

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, April 21, 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
Dave Ennis, Police Captain
John Wallace, Police Captain
Chris Byrne, Fire Chief
Guillermo Polanco, Finance Director
Daniel J. Smith, Community Affairs Director
Justin Martin, Public Works Director
Angela Johenning, Purchasing & Risk 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

[ID 25-4271](#) Pledge of Allegiance - Led by Gabriel Hernandez of Tommie Barfield Elementary School (TBE)

Master Gabriel Hernandez led the meeting's attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION by Councilor Champagne, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, that the Agenda 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

6. Approval of the Minutes

[ID 25-4105](#) Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes of April 7, 2025

MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Schwan, that the City Council Meeting Minutes of April 7, 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 Sanders Laboratories Environmental Testing Service) 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 Vice-Chair Gray, seconded by Councilor Schwan, that the Consent 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

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

- a. [ID 25-4356](#) Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to Trebilcock Consulting Solutions for Design of Traffic Signal Upgrades to Replace Signal Controllers and Lighted Pedestrian Safety Signage at Ten (10) Intersections, in the Amount of \$84,585.00, Justin Martin, P.E., Director, Public Works

8. Proclamations and Presentations

- a. [ID 25-4260](#) Presentation - Award in Recognition of Hideaway Beach Tax District Board Member Paul Fernstrum

Chair Erik Brechnitz, on behalf of the Council and the citizens of Marco Island, thanked and presented Mr. Paul Fernstrum with a recognition plaque for his 18 years of service as a member of the Hideaway Beach Tax District Board. Mr. Fernstrum briefly commented on his time on the Board.

- b. [ID 25-4396](#) Presentation - Beach & Coastal Resources Advisory Committee Initiatives - John Quinlan, Chairman, Beach & Coastal Resources Advisory Committee

Beach & Coastal Resources Advisory Committee Chair John Quinlan outlined the Committee's top three goals and most recent top five accomplishments. He advised the Council and all members of the public of the Committee's forthcoming Workshop on rodenticides scheduled for Wednesday, May 21st beginning at 9:00 A.M.

- c. [ID 25-4397](#) Presentation - Ad Hoc Business Development and Redevelopment Advisory Committee Report - Gregory Pascale, Chair

Ad Hoc Business Development and Redevelopment Committee Chair Gregory Pascale presented his Committee's summary recommendations and proposed actions for the Council's consideration.

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

Mr. Glenn Holland (760 N. Collier Blvd.) expressed his concern for pedestrian safety with the seasonal

Farmers' Market traffic turning left onto Collier Boulevard from West Elcam Circle.

Mr. James French, Head of Collier County's Growth Management & Community Development Department, shared an update on the County's plans for the boat launch, dock, and ancillary commercial services at Caxambas Park.

Ms. Linda Scherzinger (Plantation Ct.), Vice-Chair of the Marco Island Beautification Advisory Committee, requested insight on the plan to replace six trees that were recently removed on Bald Eagle Drive between San Marco Road and Yellowbird Street by Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) to facilitate LCEC's work on nearby power delivery poles. (Note: City Manager Mike McNees shared the actions already taken to replace the trees in question.)

10. City Manager's Report

City Manager Mike McNees noted the high degree of public interest in the proposed, unsolicited public-private partnership to dredge certain Marco Island waterways by Earthwerks Land Improvement and Development. He emphasized that the upcoming Monday, May 5th, 2:00 P.M. public meeting with the Marco Island City Council was just the beginning of the City's review and consideration of the proposed project and partnership.

City Manager McNees, in response to a question by Vice-Chair Gray, clarified that Caxambas Park's commercial activities are ancillary to the boat ramp operation, and consist of a bait shop and fuel service.

Later, during Council Communications, City Manager McNees also shared his perspective on City employees as stewards of the public in dealing with, and servicing, the needs of the community.

11. City Attorney's Report

[ID 25-4107](#) City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Alan Gabriel advised the Council of his intention to revise future monthly reports to highlight litigation cases where activity or status changes occur from one month to the next.

12. Departmental Reports

[ID 25-4108](#) Monthly Departmental Reports

Vice-Chair Gray queried Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius on the duration of current personnel openings noted in the Internal Services monthly report. He also requested insight on the current rate of staff turnover.

Councilor Henry requested insight from Fire Rescue Chief Chris Byrne on the reported "out-of-service" condition of three of the department's four fire trucks.

13. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing

None.

14. Ordinances

A. Public Hearings

[ID 25-4395](#) Ordinance - Second Reading - Amending Chapter 22 "Fire

Prevention and Protection," Article III "Firefighters' Pension Plan," in Accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local No. 2887 for the Period October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2025; By Amending Section 22-57 "Benefit Amounts and Eligibility," Section 22-73 "Retiree Health Insurance Subsidy," and Section 22-74 "Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP)" - Chris Byrne, Fire-Rescue Chief, Fire-Rescue Department

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Ordinance 25-03 into the record by title only.

Fire Rescue Chief Chris Byrne briefly outlined the reason for the proposed Amendments, and he highlighted the projected first year financial impact of the proposed changes.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Henry, that Ordinance 25-03 - Amending Chapter 22 "Fire Prevention and Protection", Article III "Firefighters Pension Plan", in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement between the City and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local No. 2887 for the period October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2025; by amending Section 22-57 "Benefit Amounts and Eligibility", Section 22-73 "Retiree Health Insurance Subsidy", and Section 22-74 "Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP)", be Approved on Second 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

B. First Readings

None.

15. Resolutions & City Council Items

- a. [ID 25-4355](#) Award of Contract to Coastal Concrete Products, LLC, DBA Coastal Site Development for the intersection Improvements at North Barfield Drive and North Collier Blvd. in the Amount of \$4,728,254.75 - Justin Martin, P.E., Director, Public Works

Public Works Director Justin Martin outlined the planned changes for the intersection of North Collier Boulevard and North Barfield Drive, and he detailed the expected improvements, funding sources, and executional details of the project.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Vice-Chair Gray, seconded by Councilor Goehler, that Authorization for the City Manager to Award a Contract to Coastal Concrete Products, LLC (DBA Coastal Site Development), for the Intersection Improvement at North Barfield Drive and North Collier Boulevard in the Amount of \$4,728,254.75, 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

(THE MEETING WENT INTO RECESS AT 7:49 P.M. IT IS NOTED FOR THE RECORD THAT ALL COUNCILORS WERE PRESENT WHEN THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 8:00 P.M.)

b. [ID 25-4302](#) Budget Policies and Assumptions Presentation - Casey Lucius, Ph.D., Assistant City Manager and Guillermo Polanco, Finance Director

Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius, with City Finance Director Guillermo Polanco, shared a presentation detailing Florida's Truth-in-Millage (TRIM) process and timetable for determining annual property taxes, along with a review of the City's recent and projected General Fund revenues and anticipated expenses leading into the Council's 2026 Fiscal Year Budget Development cycle. The presentation provided several potential future revenue options for the Council's consideration.

The following Marco Island residents offered their insights and recommendations for the Council's consideration:

- 1. Mr. Dennis Bartolucci (Caxambas Dr.)*
- 2. Mr. Anthony Oliverio (Olds Ct.)*
- 3. Ms. Teri Sommerfeld (San Marco Rd.)*

Assistant City Manager Lucius and City Finance Director Polanco addressed a number of questions from members of the Council, and they received several recommendations to help prepare for the Council's budget development effort.

16. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

7b. [ID 25-4385](#) Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to Sanders Laboratories Environmental Testing Services for the Pilot Aeration Study for \$87,900.00 - Justin Martin, P.E., Director, Public Works

Vice-Chair Gray expressed general concern with the City's use of consultants and the resultant benefit that is being realized by the City.

Public Works Director Justin Martin clarified that this provider is a lab testing service (rather than a consultant), and he detailed the expected benefits that will result from this proposed pilot aeration study.

Public Comment:

Mr. Ralph Rohena (Begonia Ct.) shared information with the Council on the results of a salt water aeration pilot program in the State of Florida, and he distributed information on an alternative approach for the Council's consideration.

[Editorial Note: The information provided by Mr. Rohena at the April 21, 2025 City Council Meeting may be found on the City of Marco Island website via the following path: www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Our Government > Agendas and Minutes > City Council 4/21/25 > Meeting Details]

MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Henry, that Authorization

for the City Manager to issue a Purchase Order to Sanders Laboratories Environmental Testing Services in the amount of \$87,900.00 to conduct and measure the effects of a pilot aeration study, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 4 - Councilor Goehler, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

No: 3 - Councilor Champagne, Vice-Chair Gray and Chair Brechnitz

17. Council Communications & Future Agenda

Councilor Henry encouraged the City's beachside condominium residents to reach out to the City's Code Enforcement Department for questions related to the upcoming sea turtle nesting season and the City's related ordinances.

Councilor Henry complimented the City's Parks & Recreation and Fire Departments for their involvement in the April 19th Spring Jubilee at Mackle Park, and all those involved with the successful Sunrise Easter Service on the beach on Sunday, April 20, 2025.

Councilor Henry advised the Council of her discussion with Police Chief Tracy Frazzano on the pedestrian safety issue raised earlier in the meeting regarding traffic turning left onto Collier Boulevard from West Elkcam Circle.

Councilor Henry also encouraged all members of the public to participate in the Island's April 22nd Earth Day activities.

Later during Council Communications, Councilor Henry indicated that she will participate in the Council's April 30, 2025 Pre-Budget Policy Workshop via telephone.

Councilor Schwan advised the Council that the Board of Collier County Commissioners will be reviewing the County's proposed e-bike ordinance at its Tuesday, April 22nd meeting.

Councilor Goehler complimented the Marco Island Planning Board on its actions regarding Caxambas Park at its April 11, 2025 meeting.

Councilor Goehler also requested that two items be placed on the Council's Future Agenda (see Agenda Item 18). Chair Brechnitz encouraged Councilor Goehler to consult with City Attorney Alan Gabriel in preparing for the Council's discussion of those items.

Vice-Chair Gray encouraged the community to report incidences of vandalism/graffiti to the Marco Island Police Department as they occur.

Vice-Chair Gray also complimented former Marco Island City Councilor Charlette Roman on her reappointment by Governor Ron DeSantis to the South Florida Water Management District Board.

Councilor Palumbo complimented his colleague Councilors on recent Council decisions that he believes reflect the thoughtful consideration of what is best for the City and the citizens of Marco Island.

Councilor Palumbo shared photographs of Ms. Margaret Hackett and her dog enjoying their access to the Canine Cove Dog Park at Mackle Park. He thanked all of the City and community leaders who contributed to making the Canine Cove Dog Park accessible for all who have mobility issues.

Councilor Palumbo requested that two items be placed on the Council's Future Agenda (see Agenda Item 18).

Councilor Palumbo also noted Councilor Henry's 2025 Spirit Award recognition by the Marco Island Noontime Rotary.

Councilor Champagne raised a question regarding the amount of Marco Island resident tax dollars that, in being remitted to the County, is currently being used by the County to support Caxambas Park.

Councilor Champagne also encouraged his colleague Councilors to prepare for the Council's upcoming April 30, 2025 Pre-Budget Policy Workshop by considering the City's strategic priorities that will require funding during the 2026 Fiscal Year and beyond. Among the ideas that Councilor Champagne asked his colleague Councilors to consider included: 1) public-private partnerships, and; 2) advanced technology applications (e.g. artificial intelligence solutions) to better manage costs and deliver City services.

Vice-Chair Gray observed that Caxambas Park was originally conceived as a means by which Marco Island residents who did not own waterfront property could still gain access to, and enjoy, water-related activities around the Island. He indicated his belief that the Council should continue to honor that intention. He encouraged the City Staff to pursue a discussion of the future of Caxambas Park with Collier County.

Motion to Extend the Meeting

MOTION by Vice-Chair Gray, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, to extend the City Council Meeting to conclude no later than 9:40 P.M. 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

18. Council Reports

None.

ID 25-4106 Future Agenda Items

Councilor Goehler requested that a discussion of Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) opportunities be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

Councilor Goehler requested that her White Paper on the City's Noise Ordinance be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

Councilor Palumbo requested that a discussion of the Ad Hoc Business Development & Redevelopment Committee's recommendations regarding postage be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

Councilor Palumbo requested that the City Staff's investigation of Collier County's interest in a deed transfer to the City be added to the Council's Future Agenda.

19. Citizens' Comments

Mr. Hayden Dublois (Collier Ct.), Vice-Chair of the Marco Island Planning Board, briefly shared insight on the Planning Board's recent unanimous decision to require that Collier County bring Caxambas Park into full compliance with the City's zoning and Land Development requirements.

20. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, Chair Brechnitz adjourned the meeting at 9:34 P.M.

Erik Brechnitz, Council Chair

ATTEST:

Joan Taylor, City Clerk

PREPARED BY:

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist