

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, September 22, 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

Vice-Chair Gray called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

Absent: 1 - 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
Sharon Dangles, Acting Finance Director
Daniel J. Smith, Community Affairs Director
Justin Martin, Public Works Director
Melissa Hinton, Budget Manager
Samantha Malloy, Parks, Culture & Recreation Manager
Martin Luna, Video/Broadcast Technician
Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist
Citizens and Visitors*

3. Invocation

Offered by the Reverend Scott Kerens of the Marco Presbyterian Church.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

[ID 25-4338](#) Pledge of Allegiance - Led by Amelia Morze of Tommie Barfield Elementary School (TBE)

Miss Amelia Morze 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: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

6. Public Hearing - Adoption of the Final FY2025-2026 Millage Rate & Budget

- a. [ID 25-4515](#) Resolution - Adopting the Final FY2026 Millage Rate - City of Marco Island - Melissa Hinton, Budget Manager, Finance Department

Attachments: [Resolution 25-45](#)
[DR-420 @ 1.2670 mils](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Legal Notice](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 25-45 into the record by title only.

Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius announced that the City Council is requested to consider Resolution 25-45, setting the millage rate for the 2026 City Budget. This resolution conforms with the discussions at its September 8, 2025 City Council meeting with respect to the tentative millage per Resolution 25-41.

Section 200.065, Florida Statutes, governs the budget adoption process. The Truth in Millage ("TRIM") statute establishes a detailed timeline and approval process that requires two public hearings held in the month of September and separate actions for establishing the tax levy and for approving the annual budget.

To comply with the TRIM regulations, City Council is required to take separate actions in a specified order. At each of the public hearings, the public may speak and ask questions before Council adopts any measures. Council must then adopt a millage rate before it adopts a budget. The millage rate and budget must be adopted by separate votes at the advertised hearing. The final millage rate adopted at the second hearing cannot exceed the tentatively adopted millage rate.

The proposed final millage rate is 1.2670 mils for City operations. Any change approved by City Council will be reflected in the resolution adopting the final millage rate.

At the hearing, the following must be announced:

- 1. The name of the principal taxing authority is the City of Marco Island, Florida.*
- 2. The current year aggregate rolled-back rate is 1.2449 mils.*
- 3. The current year proposed aggregate millage rate is 1.3498 mils.*
- 4. The change over the aggregate rolled-back rate is an increase of 8.43 percent.*
- 5. The millage rate to be levied is 1.2670 mils for City of Marco Island.*
- 6. The City has a dependent special district, and the Board of Supervisors of the Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District at their May 20, 2025 meeting, recommended a tax levy of 1.600 mils for district operations.*

The fiscal year 2026 budget is presented in balance and the operating millage rate of 1.2670 will support the budget as discussed by City Council. The proposed budget continues the process of eliminating the requirement to borrow money to pay for renewal, replacement, and improvement of currently owned assets by accumulating funding to build reserves for a prescribed list of projects. No debt service millage is needed since the Veteran's Park voted debt service has been repaid as scheduled.

It is requested that the Council approve the 1.2670 mils millage rate.

Public Comment:

Mr. David Boggs (Delbrook Way) offered his thoughts on the responsibilities of Marco Island's recently-elected officials.

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Champagne, that Resolution 25-45 - adopting the final FY2026 millage rate of 1.2670 mils for the City of Marco Island, be Approved. MOTION FAILED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 3 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Henry and Councilor Schwan

No: 3 - Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray and Councilor Palumbo

Following the failure of the Motion to approve Resolution 25-45 at 1.2670 mills as presented, the Council entertained an amendment to Resolution 25-45.

MOTION by Councilor Goehler, seconded by Vice-Chair Gray, that Resolution 25-45 - adopting the final FY2026 millage rate of 1.240 mills for the City of Marco Island, be Approved. MOTION FAILED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 3 - Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray and Councilor Palumbo

No: 3 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Henry and Councilor Schwan

The Council then discussed an amendment to Resolution 25-45 at 1.2670 mills that would place approximately \$430,000 of the additional funds that would be raised over the 1.240 millage rate into the City's reserve account for future Council discussion and determination as to how that money would be allocated during the 2026 Fiscal Year. An amendment to raise this amount to \$482,000 was discussed but withdrawn after additional Council discussion.

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

- 1) Mr. Brad Henson (Marco Island resident)*
- 2) Mr. David Boggs (Delbrook Way)*
- 3) Mr. Michael Josephs (Wintergreen Ct.)*
- 4) Ms. Lisa Foster (S. Seas Ct.)*

MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Schwan, that Resolution 25-45 - adopting the final FY2026 millage rate of 1.2670 mills for the City of Marco Island, and directing \$430,000 of the additional revenue gained over a 1.240 mills millage rate into the City's reserves for future Council discussion and allocation at a later date, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

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

No: 2 - Councilor Goehler and Vice-Chair Gray

(THE MEETING WENT INTO RECESS AT 6:24 P.M. IT IS NOTED FOR THE RECORD THAT ALL SIX (6) COUNCILORS WERE PRESENT WHEN THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 6:27 P.M.)

- b.** [ID 25-4516](#) Resolution - Adopting the Final FY2026 Budget - City of Marco Island -
Melissa Hinton, Budget Manager, Finance Department

Attachments: [Resolution 25-46](#)[Exhibit A](#)[FY26 Spending Cap](#)[FY26 Budget Summary](#)[FY26 General Fund](#)[FY26 Special Revenue Fund](#)[FY26 Enterprise Fund](#)[FY26 SAD Funds](#)[FY26 Internal Service Fund](#)[FY26 Hideaway Beach Special Tax District](#)[FY26 Capital Improvement Plan](#)[FY26 Capital Equipment Replacement Plan](#)[FY26 Public Works Funding Sources](#)[FY26 Department Capital Cover Sheet](#)[FY26 Consolidated Debt Summary](#)[FY26 Fire Pension Fund](#)[FY26 Police Pension Fund](#)[Legal Notice](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 25-46 into the record by title only.

Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius announced that this was the second of the required resolutions in the budget adoption process, providing for final approval of the City budget. The budget is presented as a separate approval for consideration by City Council.

Based on TRIM Statutes and other Florida Statutes guiding the budget adoption process, the public may speak and ask questions before the Council adopts any measures.

The fiscal year 2026 budget is presented in balance with a millage rate of 1.2670 mills. If the Council adopts the budget and Resolution 25-46, it is recommended that Exhibit A be amended to reflect \$430,000 being added to the City's reserves.

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Henry, that Resolution 25-46 - adopting the final FY2026 budget for the City of Marco Island with the amendment to Exhibit A to reflect \$430,000 allocated to the City's reserves, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

- c. [ID 25-4517](#) Resolution - Adopting the Final FY2026 Millage Rate - Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District - Melissa Hinton, Budget Manager, Finance Department

Attachments: [Resolution 25-47](#)
[DR-420 - Hideaway Beach](#)
[Hideaway Beach Property Tax Map](#)
[Hideaway Minutes for 5-20-25 - Draft 2](#)
[Legal Notice](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 25-47 into the record by title only.

Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius announced that this resolution is for adoption of the final millage rate for the Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District. This millage is paid only by property owners within the District boundaries as shown on the attached map. The Hideaway Beach Board of Supervisors proposes to raise its millage above the rolled back rate to fund its FY2026 budget.

City Council is required to take actions in a specified order. At each of the public hearings, the public may speak and ask questions before Council adopts any measures. Then the millage rate and budget must be adopted by separate votes at the advertised hearing. The final millage rate adopted at the second hearing cannot exceed the tentative millage rate adopted at the first hearing.

The final millage rate being considered is 1.6000 mil for District operations.

1. The name of the taxing authority is Hideaway Beach District.
2. The current year rolled-back rate is 1.4919 mils.
3. The Hideaway Beach District is a dependent special district of the City, and the Board of the Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District at its May 20, 2025 meeting, recommended a tax levy of 1.6000 mils for district operations, an increase of 6.7% above the rolled back rate.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Palumbo, seconded by Councilor Henry, that Resolution 25-47 - adopting the final FY2026 millage rate of 1.600 mils for the Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

- d. [ID 25-4518](#) Resolution - Adopting the Final FY2026 Budget - Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District - Melissa Hinton, Budget Manager, Finance Department

Attachments: [Resolution 25-48](#)
[FY26 Hideaway Beach Budget](#)
[Legal Notice](#)

City Clerk Joan Taylor read Resolution 25-48 into the record by title only.

Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius reminded all present that the public may speak and ask questions before the Council adopts any measures.

The recommendation is to adopt Resolution 25-48, approving the 2026 Fiscal Year for the Hideaway Beach Taxing District as outlined and recommended by the Special Taxing Board.

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

MOTION by Councilor Goehler, seconded by Councilor Champagne, that

Resolution 25-48 - adopting the final FY2026 budget for the Hideaway Beach Special Taxing District, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

7. Approval of the Minutes

[ID 25-4193](#) Approval of the City Council Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2025

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

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Palumbo, that the City Council Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

8. Approval of Consent Agenda

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

Yes: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

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

- a. [ID 25-4579](#) Authorize the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to American Engineering Consultants of Marco Island, Inc. for Professional Engineering Services for the Design of Exfiltration Swales in the Amount of \$99,300, using the City of Marco Island Contract #2025-009-3 for Professional Services - Justin Martin, P.E., Director, Public Works

Attachments: [American Engineering Consultants Proposal 7-11-25](#)

- b. [ID 25-4701](#) Invitation for DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) to Audit City Operations - Chairman Erik Brechnitz

Attachments: [Invitation for DOGE](#)

9. Proclamations and Presentations

[ID 25-4636](#) Presentation - The Home Depot Foundation, Community Building Initiative - Rhonda Oliver, CEO, HandsOn Greater Phoenix

City of Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel Smith introduced online meeting participant Ms. Rhonda Oliver, CEO of Hands on Phoenix, who outlined the details of a forthcoming Home Depot Foundation volunteer community event on Marco Island beginning October 21, 2025 to enhance and repair the appearance and operation of several public amenities and grounds at Winterberry Park and Veterans Community Park.

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

Ms. Anita Sargese (Manor Terr.) requested clarification of Councilor Deb Henry regarding Councilor Henry's interest in pursuing an amendment to Marco Island's ordinances to allow the ability for beachgoers to utilize non-motorized, pull-along "beach buggies" to help carry their beach equipment onto, and off of, the beach.

Ms. Alexis Perez (Keane Ave., Naples) spoke of the dedication and commitment of her husband Raul Perez during his service as Chief Building Official for the City of Marco Island.

11. City Manager's Report

[ID 25-4640](#) City Manager's Report

Attachments: [City Manager](#)

City Manager Mike McNees attributed all credit for the October 21, 2025 Home Depot Foundation Event on Marco Island (see the Minutes of Agenda Item 9) to the efforts of Marco Island Parks, Culture and Recreation Manager Samantha Malloy, and Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel Smith.

City Manager McNees next referenced his recent email to the Council regarding a local legislative proposal that could affect the City's Charter, and he requested that a discussion of this proposal be placed on the Council's Future Agenda (see Agenda Item 18 on page 10).

City Manager McNees requested, and received, Council consensus to act as the Council's emissary to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) in requesting the Committee's review and recommendations regarding potential changes to the revenue and the membership models for the Marco Island Racquet Center.

City Manager McNees concluded by recognizing and calling forward Auxiliary Police Officer Bill Miller and his wife to receive special recognition of Officer Miller's fifteen years of volunteer service to the City and the citizens of Marco Island. Vice-Chair Stephen Gray, on behalf of the Council, provided Mr. Miller with a memento of his recognition.

12. City Attorney's Report

[ID 25-4195](#) City Attorney's Report

Attachments: [City Attorney](#)

City Attorney Alan Gabriel provided no additional comment beyond his written report that was included with the evening's Agenda.

13. Departmental Reports

[ID 25-4656](#) Monthly Departmental Reports

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

No questions or comments were raised regarding the Departmental Reports.

14. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing

None.

15. Ordinances

None.

16. Resolutions & City Council Items

[ID 25-4696](#) Update of Corrective Action Plan - Sharon Dangles, Controller & Interim Director, Finance Department

Attachments: [Presentation - Corrective Action Plan](#)

Acting City Finance Director Sharon Dangles reviewed the details of the City's Corrective Action Plan (CAP) in response to the material weaknesses identified by the auditors of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP in their June 26, 2025 report.

Public Comment

Ms. Elena McFann (Eubanks Ct.) offered her observations and commented on the support offered in addressing the CAP by the City's Audit Advisory Committee.

17. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

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

Motion to Extend the Meeting

During Council Communications (Agenda Item 18) , Vice-Chair Gray requested that a Motion to extend the meeting be brought forward for consideration.

MOTION by Councilor Schwan, seconded by Councilor Henry, than an extension of the City Council meeting by 18 minutes, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Champagne, Councilor Goehler, Vice-Chair Gray, Councilor Henry, Councilor Palumbo and Councilor Schwan

18. Council Communications & Future Agenda

Councilor Schwan expressed her concern with the local legislative proposal that City Manager McNees noted during his City Manager's Report (Agenda Item 11), and she joined in his request that a discussion of this proposal be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

Councilor Henry expressed her condolences to the families of the victims of the past weekend's jet ski accident, and she conveyed her thanks to the first responders from Marco Island and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for their prompt response.

Councilor Henry requested that periodic reports to the Council from its representatives on the Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee (CAC) be scheduled for future meetings.

Councilor Henry thanked City Manager McNees for filling in for Chair Brechnitz at the recent local

legislative review event.

Councilor Henry recognized the members of the Beautification Advisory Committee, the Audit Advisory Committee, and the Planning Board for the quality and the decorum of their monthly meetings. She also recognized the effort of Waterways Advisory Committee member Ralph Rohena and Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius in contributing accurate, factual information to address the rumors that have been circulating on local social media platforms.

Councilor Henry encouraged her fellow Councilors to schedule one-on-one meetings weekly with City Manager McNees address citizen concerns and enhance their understanding and engagement in the business of running the City.

Councilor Henry concluded by encouraging all present to support the Meals of Hope Fundraiser at the Brewery Restaurant on Monday, September 29th.

Councilor Goehler recognized Stephanie (last name not given), a young women who recently opened a school for autistic children in Naples. Councilor Goehler also thanked Councilor Henry and Councilor Schwan for their attendance at the opening.

Councilor Goehler thanked Councilors Palumbo and Gray for their attendance at a recent presentation by a the Executive Director of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program at the Right Club of South Collier County. She expressed her intention to invite representatives from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program to a Town Hall Meeting on Marco Island early in 2026 to share their observed results from the application of Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) technology on their local utility's reuse water.

Councilor Champagne proposed a Future Agenda item, and he encouraged the City Council and Staff to avail itself of the Florida "DOGE Yourself" materials and techniques rather than waiting for a visit from the Florida DOGE team as requested by the Council (see Agenda Item 8b). Later, following Councilor Palumbo's presentation, Councilor Champagne strongly urged the Council to consider identifying and quantifying objective metrics to assess the qualifications of candidates and the performance of future City Manager appointees.

Councilor Palumbo displayed the City Manager's August 12, 2025 letter to the Council providing notice of his intention to terminate his service to the City of Marco Island effective September 30, 2026. He followed that document with one outlining a series of questions for the Council's consideration in determining how and when to begin seeking a successor to Mr. McNees.

Councilors Henry, Gray, Schwan, Champagne, and City Manager McNees offered comments and recommendations for the Council's consideration relative to the process for identifying a successor to Mr. McNees. Vice-Chair Gray requested that this discussion be added to the Council's Future Agenda.

Vice-Chair Gray requested that a Council decision item regarding the City of Marco Island's position on the implementation of Florida Senate Bill 180 be added to the Council's Future Agenda, along with the potential drafting of a letter to Florida's Governor regarding the applicability of Live Local legislation on a barrier island community like Marco Island.

Vice-Chair Gray requested that a discussion of the benefits and costs of implementing a Storm Water Utility on Marco Island be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

Vice-Chair Gray concluded his remarks by complimenting Police Chief Tracy Frazzano and her department for helping the City avoid a significant expense by utilizing the depth finders on its Police Department boats to map the depth and contours of the Island's canals.

[ID 25-4194](#) Future Agenda Items

Attachments: [Future Agenda](#)

City Manager McNees requested that a discussion of a local legislative proposal affecting the City's Charter be placed on the Council's Future Agenda. Councilor Schwan joined in supporting this request.

Councilor Henry requested that regular reports by the Council's representatives to the MPO and the CAC be placed on the Council's Future Agendas.

Councilor Champagne requested that a Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Statement Closing Workshop be added to the Council's Future Agenda before the end of the 2025 calendar year.

Vice-Chair Gray requested that a discussion of the Council's process and plan to identify a successor to City Manager McNees be added to the Council's Future Agenda.

Vice-Chair Gray requested that a discussion regarding potentially joining with Naples and other Florida cities that have filed suit against the State of Florida to block the implementation of Florida Senate Bill 180 be added to the Council's Future Agenda.

Vice-Chair Gray requested that a letter to Governor DeSantis regarding Live Local legislation's applicability to a barrier island like Marco Island be added to the Council's Future Agenda.

Vice-Chair Gray requested that a discussion regarding the potential establishment of a Storm Water Utility for Marco Island be placed on the Council's Future Agenda.

19. Council Reports

None.

20. Citizens' Comments

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

21. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, Vice-Chair Gray adjourned the meeting at 9:08 P.M.

Stephen Gray, Council Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

Joan Taylor, City Clerk

PREPARED BY:

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist