

# City of Marco Island Florida

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



## Meeting Minutes - Draft

**Monday, October 21, 2024**

**5:30 PM**

**Community Meeting Room**

### **City Council**

*Chair: Jared Grifoni*

*Vice-Chair: Erik Brechnitz*

*City Council: Rich Blonna,  
Greg Folley, Becky Irwin,  
Darrin Palumbo, Joe Rola*

*City Manager: Mike McNeas*

*Assistant City Manager: Casey Lucius*

*Assistant City Attorney: David Tolces*

*City Clerk: Joan Taylor*

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Roll Call**

**Present:** 7 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz, Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Rola and Chair Grifoni

**Also Present**

*Michael McNees, City Manager  
Casey Lucius, Assistant City Manager  
Joan Taylor, City Clerk  
David Tolces, Assistant City Attorney  
Tracy Frazzano, Police Chief  
Chris Byrne, Fire Chief  
Daniel J. Smith, Community Affairs Director  
Justin Martin, Public Works Director  
Samantha Malloy, Parks, Culture & Recreation Manager  
Martin Luna, Video/Broadcast Technician  
Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist  
Citizens and Visitors*

**3. Invocation**

*Offered by the Reverend Matt White of the Wesley United Methodist Church.*

**4. Pledge of Allegiance**

*Led by Councilor Irwin.*

**5. Approval of the Agenda**

**MOTION by Councilor Irwin, seconded by Councilor Blonna, that the Agenda be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:**

**Yes:** 7 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz, Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Rola and Chair Grifoni

**6. Approval of the Minutes**

*None.*

**7. Approval of Consent Agenda**

**MOTION by Vice-Chair Brechnitz, seconded by Councilor Blonna, that the Consent Agenda be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:**

**Yes:** 7 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz, Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Rola and Chair Grifoni

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

[ID 24-3882](#) Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to Titan Concrete & Utilities, Inc., for the Stormwater Pipe and Sidewalk Replacement at 991 Ironwood Court in the Amount of \$79,659.86, using the City Public Infrastructure Construction Services Contract 2023-029 - Justin Martin, P.E., Director of Public Works

## **8. Proclamations and Presentations**

a. [ID 24-3803](#) Proclamation - Florida City Government Week

*Chair Jared Grifoni proclaimed October 21 - 27, 2024 as Florida City Government Week, and presented the Proclamation to Marco Island City Clerk Joan Taylor. Ms. Taylor received a warm round of applause from all present.*

b. [ID 24-3855](#) Proclamation - In Recognition of Senator Kathleen Passidomo

*Chair Jared Grifoni publicly recognized Florida State Senator Kathleen Passidomo with a proclamation honoring her many accomplishments in state government over the past fourteen years. Senator Passidomo shared a few words of gratitude in accepting this honor. All present offered a warm round of applause in appreciation of Senator Passidomo's many accomplishments on behalf her Southwest Florida constituency and, specifically, the residents and business community of Marco Island.*

c. [ID 24-3897](#) Presentation - City of Marco Island Park & Recreation Master Plan - Carlos Perez, Perez Planning & Design, LLC.

*Mr. Carlos Perez, President and Founder of Perez Planning & Design LLC, returned in follow-up to his initial presentation to the Marco Island City Council at its July 22, 2024 meeting, to share his "Draft Summary Presentation" of the City of Marco Island's Parks & Recreation Master Plan.*

*Assisted by his associate Mr. Phillip Hardin, Mr. Perez identified a number of potential park projects and alternative funding scenarios for future Council consideration.*

*No members of the public came forward to offer comment.*

*Chair Grifoni thanked both gentlemen and Community Affairs Director Daniel J. Smith for their multi-year collaboration in soliciting the public's input in developing this Master Plan. He obtained Council consensus to request that the City Manager and City Staff develop and bring forward actionable proposals consistent with this Plan for future Council review and approval.*

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

*Ms. Diana Dohm (N. Collier Blvd.), Executive Director of the Marco Island Chamber of Commerce, thanked the Council and the City Staff for its emergency planning, leadership, and communication in preparing the citizens of Marco Island for the effects of Hurricane Milton.*

*Ms. Bonita Schwan (Cape Marco Dr.), as a candidate for the Marco Island City Council, thanked the voters who turned out during the early voting period, and she reiterated her qualifications to serve on the Marco Island City Council.*

*Ms. Deb Henry (Tulip Ct.), as a candidate for the Marco Island City Council, complimented the staff of the Collier County Supervisor of Elections for its management of the first day of early voting on Marco Island.*

*Ms. Kassie-Annie Rigas (Amber Dr.) complimented the members of the City Council who prioritized and supported lower taxes for the property owners of Marco Island. She expressed her hope that this focus will continue in the future.*

*Mr. Peter Rigas (Amber Dr.) shared a comparison of the property tax bills of two residential properties on Marco Island to demonstrate the cumulative effect of lower millage rates for property owners. He also offered comments regarding Council candidates supporting taxpayer protection pledges.*

## 10. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing

- a. [ID 24-3902](#) Resolution - Utility Easement Vacation (LV-24-000162) Request to Vacate the Utility and Drainage Easements of the Common Lot Line for Property Located at 692 & 698 Solana Court, Marco Island, FL 34145 - Mary P. Holden, Planning Manager, Community Affairs/Growth Management

*Assistant City Attorney David Tolces announced the procedure for the City's quasi-judicial proceeding, and he swore in all parties who indicated an intention to provide witness or testimony. Council Chair Jared Grifoni asked each member of the Council to convey a verbal ex parte disclosure related to the Applicant's appeal.*

*City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 24-63 into the record by title only.*

*City of Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel J. Smith outlined the rationale for the Applicant's request, and he addressed questions raised by members of the Council.*

*No representative of the Applicant came forward to offer testimony.*

*No members of the public came forward to offer comment.*

**MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Blonna, that Resolution 24-63 - Utility Easement Vacation (LV-24-000162) Request to Vacate the Utility and Drainage Easements of the Common Lot Line for the Property Located at 692 & 698 Solana Court, Marco Island, FL 34145, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:**

**Yes:** 7 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz, Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Rola and Chair Grifoni

- b. [ID 24-3903](#) Resolution - Conditional Use Permit (CUP-24-000055) to Construct a Car Storage Condominium Complex for the Property Located at 138 -168 South Barfield Drive, Marco Island, FL 34145 - Daniel J. Smith, AICP, Director, Community Affairs/Growth Management

*Assistant City Attorney David Tolces swore in all parties who indicated an intention to provide witness or testimony, and Council Chair Jared Grifoni asked each member of the Council to convey a verbal ex parte disclosure related to the Applicant's appeal.*

*City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 24-64 into the record by title only.*

*City of Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel J. Smith indicated that the Site Plan for this property had already been approved, that no dwelling units were being created, and he outlined the reasons why a Conditional Use Permit approval was required from the Council.*

*The Applicant elected to not come forward to offer testimony in support of his request.*

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*Public Comment*

*Mr. Robert Sakuta (Pelican Ct.) spoke in support of the Applicant's request.*

**MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Blonna, that Resolution 24-64 - Conditional Use Permit (CUP-24-000055) to Construct a Car Storage Condominium complex for the Property Located at 138 - 168 South Barfield Drive, Marco Island, FL 34145, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:**

**Yes:** 7 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz, Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo, Councilor Rola and Chair Grifoni

## 11. Ordinances

### A. Public Hearings

*None.*

### B. First Readings

[ID 24-3906](#) Ordinance- First Reading - Land Development Code Amendment (LDC) to Sec. 30-84, Conditional Uses, 7. and Sec. 30-88. Structural and Site Design Guidelines (5). a. 4 by Deleting Both in their Entirety - Mary, P. Holden, Planning Manager, Community Affairs/Growth Management

*City Clerk Joan Taylor read Ordinance 24-17 into the record by title only.*

*Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel J. Smith explained the recent history and rationale for these proposed amendments to the City of Marco Island's Land Development Code.*

*No members of the public came forward to offer comment.*

**MOTION by Councilor Irwin, seconded by Councilor Folley, that Ordinance 24-17 - Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments to Sec. 30-84, Conditional Uses, 7, and Sec. 30-88 Structural and Site Design Guidelines (5), by Deleting Both in Their Entirety, be Approved on First Reading. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:**

**Yes:** 6 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz, Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo and Chair Grifoni

**No:** 1 - Councilor Rola

## 12. Resolutions & City Council Items

[ID 24-3868](#) Resolution - Appointment of Al Schettino as the Fifth Trustee, to the Police Officers' Pension Plan Board, Item tabled from the September 23, 2024 City Council meeting - Joan Taylor, City Clerk

*City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 24-59 into the record by title only.*

*Chair Grifoni noted that this item had been removed from the Council's September 23, 2024 Consent*

*Agenda, and that action had been postponed pending the Council's receipt of additional, clarifying information which was provided to the Council prior to the evening's meeting.*

*Vice-Chair Brechnitz requested that a review and comparison of the State statute with Marco Island's current Code regarding the approval of Police and Fire Department Pension Board nominees be added to the Council's Future Agenda. Assistant City Attorney David Tolces confirmed the Council's ministerial duties in the appointment of Trustees to the Police Officers' Pension Plan Board as outlined in Sec. 32-46 of the City Code, and he verified that Florida State Statute 185.05 is consistent with the City's Code on this issue.*

*No members of the public came forward to offer comment.*

**MOTION by Councilor Irwin, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, that Resolution 24-59 - Appointing Mr. Al Schettino as the Fifth Trustee to the Police Officers' Pension Plan Board, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:**

**Yes:** 4 - Councilor Folley, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Rola

**No:** 3 - Councilor Blonna, Vice-Chair Brechnitz and Chair Grifoni

### **13. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda**

*No items were removed from the Consent Agenda at this meeting.*

### **14. Council Communications & Future Agenda**

*Vice-Chair Brechnitz raised for discussion his perception that the Council and the City Staff could be viewed as inconsistent in its application and enforcement of the City's Land Development Code (LDC). He offered several examples for the Council's consideration. Several Councilors, the Assistant City Attorney, and the City Manager all provided input and perspective regarding the reading and interpretation of "guidelines" and "requirements" within the Land Development Code.*

*Councilor Blonna noted that the Ad Hoc Business Development & Redevelopment Committee is currently reviewing the LDC and is preparing to submit its recommendations to the Council in April, 2025.*

*Councilor Palumbo commented on the alignment of the Council's vote on Agenda Item 12 (Resolution 24-59), and he denounced the offensive actions that he observed on opening day of early voting on the Island.*

*Councilor Palumbo concluded by noting City Manager Mike McNees' recent recognition as an alumnus of Indiana University.*

*Council Rola reiterated the City's Code of Ordinances regarding the display of non-commercial (e.g. election season) signs in the Rights of Way, and Chair Grifoni outlined past Council actions on this issue.*

*Councilor Folley dispelled assertions that sitting members of the Council are motivated by personal benefit or gain, and he commended the six City Council candidates for their willingness to serve the citizens of the Island.*

*Councilor Irwin highlighted and compared the reported incidents of noise complaints versus verified noise violations from August, 2023 with those reported during August 2024, and she stressed the importance of relying on factual data in addressing the issues and concerns of the citizens of Marco Island.*

[ID 23-3168](#) Future Agenda Items

*Vice-Chair Brechnitz requested that a review of the State statute regarding the local municipal approval of Police and Fire Department Pension Board nominees be added to the Council's Future Agenda.*

**15. Council Reports**

*None.*

**16. City Manager's Report**

*None.*

**17. City Attorney's Report**

[ID 23-3169](#) City Attorney's Report

*The City Attorney's Report was included with the meeting Agenda. No comments or questions were raised regarding the Report.*

**18. Departmental Reports**

[ID 23-3170](#) Monthly Departmental Reports

*No comments or questions were raised regarding the Monthly Department Reports.*

**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 Grifoni adjourned the meeting at 7:39 P.M.*

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*Jared Grifoni, Council Chair*

ATTEST:

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*Joan Taylor, City Clerk*

PREPARED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist*