REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 6, 2025
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 Sandy Trammell
Councilmember Kevin Schmidt
Councilmember Torey Geile
Councilmember Dewey Destin
Councilmember Jim Bagby
Councilmember Terésa Hebert

Destin City Staff

City Manager Larry Jones
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Firth
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
Public Information Director Tamara Young
Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp
City Clerk Rey Bailey
Finance Director Krystal Strickland
Building Official Noell Bell
IT Director Andy Peters
HR Director Jamie Haynes

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bobby Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Pastor Steve Farris of the First Baptist Church in Destin gave the invocation, which was then followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Award presentation to the Outdoor Decorating Contest winners was added to the agenda.

Motion by Councilmember Trammell, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve the agenda, as amended, passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

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

The Mayor and Council acknowledged and presented a commemorative plaque to the following winners of the Outdoor Decorating Contest as follows:

- Best Business – La Paz Restaurant
- Best Organization – Emerald Grande at Harbor Blvd
- Best of Holiday – Sarah Micholick
- Best Home – Robert Wagner

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of minutes of December 3, 2024 City Council Workshop - LDC Rewrite
B. Approval of minutes of December 2, 2024 Regular City Council Meeting
C. Approval of minutes of November 18, 2024 Regular City Council Meeting

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve Consent Agenda items 3A through 3C, as printed above, passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

A. Heffley & Associates, Lobbyist Kelly Horton - Presentation

Ms. Kelly Horton, representing Hefley and Associates, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to represent the City of Destin in Tallahassee. As a fourth-generation Floridian with deep ties to both Tallahassee and Walton County, she emphasized her personal investment in the community and the importance of having dedicated representation amid significant political shifts.

She outlined recent political changes, including numerous vacancies and new appointments caused by the Trump administration's selections, term limits, and party switches in the Florida legislature. This includes 28 new House members and nine new Senate members, highlighting the need for Destin to actively engage with and educate these new representatives, particularly given the Panhandle's often-overlooked status.

Ms. Horton praised the Panhandle delegation, mentioning influential figures like Senator Jay Trumbull, Representative Pat Maney, and Senator Don Gaetz, noting their strong advocacy for the region. She also discussed leveraging relationships with neighboring representatives and various advocacy groups to secure resources for Destin.

Key issues she identified include property taxes, affordable housing, vacation rentals, and regulatory concerns like impact fees. She emphasized the importance of Destin's appropriation requests, such as the Crosstown Connector and the Mattie Kelly project, and discussed strategies to secure funding, including through non-legislative channels.

Ms. Horton provided an overview of the legislative session timeline, with key deadlines for bill drafting and appropriations, stressing the importance of timely submissions. She concluded by encouraging continued communication with her and the local delegation, reiterating her commitment to advocating Destin year-round, beyond just the legislative session.

Councilmember Geile addressed concerns regarding the significant impact of short-term rentals on the community, emphasizing that it is one of the city's larger issues. He noted that the city, with a population of approximately 14,000 to 15,000 residents, has only 3,600 homesteaded homes. This disparity underscores how short-term rentals are affecting the housing landscape and the overall community dynamics. Councilmember Geile expressed a desire to discuss strategies for gaining more *home rule* authority, particularly for communities with fewer than 25,000 residents. He also suggested the possibility of advocating for legislative changes to provide more local control over this issue.

In response, Ms. Horton acknowledged that many communities are facing similar struggles with short-term rentals. She referenced a recent conversation in Walton County, where homeowners are also experiencing challenges related to this issue. Ms. Horton mentioned that a vacation rental bill is typically filed in the legislature each year, offering potential opportunities to address these concerns, although she clarified that she does not track the issue closely and that Walton County has not been deeply involved in the matter.

Ms. Horton expressed her willingness to continue the conversation with Councilmember Geile, suggesting that they set up a call later in the week. This would give her time to conduct additional research on any upcoming legislative developments related to short-term rentals. She also sympathized with the council member's concerns but pointed out that the legislature often prioritizes *property rights*, typically side with property owners regarding how they use their property, which complicates efforts to regulate short-term rentals. However, she acknowledged the significant impact such rentals have on local communities.

Councilmember Schmidt referenced a previous comment made by Ms. Horton regarding alternative funding sources beyond appropriations. He asked for clarification on what those alternatives might be.

In response, Ms. Horton elaborated on several potential funding avenues:

- Grant Programs: She noted that various grant programs are available, highlighting that the Governor controls multiple funds, including those for economic development.

- Resiliency Funding: Ms. Horton indicated she had discussed resiliency-related funding opportunities with Councilmember Bagby.

- Regional Resources: Ms. Horton pointed out that the Northwest Florida Water Management District has available funds, contingent on the type of project proposed. She emphasized that these resources could be accessed if the project aligns with the district's priorities.

- Legislative Budget Request (LBR) Process: Ms. Horton explained that funds could also be secured through the LBR process, allowing for the reallocation of resources, particularly during the legislative offseason or when specific needs arise.

Ms. Horton summarized by stating that the availability of funding depends on the nature of the project and the corresponding opportunities within these various funding streams.

Councilmember Schmidt followed up by inquiring whether their agreement with Ms. Horton was an open-ended arrangement or limited to the current legislative session.

Ms. Horton clarified that the contract is for six months, covering the current session, with the option to re-evaluate after that period. She also noted that, as a government affairs consultant, she is prohibited from working on a commission basis, meaning she cannot be compensated based on a percentage of the funds secured or conditioned on the success of securing funding.

Councilman Bagby highlighted the importance of community involvement in securing funding, such as the resiliency money for Four Prong Lake. He emphasized that while Ms. Horton will do an excellent job, she cannot achieve success alone. The community must actively participate in advocacy efforts. He pointed out that securing the $1 million for Four Prong Lake was not solely due to hiring a lobbyist but also because 30 community members traveled to the state capital during the legislative session to meet with key representatives like Patt Maney and Jay Trumble, and others in influential positions. He underscored that this type of direct engagement is critical for obtaining funding. While hiring a lobbyist is beneficial, he cautioned against assuming it guarantees financial support without continued community involvement to reinforce the message and show commitment.

B. FY25 Resurfacing Projects, authorization to issue Purchase Orders, batch 2

The City Manager discussed the item which covers the FY24 resurfacing projects as part of the city's Renewal and Replacement Plan. A list of 11 street projects, totaling just over $1.2 million, was included along with a map in the staff report. The recommendation was made for the council to approve the list.

Councilmember Trammell made a motion to authorize the City Manager to issue the appropriate purchase orders for the eleven projects listed in the staff report. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion, which passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

C. RFB 24-14-REC, Morgan Sports Center Lighting Project

The City Manager introduced the agenda item, explaining the need to revisit the project due to an oversight in the previous meeting. The city had initially recommended awarding the contract to Techline Sports Lighting. However, it was later discovered that Techline was not a state-licensed general contractor, a requirement specified in the solicitation documents. The City Manager acknowledged the mistake and clarified that Techline withdrew their proposal upon notification of this issue. And with Techline's withdrawal, the City Manager recommended awarding the contract to M. Gay Contractors, the second highest ranked firm and the only remaining proposer with a valid general contractor license.

Councilmember Schmidt raised concerns, asking how the city confirmed that M. Gay Contractors held a valid Florida general contractor license. The City Manager responded that the verification was completed through the Department of Professional Business Regulation (DPBR), confirming their licensure.

Councilmember Schmidt also questioned whether requiring a general contractor license was necessary for this project. The City Manager explained that the requirement was included because projects of this size typically involve multiple construction components beyond electrical work. These could include crane operations or high-rise construction activities, which might require additional permits and specialized subcontractors. Therefore, a general contractor license was deemed necessary.

Councilmember Geile requested the license number for M. Gay Contractors, stating he could not locate it on the Florida licensing website.

A representative from M. Gay Contractors was present and clarified that searching for "M. Gay Constructors" (instead of "Contractors") on the licensing website would display all their licenses, including general contractor, electrical contractor, and underground utility licenses.

Councilmember Geile confirmed he found the license information and noted it was active until 2026.

The City Manager concluded the discussion by assuring the Council that corrective actions were being implemented. He mentioned that extensive internal reviews had taken place to analyze how the error occurred and how similar mistakes could be prevented in the future. The city plans to introduce more objective, binary criteria in the bid review process, ensuring that requirements like licensing are verified with a simple "yes or no" check. While he could not guarantee that mistakes would never happen again, he expressed confidence that these new procedures would significantly reduce the likelihood of similar issues.

Councilmember Trammell made a motion to accept the withdrawal of Techline Sports Lighting, adopt the Bid Committee's recommendation select the proposals from M. Gay Constructors, Inc., and direct staff to negotiate a contract for approval. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion, which passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

D. RFQ 24-12-CD Professional Planning & Grant Consulting

The City Manager introduced the item explaining that it pertains to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) issued for consulting services related to Community Development and Grants. The RFQ aimed to identify firms that could provide specialized expertise, particularly in grant applications, where existing staff bandwidth might be insufficient. Seven firms submitted proposals, and three were recommended for selection: 3TP Ventures, Kimley-Horn, and Inspire Group.

The City Manager emphasized that selecting multiple firms would provide the city with a range of expertise to draw from, depending on project needs. These would be continuing service agreements, and any expenditure under these contracts would require future task work order approvals by the council.

Councilmember Trammell expressed support for Kimley-Horn, noting that their proposal included a section on historical preservation, which is critical for projects in the harbor area due to the historical overlay. She stressed the need for criteria to guide preservation efforts.

Councilmember Schmidt questioned the necessity of contracting with all three firms, suggesting that it might be excessive. He expressed a preference for selecting a single firm, especially considering the city's existing resources. He pointed out that the city has a staff member whose responsibilities include handling grants. He also mentioned an existing six-month contract with Ms. Horton, who could assist with grant identification, even if it was not the application process. He also argued that maintaining three contracts might be inefficient.

The Building Official responded to Councilmember Schmidt's concerns, explaining that the selection of a firm would be based on the specific expertise required for each project: 3TP Ventures specializes in planning, making them suitable for projects requiring that focus. Kimley-Horn has a strong engineering team, making them ideal for projects involving engineering work. Inspire Group offers expertise in grant processes, though the staff would retain responsibility for filling out applications.

Councilmember Destin supported contracting with multiple firms, highlighting the advantages of flexibility and responsiveness. Having more than one firm ensures that if one is unavailable, another can be called upon. The presence of multiple firms fosters competition, likely resulting in better service and responsiveness. He emphasized that staff would still bring specific projects and firm selections back to the council for approval, maintaining oversight and control.

Councilmember Bagby moved to select the proposals from, and direct staff to negotiate contracts with 3TP Ventures, Kimley-Horn, and Inspire Group, and bring those contracts back to the council for consideration. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion, which passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

E. Volunteer Boards and Committees Recommendations

The City Manager introduced the discussion about volunteer boards and committee recommendations. He mentioned that staff had met multiple times with Councilmember Trammell, the legislative sponsor, to review various committees. The Local Planning Agency (LPA) and the Board of Adjustments remain unchanged due to statutory requirements. For the Harbor and Town Center Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs), three options were presented:

1. Keep both CRAs as they are.
2. Combine them into a hybrid committee.
3. Eliminate them entirely, as they are not required by statute.

The City Manager noted that while finding members for the Harbor CRA is not difficult, there is significant trouble filling the Town Center CRA, which currently has only one active member and two applicants for seven slots. He also highlighted that due to a $25 million loan commitment, the Harbor CRA has no available funds for at least three years, limiting their activities.

Councilmember Trammell emphasized that committees should generate their own initiatives and bring suggestions to the City Council or staff, rather than relying solely on staff to direct meetings. She pointed out that historically, committees were often unable to meet because staff had nothing to present, which she argued was contrary to their intended purpose.

Councilmember Trammell recommends retaining the existing CRA committees with seven members each for one more year to test a new approach, focusing on empowering chairs to recruit skilled members like bankers, lawyers, and grant writers. She supported keeping at-large memberships to bring in technical expertise, even if those individuals do not live or work in the CRA district.

Councilmember Bagby agreed with reinvigorating the committees but expressed skepticism about filling the Town Center CRA positions. He proposed giving until the second meeting in March to find seven qualified members. If successful, the CRA would continue for a year; if not, alternative options would be explored. He opposed at-large memberships, arguing that they often lead to members who lack a vested interest in the CRA areas, resulting in poor attendance and engagement.

Councilmember Trammell defended at-large memberships, arguing that they allow for specialized skills, such as grant writing, which may not be found within the CRA districts. She suggested this flexibility would support the committees' ability to achieve their goals and adapt to changing needs.

Mayor Wagner supported the idea of consolidating the Harbor and Town Center CRAs to create a more diverse and capable talent pool. He advocated for collaboration and efficiency, suggesting that a combined committee could achieve more impactful results. However, he remained open to seeing how the committees perform under the new approach before the council making final decisions.

Councilmember Trammell opposed combining the CRAs, arguing that it looks good on paper but would lead to conflicts in practice due to differing priorities and personalities tied to each district.

Councilmember Trammell moved to maintain the current structure of all existing committees, with each committee consisting of seven members appointed by the Council. The motion also included a provision to extend the operation of the two CRA advisory committees until the second Council meeting in March 2025. At that time, the Council will evaluate whether each CRA advisory committee has successfully appointed seven qualified members. Councilmember Hebert seconded the motion.

Councilmember Schmidt criticized the inefficiency of the current committees, citing years of discussions with little progress. He proposed eliminating the CRA advisory boards altogether and combining the Parks and Recreation Committee, Public Works and Safety Committee, and Harbor and Waterways Committee into a new "Community Service Advisory Board." This new board would have designated members with expertise in each area and streamline advisory functions, reducing the burden on staff and increasing efficiency. He emphasized the decline in volunteerism across various sectors and suggested this consolidation as a practical solution.

Councilmember Schmidt introduced a substitute motion proposing the following adjustments:

1. **To extend the terms of the two existing CRA advisory committees, allowing them to remain active until the second City Council meeting in March 2025. At that time,**

the Council will evaluate whether each CRA advisory committee has successfully appointed seven qualified members.

2. **To consolidate the Parks and Recreation Committee, Public Works/Safety Committee, and Harbor and Waterways Board into a single entity, to be named the Community Service Advisory Board.**

Councilmember Geile provided a second to the substitute motion. The substitute motion failed 2-4 (Council members Geile and Schmidt voted "yes"; Council members Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Trammell voted "no"; Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

Councilmember Trammell brought back her original motion to maintain the current structure of all existing committees, with each committee consisting of seven members appointed by the Council. The motion also included a provision to extend the operation of the two CRA advisory committees until the second Council meeting in March 2025. At that time, the Council will evaluate whether each CRA advisory committee has successfully appointed seven qualified members. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion, which passes 4-2 (Council members Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Trammell voted "yes"; Council members Schmidt and Geile voted "no"; Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

Next, the City Council appointed the following members to serve on the city's standing boards and committees, with the member of the council making the nomination for each appointee indicated in parentheses:

Harbor and Waterways Board
- Bill McKissick (Hebert)
- Jerod Hayden (Destin)
- John Stephens (Trammell)

Harbor CRA Advisory Committee
- James Green (Hebert)
- Lance Jonson (Destin)
- James Howard (Trammell)

Local Planning Agency
- Marcie Bell (Hebert)

Parks and Recreation Committee
- Autumn Weidenhamer (Hebert)
- Alison Stephens (Destin)
- Nikki Johnson (Trammell)

Public Works/ Safety Committee
- John Green (Hebert)
- Jim Wood (Destin)
- Marcie Bell (Trammell)

Town Center CRA Advisory Committee

- Corlene Ziegler (Trammell)

Councilmember Trammell made a motion to require that each committee hold a minimum of one meeting per month. The motion further specified that committee members would have primary responsibility for placing items on the agenda, while allowing staff to add items as needed. Councilmember Bagby seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

F. Minutes of Standing Board & Committees - Informational Only

G. Announcements

1) The newly appointed Community Development Director, Louis Zunguze, was unable to report for duty as scheduled due to circumstances beyond his control. His start date has been extended to January 21, 2025, with specific conditions in place. The City Council will receive a follow-up report on that date. Additionally, the position will be posted, with the outcome expected by January 21, 2025.
2) The Human Resources Director distributed the Employee Satisfaction Survey, which will remain open for staff participation until January 20th.
3) The second City Council meeting in January is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21st, due to the third Monday of the month being a holiday.
4) The special primary election to fill the vacancy for the First Congressional District vacated by Representative Gaetz will take place on Tuesday, January 28th. Early voting will be held at the Destin Community Center from Saturday, January 18th through Saturday, January 5th, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Second Reading of Ordinance 24-20-LC – Amending Article 2 "Administration" and Article 20 "Building Regulations" of the Land Development Code (LDC) to remove provisions related to construction permits, building permits, inspections, certificates of occupancy, and Fire District reviews from the LDC.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 24-20-LC and presented the ordinance to the city council on second reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA; AMENDING ARTICLE 2 "ADMINISTRATION" AND ARTICLE 20 "BUILDING REGULATIONS" OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO REMOVE PROVISIONS RELATED TO CONSTRUCTION PERMITS, BUILDING PERMITS, INSPECTIONS, CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY, AND FIRE DISTRICT REVIEWS FROM THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR A FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE CITY LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The mayor opened a public hearing to receive comments for or against the proposed ordinance. Having none, the mayor closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to the city council for their discussion and consideration.

Motion by Councilmember Trammell, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve Ordinance 24-20-LC on second reading passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

B. Second reading of Ordinance 24-21-CC – Amending Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances "Buildings and Building Regulations" to address construction permits, building permits, inspections, certificates of occupancy, and Fire District reviews within the Code of Ordinances.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 24-21-CC and presented the ordinance to the city council on second reading.

> AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA; AMENDING CHAPTER 6 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES "BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS" TO ADDRESS CONSTRUCTION PERMITS, BUILDING PERMITS, INSPECTIONS, CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY, AND FIRE DISTRICT REVIEWS WITHIN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR A FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The mayor opened a public hearing to receive comments for or against the proposed ordinance. Having none, the mayor closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to the city council for their discussion and consideration.

Motion by Councilmember Trammell, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve Ordinance 24-21-CC on second reading passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

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

A. Councilmember Braden
B. Councilmember Trammell
C. Councilmember Destin
D. Councilmember Bagby
E. Councilmember Hebert
F. Councilmember Geile
   1) Projects Status / Updates
G. Councilmember Schmidt
   1) TDC December Meeting Update

Councilmember Schmidt informed the council that he attended the December TDC meeting but has not been officially sworn in until the Board of County Commissioners votes.

- The interlocal agreement for the Crosstown Connector was approved and recommended.

- Up to $400,000 in dredge support for the Destin Harbor was also approved.
- The SS United States artificial reef project was discussed. Delays are due to Coast Guard issues, but repairs and upgrades are ongoing. Despite some penalties and fees, the project remains under budget and on schedule.
- The final location for the reef deployment was not decided, but he will follow up at the next meeting.

Next, Councilmember Schmidt asked about the status of the Park Master Plan.

It was confirmed that the plan is currently being reviewed by the City Attorney. The contract has been reviewed by the city's Special Project Attorney and is now with another reviewer for final review before being returned soon.

Councilmember Schmidt inquired about updates on Triumph funding for the Morgan Sports Complex.

The Projects/Grants/Contract Manager stated that no application has been submitted yet. Triumph prefers not to be the largest contributor, so the city has been reaching out to third parties for additional support.

There was a discussion on whether Triumph had encouraged applying for Morgan funding. Some believed Triumph suggested applying, but no formal direction or confirmation was noted. Triumph grants generally require job creation, with over 55% of jobs meeting a specific threshold, which could be a factor in the application process.

The mayor said they will follow up with the person who claimed city staff were instructed to apply for the funding.

H. Mayor Wagner
I. City Attorney
    1. City Manager Contract

The City Attorney introduced the contract for Mr. Larry Jones as the new City Manager. She clarified that the contract establishes an independent contractor relationship, meaning Mr. Jones will not be a city employee. He will receive an annual salary as outlined in the agenda, with no additional benefits such as health insurance, dental, or car allowance. The total compensation reflects this arrangement. The City Attorney reminded the Council that the City Charter requires 70% approval for this vote.

Councilmember Bagby moved to approve the City Manager contract as presented; seconded by councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

    2. Proposed Settlement Agreement with Destin Fishing Fleet

The City Attorney presented a proposed settlement agreement between the City of Destin and the Destin Fishing Fleet. Councilmember Destin abstained from both the discussion and the vote. The City Attorney noted that the settlement had been discussed with all council members individually and recommended proceeding directly to a vote.

Motion by Councilmember Trammell, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve the proposed settlement agreement with the Destin Fishing Fleet, as presented, passed 4-1 (Council members Schmidt, Geile, Hebert, and Trammell voted "yes"; Councilmember Bagby voted "no"; Councilmember Destin abstained from voting; Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

3) Resolution 25-01 Financial Institution Signature Authority

The City Attorney introduced Resolution 25-01, granting the City Manager permanent authority to sign on behalf of the city.

Councilmember Trammell moved to adopt Resolution 25-01, seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 6-0 (Councilmember Braden was absent from the meeting).

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Carrie Harbarger, a Destin resident and business owner, raised concerns about the lack of enforcement against illegal businesses operating on the city's beaches. She emphasized the importance of protecting local businesses, especially with the upcoming busy season. She expressed frustration with continued illegal activity, particularly unauthorized vendors such as ice cream carts on the beach. She criticized the city for not adequately addressing these issues, stating that it negatively affects local businesses that invest heavily in the community through property ownership, insurance, and taxes. Ms. Harbarger urged the council to prioritize code compliance and take firm action against illegal vendors, warning that more such businesses were expected to arrive before the summer season. She concluded by stressing that the government should serve the residents and businesses of Destin and not allow outside entities to profit unlawfully.

Councilmember Bagby emphasized the need for strict enforcement of existing ordinances to protect local businesses and property owners. He referenced data showing a nearly 40% drop in bed tax collections in Walton County for November, suggesting economic challenges for the area. He highlighted that the city needs to ensure its beaches are well-managed to maintain tourism appeal and support local businesses.

Councilmember Destin echoed the need for robust enforcement of the ordinance prohibiting beach vending. He expressed confidence in the new City Manager to prioritize this issue. He stated that if the city fails to enforce its ordinances, it undermines the council's authority. He suggested that if fines are insufficient to deter illegal vendors, the city could pursue legal action through the Circuit Court to obtain injunctions. Violators who disregard court orders could then face contempt charges, leading to possible jail time. However, he noted that Council directive would be needed to initiate such litigation.

Councilmember Geile inquired about the specific enforcement procedures, asking how violations would be handled and what penalties could be applied.

The mayor suggested installing live webcams at public beach access as both a recreational amenity and a tool to monitor and document illegal vending activities.

Council members Trammell and Hebert supported the need for strict enforcement, referencing past instances where illegal vendors operated openly despite complaints. They emphasized that the city needs to take action early in the season to deter such activity.

The City Attorney confirmed that citations typically carry fines, but the amounts are capped by statute. If fines prove ineffective, more aggressive legal measures could be pursued with council approval.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Bobby Wagner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rey Bailey, City Clerk

FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS

LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE NAME Destin Dewey E	NAME OF BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY, OR COMMITTEE Destin City Council
MAILING ADDRESS 799 Spring Lake Dr	THE BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY OR COMMITTEE ON WHICH I SERVE IS A UNIT OF: ☑ CITY ☐ COUNTY ☐ OTHER LOCAL AGENCY
CITY Destin COUNTY Okaloosa	NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION:
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED 1/6/25	MY POSITION IS: ☑ ELECTIVE ☐ APPOINTIVE

WHO MUST FILE FORM 8B

This form is for use by any person serving at the county, city, or other local level of government on an appointed or elected board, council, commission, authority, or committee. It applies equally to members of advisory and non-advisory bodies who are presented with a voting conflict of interest under Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes.

Your responsibilities under the law when faced with voting on a measure in which you have a conflict of interest will vary greatly depending on whether you hold an elective or appointive position. For this reason, please pay close attention to the instructions on this form before completing the reverse side and filing the form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 112.3143, FLORIDA STATUTES

A person holding elective or appointive county, municipal, or other local public office MUST ABSTAIN from voting on a measure which inures to his or her special private gain or loss. Each elected or appointed local officer also is prohibited from knowingly voting on a measure which inures to the special gain or loss of a principal (other than a government agency) by whom he or she is retained (including the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which he or she is retained); to the special private gain or loss of a relative; or to the special private gain or loss of a business associate. Commissioners of community redevelopment agencies under Sec. 163.356 or 163.357, F.S., and officers of independent special tax districts elected on a one-acre, one-vote basis are not prohibited from voting in that capacity.

For purposes of this law, a "relative" includes only the officer's father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. A "business associate" means any person or entity engaged in or carrying on a business enterprise with the officer as a partner, joint venturer, coowner of property, or corporate shareholder (where the shares of the corporation are not listed on any national or regional stock exchange).

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

ELECTED OFFICERS:

In addition to abstaining from voting in the situations described above, you must disclose the conflict:

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN by publicly stating to the assembly the nature of your interest in the measure on which you are abstaining from voting; *and*

WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE VOTE OCCURS by completing and filing this form with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who should incorporate the form in the minutes.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Although you must abstain from voting in the situations described above, you otherwise may participate in these matters. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:

- You must complete and file this form (before making any attempt to influence the decision) with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who will incorporate the form in the minutes. (Continued on other side)

APPOINTED OFFICERS (continued)

- A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency.
- The form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

IF YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION EXCEPT BY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

- You must disclose orally the nature of your conflict in the measure before participating.
- You must complete the form and file it within 15 days after the vote occurs with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who must incorporate the form in the minutes. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency, and the form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

DISCLOSURE OF LOCAL OFFICER'S INTEREST

I, Dewey E Destin, hereby disclose that on 1/6, 20 24:

(a) A measure came or will come before my agency which (check one)

✓ inured to my special private gain or loss;

___ inured to the special gain or loss of my business associate, ___;

___ inured to the special gain or loss of my relative, ___;

___ inured to the special gain or loss of ___, by whom I am retained; or

___ inured to the special gain or loss of ___, which is the parent organization or subsidiary of a principal which has retained me.

(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

I HAVE OWNERSHIP IN BUSINESS ENTITIES THAT WERE DEFENDANTS IN THIS COURT ACTION

1/6/24
Date Filed

Dewey Destin
Signature

NOTICE: UNDER PROVISIONS OF FLORIDA STATUTES §112.317, A FAILURE TO MAKE ANY REQUIRED DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR AND MAY BE PUNISHED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: IMPEACHMENT, REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION FROM OFFICE OR EMPLOYMENT, DEMOTION, REDUCTION IN SALARY, REPRIMAND, OR A CIVIL PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED $10,000.