

**REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
JULY 22, 2024
CITY HALL ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:00 PM**

The Council of the City of Destin met in regular session with the following members and staff present:

Destin City Council

Mayor Bobby Wagner
Councilmember Torey Geile
Councilmember Johnny King
Councilmember Terésa Hebert

Councilmember Kevin Schmidt
Councilmember John Stephens
Councilmember Jim Bagby
Councilmember Dewey Destin

Destin City Staff

Acting City Manager Krystal Strickland
IT Director Andy Peters
Community Development Director Tina Deater
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Firth
Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey
City Engineer Ryan Scott
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
Permit and License Clerk Jennifer Hutson
Code Compliance Officer William Morales

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bobby Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Pastor David J. Butler of the Faith Assembly Christian Church gave the invocation, which was then followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Agenda amended by placing the nomination of Bryan Otto to the Parks and Recreation Committee under Councilmember Bagby's name and marking the schedule of fees as Exhibit B to the architectural RFQ under the Consent Agenda.

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Stephens, to approve the agenda, as amended, passed 7-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, Geile, and Stephens voted "yes").

1. PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS / SPECIAL / PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Stephen Sanford from Lamar Advertising expressed frustration over a delayed agreement with the city regarding billboard conversions. He cited legal and procedural inconsistencies and requested clarification and a meeting with city staff.

Ms. Carrie Harbarger, a Destin resident and business owner, raised concern about unregulated business activities, specifically ice cream and vending on the beach. She provided photos and requested the council to enforce existing regulations.

Ms. Brittney Zirkle and Mr. Sampson Thomas, owners of Thomas Island Ice Cream, clarified that they were being wrongly accused by the previous speaker. They mentioned that there was a restraining order against the speaker and emphasized that their business was following city regulations and was not the one depicted in the picture that was submitted by the speaker.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Replacement of Corrugated Metal Pipe, Joe's Bayou driveway, after-the-fact
- B. Continuing Service Provider – Architectural RFQ 23-09-ENG
- C. Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- D. Approval of minutes of July 15, 2024, City Council Budget Workshop
- E. Approval of minutes of May 20, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Stephens, to approve Consent Agenda items 3A to 3E passed 7-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, Geile, and Stephens voted “yes”).

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

- A. Establishing the FY 2025 Tentative Millage Rate and Budget Public Hearing Dates

Acting City Manager and Finance Director Krystal Strickland presented the proposed millage rate of 1.6150 mills to fund the FY 2025 Budget. This amount is 6.76% more than the roll-back rate of 1.5127 mills. She also requests the council reaffirms that the first public hearing on tentative millage rate and budget will be held during the regular city council meeting scheduled on September 5, 2024; and that the second public hearing to adopt the final millage rate and budget be held at the September 16, 2024, regular city council meeting. She also emphasized that according to the information currently available to the city, these budget hearing dates do not conflict with the budget hearing dates of the Okaloosa County School Board and the Okaloosa County Board of Commission.

Ms. Strickland also noted that the city is required to notify the Property Appraiser of the date, time, and location of the city's first public hearing to publish on the TRIM notices, and that any change in the meeting time from the first public hearing will require a notice to each taxpayer.

Discussion ensued among the council members regarding the necessity and implications of maintaining or increasing the millage rate.

Councilmember Bagby moved to set the tentative millage rate for ad valorem taxes at 1.6150 mills which is 6.76% more than the roll-back rate of 1.5127 mills and confirm the dates and times of the public hearings for the FY 2024 Budget on September 5, 2024 at 6:00 PM and September 16, 2024 at 6:00 PM. Motion seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 5-2 (Council members Schmidt, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Stephens voted “yes”; Council members Geile and King voted “no”).

Ms. Strickland also seeks direction on whether to proceed with an optional Budget Workshop on Monday, August 12th.

The council, after a brief discussion, agreed that converting the August 12th optional budget workshop into a special city council meeting would better serve their needs, allowing them to vote on any proposed budget changes in preparation for the September 5th budget hearing.

Motion by Councilmember Bagby, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to convert the August 12th optional budget workshop into a special city council meeting passed 7-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, Geile, and Stephens voted “yes”).

B. 2024 Debt Issuance RFQ Underwriters and Bank Loan

On Juane 3, 2024, staff brought forth a debt issuance update to the council confirming amount to borrow and proposing a timeline, process, and choice of an SEC license broker (underwriter). The council made three motions:

- 1) Approve the issuance of \$25 million to underground overhead utilities from the Marler Bridge to Airport Road, to complete construction of the cross-town connector, and the purchase of 1 Harbor Blvd.
- 2) Undertake a competitive solicitation for either a bank loan or an underwriter.
- 3) For staff to bring back an adjusted timeline for the 2024 debt issuance to include additional time needed to develop and route competitive solicitations.

Mr. John Ford from Ford and Associates presented various options for bank loans and bond issues to finance city projects. The discussion primarily focused on the term lengths and prepayment penalties associated with these options. After considerable deliberation, it was decided to proceed with both options and to present a revised Request for Qualifications (RFQ) at the next meeting.

Motion by Councilmember Destin, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to bring back the revised debt issuance RFQ and ITN at the August 5th council meeting passed 7-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, Geile, and Stephens voted “yes”).

C. RFP 24-02-REC Clement Taylor Park - Bid Committee Recommendation

The Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd presented the bid results for Clement Taylor Park, noting that all five proposals were found to be unresponsive, and that the city’s bid committee recommended rejecting all bids and re-releasing the RFP with modifications. Upon review of all five bids, significant issues were identified wit all bids. The RFP contained language stating, “No proposals in excess of a firm fixed price of \$1,500,000 will be considered”. Four of the

five bids were above that threshold. The single bid under the threshold failed to provide a price for a required element of the project.

Councilmember Destin moved to accept the Bid Committee's recommendation and reject all bids for RFP 24-02-REC Clement Taylor Park Renovation Project for being unresponsive, to continue with the gravel parking lot in the plan rather than asphalt, and that the RFP be released; seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, Geile, and Stephens voted "yes").

Councilmember Geile requested to be excused from the remainder of the meeting to attend to a prior engagement.

D. Public Attendance/Public Engagement Proposal

The city council previously directed staff to bring back recommendations on ways to encourage public attendance at council meetings and workshops. The city's Public Information Director detailed the efforts and achievements in public engagement through social media, website enhancements, and communication upgrades. She highlighted a significant increase in content interactions and response rates.

Council members expressed their appreciation to the work done by the Public Information Director and suggested further enhancements like video snippets of meetings for better public understanding.

E. Confirmation of Community Development Director Appointment

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Stephens, to confirm the City Manager's recommendation to hire Tina Deater as the city's Community Development Director passed 6-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Stephens voted "yes"; Councilmember Geile was not present during voting)

F. Operations Financial Report - Informational Only

The Finance Director provided a report of year-to-date budget versus actuals. Governmental funds are accounted for on a modified accrual basis, which excludes long-term assets and liabilities.

G. Capital Project Status - Informational Only

The Finance Director provided a summary of the current capital improvement projects, showing status and year-to-date expenditures and encumbrances.

H. Quarterly Investment Report - Informational Only

The Finance Director presented the current quarterly investment report with schedules showing the current status of the city investment accounts with Raymond James. Summary tables of activity were also provided.

I. TDC Monthly Report - Informational Only

The Finance Director provided the monthly update of collections of the Tourist Development Tax.

J. Draft Minutes of Standing Boards & Committee Meetings - Informational Only

K. Announcements

1. LDC rewrite workshop scheduled for Monday, July 29th at 5:30 PM.
2. SRS Public Workshop is on August 6th at 5:30 PM. It will be advertised as such that two or more council members may be in attendance.
3. The Big Truck event is scheduled for Friday, August 2nd, from 9-11 AM.
4. The City of Destin birthday bash scheduled for August 10th, at Harborwalk Village, from 5:30 PM to 9 PM.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6. COMMENTS / PRESENTATIONS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND CITY ATTORNEY

A. Councilmember Stephens

Councilmember Stephens suggested increasing code compliance efforts, especially around the holidays, to address illegal operations on the beach and at city facilities.

B. Councilmember Geile

- 1) Projects updates/status

C. Councilmember Destin

D. Councilmember Bagby

- 1) Membership appointment to the Parks & Recreation Committee

Motion by Councilmember Bagby, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to appoint Mr. Bryan Otto to the Parks & Recreation Committee passed 6-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Stephens voted “yes”; Councilmember Geile was not present during voting)

Councilmember Bagby discussed the importance of defining code enforcement priorities and the need for a holistic conversation about these priorities.

E. Councilmember Hebert

F. Councilmember King

G. Councilmember Schmidt

Councilmember Schmidt announced the progress of the Destin Little League Baseball Team, highlighting their upcoming game representing the State of Florida in the Southeast Regional Championship against the State of Georgia on July 23rd, at 10:30 AM; the winner of which will move on to the National World Series in California.

- H. Mayor Wagner
1) Resolution on Annexation

Mayor Wagner discussed the ongoing annexation strategy, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and fact-finding mission to ensure a comprehensive approach.

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Destin, to continue with a fact-finding liaison mission without creating a Sunshine committee passed 6-0 (Council members Schmidt, King, Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Stephens voted “yes”; Councilmember Geile was not present during voting)

The City Attorney will bring back a resolution that will outline key dates and strategic goals for each calendar year leading to the 2026 election cycle.

Mayor Wagner introduced the idea of utilizing the Skill Bridge program to help military personnel transition to civilian jobs while providing skilled labor to the city.

Councilmember Bagby, the first chairman of Veterans Florida that runs the Skill Bridge Program for the State of Florida, recommends the city’s Human Resources Director contacts Mr. Joe Marino, the Executive Director for the Skill Bridge Program.

I. City Attorney

- 1) City Prevails Again in Bert Harris case brought by Destin Fishing Fleet
Case Number 1D2023-0477, Destin Fishing Fleet v. City of Destin (Bert Harris Claim)

The City Attorney informed the council about the city’s victory in the Bert Harris case brought by the Destin Fishing Fleet and discussed the next steps to recoup attorney fees.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

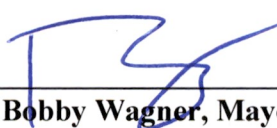
ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

ATTEST:



Rey Bailey, City Clerk



Bobby Wagner, Mayor