

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

5:30 PM

Community Meeting Room

City Council

*Chair: Darrin Palumbo
Vice-Chair: Rene Champagne*

*City Council: Erik Brechnitz, Tamara Goehler,
Stephen Gray, Deb Henry,
Bonita Schwan*

*Interim City Manager: Casey Lucius
Assistant City Attorney: David Tolces
City Clerk: Joan Taylor*

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

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

Also Present

*Casey Lucius, Interim City Manager
Joan Taylor, City Clerk
Theresa Swanson, Deputy City Clerk
David Tolces, Assistant City Attorney
Tracy Frazzano, Police Chief
Dave Ennis, Police Captain
Chris Byrne, Fire Chief
Carol McDermott, Finance Director
Daniel J. Smith, Community Affairs Director
Justin Martin, Public Works Director
Jeff Poteet, Water & Sewer General Manager
Martin Luna, Video/Broadcast Technician
Citizens and Visitors*

3. Invocation

Offered by the Reverend Thomas McCulley of the New Life Community Church.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

[ID 25-4891](#) Pledge of Allegiance - Led by Amelia Morze of Tommie Barfield Elementary School

Sisters Amelia & Stella Morze led the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Approval of the Agenda

Councilor Henry requested that Agenda Items 14a (Ordinance - Second Reading - Amending Chapter 50, Traffic and Vehicles), and 15a (Resolution - Implementing a Vehicle Registration System for Parking Non-Commercial Vehicles) be removed from the meeting's Agenda.

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

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

6. Approval of the Minutes

[ID 25-4892](#) Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026

Attachments: [City Council Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026](#)

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Henry, that the City Council Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

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

7. Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

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

[Approval of the Consent Agenda Passed All Routine Items Listed Below]

- a. [ID 25-5026](#) Resolution - Adopting An Administrative Policy And Procedure Governing The Issuance Of City Proclamations - Joan Taylor, City Clerk
Attachments: [RESOLUTION 26-02](#)
[City Policy for Proclamations](#)
- b. [ID 25-5065](#) Approving a Purchase Order to Coastal Engineering Consultants, Inc., in the Amount of \$124,840 for the Hideaway Beach Erosion Control Project - Renewal Permit - Justin Martin, P.E., Director, Public Works
Attachments: [Coastal Engineering Consultants Proposal](#)
[Hideaway Meeting Minutes \(December 18, 2025\)](#)
[Agreement for Professional Services \(March 2023\)](#)
- c. [ID 25-5063](#) Authorize the Interim City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to Titan Concrete & Utilities, Inc., for the Stormwater Pipe Repair at 857 Swan Road for \$100,140, using the City Public Infrastructure Construction Services Contract 2023-029 - Justin Martin, P.E., Director, Public Works
Attachments: [Titan - PROPOSAL](#)
[Titan Concrete Contract](#)

8. Proclamations and Presentations

- a. [ID 26-5098](#) Presentation - Beautification Advisory Committee Update - Chairman Marv Needles and Member Victoria Myers
Attachments: [Marco In Bloom 2026 Nomination Form](#)
[Marco In Bloom 2026 Advertisement](#)

City of Marco Island Beautification Advisory Committee Chair Marv Needles, along with Committee Member Victoria Myers, shared an overview of the Committee's recent and upcoming initiatives, highlighting details of the forthcoming March 5, 2026 Marco Nature Night event, the Committee's

deployment of its 2026 Tree Fund budget, and the Committee's plans for the 2026 Marco In Bloom Contest.

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

Mr. Marv Needles (Butterfly Ct.) shared a listing of multi-storefront commercial properties on Marco Island which were in compliance with vehicle parking standards that were in effect before Marco Island became a city. Citing complexities in permitting and special agreements that have to be negotiated between neighboring businesses related to vehicle parking whenever tenants change at those commercial locations, Mr. Needles requested City Council and City Staff assistance at those locations.

[Editorial Note: Mr. Needles' list of properties may be found on the City's website at: www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > City Council > 1/20/26 > Meeting Details]

Mr. Paul Tateo (Gayer Way) amplified upon Mr. Needles' concern and request by citing the time and expense currently required to comply with City standards and Code of Ordinances when non-sit-down restaurants are changing hands.

Mr. Reilly McGregor (Saxon St.) shared his experience as a long-established business owner on the Island in attempting to expand his business presence at his location. He requested the Council's action in addressing the City's current process for reviewing commercial applications for approvals and permits.

Mr. Joseph Oliverio (Caxambas Ct.) noted the extensive City Staff time required to review commercial property proposals and changes, and he recommended that the Council direct the City of Marco Island Planning Board to review the issue.

Attorney Zach Lombardo (Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A.) offered a proposed Land Development Code (LDC) modification for pre-City incorporation commercial buildings that his firm developed for the City Staff's consideration regarding the issue raised by Messrs. Needles, Tateo, McGregor, and Oliverio. He urged the Council's action on this issue.

[Editorial Note: Attorney Lombardo's proposed Land Development Code modification may be found on the City's website at: www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > City Council > 1/20/26 > Meeting Details]

Mr. Richard Cipriani (Greenview St.) summarized his review of the results of several past wastewater phosphate and nitrate removal projects in the U.S. and Denmark. His assessment concluded that the elimination of those nutrients in wastewater results in visible improvements in the appearance and health of affected waterways.

Mr. Rick Woodworth (N. Barfield) advised the Council and the public that Clean Marco Waters LLC's amended petition to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) regarding the City of Marco Island's permit classification for the treatment of its wastewater resulted in a reversal of FDEP's initial opinion. It is now expected to proceed toward an administrative law judge review. Clean Marco Waters LLC requested that the City of Marco Island withdraw opposition to its petition to FDEP, and to implement Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) technology at its wastewater utility as soon as feasible.

Assistant City Attorney David Tolces noted that the City has not reversed its efforts to defend the status of the City's existing permit with FDEP, and he advised members of the Council to not comment on this matter as it proceeds through the administrative hearing process.

Mr. David Cadwell (Marco Villas Dr.) noted the intrusive noise that he and his neighbors experience from the pickleball activities at the City of Marco Island Racquet Center. He proposed that the Council consider: 1) relocating the Racquet Center facility, or; 2) building an indoor facility to contain the noise and

improve the environment around the existing facility.

Dr. Rich Blonna (San Marco Rd.) read a letter which he sent to all City Councilors regarding his thoughts on the implementation of Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) technology and other approaches to improve the water quality of the City's canal system, as well as his request that public access to the City's canals for non-motorized paddle craft be considered.

[Editorial Note: a copy of Mr. Blonna's letter may be found on the City's website at:
www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > City Council > 1/20/26 > Meeting Details]

Mr. David Rasmussen (Caxambas Ct.) cited a report from the fourteen water quality monitoring sites on Marco Island where levels of certain toxins have been measured, yet not actively addressed by the City's Waterways Advisory Committee. He expressed his concern with an apparent lack of action on the sources of these toxins.

Mr. Peter Pareene (Tallwood St.) opined on Samantha Malloy, a City of Marco Island Parks & Recreation Department employee.

10. City Manager's Report

[ID 25-4971](#) City Manager's Report

Attachments: [City Manager's Report](#)

Interim City Manager Casey Lucius advised the Council that its February 9, 2026 Workshop will include a review and discussion of the capital projects outlined in the City's Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

City Council Chair Darrin Palumbo noted the number of initiatives currently being addressed by the City Staff, and he encouraged the members of the Council to temper their expectations on the speed by which things can be accomplished under the current level of City Staff resources.

Public Comment

Mr. Dennis Bartolucci (Caxambas Ct.) raised question with the City's process and standards for monitoring and collecting data from private citizens who receive, view, and open electronic communications from the City.

Interim City Manager Lucius provided a brief overview of the "opt-in" procedure that citizens voluntarily undertake to receive email communications from the City. Chair Palumbo encouraged Mr. Bartolucci to contact Ms. Lucius directly on any further questions that he may have on this matter.

11. City Attorney's Report

[ID 25-4893](#) City Attorney's Report

Attachments: [City Attorney Report](#)

Assistant City Attorney David Tolces referenced the written report that accompanied the evening's Agenda, and he indicated that additional communication regarding the Clear Marco Waters LLC petition will be forthcoming to members of the Council.

Councilor Gray requested clarification on the role of the City Attorney in ensuring that the Council complies with annual City Code-mandated, and State-mandated requirements.

Assistant City Attorney Tolces encouraged all members of the Council to reach out to him, City Attorney Alan Gabriel, or members of the City Staff, on questions or concerns regarding City Code-mandated or State-mandated requirements.

12. Departmental Reports

[ID 25-4894](#) Monthly Departmental Reports

Attachments: [Finance](#)
[Community Affairs](#)
[Fire Rescue](#)

Councilor Henry complimented the City department heads on the information and detail in the Monthly Departmental Reports, and she encouraged all citizens to review those reports.

Vice-Chair Champagne noted that the Council had not been provided with the City's quarterly and fiscal year-end financial statements since April 30, 2025, and he inquired of the City's Finance Director when the Fiscal Q1 2026 statement will be available for the Council's review.

[City Finance Director Carol McDermott noted that the review of the City's Fiscal Q1 2026 financial statement is scheduled for the Council's second meeting Agenda in February]

Vice-Chair Champagne expressed the need for regular, timely, quarterly and year-end financial reviews with the City Council. Interim City Manager Casey Lucius and City Finance Director Carol McDermott confirmed their commitment to meeting the Council's expectations on this issue.

Councilor Gray noted that two openings - Controller and Finance Accountant - currently exist within the City's Finance Department. City Finance Director McDermott outlined the status of the City's efforts to fill both roles.

Councilor Gray thanked Finance Director McDermott for actively addressing the areas recommended for improvement by the City's financial auditor during calendar year 2025.

Councilor Gray complimented Fire Rescue Chief Chris Byrne and his team for its resourcefulness in obtaining grant funding to acquire video laryngoscopes, and he inquired about: 1) the cost to the City of fire equipment (e.g. the use of a ladder truck) when the City's unit is out for repair, and; 2) the application of false alarm fees and the City's efforts to reduce the number of incoming false alarms.

Councilor Gray noted the staffing challenges reported by the Community Affairs Department, and he inquired whether alternative staffing arrangements had been considered.

Councilor Gray concluded by: 1) requesting insight on the traffic concerns noted in the Community Affairs Department regarding the weekly, in-season Farmers Market event, and; 2) encouraging the expansion of complimentary programs to include an educational environmental wildlife program for the Island's young people.

Councilor Brechnitz expressed his support of Finance Director McDermott's timetable for reporting the City's Fiscal Q1 2026 financial statement to the Council.

Councilor Schwan commended the Marco Island firefighters who participated in the Patty Bake Humane Society Naples 2026 Calendar photo shoot.

Chair Palumbo thanked Vice-Chair Champagne and the Council for continuing to encourage the City Staff's efforts to improve the transparency and timeliness of its financial reporting. He congratulated Chief

Byrne with a recent department member promotion and 6 department members receiving the Phoenix Award for life saving . He also expressed support for the City Staff as it enjoyed the first hurricane season in ten years without a Southwest Florida hurricane landfall.

13. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing

No quasi-judicial items were scheduled for Council hearing at this meeting.

14. Ordinances

A. Public Hearings

[ID 26-5095](#) Ordinance -Second Reading - Amending Chapter 50, "Traffic And Vehicles; Article II "Stopping, Standing And Parking"; Section 50-37, "Prohibited Parking" Of The City Of Marco Island Code Of Ordinances To Provide For Regulations Related To Limited Permitted Swale Parking In Designated Areas Within The City Of Marco Island - Councilor Deb Henry, Chief Tracy Frazzano, Police

Attachments: [ORDINANCE 26-01- 2nd Reading - Prohibited Swale Parking](#)
[Business Impact Estimate](#)
[Affidavit](#)

As noted under Agenda Item 5 (Approval of the Agenda) earlier in the meeting, Agenda Item 14a (Ordinance - Second Reading - Amending Chapter 50, Traffic and Vehicles) was removed from the evening's Agenda and tabled.

15. Resolutions & City Council Items

- a. [ID 26-5100](#) Resolution - Implementing A Vehicle Registration System For Parking Non-Commercial Vehicles On Swales In Residentially Zone Districts - Chief Tracy Frazzano, Police

Attachments: [RESOLUTION 26-04](#)

As noted under Agenda Item 5 (Approval of the Agenda) earlier in the meeting, Agenda Item 15a (Resolution - Implementing a Vehicle Registration System for Parking Non-Commercial Vehicles) was removed from the evening's Agenda and tabled.

- b. [ID 26-5102](#) Discussion and Preliminary Decisions Regarding Proposed Capital Bonds - Casey Lucius, Ph.D., Interim City Manager

Attachments: [Jan 20 Memo to Council re Capital Bond](#)
[Critical Events Schedule](#)
[Proposed Capital Projects](#)
[Proposed Capital Maintenance](#)
[Proposed Ten Year Capital Plan](#)
[Debt Service Schedule](#)

Interim City Manager Casey Lucius highlighted the provided Critical Events Schedule that outlined the activities and timeline to facilitate the Council's initiative to bring forward one or more bond referenda for voter consideration on the August 18, 2026 primary election ballot.

Dr. Lucius shared recommendations from Bryant Millier Olive (BMO), the City's Bond Counsel, on potential categories under which to group specific capital projects for future bond issuance:

1. "Transportation"
2. "City Parks & Facilities"
3. "Water Quality"

The following members of the public came forward to offer perspective for the Council's consideration:

1. Mr. Rick Woodworth (N. Barfield Dr.)
2. Mr. Joseph Oliverio (Caxambas Ct.)
3. Mr. Dennis Bartolucci (Caxambas Dr.)

Following Council discussion, Interim City Manager Casey Lucius confirmed the following direction:

1. Council will pursue a single bond referendum focused on "Transportation", with Council continuing to refine which projects will be included within the "Transportation" bond category.
2. For the February 9, 2026 City Council Workshop, staff will present estimated millage rate impacts under multiple scenarios, including projected General Fund savings associated with reallocating certain budgeted capital items to bond financing. The thought is that estimated savings can be reallocated to items not included in the "Transportation" bond.
3. Staff will provide the anticipated property tax millage rate increase for each non-"Transportation" capital bond project not included in the "Transportation" bond proposal.

(THE MEETING WENT INTO RECESS AT 7:55 P.M. IT IS NOTED FOR THE RECORD THAT ALL COUNCILORS WERE PRESENT WHEN THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 8:02 P.M.)

- c. [ID 25-5054](#) Authorize the Interim City Manager to Execute a Change Order to Cardinal Contractors, Inc for the purchase and installation of a Vertical Turbine Transfer Pump and Upgrade the Service Authorization to Purchase Order 220344 with Jacobs Engineering Inc. to Extend Engineering Services During Construction, in the amount of \$628,879 and \$79,875.00, respectively - Jeffrey E. Poteet, General Manager, Water & Sewer Department.

Attachments: [Cardinal Contractors Proposal - New Lake Transfer Pump R1](#)
[EXHIBIT E BAF Change Order #02 for pump and time extension PDF](#)
[Marco Lakes Additional SDCs 12182025](#)
[Upgrade Service Autorization No. 2 - BAF Project](#)

City of Marco Island Water & Sewer General Manager Jeff Poteet briefly recounted the previous February

7, 2024 City Council approval of two horizontal Biologically Active Filter (BAF) systems at the City's Source Water Facility. He outlined the reason for the Change Order request, and he responded to questions from members of the Council.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Henry, seconded by Councilor Gray, that authorization of the Interim City Manager to execute a Change Order to Cardinal Contractors, Inc. for the purchase and installation of a Vertical Turbine Transfer Pump, and a service authorization to Purchase Order 220344 with Jacobs Engineering, Inc. to extend engineering services during construction, in the amounts of \$628,879.00 and \$79,875.00, respectively, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

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

- d. [ID 26-5103](#) Authorization to Transfer Funds from Unrestricted Reserves to the Capital Budget Account for the Collier Boulevard Alternate Bike Lanes Project. - Justin Martin, P.E., Director of Public Works

Attachments: [City Council Meeting Minutes December 8, 2025](#)

City of Marco Island Public Works Director Justin Martin outlined the reason for the requested transfer, and he addressed several questions from members of the Council.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Henry, seconded by Councilor Gray, that authorization of the Interim City Manager to transfer funds from Unrestricted Reserves to the Capital Budget Account for the Collier Boulevard Alternative Bike Lanes Project, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

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

16. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

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

17. Council Communications & Future Agenda

Councilor Gray, in response to concerns raised during Agenda Item 9 (Public Comment) regarding vehicle parking standards and requirements at multi-storefront commercial properties that were in effect prior to Marco Island's incorporation as a City, asked Community Affairs Director Daniel Smith to provide background and history of the issue.

Councilor Gray advised the community of a "WINK News Listens" event on Marco Island on Friday, January 30, 2026.

Councilor Gray expressed his belief that the services of a qualified Coastal Biologist could be beneficial in assisting the Council, its Advisory Committees, and the members of the community to better address the Island's environmental issues.

Councilor Gray reiterated a previously-expressed desire to have a "dashboard" of metrics that measure, among other things, City project change orders, consultant expenditures, and employee overtime hours.

At Councilor Gray's request, Interim City Manager Casey Lucius confirmed that responsibility for the maintenance of the swales along Collier Boulevard has returned to the City.

Councilor Henry explained her reasons for requesting that Agenda Items 14a (Ordinance - Second Reading - Amending Chapter 50, Traffic and Vehicles) and 15a (Resolution - Implementing a Vehicle Registration System for Parking Non-Commercial Vehicles) be removed from the evening's Agenda and tabled at this time. She thanked Marco Island Police Chief Frazzano and Police Captain Ennis for their assistance.

Councilor Henry encouraged all members of the community to support the Beach Clean-Up event on South Beach on Saturday, January 24, 2026.

Councilor Goehler, supported by Councilors Schwan and Henry, requested that the Planning Board review the parking standards and requirements for multi-storefront commercial properties that were raised during Agenda Item 9 (Public Comment) earlier in the meeting. Chair Palumbo obtained majority support from six of the seven City Councilors to request that the City Staff direct this issue to the Marco Island Planning Board for its review and recommendations.

Councilor Schwan noted that the Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is developing proposed legislation to further enhance pedestrian and e-bike safety, and she indicated her intention to bring forward elements of the MPO's proposals for the Council's consideration.

Chair Palumbo read the contents of an email sent by a Connecticut representative from the Friends of Animals international advocacy group regarding the City's elimination of rodenticides from key City-owned facilities. He noted the positive, far-reaching impact of small steps to improve the environment.

Chair Palumbo displayed comparative aerial photos of the Coconut Island / Sand Dollar Spit from 1995 and 2025. He similarly displayed comparative aerial photos of Cape Romano from 1995 and 2025. He observed the significant, unchecked deterioration of land mass around Cape Romano and expressed his belief that Marco Island needs to be protected from storm and tidal erosion to ensure its long-term viability.

[Editorial Note: the photographs referenced by Chair Palumbo may be found on the City's website at: www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > City Council > 1/20/26 > Meeting Details]

Chair Palumbo briefly noted the Planning Board's recent consideration and decision on the property owner's request for a variance at 1695 Ludlow Road. Chair Palumbo requested that the Council discuss the permit application fee paid by the property owner.

[Editorial Note: this topic was added to the February 2, 2026 City Council Meeting]

[ID 25-4895](#) Future Agenda Items

Attachments: [Future Agenda](#)

Chair Palumbo requested that a review of the City's Land Development Code (LDC) be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

18. Council Reports

a. [ID 25-4837](#) Presentation- County and State Taxes - Councilor Erik Brechnitz

Attachments: [Research - Taxes](#)

Councilor Brechnitz displayed various charts ranking Collier County among all other Florida counties in terms of per capita total property taxes, school district taxes, local option sales tax rates, personal income

tax, and other related metrics. From his analysis, Councilor Brechnitz concluded that:

1) Marco Island is not receiving funding from the State and the County commensurate with the tax contributions that its citizens and businesses generate, and;

2) the Council should lobby Collier County's Board of Commissioners to re-instate a local sales tax

Interim City Manager Casey Lucius shared the results of her recent conversation with Collier County Manager Amy Patterson, and she proposed:

1) that the Council identify specific projects that could be realistically be funded by Collier County Tourist Development Tax (TDC) funds, and;

2) that a letter be drafted by the City Staff on behalf of the Marco Island City Council to petition the Collier County Board of Commissioners to re-instate a local sales tax.

Chair Palumbo received unanimous Council consensus to direct the City Staff to prepare this letter for the Council's review.

19. Citizens' Comments

No members of the public came forward to address the Council during this portion of the Agenda.

20. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, Chair Palumbo adjourned the meeting at 9:06 P.M.

Darrin Palumbo, Council Chair

ATTEST:

Joan Taylor, City Clerk

PREPARED BY:

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist