

**REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
JULY 7, 2025
ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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 Kevin Schmidt
Councilmember Terésa Hebert
Councilmember Sandy Trammell

Councilmember Dewey Destin
Councilmember Torey Geile
Councilmember Jim Bagby
Councilmember Rodney Braden

Destin City Staff

City Manager Larry Jones
Human Resources Director Jaime Haynes
Deputy Comm Dev Director Steve O'Connor
Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd
Principal Planner Daniel Butler
Community Development Director David Prichard
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey
IT Director Andy Peters
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
City Engineer Robert Tomasek
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Firth
Public Information Director Tamara Young
Finance Director Krystal Strickland

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bobby Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The mayor asked for a moment of silence, which was then followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Bagby, to approve the agenda passed 7-0.

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

A. Proclamation - Parks and Recreation Month

The mayor read the Proclamation designating the month of July 2025 as *Parks and Recreation Month* in the City of Destin and then presented it to the Chair of the Parks & Recreation Committee Autumn Weidenhamer and Parks and Recreation Director Lisa Firth.

B. National Civics Bee Florida State Finals - Noah Finkler from Destin Middle School, winner

Mayor Wagner recognized Noah Finkler of Destin Middle School, the winner of the Florida State Finals of the National Civics Bee.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Patty Brown, a Destin resident, began by emphasizing her strong belief in civic participation, stating that one must actively engage to be part of the process. She noted her 20 years of involvement with the City of Destin, including serving three times on the short-term rental task force, most recently as its chair. Her central concern was the lack of effective enforcement of city regulations. She urged the city to move beyond warnings and start issuing fines to deter violations, specifically highlighting how Crystal Beach has deteriorated in the past year. Many homes display signage indicating space for four vehicles, yet she regularly sees nine or more trucks and SUVs, with cars often blocking sidewalks and streets. She acknowledged that the city is short-staffed, with only two code enforcement officers, which limits their capacity to respond. Her own calls about parking violations have gone unanswered, and violations remain unaddressed.

Ms. Brown also spoke as a local business owner, explaining that she and other yacht operators have worked diligently and legally with the city to secure livery permits and meet all necessary business requirements. She voiced concern over out-of-town operators from states like Texas and Tennessee who are bypassing the permitting process by using residential slips without obtaining Business Tax Receipts or adhering to local rules. This undermines legitimate operators who pay commercial rates for dock space and taxes, and she urged the city to prevent further abuse of the system.

Ms. Brown also described an increase in property damage, trash on beaches, and disregard for parking rules. She referred to the mess left at James Lee Park after the Fourth of July—burned trash cans, broken tents, and litter everywhere—and said it is often locals who clean up the aftermath. She believes tourists have become less respectful, noting comments she's seen online from visitors who claim they can do whatever they want because they spend money in Destin. She suggested that the city coordinate with the TDC and look to Walton County, which she believes attracts more respectful tourists.

Finally, Ms. Brown addressed the idea of allowing beach bonfires. While supportive in principle, she insisted that the activity must be properly regulated. Drawing on her experience in California, where unregulated beach fires result in dirty, blackened sand, she stressed the need for permitting and cleanup protocols, as people today often do not manage their behavior responsibly.

Ricky Grant introduced himself as a Cincinnati native who now lives in Destin, currently residing in the warehouse where he repairs beach chairs. He explained that he sleeps in the office space there and has been making a living doing chair repairs for Catch22 and Sunrise Share Coffee Co. He stated he recently became a licensed real estate agent and is working toward opening his own brokerage and establishing a farm in Tennessee. He dreams of building a life that includes a coastal beach house and possibly a fishing cabin, reflecting the influence of the fishing culture he has absorbed while living in Destin.

He shared that his life has involved many struggles, including challenges interacting with business owners and being trespassed from the public library following a misunderstanding. Despite hardships, he is trying to stay grounded, keeping faith at the center of his life through his church at St. Andrews. He expressed hope that new technologies like AI and support from local leadership could help people like him navigate life's challenges.

Brian Decker, a Destin resident, addressed the topic of beach bonfires, referencing a recent article he had read. He stated he has spent over 25 years closely involved with Destin's beachfront, and supports allowing bonfires but has concerns about the initial proposal suggesting a single-vendor system. He believes that while it may be appropriate for the city to employ a single vendor on city-owned beachfronts, private beachfront owners and HOAs should retain the freedom to select their own vendors. Removing that choice, in his view, would be a disservice to property owners.

Mr. Decker also emphasized that regulation is key to implementing bonfires responsibly and stated that many HOAs and management teams he works with have voiced support for a structured permitting system. He recommended mirroring existing beach vending requirements, including liability insurance, vendor authorization, and indemnification clauses. He also encouraged the city to consult with the South Walton Fire District's chief, who helped design a successful bonfire program that could serve as a useful model. He noted important considerations such as fire safety, turtle nesting protection, and the potential for new revenue streams for vendors, the fire department, HOAs, and the city. He concluded by offering a counterpoint to earlier comments critical of Walton County, stating that many visitors actually return to Destin for its unique charm. He encouraged the council to consider allowing bonfires not only for enjoyment but also to remain competitive with surrounding counties.

Britney Zirkle a disabled veteran, registered nurse, and mother, began her remarks by explaining why she declined to provide her address—due to concerns for her safety stemming from a prior restraining order. She explained that she was speaking on behalf of over 1,700 people who signed a petition in just one week to support mobile ice cream vending on the beach. She stated that these supporters include locals, tourists, parents, and veterans who cherish the tradition of getting ice cream at the beach, which has never been a problem until recently.

Ms. Zirkle asserted that the sudden scrutiny of mobile vendors stems not from public complaints, but from a single competitor—Rainbow Frost Ice Cream—whose repeated objections appear to have unfairly influenced city policy. She said her family's vending operation is legal, compliant, and enjoyed by the community, and that past vendors have operated without issue for decades. The shift, she argued, is not about safety or zoning but about a business trying to create a monopoly by pushing out competition. She reminded the council that even a city code officer had acknowledged on camera that her operation was legal. She urged council members not to let personal interests overshadow the will of the people, especially when over 1,700 voices had spoken so clearly and quickly in favor of preserving a simple, joyful tradition.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. 506 & 508 Harbor Blvd, Commercial Marine Construction, HWB-001589-2025
- B. 742 & 744 Harbor Blvd, Residential Marine Construction, HWB-001616-2025
- C. Atkins Amendment 7 - Post Design Services
- D. FY 2024 Edward Byrne Grant Funding 51% Letters of Support
- E. Destin Rodeo Run 5k Run/Walk - October 5, 2025
- F. Destin Fishing Museum Foundation, Inc. - 5k Mullet Run/Walk September 28, 2025
- G. Approval of minutes of June 16, 2025, Council Executive Session
- H. Approval of minutes of June 2, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting
- I. Approval of minutes of May 19, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 3A through 3I, as printed above, and was seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0.

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

A. RFB 25-07-CM Crosstown Phase 1 Construction Contract

The City Manager introduced the item, which pertains to awarding the contract H&T Contractors for the Crosstown Connector project. This item follows a previous decision made by the council to award the project, and the current step involved approving the contract and authorizing the City Manager to execute it and issue a notice to proceed. Staff recommended approval of this contract.

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion to approve the contract with H&T for RFB 25-07-CM and direct the City Manager to execute the contract and issue a notice to proceed. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert.

Councilmember Destin raised serious concerns regarding the planned connection of the Crosstown Connector to the Stahlman Avenue intersection. He emphasized that no funded or projected improvements had been made to the intersection despite its existing congestion issues, especially given the anticipated increase in traffic from Commons Drive and the potential expansion of Emerald Grande, which could double the area's density. Councilmember Destin warned that moving forward without addressing the intersection could be one of the most significant mistakes in his 30 years on the council. He suggested alternative traffic solutions, such as a roundabout like the one on Hollywood Boulevard in Fort Walton Beach, which disperses traffic across multiple intersections on Highway 98. He stated his intention to make a motion to study and explore alternatives to improve the intersection before any connection is made.

Councilmember Braden echoed Councilmember Destin's concerns and noted that the city had allocated \$50,000 several years ago for a redesign study of the Stahlman intersection. However, he questioned the tangible outcomes of that expenditure, noting that no visible improvements had been delivered.

The City Manager informed the Council that a pre-construction meeting for the current stormwater phase of the project was scheduled for Wednesday of that week. He assured members that he would provide an estimated timeline following that meeting.

The mayor asked for a vote on the current motion, which passed 7-0.

Councilmember Destin moved that the Crosstown Connector not be connected to Stahlman Avenue until such time as improvements to the intersection have been made or funded to the satisfaction of the city council. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion.

Councilmember Schmidt expressed confusion about how Councilmember Destin's motion would affect project phases. He sought clarification on whether completed segments, such as Beach to Benning Drive, would still be opened as scheduled.

Councilmember Destin clarified that his motion was not meant to delay opening completed segments but to ensure that the final connection to Stahlman Avenue does not occur until appropriate improvements are made. He highlighted options to divert traffic through other north-south roads such as Palmetto or Marler Street, although those routes currently lack signalized intersections.

The mayor called for a vote on Councilmember Destin's motion, which passed 7-0.

B. Community Rating System Update - upgrading to a Class 5

The City Manager provided an update on the Community Rating System (CRS), specifically regarding the possibility of improving the city's rating from Class 6 to Class 5. He explained that Okaloosa County Emergency Management is leading a countywide Program for Public Information (PPI), which aims to enhance public outreach, improve CRS-eligible activities, strengthen documentation practices, engage stakeholders more effectively, and promote interagency collaboration. Although the PPI initiative alone may not be sufficient to achieve the Class 5 designation, it would contribute significant points toward that goal and serve as a foundation for future improvements. Achieving a Class 5 rating could result in savings of approximately \$250 to \$280 per year on flood insurance for the average policyholder. The City Manager recommended that the city participate in the county's PPI initiative and requested authorization to appoint a staff representative and stakeholder to the committee, as well as to work in cooperation with Okaloosa County Emergency Management to support the necessary activities associated with this effort.

Councilmember Bagby moved to approve the City of Destin's participation in the Okaloosa County Program for Public Information (PPI) initiative, authorize the City Manager to designate a staff representative and stakeholder for the PPI committee, and direct staff to coordinate with Okaloosa County Emergency Management to support documentation and outreach activities necessary for Destin's CRS Class 5 advancement. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0.

C. RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Presentations

The City of Destin held a public meeting to hear presentations from three firms—Anchor CEI, Halff Associates, and Volkert—for Construction Engineering and Inspection (CEI) services on the Cross Town Connector project. The City Manager Larry reminded the council of the qualification-based ranking system, where firms would be evaluated solely on their presentations and ranked accordingly: the top-ranked firm receiving a "1", second a "2", and third a "3". The lowest total score would determine the top choice, and staff would be directed to negotiate a contract with that firm. If negotiations failed, the city would move down the list.

The following firms made presentations to the council as part of the RFQ 25-06-CD selection process:

- Anchor CEI
- Halff Associates
- Volkert

Anchor CEI emphasized its comprehensive in-house capabilities—from planning to construction inspection. The leadership team, with about 70 years of combined experience, showcased deep regional knowledge and FDOT certifications. Their proposed team included local project leads and a senior inspector, all committed to providing responsive, high-quality service. Anchor stressed their specialty in construction administration for municipalities and their hands-on problem-solving experience with drainage and roadway issues. They positioned themselves as an extension of city staff and highlighted their ongoing and past work across Northwest Florida.

Halff Associates, in partnership with Utility Consultants of Florida, focused heavily on their local presence and CEI specialization. Their team, led by seasoned professionals underscored extensive CEI experience, particularly in neighborhood-scale infrastructure similar to the Cross Town Connector. They detailed proactive outreach to local stakeholders and school officials, promising high communication standards and innovative solutions like live-streaming construction cameras and real-time email updates for residents. Halff also outlined their approach to mitigating

cost overruns, ensuring compliance with FDOT specs, and avoiding excessive change orders. Their approach emphasized community engagement and schedule control.

Councilmember Schmidt questioned how **Halff** would enforce their commitment to minimizing construction noise impacts, particularly regarding reverse alarms and early-morning disruptions. **Halff** explained that restrictions could be included in the project plan and enforced through daily on-site inspection and coordination.

Volkert discussed their long-standing relationship with the city and current engagements such as the Commons Drive project. Their team would be led by an experienced professional, with additional support from experienced inspectors and a compliance specialist to ensure proper documentation for reimbursement. Volkert emphasized responsiveness, local availability, and experience with FDOT and LAP-funded projects. Their approach included detailed quality assurance reviews, robust documentation protocols, and adherence to the city's budget and schedule. They closed by highlighting their 100-year history and core values—service, quality, ethics, and safety.

Following the presentations, the council ranked the firms one through three in order of preference. The City Clerk tallied the results and announced the following:

- 1. Top rank firm is Halff Associates with 9 points.**
- 2. Second rank firm is Anchors CEI with 12 points.**
- 3. Third rank firm is Volkert with 21 points.**

Councilmember Trammell inquired whether a specific element from one firm could be incorporated into a contract negotiated with another.

The City Attorney affirmed that the ranking motion did not need to include contract details, that such provisions could be added through a separate motion after the top firm was selected.

Councilmember Schmidt moved to authorize staff to negotiate a contract, starting with the top-ranked firm, Halff Associates, which will be subject to final approval by the city council. And if negotiations with that firm fail, moving down the list of the three firms in order of ranking until a proposed contract is reached with a firm. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0.

Councilmember Trammell moved to include the installation of cameras as part of the project, allowing residents to access the camera feeds and monitor daily progress on the project. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0.

D. Undergrounding Update with Parking Lot Light Discussion

The City Manager introduced the topic by explaining that as part of the undergrounding of power lines on Highway 98, approximately 60 parking lots with light fixtures are affected. Since servicing these lights via overhead lines will no longer be possible once the undergrounding is complete, the City is proposing to fund the installation of conduit infrastructure in the amount of \$147,000. This infrastructure would allow the light fixtures to be connected to the new underground system. The proposal includes using funds from the project's landscaping budget to cover the cost. The City Manager emphasized that this move would ensure consistency in the look of the streetlights throughout the corridor and suggested a future amendment to the Land Development Code requiring uniform lighting standards for parking lots within the designated area. Under this

plan, property owners would then pay FPL a monthly fee per pole and light fixture, using the same type of fixtures installed along the roadway.

Mark Porter of Utility Consultants of Florida provided a project update and technical details. He stated that 65% of the major underground infrastructure is now complete, specifically between Main Street and the west bridge, and that the remaining segment eastward is also progressing. The most difficult part—installing conduit—has been largely addressed, and efforts are now focused on transitioning service, which requires close coordination with FPL. The project remains on schedule and within budget. He explained that the proposed \$147,000 would fund approximately 14,000 linear feet of conduit needed to connect 59 affected parcels. This cost reflects a rate of \$10.50 per linear foot as quoted by FPL. All other aspects, including poles, wires, and light fixtures, would be installed by FPL and paid for by the property owners on a monthly basis. He also highlighted that new LED lights may provide better coverage, potentially reducing the number of fixtures needed. Estimated monthly charges would decrease for floodlights and slightly increase for smaller parking lot lights, though LED efficiency could offset some of the cost increases.

Councilmember Hebert raised questions regarding the specifics of the \$147,000 cost and the durability of the proposed black concrete light poles. Mr. Porter clarified that the figure only covers the installation of conduit, not the wires or light fixtures, which would be addressed separately between FPL and individual property owners. Regarding the poles, he explained they are concrete with a weather-resistant coating rather than dyed through, and have been proven to hold up well in coastal environments. He further noted that FPL would be responsible for maintenance and replacement, ensuring the city is not burdened with ongoing upkeep.

Councilmember Trammell expressed concern that the landscaping budget is often tapped for unrelated expenditures, potentially leaving projects unfinished. In response, the city's Finance Director, clarified that the \$147,000 would be funded using electric franchise fees, specifically from a 10% allocation within that fund designated for landscaping under the ordinance related to the undergrounding project. She confirmed that these funds have not been significantly spent and that sufficient budget remains available.

Councilmember Bagby moved to direct the City Manager to approve a change order consistent with the consultant's presentation and bring back any necessary budget amendment to the city council taking those funds from the landscaping budget as discussed. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion, which passed 6-0. Councilmember Destin abstained from voting.

Councilmember Bagby moved to direct the City Manager and City Attorney to prepare an ordinance for future council consideration to require uniform light poles consistent with the consultant's presentation. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0

Councilmember Bagby volunteered to be the legislative sponsor for this item.

E. Public Beach Vending RFP Discussion

The City Manager introduced the topic by noting that staff had been asked to explore what a procurement process for beach vending might look like. The council's meeting packet included Destin's proposed standards and limitations, sample responses from potential applicants, and an example RFP and ordinance from Walton County. He clarified that for vending activities such as bonfires, food sales, or merchandise to be permitted, the City's code would need to be amended.

Before proceeding further, he asked whether the council had any interest in allowing vending at all, stressing the desire to avoid unnecessary staff work if there was no support.

Councilmember Bagby responded by stating he was not strongly in favor of beach vending. Drawing on his experience in Walton County, where vending regulations went through several difficult iterations, he cautioned that Destin lacks the extensive public beach access that other counties have. He noted the absence of public demand for vending and emphasized that private beachfront property owners are already able to contract vendors for their own use. For these reasons, he concluded that the effort to permit vending was likely not worthwhile unless there was overwhelming public interest or a compelling regulatory framework.

Councilmember Trammell also opposed the idea, emphasizing the city's limited ability to enforce such regulations. She warned that without the capacity to monitor vendors, enforcement would be ineffective. She highlighted that Destin's unique no-vending policy sets it apart from other beach communities and adds to its charm, suggesting that the city should only adopt policies it can realistically manage.

Councilmember Geile clarified that he had initially requested the beach vending discussion not to advocate for or against it, but to ensure the council conducted proper due diligence. He believed it was important for the council to review potential regulations and impacts in order to make an informed decision.

Council members Braden and Hebert both voiced strong opposition to beach vending. Councilmember Braden cited the absence of recent complaints and concerns over reigniting past enforcement issues. Councilmember Hebert expressed concerns about the city's limited enforcement staff and the potential for rogue operators to skirt regulations, noting that the city already struggles to monitor existing activities, such as illegal pontoon operations.

Councilmember Schmidt asked several questions to clarify the issue. He sought to understand the distinction between public and private beach vending, and whether private beachfront owners could host vendors. He also inquired about the types of vending being considered—such as food, t-shirts, and bonfires—and whether these activities could be limited to certain areas. Although Schmidt expressed some openness to limited vending on public beaches, he acknowledged the topic was complex and confusing.

The City Manager responded that permits are currently required for vending on both public and private beaches. He explained that if council chose to expand vending options, regulations would need to be clearly defined. Limited vending on designated public access points could, he suggested, include a form of self-regulation among permitted vendors. He also noted that making violations a misdemeanor offense could enhance enforcement.

The City Attorney further clarified that commercial vending requires a permit regardless of beach ownership, and some condo properties may offer private amenities that fall under different standards.

Councilmember Hebert reiterated enforcement concerns, citing specific examples of rogue operations that already tax the city's limited code enforcement staff. She argued that adding more permitted activities would create unfair burdens on compliant vendors while allowing non-compliant ones to flourish.

Councilmember Destin expressed concern that beach vending could make Destin's beaches feel over-commercialized. He noted that even Walton County restricts vending to specific sites and

prohibits mobile carts. He stated that he would only consider permitting vending if beachfront property owners clearly supported it, but he had not received any such requests.

Councilmember Bagby explained that there is a clear difference between private property owners hiring vendors for personal use and public vending operations that function like monopolies. He warned that issuing a single RFP to one vendor would create a government-sanctioned monopoly, which he felt was not the proper role of local government.

Councilmember Destin moved to prohibit all beach vending activities, with the exception of bonfires, which will be addressed separately in a later discussion. Motion seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 6-1, with Councilmember Schmidt dissenting.

F. Transient Boat Slips Signage Discussion

The City Manager explained the background for proposing standardized signage for transit boat slips. After a recent code compliance hearing regarding Mr. Perry's property—which was found in violation for misidentifying three boat slips—there was agreement to install signs designating them as transit/public slips. However, the property owner objected, citing that current city code did not mandate such signage, and they were technically correct. While some signage was eventually installed, it was substandard. This prompted discussions among city staff and council to consider a uniform, city-designed sign for all transit/public slips. The proposal includes adding a requirement in the Land Development Code to mandate such signs for existing and future slips.

Councilmember Trammell supported the sign mockup but recommended that it include the specific code section at the bottom. This would give the signage more legal authority, allowing enforcement for violations like unauthorized commercial activity.

The mayor expressed concern about signage clarity and public perception. He observed that large "No Parking" signs at the front of some docks might mislead the public into thinking the entire dock is off-limits. He suggested that while the new transit slip signs might be mounted facing the slip (and not outward), this could still be overridden by the more visible "No Parking" signs. He proposed possibly adding another type of sign to clarify public access and minimize misdirection.

The City Attorney emphasized that the proposed signage policy would apply harbor-wide, not to a specific property. The intent is to standardize signage across all properties with public/transit slips, many of which already have inconsistent or unclear signage. The Attorney also acknowledged the Mayor's suggestion and indicated that additional language could be incorporated into the new ordinance to address this issue further.

Councilmember Braden supported the effort and echoed the mayor's concerns. He pointed out that current signage is often mounted horizontally, which may not be visible or effective. He recommended also requiring a vertical sign to enhance visibility. Additionally, he preferred having the word "Public" appear at the top of the sign instead of "Notice" to better communicate its intent.

Councilmember Destin raised a concern about entering into a "dueling signs" competition with property owners, where different parties try to outdo each other with larger or more prominent signage. He emphasized the importance of uniformity to avoid such situations. He acknowledged the mayor's suggestion but advised keeping the current motion focused on the standardized signage proposal to avoid diluting the initiative.

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to direct the City Manager and City Attorney to bring back a proposed amendment to the LDC for uniform signage for public transient slips passed 7-0.

Councilmember Hebert volunteered to be the legislative sponsor for this ordinance.

The City Attorney confirmed that additional signage types (e.g., for water taxis) could be incorporated into the same ordinance at first reading, based on council consensus.

G. Appointment of Council Representatives to Various Local and Regional Committees and Boards

The City Manager asked the Council to consider appointing alternate representatives to the following regional committees, so that in the event the primary representative is unavailable, the alternate may attend in their place:

- Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC)
- Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority (RUA)
- Okaloosa County Public Transit Cooperative

Motion by Councilmember Bagby, seconded by Councilmember Hebert to appoint Mayor Wagner as the alternate council representative to the Emerald Coast Regional Council (ECRC) passed 7-0.

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Bagby, to appoint Councilmember Bagby as the alternate council representative to the Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority (RUA) passed 7-0.

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Bagby, to appoint Councilmember Trammell as the alternate council representative to the Okaloosa County Public Transit Cooperative passed 7-0.

The City Manager noted that many of these local and regional committees generate meeting minutes that are not currently shared with the city council. There will now be a coordinated effort to obtain these minutes from the various committees. The City Clerk has agreed to assist in collecting and distributing these documents. Moving forward, council members will receive these minutes regularly, ensuring they are kept informed about the activities and discussions occurring within each committee.

H. Minutes from Standing Board & Committees - Informational Only

I. Absentee Report - Volunteer Committees and Boards - Informational Only

J. Announcements:

1. The City of Destin successfully reopened the harbor side of Noriego Point to boat access just in time for the Fourth of July holiday. Staff managed to reposition fencing further up the hill and relocate the appropriate signage, creating enough space to open the shoreline for use. Councilmember Schmidt, along with the contractor and representatives from D-Rep, collaborated on-site to make this possible. Special thanks were extended to Kevin for his role in facilitating the outcome, which was well received by residents who appreciated being able to park at Noriego Point during the holiday period.

2. In legislative news, the city secured a \$1 million appropriation from the Florida Legislature, which was signed into the state budget by the Governor despite numerous vetoes on the same day. The city is grateful for this funding. Kelly Horton, the city's lobbyist, will attend the next council meeting to provide a comprehensive wrap-up of the legislative session and to address any questions regarding the appropriation and related matters.
3. Regarding the city's paid parking initiative, the request for proposals (RFP) process has concluded, and staff are now reviewing a substantial number of submissions. Due to the volume and complexity of the proposals, a final recommendation was not ready for the current meeting but will be brought forward at the next council session following a thorough evaluation.
4. The city has also scheduled a utility coordination meeting for July 16th from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., in response to numerous conflicts between fiber optic boring contractors and other utility providers such as natural gas and Destin Water Users. This meeting will bring all stakeholders together in one room to address long-standing disputes and attempt to resolve them efficiently. City staff will review work records to identify where and when conflicts occurred, with the goal of clearing obstacles to future utility work. Residents experiencing unresolved utility issues are encouraged to attend and are asked to email their name, address, and specific concerns in advance to publicinfo@cityofdestin.com, so the appropriate representatives can be prepared with answers.
5. Mr. Chris Cook will be joining the Code Compliance Division as the new Operations Supervisor and Training Coordinator, beginning July 14th. His primary duties will include overseeing daily staffing and operations as well as ensuring that officers and staff receive proper training.
6. The city's beloved Big Truck Day will return on August 1st at the Destin Community Center from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The event, which is a favorite among families and children, will be promoted through the city's website and social media channels.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Allowing Beach Bonfires on Destin Beaches

The City Manager introduced the topic of bonfires on Destin beaches as a public hearing item intended to gather community input. He stated that the city had reached out to Walton County to understand their successful bonfire permitting process, which is handled by the South Walton Fire District. Permits in Walton County cost \$105, with \$100 split between the county and fire district. Though Destin is unlikely to generate similar revenue (\$936,000 annually in Walton County), the City Manager acknowledged there is demonstrated demand. He proposed allowing bonfires only on *private beach property* due to the limited nature of public access. Certified vendors would be required, permits issued through the Destin Fire Control District, and strict guidelines on fire placement, safety, and environmental protection would be enforced—similar to Walton County's model. The proposal would require an amendment to the Land Development Code and a legislative sponsor to move forward.

The floor was opened by the mayor for comments from the public concerning the issue

Carrie Harbarger (307 Mountain Drive) spoke against the proposal. She argued that Destin's limited beach space and existing management issues make bonfires inappropriate. She emphasized that there's no economic necessity for this and that most locals oppose the idea.

Gary Troop (86 Shirah Street) opposed bonfires unless code enforcement is improved. He doubted the city's ability to manage additional oversight and enforcement. He also questioned the revenue projections and highlighted the risk of unauthorized fires and environmental degradation.

Guy Tadlock (502 Noriego) agreed with earlier opposition, suggesting "fire pits" is a more appropriate term than bonfires. He expressed safety concerns and environmental risks, particularly for parks like Norriego Point. He raised questions about potential conflicts with park hours and residential proximity.

Steve Napier (126 Country Club Drive West) Criticized the city's ability to enforce current beach regulations, such as dog restrictions, and warned that bonfires would create more enforcement problems and environmental damage. He urged visitors seeking bonfires to go to Walton County.

Marcie Bell, a Destin resident, reinforced earlier concerns about inadequate code enforcement and warned that unpermitted bonfires would proliferate if rules were not strictly enforced. She added that she submitted her opposition in an email as well and cited environmental risks.

John Karns (2701 Scenic 98) and General Manager of Henderson Beach Resort supported the proposal if limited to private property and well-regulated. He emphasized the economic and experiential benefits for guests and staff, particularly for weddings and reunions. He offered his resort as a *beta site* to test the process in cooperation with the fire department but stated access would be limited to hotel guests and not the general public.

Councilmember Schmidt volunteered as a *legislative sponsor* to develop an ordinance for permitting bonfires on private beaches.

Councilmember Schmidt moved to direct the City Manager and City Attorney to bring back an ordinance to allow beach bonfires on private properties. Motion failed for lack of a second.

The issue was deferred for potential future discussion during individual council member comment periods.

- B. A public hearing regarding the submittal of a Major Development Order for the construction of an Alvin's Island retail store at 1073 East Highway 98 (Parcel ID: 00-2S-22-0000-0024-0020

The City Clerk swore in the following individuals for testimony:

- Principal Planner Daniel Butler
- Robert Carroll, Engineer of Record

Principal Planner Daniel Butler began by introducing the public hearing for a major development order request concerning the reconstruction of an Alvin's Island retail store at 1073 East Highway 98. The proposed structure is a 12,600-square-foot retail store intended to replace the previous 22,000-square-foot store that was destroyed by fire in 2021. This type of general

merchandise use is permitted within the Town Center Mixed-Use Zoning District. He confirmed that the project had undergone a full technical review process and received approvals from all applicable entities. Staff recommended approval of the development order as presented

Robert Carroll of McNeil Carroll Engineering, the engineer of record, confirmed that his team was responsible for the project's engineering. He noted that the proposed new structure would be about half the size of the original building. He emphasized their compliance with all city regulations and expressed eagerness to begin construction. He also explained that although a similar approval had been obtained years ago, ongoing insurance disputes caused the permit to expire, requiring the team to restart the process.

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

Councilmember Trammell raised questions about the building elevations, specifically inquiring about the facade facing Highway 98. The applicant clarified that the top elevation shown in the visuals represented the south-facing facade on Highway 98, while the bottom was the north-facing side toward the neighborhood.

Councilmember Trammell also questioned the labeling under the main signage, asking if the term "vision" indicated windows. The applicant confirmed that the space labeled "vision" referred to display windows, which would feature staged beach scenes and mannequins, not static posters.

Councilmember Trammell expressed concern about the potential for excessive window signage, citing examples of similar stores using oversized window graphics. The applicant assured the council that the design intended to use the display windows for thematic presentations rather than poster-style advertisements. He described the areas as 2.5-foot-deep display chambers intended for showcasing scenes with umbrellas, mannequins, and beachwear.

Councilmember Bagby focused on the signage and electronic reader boards. He asked for clarity on whether the two reader boards were electronic signs, which the applicant confirmed. Councilmember Bagby counted at least six signs above the windows and questioned whether the cumulative signage would exceed city code limits.

The Principal Planner responded that signage is not reviewed during the development order stage but at the permitting stage. He explained that at that point, the applicant would have to submit facade measurements and signage square footage calculations. The signage would be limited to 15% of the facade's square footage or 150 square feet, whichever is less.

Councilmember Bagby expressed concern that this signage threshold might already be nearly met with just the proposed signs and wanted to ensure staff would strictly enforce signage limits, especially for window areas. Staff explained that any visible signage, including that in windows, would be subject to the same calculations and limitations. If unapproved signage were added later, the city could issue a code citation.

Councilmember Bagby emphasized the importance of maintaining a refined aesthetic, avoiding visual clutter. He recommended that a clear provision be added as a condition of the development order approval, limiting window signage and ensuring the total signage remained within the allowed percentage. He reiterated that window signage must be considered in the total calculation.

The Deputy Community Development Director, clarified that all signage, including temporary signs visible from the right-of-way, would be included in the 15% facade calculation. He confirmed that any window signage would be treated as an attached sign and thus must fall within the maximum signage allowance. He also reassured the council that staff would verify these limits during the signage permit phase, and any violations or excessive signage would not be approved.

Councilmember Trammell moved to approve Alvin's Island #11, a Major Development Order, as presented; seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0.

- C. First reading of proposed Ordinance 25-13-PC - Making transportation-related amendments to Chapter 1 - Future Land Use Element, Chapter 2 - Transportation Element, Chapter 9 – Capital Improvements Element, Chapter 12 - Administration, and Chapter 13 - Glossary, of the city's comprehensive plan; deleting the Multimodal Transportation District; providing for goals, objectives, and policies relating to the city mobility plan city mobility fees.

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-13-PC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, MAKING TRANSPORTATION-RELATED AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 1 – FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT, CHAPTER 2 – TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT, CHAPTER 9 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT, CHAPTER 12 - ADMINISTRATION, AND CHAPTER 13 - GLOSSARY, OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; DELETING THE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT; PROVIDING FOR GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES RELATING TO THE CITY MOBILITY PLAN AND CITY MOBILITY FEES; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR A BUSINESS IMPACT ESTIMATE; 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 Bagby, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve proposed Ordinance 25-13-PC on first reading passed 7-0.

- D. First reading of proposed Ordinance 25-15-CC - Amending Chapter 14 "Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions" of the Code of Ordinances, establishing that solicitation canvassing and/or vending on the beach without a permit is a misdemeanor offense; and providing for penalties consistent with state law.

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-15-CC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; AMENDING CHAPTER 14 "OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS" OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; ESTABLISHING THAT SOLICITATION, CANVASSING AND/OR VENDING ON THE BEACH WITHOUT A PERMIT IS A MISDEMEANOR OFFENSE; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The City Attorney explained that Chapter 162 of the Florida Statutes allows municipalities to designate certain offenses as misdemeanors, carrying penalties of up to \$500 in fines and up to 60 days in jail. The ordinance under review had been coordinated with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, which confirmed its belief that the proposed enforcement structure was legally defensible.

The City Manager then added that the Sheriff's Office indicated that enforcement of this ordinance would require an additional beach deputy, as current resources were insufficient for that purpose.

Councilmember Braden questioned the necessity of additional personnel, citing a photo sent to the City Manager by a tourist from Alabama showing two deputies on four-wheelers on the beach. He raised a concern about existing coverage, suggesting that if deputies were already patrolling the area, it might not be necessary to fund another position.

Captain Fulghum of the Sheriff's Office responded by clarifying that the Sheriff's Office currently has only three designated beach deputies, with none funded by the City of Destin. Two are funded by the Tourist Development Department (TDD), and often one deputy must cover both Okaloosa Island and Destin. On days when two deputies are observed, it is likely due to seasonal staffing during busy periods like spring break. He emphasized that these deputies respond to over 6,000 criminal calls annually and do not have the bandwidth to handle municipal ordinance enforcement, such as unpermitted beach vending or animals on the beach. Their primary responsibilities include handling fights, underage drinking, and water rescues.

Councilmember Destin noted that the cost of hiring a deputy—quoted by Captain Fulghum as approximately \$157,348 per year—should be subject to negotiation. He suggested that staffing could be limited to peak tourist months, such as May through early September, rather than year-round. He also noted that the city had already allocated \$30,000 for legal support related to the ordinance and expressed hope that the City and Sheriff's Office could arrive at a compromise during contract discussions.

Motion by Councilmember Destin, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve proposed Ordinance 25-15-CC on first reading passed 6-1, with Councilmember Schmidt dissenting.

- E. Second reading of proposed Ordinance 25-03-PC - Providing for the adoption of a small-scale amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to include a change in Future Land Use Designation of 3 parcels of real property located within a portion of the area of Beach Drive to Benning Drive consisting of approximately 8.53 acres, from Medium Density Residential -Village (MDR-V) to Recreation (REC).

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-03-PC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF A SMALL SCALE AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP TO INCLUDE A CHANGE IN FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION OF 3 PARCELS OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN A PORTION OF THE AREA OF BEACH DRIVE TO BENNING DRIVE, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AND DEPICTED IN EXHIBIT "A", CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 8.53 ACRES, FROM MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL - VILLAGE (MDR-V) TO RECREATION (REC); PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR A BUSINESS IMPACT ESTIMATE; 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.

Councilmember Bagby made a motion to adopt Ordinance 25-03-PC, seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0.

- F. Second reading of Proposed Ordinances 25-04-LC – Amending the official zoning map as referenced in the LDC, Section 7.12.01 (A)2, to include a change in the zoning designation of 3 parcels of real property located within a portion of the area of Beach Drive to Benning Drive, consisting of approximately 8.53 acres, from Medium Density Residential - Village (MDR-V) to Recreation (REC). Second reading of proposed Ordinance 25-10-LC - Permitting decks to encroach up to five feet into rear setbacks for town homes that are not waterfront within the High-Density Residential zoning district.

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-04-LC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP AS REFERENCED IN THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, SECTION 7.12.01(A)2, ZONING MAPS, TO INCLUDE A CHANGE IN THE ZONING DESIGNATION OF 3 PARCELS OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN A PORTION OF THE AREA OF BEACH DRIVE TO BENNING DRIVE, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AND DEPICTED IN EXHIBIT "A", CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 8.53 ACRES, FROM MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL-VILLAGE (MDR-V) TO RECREATION (REC); PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR JURISDICTION; PROVIDING FOR ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE 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.

Councilmember Bagby moved to adopt Ordinance 25-04-LC, seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0.

- G. Second reading of proposed Ordinance 25-10-LC - Permitting decks to encroach up to five feet into rear setbacks for town homes that are not waterfront within the High Density Residential zoning district.

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-10-LC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, PERMITTING DECKS TO ENCROACH UP TO FIVE FEET INTO REAR SETBACKS FOR TOWNHOMES THAT ARE NOT WATERFRONT WITHIN THE HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ("HDR") ZONING DISTRICT; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE 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 Destin, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to adopt Ordinance 25-10-LC passed 7-0.

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

A. Councilmember Braden

Councilmember Braden inquired about the current number of code enforcement officers employed by the City. The City Manager responded that there are four officers currently on staff, with one out on extended sick leave. The city is actively seeking to hire more staff and is exploring alternative ways to supplement the department to improve service coverage.

Councilmember Braden also raised a question regarding the 25% parking requirement related to open-air seating in the Land Development Code (LDC) rewrite. He expressed confusion about how the city arrived at the 25% figure. Staff clarified that the number originated from deliberations involving both the Local Planning Agency (LPA) and City Council during workshops. Originally, staff recommended a 100% parking requirement, the LPA proposed 50%, and eventually, Council settled on 25% for the Harbor District and 50% elsewhere.

Councilmember Braden questioned the rationale behind this decision, especially since many open-air seating areas are used year-round, similar to fully enclosed areas. Staff elaborated that calculating parking based on seat count can be problematic, as outdoor spaces often accommodate more than what's shown on official plans.

Councilmember Braden criticized the city's historical approach to permitting and enforcement, stating that business owners submit questionable parking plans reused by multiple establishments without consequence. He expressed frustration that such practices contribute to ongoing parking problems.

Next, Councilmember Braden handed a printed document to the mayor, asking him to read it aloud. The mayor read Section 3.07 of the city charter, outlining the powers and duties of the mayor, including ceremonial representation, presiding over meetings, presenting a state of the city message, and casting tie-breaking votes—but notably not making or seconding motions and always representing the council's adopted position.

Councilmember Braden then voiced serious concerns over the mayor's conduct. He described receiving multiple calls from citizens confused about the mayor's actions, such as speaking in Tallahassee or hosting bonfire-related meetings, without prior council approval. He expressed frustration that these activities give the impression the mayor is speaking on behalf of the entire city without proper authority. He also criticized the mayor for potentially taking credit for projects that were years in the making and driven by past councils and staff.

Mayor Wagner defended his actions by emphasizing his commitment to transparency and public engagement. He stated that his intent is to gather feedback and foster communication, not to act unilaterally or against council policy. He clarified that initiatives like the "fireside chats" are personal efforts to engage with the public and are not meant to represent official city positions.

unless explicitly approved. He acknowledged a need to be cautious with details and expressed a willingness to issue an apology for any miscommunications.

Councilmember Destin supported the mayor's enthusiasm but expressed concern about potential Sunshine Law violations through social media use. He suggested the need for a formal social media policy to prevent legal missteps. He warned that elected officials expressing opinions on issues visible to other officials could potentially cross legal boundaries.

Councilmember Hebert commended Mayor Wagner's energy but echoed concerns about crediting ongoing projects. She pointed out a specific example where the mayor posted about a beach project that had been years in the making, making it seem like a recent initiative of his. She advised him to recognize the collective, long-term effort of staff and past councils in his public communications.

Councilmember Bagby supported the need for a social media policy but defended the mayor's intent. He pointed out that every mayor has had causes they championed and reminded the group that the acquisition of public beach access has long been a shared council priority, validating the mayor's efforts in lobbying for it in Tallahassee.

Councilmember Schmidt strongly supported Mayor Wagner, encouraging him to continue his outreach efforts. He dismissed criticisms from those who felt overlooked or offended by the mayor's posts and emphasized that the mayor's communication style was not intentionally dismissive.

Councilmember Trammell offered clarification on the procedural concerns about the fireside chats, especially when referencing projects such as the one associated with Mr. John Stephens. She noted that any project being publicly promoted must first be approved by the council or relevant committee, particularly when involving a former councilmember. She stressed the importance of following proper protocols and not publicizing projects before they are officially vetted.

Mayor Wagner responded that he had adjusted his communication plan to avoid overstepping and that he had avoided discussing certain unapproved topics based on staff guidance. He reiterated his goal of engaging citizens and ensuring they feel heard. He acknowledged the concerns raised and expressed a commitment to transparency and collaboration, while reiterating his pride in his role and the work of the city team.

B. Councilmember Trammell

Councilmember Trammell requested that the City Clerk include a list of current vacancies on citizen volunteer committees and boards in the quarterly absentee report submitted to the council.

Councilmember Trammell requested a motion from the council allowing her to attend the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida in August.

Councilmember Destin moved to allow Councilmember Trammell to attend the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference in August 2025, seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0.

C. Councilmember Destin

Councilmember Destin moved to direct the City Attorney to bring back a social media policy for the council's review and approval, seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Destin volunteered to be the legislative sponsor for this policy.

D. Councilmember Bagby

C. Councilmember Hebert

1) Bad Roosters

E. Councilmember Geile

1) Projects Status/Updates

Councilmember Geile expressed strong concerns regarding the current direction of the Tourist Development Council (TDC), emphasizing that it is attracting the wrong type of tourist to Destin. He lamented the negative impact this has on local residents, who face long wait times at restaurants, overcrowded areas, and disrespectful behavior from visitors. He underscored a shared community sentiment that the TDC's strategy is misaligned with Destin's needs. He also criticized the TDC's responsiveness, noting that he requested a presentation from them over three months ago, with no follow-up.

The City Manager confirmed that the TDC Director had previously stated she was checking with commissioners but had not provided further updates.

Councilmember Schmidt, who serves as the city's representative to the TDC, explained that the July meeting was canceled to allow for data collection, and a presentation on targeted tourist demographics would be given in August. He committed to bringing that information to the council himself if the TDC does not.

Councilmember Geile further proposed reserving certain city-owned parking lots exclusively for Destin residents during major events such as the Fourth of July. He argued this would ease the burden on locals, referencing a disappointing revenue figure of only \$2,000 generated from one parking lot during the Fourth of July. He suggested enforcing such restrictions through tow truck sweeps for non-Florida-tagged vehicles, highlighting the importance of prioritizing access for local taxpayers.

Councilmember Geile raised concerns about unregulated gutter installations, citing a recent incident at the Morgan Sports Complex where a contractor installed gutters improperly and justified the work by blaming a prior installer. He criticized the lack of basic skills and oversight, pointing out that incorrect gutter installation can cause structural damage such as rotting fascia and soffits. He proposed that the city require permits for gutter installations and restrict the work to properly licensed contractors holding one of five specific licenses: specialty structure, residential, building, general, or roofing.

Councilmember Geile also initiated a discussion about inspections of short-term rentals (STRs), questioning whether the city or law enforcement can enter these properties without a warrant in the event of complaints. Captain Fulghum of the Sheriff's Office responded that unless the area is open to the public, law enforcement needs a warrant due to renters' expectation of privacy, even if the property is considered a business. He noted that landlords or rental agencies cannot authorize law enforcement entry without proper legal authority. In response to a related legal question, it was clarified that while inspections can be mandated for permitted activities such as construction, including a blanket inspection right within STR or Business Tax Receipt (BTR) agreements could be controversial and difficult to enforce—unless clearly tied to life safety.

Throughout the discussion, Councilmember Geile voiced deep frustration over the strain that unchecked tourism and weak regulation are placing on local infrastructure and quality of life. He shared a personal experience from the Fourth of July, where parking issues and confrontations with disrespectful tourists nearly led to physical altercations. He described one incident where a tourist discarded trash mere feet from a garbage can, and he had to forcefully intervene. This, he argued, exemplifies the broader behavioral problem stemming from the city's current tourist demographic. He called on the council to seek solutions that prioritize locals, including regulatory changes, better enforcement, and a strategic shift in tourism focus to attract respectful and responsible visitors who align with Destin's values and standards.

F. Councilmember Schmidt

Councilmember Schmidt inquired about the status of the Lee Parcel on Indian Trail, specifically asking whether it was still under consideration and if the city was waiting for appraisals. In response, Councilmember Bagby explained that the Park Foundation—particularly Keith and Jay Howard—were in discussions with the Lee family to potentially donate the parcel in exchange for a tax write-off. The parcel spans from Indian Trail to Indian Bayou. He noted he would follow up with Jay Howard for more information and report back. Councilmember Schmidt asked the City Manager and the City Attorney to coordinate with relevant parties and present an update at the August council meeting.

Councilmember Schmidt requested an update on the Clement Taylor Park project. Grants and Projects Manager Jeff Cozadd responded that the city had received a request for additional information from the county, stemming from the Treasury, related to insurance and flood impact requirements. That request had been promptly addressed.

Councilmember Schmidt expressed frustration over the repeated delays and asked whether more assertive action could be taken with the county or federal contacts. Mr. Cozadd acknowledged the difficulties and the multiple efforts made to expedite the process. There was discussion about contacting Jane Evans and potentially revisiting a direct conversation with the Treasury, as had been done during the Royal Melvin project.

Councilmember Schmidt asked about the status of the Joe's Bayou state project—specifically whether it had gone out for bid. Staff replied it had not yet done so and was still in the permitting phase.

Councilmember Schmidt raised questions about the status of no wake zone signage in Joe's Bayou. Staff reported that all existing no wake signs were currently in place, including those at the fingers of the bayou. However, a council directive had also requested the addition of a new no wake sign 500 feet from the Joe's Bayou boat launch. Councilmember Schmidt noted that this directive and the associated cost and GIS mapping had not yet been fully addressed. Staff confirmed they had the GIS map and would send it to council. There was also discussion about exploring the designation of additional kayak launch areas, which could expand no wake zones, specifically near a piece of right-of-way waterfront property.

Councilmember Schmidt voiced concerns about code enforcement, noting there were only four code officers and questioning if staffing, budgeting, or advertisement strategies were at fault. The City Manager acknowledged it was a priority and mentioned a discussion had occurred earlier that day exploring options such as hiring part-time officers—potentially former military police or officers from other jurisdictions. One additional officer was expected to start the following week, and efforts were ongoing to improve recruitment. Councilmember Schmidt offered legislative

support to ensure adequate code enforcement and suggested reallocating resources from beach enforcement to city streets to better serve residents.

G. Mayor Wagner

Mayor Wagner discussed paid parking stating that to his understanding, there is over \$2 million in parking revenue generated from the harbor parking lot. He remarked that the current city council doesn't seem interested in making further improvements to harbor parking, which he's fine with. Given that, he suggested that during budget season, the city should consider using those parking funds for improvements at Morgan's Sports Complex or Crystal Beach. He pointed out that if the city is developing public beach access points, then upland facilities—such as parking areas that are not as costly as Gulf-side lots—are necessary. He emphasized that this could tie into the city's mobility plan, which already identifies two potential locations in Crystal Beach for parking enhancements. Addressing the ongoing issue of cars parking on sidewalks, he proposed that rather than only enforcing code violations through tickets, the city could instead guide drivers to proper paid parking areas, both for daily use and overnight stays.

H. City Attorney

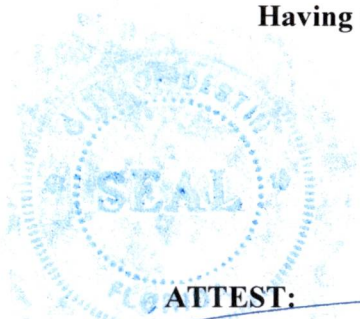
The City Attorney informed the council of two new Florida legislative mandates requiring ordinances or resolutions, such as one affecting plat policies, which would shift final approval authority from the council to city staff. She asked if a legislative sponsor was needed for such state-mandated items. The council agreed that such mandates came from the state and would be noted accordingly without requiring an internal sponsor.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Stephens, a resident on Indian Trail, referenced a recent incident at Osteen Beach and noted that Okaloosa County had removed all safety corridor buoys from Crab Island. He recommended the city repurpose those buoys for use as cautionary markers in areas with swift currents. Staff confirmed they had already spoken with Mike Norberg and planned to pick up the buoys soon for potential repurposing.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 PM.



ATTEST:

Rey Bailey, City Clerk

Bobby Wagner, Mayor



**RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET**

Evaluator's Name Sandy Trammell

Date 7/7/25

<u>FIRMS</u>	<u>RANK</u>
Anchor CEI	<u>2</u>
Halff Associates	<u>1</u>
Volkert	<u>3</u>

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.



**RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET**

Evaluator's Name Rodney Braden

Date 7-7-25

FIRMS

RANK

Anchor CEI

2

Halff Associates

1

Volkert

3

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.



**RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET**

Evaluator's Name Kevin Schmid Date _____

<u>FIRMS</u>	<u>RANK</u>
Anchor CEI	<u>2</u>
Halff Associates	<u>1</u>
Volkert	<u>3</u>

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.



RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET

Evaluator's Name Teresa Hebert Date July 25

<u>FIRMS</u>	<u>RANK</u>
Anchor CEI	<u>2</u>
Halff Associates	<u>1</u>
Volkert	<u>3</u>

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.



RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET

Evaluator's Name TORRY CJ GATE Date 7/7/2020

<u>FIRMS</u>	<u>RANK</u>
Anchor CEI	<u>1</u>
Halff Associates	<u>2</u>
Volkert	<u>3</u>

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.



**RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET**

Evaluator's Name Jim Bagby

Date 7/7/25

FIRMS

Anchor CEI

Halff Associates

Volkert

RANK

1

2

3

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.



RFQ 25-06-CD Crosstown CEI Services
SCORESHEET

Evaluator's Name D DESTIN

Date 7/7/25

<u>FIRMS</u>	<u>RANK</u>
Anchor CEI <i>PK</i>	<u>2</u>
Halff Associates	<u>1</u>
Volkert	<u>3</u>

The above list of firms is considered by City Staff to be adequately qualified. Please rank the firms in order of which firm you deem to be the most qualified to work on this project.

(1=first choice) (2=second choice) (3=third choice)

When you are finished scoring you will have ranked the firms in order from 1 to 3.

The lowest average-scoring firm will be identified as the council-selected firm for this project.

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 777 SPRING LAKE OKALOOSA	THE BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY OR COMMITTEE ON WHICH I SERVE IS A UNIT OF: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CITY <input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER LOCAL AGENCY
CITY DESTIN	COUNTY _____
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED 7/7/25	NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION: DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
MY POSITION IS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ELECTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> 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, Darcy E Destiv, hereby disclose that on 7/7, 20 25:

(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:

PROPERTY OWNER IN AREA THAT MAY BENEFIT FROM CITY SUBSIDY

7/7/25

Date Filed

Darcy Destiv

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.