

City of Marco Island Florida

*51 Bald Eagle Drive
Marco Island, Florida
cityofmarcoisland.com*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, July 7, 2025

5:30 PM

Community Meeting Room

City Council

Chair: Erik Brechnitz

Vice-Chair: Stephen Gray

***City Council: Rene Champagne,
Tamara Goehler, Deb Henry,
Darrin Palumbo, Bonita Schwan***

City Manager: Mike McNees

Assistant City Manager: Casey Lucius

City Attorney: Alan L. Gabriel

City Clerk: Joan Taylor

1. Call to Order

Chair Brechnitz called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

Also Present

*Michael McNees, City Manager
Casey Lucius, Assistant City Manager
Joan Taylor, City Clerk
Alan L. Gabriel, City Attorney
Tracy Frazzano, Police Chief
Chris Byrne, Fire Chief
Guillermo Polanco, Finance Director
Daniel J. Smith, Community Affairs Director
Justin Martin, Public Works Director
Jose Duran, Information Technology Director
Jeff Poteet, Water & Sewer General Manager
Sonia Iszler, Water & Sewer Engineering & Operations Manager
Mario Blanco, Sr. Network Specialist
Martin Luna, Video/Broadcast Technician
Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist
Citizens and Visitors*

3. Invocation

Offered by the Reverend Jessica Babcock of Saint Mark's Episcopal Church.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Chair Brechnitz.

5. Approval of the Agenda

Chair Brechnitz requested that Agenda Item 15 (Resolution - Supporting Continued Operations and Development of Everglades City Airpark) be addressed immediately after Agenda Item 9 (Citizens' Comments).

Chair Brechnitz also requested that a discussion of the City's June 30, 2025 submission to the Florida Auditor General be added to the Agenda as Agenda Item 8c under Proclamations and Presentations.

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, that the Agenda be Approved as Amended. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

6. Approval of the Minutes

- a. [ID 25-4165](#) Approval of the Capital Budget Workshop Minutes of June 16, 2025

Attachments: [Capital Budget Workshop Minutes of June 16, 2025](#)

MOTION by Vice-Chair Gray, seconded by Councilor Champagne, that the Capital Budget Workshop Minutes of June 16, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

- b. [ID 25-4166](#) Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2025

Attachments: [City Council Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2025](#)

MOTION by Vice-Chair Gray, seconded by Councilor Goehler, that the City Council Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Vice-Chair Gray requested that Agenda Item 7b (Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to USSI, LLC) be removed from the Consent Agenda.

[Editorial Note: the record of the Council's decision on this item is now reflected in these Minutes under Agenda Item 16 (Items Removed from the Consent Agenda)]

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, that the Consent Agenda be Approved as Amended. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

[Approval of the Consent Agenda Passed the Routine Item Listed Below]

- a. [ID 25-4533](#) Award of Contract of the Roadway Restriping Project to the Lowest Responsible Bidder, McShea Contracting LLC., in the Amount of \$159,471.95 - Justin Martin, P.E., Public Works Director

Attachments: [Bid Tabulation](#)
[McShea Contracting Proposal](#)
[2025 Restriping Map](#)

8. Proclamations and Presentations

- a. [ID 25-4169](#) Employee of the Second Quarter

Ms. Sonia Iszler, Marco Island Water & Sewer Department Engineering and Operations Manager, was recognized as the City's "Employee of the Quarter" for the second Quarter of 2025.

- b. [ID 25-4530](#) Presentation - AI Task Force - Mario Blanco, Senior Network Specialist

Attachments: [AI Task Force Memo](#)
[City of Marco Island Interim AI Policy](#)

Mr. Mario Blanco, Marco Island Senior Network Specialist on the City's Information Technology Team, presented the policy guidelines drafted by the City's AI Task Force to guide the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence tools by City departments and staff members.

Marco Island Code Compliance and Reserve Police Officer Ray Leshinger shared a brief example of the Axon VR (Virtual Reality) police officer tactical training tool, and the Blue Voice AI information platform, which utilize Artificial Intelligence to advance the field skills of law enforcement officers.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

c. Special Item: Discussion of June 30, 2025 Submission to the Florida Auditor General

Chair Brechnitz expressed concern with the contents of the report recently conducted by the City's independent auditor (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP) that was released to the Florida Auditor General. He also noted the lack of advance communication to the City Council of its contents by the City Manager and the City's Finance Director.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Chair Brechnitz, seconded by Councilor Palumbo for the purpose of discussion, that the City Manager's Employment Contract not be reviewed for another year, effective July 7, 2025. After discussion and with Council agreement, Councilor Palumbo withdrew his seconding of the Motion. MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.

9. Citizens' Comments on Items Not Scheduled for Public Hearing and Items Other Than Those Appearing on the Agenda

Mr. Elliott Mascoop (6th Ave.) shared his concerns, and the concerns of his neighbors who reside in the area of North Barfield Drive and North Collier Boulevard, with the lack of information that they have received from the City regarding planned construction activity and the expected resulting neighborhood traffic impact during the forthcoming water, sewer, roadway, and intersection improvement project at that intersection.

Ms. Sheelah Yawitz (N. Collier Blvd.) expressed disappointment with the seeming lack of coordination between the City of Marco Island's Police and Fire Rescue departments in providing direction to the Board and Management of the Crescent Beach Condominium Association regarding the replacement of a required wall-mounted safe (aka Knox Box) for emergency personnel and first responder access to the premises.

10. City Manager's Report

City Manager McNees communicated that this year's annual independent financial audit process was atypical, and he expressed his disappointment in the manner in which it was discussed at this meeting. He indicated his intention to share additional details with each Councilor, individually.

City Manager McNees also responded to questions from Councilor Palumbo regarding the status of: 1) implementing non-certified mail for official notifications to property owners, and; 2) a review of the number (and role) of existing volunteer City Committees.

Chair Brechnitz requested that the Council's discussion of the role and number of volunteer City Committees be placed on the Council's Future Agenda (see Agenda Item 17).

11. City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Alan Gabriel advised the Council that the Code Enforcement cases that he highlighted during his report at the Council's June 16, 2025 meeting are advancing through the judicial system.

Additionally, at the request of Chair Brechnitz, City Attorney Gabriel clarified that according to the City Charter, a potential future public referendum on Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) would require the creation of an ordinance by the City of Marco Island.

Mr. Gabriel's response prompted a discussion among members of the Council about the benefits of providing the public with a realistic implementation cost estimate in the description of any proposed referendum that may come before the voters regarding the implementation of AWT technology by the City's Water & Sewer utility.

Chair Brechnitz encouraged the Council to consider the financial cost savings to the City of conducting public referendums on dates coinciding with broader, state or county-wide ballot initiatives.

City Manager McNees was reminded of the Council's direction to engage an independent engineering consultant resource to estimate the cost of implementing AWT as discussed at the Council's earlier July 7, 2025 Water Quality Workshop.

12. Departmental Reports

[ID 25-4173](#) Monthly Departmental Reports

Attachments: [City Clerk](#)
[Public Works](#)
[Water & Sewer](#)
[Police](#)

No questions or comments were raised regarding the Monthly Departmental Reports.

13. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing

[ID 25-4534](#) Resolution - Coastal Construction Setback Line Variance Request (CCCL-25-000072) for Property Located at 400 South Collier Boulevard, Marco Island, FL 34145 - Mary P. Holden, Senior Planner, Community Affairs/Growth Management

Attachments: [Resolution 25-31](#)
[Staff Report](#)
[Cover Letter](#)
[Application](#)
[Justification](#)
[Neutral Grading Plan](#)
[Response Letter](#)
[Notice of Publication](#)

City Attorney Alan Gabriel swore in all parties who intended to provide witness or testimony, and each

Council member conveyed a verbal ex parte disclosure related to the Applicant's Appeal.

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 25-31 into the record by title only.

Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel Smith shared a brief visual presentation of the proposed variance request and addressed questions from members of the Council.

Mr. Tim Hall, Principal, Turrell Hall & Associates, Inc., provided testimony on behalf of the Applicant.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Champagne, that Resolution 25-31 - Coastal Construction Control Line Variance Setback Request (CCCL-25-000072) for the Property Located at 400 South Collier Boulevard, Marco Island, FL 34145, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

14. Ordinances

A. Public Hearings

None.

B. First Readings

1. [ID 25-4540](#) Ordinance - First Reading - Amending Chapter 32 "Law Enforcement", Article II "Police Officers' Pension Plan" in Accordance with Secure Act 2.0, Increased Required Minimum Distribution Age for Retirement Accounts - Joan Taylor, City Clerk

Attachments: [Ordinance 25-05](#)
[Actuary Report Ordinance 25-05 Impact Letter](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Ordinance 25-05 into the record by title only, and she briefly outlined the reason for the proposed amendment.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Henry, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, that Ordinance 25-05 - Amending Chapter 32 "Law Enforcement" Article II in Accordance with SECURE ACT 2.0, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

2. [ID 25-4543](#) Ordinance - First Reading - Amending Chapter 50, "Traffic & Vehicles," Operation of Bicycles & Electric Bicycles within the City of Marco Island Municipal Boundaries - Tracy Frazzano, Police Chief

Attachments: [Ordinance 25-06](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Ordinance 25-06 into the record by title only.

Marco Island Police Chief Tracy Frazzano briefly reminded the Council of its direction at its May 19, 2025 meeting (Agenda Item 15c) to draft an ordinance to govern the operation of electric bicycles on sidewalks, shared-use pathways, and within City parks.

Councilor Schwan, the Marco Island City Council's representative to the Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), proposed a consistent 10 MPH speed limit for all areas of the Island, and the removal of specific street names on Marco Island (lines 233 - 237), identified in the proposed Ordinance.

Public Comment

Mr. Steve Servente (Leland Way) proposed that the Council consider requiring working forward and rear lights on rental e-bikes, along with additional language in the Ordinance to address:

1) wrong-way driving on roadway bike lanes, and; 2) the number of allowable riders on a single e-bike.

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Vice-Chair Gray, that Ordinance 25-06 - Amending Chapter 50 "Traffic & Vehicles", Article II "Stopping, Standing, & Parking", Section 50-34 "Definitions", and Chapter 34 "Parks, Recreation & Public Facilities", Article I "In General", Section 34-3 "Establishment of Rules & Regulations" of the City of Marco Island Code of Ordinances, with modifications to include: 1) the elimination of named roads in Lines 233 - 237, and; 2) with a 10 MPH maximum speed limit throughout, be Approved on First Reading. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

15. Resolutions & City Council Items

[ID 25-4529](#) Resolution - Supporting Continued Operations and Development of Everglades City Airpark, Marco Island Executive and Immokalee Regional Airports - Joan Taylor, City Clerk

Attachments: [Resolution 25-30](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 25-30 into the record by title only.

Public Comment

Messrs. Howell (Howie) Grimm Jr., Mayor of Everglades City, Harry Henkel, Director, Friends of the Everglades Airpark, Inc., and Craig Woodward, Attorney, Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A., individually expressed their appreciation to the Council for its support.

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Goehler, that Resolution 25-30 - Supporting Continued Operations and Development of Everglades City Airpark, Marco Island Executive, and Immokalee Regional Airports, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

16. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

- 7b. [ID 25-4528](#) Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to USSI, LLC in the Amount of \$218,400 for the Smoke Testing of the City's Wastewater Collection System by Piggybacking on Clearwater Contract No. 22-0006-UT - Jeffrey E. Poteet, General Manager, Water & Sewer

Attachments: [Marco Island Estimate 1 - USSI](#)

[2023 Sewer Point Repair & Improvements Project 22-0006-UT - Full Contract](#)

[City of Marco Island Piggyback Agreement - USSI - Partially Executed](#)

Vice-Chair Gray questioned City of Marco Island Water & Sewer General Manager Jeff Poteet on the reason for originally underestimating the cost per foot to conduct the smoke testing of the City's wastewater collection system, and Chair Brechnitz confirmed the selected supplier's status on the City's contractor list. Mr. Poteet provided responses to Vice-Chair Gray and Chair Brechnitz's questions.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Vice-Chair Gray, seconded by Councilor Schwan, that the City Manager be Authorized to Issue a Purchase Order to USSI, LLC in the Amount of \$218,400.00 for the Smoke Testing of the City's Wastewater Collection System by Piggybacking on Clearwater Contract No. 22-0006-UT, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Schwan and Chair Brechnitz

17. Council Communications & Future Agenda

Councilor Henry reminded the public to take advantage of the opportunities outlined during the City's June 18th Hurricane Preparedness Seminar to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season and to sign up for the emergency notification channels that are endorsed by the City to keep residents and visitors informed and up-to-date on potential extreme weather events.

Councilor Henry also encouraged all residents and visitors to be aware of the presence of 63 active "campers" and an equal number of young adult camp councilors as Camp Able kicks off its activities on Marco Island during the week of July 7, 2025.

Council Champagne requested insight and confirmation on the Council's next steps in advancing the investigation into the cost to implement Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) technology at the City of Marco Island Water & Sewer utility. Chair Brechnitz confirmed the Council's consensus to direct the City Staff to initiate the investigation of securing a cost estimate.

Councilor Palumbo referenced an unsolicited email received on June 20th indicating an opportunity for the City to use a company to remove and repurpose dredged canal sediment for landscaping purposes. The City's action on this proposal was remanded to the City's Waterways Advisory Committee for investigation and follow-up.

Councilor Palumbo noted a recent increase in the number of complaints that he has been receiving regarding the permitting process on Marco Island. City Manager McNees briefly recalled the City's recent activities to streamline the permitting process, and he requested that members of the Council share specific cases of concern so that the City Staff can promptly address them.

Later, during Council Communications, Councilor Palumbo confirmed with City Attorney Gabriel that the actions initiated by the State of Florida following Hurricane Ian which suspended the ability of local governing bodies to enact "burdensome" or "restrictive" land development ordinances (e.g. regulating short-term residential property rentals) was recently extended into calendar year 2028.

Councilor Goehler brought attention to, and commented on, the significance of the recent Fourth of July Holiday for the country and its citizens.

Councilor Goehler also requested insight on how to best engage with a Michigan-based company offering a technology to reduce the concentration of nutrients in organic "muck". Chair Brechnitz recommended that the representatives of that company reach out to the City Staff to initiate dialogue regarding how to most effectively share its proposals for the City's consideration.

Councilor Goehler concluded by sharing a concern brought to her by a Marco Island resident regarding the identification of complainants in instances where property renters are reported for excessive noise in residential single-family districts. The Council discussed the appropriate procedure for submitting and responding to public records requests.

Vice-Chair Gray briefly updated the Council on his progress in drafting revisions to the City's Noise Ordinance with the assistance of Police Chief Frazzano and City Attorney Gabriel.

Vice-Chair Gray also noted that work is continuing on his effort to identify changes to the City's Zoning Ordinance to keep harmful and dangerous items out of the City's parks.

[ID 25-4172](#) Future Agenda Items

Attachments: [Future Agenda](#)

Chair Brechnitz requested that the Council's discussion of volunteer City Committees be placed on the Council's Future Agenda (from Agenda Item 10 - City Manager's Report)

18. Council Reports

None.

19. Citizens' Comments

No members of the public came forward to offer comment during this portion of the meeting.

20. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, Chair Brechnitz adjourned the meeting at 8:19 P.M.

Erik Brechnitz, Council Chair

ATTEST:

Joan Taylor, City Clerk

PREPARED BY:

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist