifying period, authorizing a contract with the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections and establishing the polling place.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan opened the public hearing. There were no public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan asked staff to research, for future elections, aligning City elections with county and state elections to reduce costs; the City Manager noted this would require a charter amendment.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve Resolution No. 2026-17; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

7.4 Resolution No. 2026-18 – Forward Pinellas Nomination

City Attorney Maggard read the resolution by title, nominating Madeira Beach Mayor-Commissioner Anne-Marie Brooks to the Forward Pinellas Board to represent the BIG-C municipalities (excluding the City of Clearwater).

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan opened the public hearing. There were no public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve Resolution No. 2026-18; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

7.5 Piggyback Agreement – Deckard Technologies, Inc.

City Manager Henderson recommended replacing the expiring Granicus contract with Deckard Technologies' Rentalscape platform, which identifies short-term rental advertisements and supports code enforcement before the Special Magistrate. The Deckard representative was

unable to attend and will present at a future meeting. The FY budget included $78,000 for STR monitoring; the change saves about $36,000. The STR hotline is not included; neighbors should call the Sheriff's Office for immediate issues and City Code Enforcement for follow-up.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan opened the public hearing. There were no public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve the piggyback agreement with Deckard Technologies; **SECOND** by Commissioner Bigelow.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

7.6 Piggyback Agreement – Waste Pro of Florida, Inc. (Recycling)

Administrative Director Gomez explained the agreement uses the City of Madeira Beach's contract for weekly residential and multifamily curbside recycling, beginning January 1 for one year, with possible extensions if Madeira Beach renews. New carts will be exchanged in mid- to late December. Resident rates will not change; the residential rate charged to the City is slightly lower, and multifamily rates for the City's 47 customers will be equal or lower. Billing continues through Pinellas County Utilities.

Ed Farmer, Municipal Marketing Manager, introduced Waste Pro's Andrew McKimpsley and Calvin Warren, a former City employee (1998–2018). In response to Commissioner King's question about repeat contamination, the City Manager said staff will work with Waste Pro on tagging and possible cart removal, and a new code officer position is being filled. Waste Pro described monthly tonnage reporting and cart tagging.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan opened the public hearing.

Public comment: John Thayer, 1819 Bay Boulevard, asked that lids be closed after collection; Beth McMullen, 441 Harbor Drive South, confirmed residents may label carts with their address; Beth Flynn, 914 Harbor House Drive, thanked the Commission for continuing recycling. The City Manager thanked Administrative Director Gomez and Public Works Director Dean Sharmen.

Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan closed the public hearing.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve the agreement to utilize (piggyback) an existing contract with Waste Pro of Florida, Inc. for the collection, hauling and recycling of recyclable materials from residential and multifamily units; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

7.7 Resolution No. 2026-19 – Additional Fees, Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson

City Attorney Maggard read the resolution by title, amending Resolution No. 2026-10 to increase the authorized fee limit for Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson by $10,000 for legal services regarding the City's short-term rental ordinance. He proposed a public workshop with the firm to review findings, risks and options before drafting ordinance revisions. Commissioners supported a separate workshop, preferably in person and before Thanksgiving, possibly during the day. Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan asked for materials at least five days in advance. The workshop will be public, with materials in the agenda package.

Public comment: Beth McMullen, 441 Harbor Drive South, supported the item; Beth Flynn, 914 Harbor House Drive, confirmed the workshop will be public.

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to approve Resolution No. 2026-19; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Watt – Yes; King – Yes; Bigelow – Yes; Wilson – Yes; Vaughan – Yes. **Motion passed 5–0.**

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8. Neighbor's Feedback

No one spoke.

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9. Future Agenda Items

- **Commissioner King:** (1) a public workshop with Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson on the STR ordinance (addressed under Item 7.7); (2) a workshop on use of reserve funds, combining reserves with grant and appropriation opportunities, including possible acquisition and rehabilitation of distressed properties for long-term rental housing, before further property acquisition; (3) scheduling the Charter Review, including related resolutions, election alignment and policies and procedures. The City Manager will set a date to revisit the Charter Review, which was interrupted by Hurricane Helene.
- **Commissioner Watt:** follow-up on John Thayer's earlier request regarding no motorized vehicles on the beach. Administrative Director Gomez noted neighboring beach cities have adopted micromobility ordinances restricting e-bikes on the sand. The City Manager reported he met with Smoke-Free Pinellas and smoking signs will be added on the beach.
- **Mayor-Commissioner Vaughan:** a review of the sign ordinance, including short-term rentals using real estate signs as permanent advertising.
- **City Manager:** a six-month review of paid parking will be presented at the November meeting.

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10. Noted Items

The City Manager had no noted items.

Adjournment

MOTION by Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson to adjourn; **SECOND** by Commissioner Watt. **All in favor.** The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:06 p.m.

Lan Vaughan, Mayor-Commissioner

ATTEST: Lorin A. Kornijtschuk

Lorin A. Kornijtschuk, City Clerk

Approved: 11/10/2026