

**REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 4, 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
IT Director Andy Peters
Comm Dev Deputy Director Steve O'Connor
Building Official Noell Bell
Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd
Community Development Director David Prichard
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
Finance Director Krystal Strickland
Planner Jesse Hernandez
City Engineer Robert Tomasek
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Firth

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

AGENDA APPROVAL

- Remove item 4B from the agenda
- Pull Consent Agenda item 3B for discussion.

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

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Ken Wampler acknowledged that the ordinance on short-term vacation rentals has already passed and the discussion now focuses on the associated fees for condominiums. He stated that he reviewed the proposed fee schedule and is urging the council to consider what services the city actually provides for condos when setting the fees. He suggested that a fair starting point would be a \$150 registration fee, which aligns with the original short-term vacation rental registration fee used in the past for homes before subsequent increases. He emphasized that his request is aimed at ensuring fairness and reasonableness in the fee structure, without rehashing prior arguments, as he recognizes that the ordinance and fees will be adopted, but the key question is at what level.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Parks and Recreation Purchase of Field Pro
- B. Concrete Continuing Services Contact (S.H. Hayes) - adjustment to "Exhibit A"
- C. Declaration of City Property as Surplus (Mowers and Tractor)
- D. Approval of minutes of July 7, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting

Consent Agenda itm 3B was pulled for further discussion.

Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve Consent Agenda items 3A, 3C, and 3D passed 7-0.

With regards to Consent Agenda item 3B, Councilmember Destin raised concerns about substantial price increases in the city's concrete services contract, noting that some costs had doubled or tripled. He questioned at what point the city should consider rebidding the contract and asked about termination provisions.

The City Attorney responded that the contract includes a termination-for-convenience clause requiring only five days' notice. The Public Works Director clarified that the item under discussion was not a contract renewal but an adjustment to Exhibit A of the existing 2021 contract, which had already been amended once in 2023 due to rising concrete costs. They added that a new bid process was scheduled for FY26.

Councilmember Bagby suggested the city could proceed with reissuing an RFP and asked about interim needs while bids were solicited. Councilmember Destin responded that since the city is not obligated to approve price increases, the contractor would still be bound by the existing rates until the contract's expiration on December 31. He favored seeking competitive bids to determine if prices are reasonable. Councilmember Guile, citing his engineering background, questioned the use of a more expensive 89 aggregate mix instead of the less costly 57 rock recommended for slab-on-grade applications. The Public Works Director explained that the city standard requires 4,000 PSI concrete with fiber, which increases cost, but agreed to follow up on Councilmember Guile's technical concerns regarding aggregate selection.

Councilmember Destin moved to reschedule Consent Agenda item 3B concerning the proposed concrete price adjustments to the next city council meeting agenda and to direct staff to prepare a procurement package for a Request for Bids (RFB) for concrete services to be presented at that meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed unanimously, 7-0.

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

A. Resolution 25-17 Restated Schedule of Fees Adoption of STR Registration Fees

The City Manager opened the discussion of this item by outlining proposed amendments to the city's fee resolution, primarily addressing short-term rental registration fees for condominiums. He noted that while the main focus was on setting these fees, other potential updates included raising public records request fees from \$21 to \$28 per hour as allowed by statute, adding a 3% credit card service fee for permit-related purchases, adjusting library media replacement fees to match actual replacement costs, and making some formatting and accounting code corrections. These could either be addressed concurrently or later, but the priority was establishing the condominium short-term rental fees. The City Manager explained there was no existing fee category for condominiums under 1,500 square feet, and suggested creating a lower tier for units 1,499 square feet or less with a proposed \$300 annual fee, while units above 1,500 square feet would align with the existing single-family dwelling fee schedule. He also raised implementation considerations, including whether to continue exploring internal data collection with the Okaloosa County Clerk of Court or proceed with developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a third-party vendor to handle compliance and monitoring.

Councilmember Bagby expressed concerns about combining unrelated fee changes and suggested handling only the short-term rental item to avoid legal challenges over improper advertising. He supported moving forward with the rental fees and issuing an RFP for program implementation.

Councilmember Bagby moved to adopt Resolution 25-17 as discussed during the meeting; to focus exclusively on the imposition and structure of short-term rental fees; and to authorize staff to develop and issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the engagement of a third-party vendor to manage the short-term rental registration process. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert.

Councilmember Geile noted the uncertainty of actual program costs and argued it is easier to reduce fees later than to raise them, recommending setting the new under-1,500-square-foot category fee at \$500 annually rather than \$300. He justified this amount based on the unknown costs of implementation and stated the need for flexibility in adjusting later. He provided supporting data, noting the city has roughly 15,000 residents, 3,600 homesteaded properties, \$3.5 million annually for fire and beach safety, and about \$1.6 million for code enforcement, with approximately 29,466 calls received and 4,500 traffic stops. While not all are directly linked to short-term rentals, he emphasized their substantial impact and the need for adequate funding to offset city costs.

Councilmember Geile proposed a substitute motion to amend the existing registration fee structure. The motion recommends the creation of a new fee category specifically for condominium units that are under 1,500 square feet in size. For this newly defined tier, an annual registration fee of \$500 would be established and that the current fee levels for all other square footage categories to remain unchanged. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Schmidt.

A robust discussion followed among the council members about fairness and revenue impacts. Some argued \$500 might be punitive to owners of smaller condos, particularly since non-homesteaded properties already pay higher property taxes without exemptions and contribute significantly to city revenue. Others supported the \$500 fee as reasonable given the rental income these properties generate and the additional burden they place on infrastructure and public safety. It was noted that many smaller condos rent frequently, often multiple times a week, adding to

enforcement challenges. Council members debated the equity of applying the same fee to an 890-square-foot condo and a 2,499-square-foot house, with differing opinions on whether the fee structure should be proportional to impact or simply cover program costs. There were also discussions about implementation logistics, including sending notices to owners, the feasibility of beginning internal compliance efforts while an RFP is pursued, and ensuring any fee structure is legally defensible.

The substitute motion passed 4-3 (Council members Schmidt, Geile, Hebert, and Braden voted “yes”; Council members Destin, Bagby, and Trammell voted “no”).

- B. POSTPONED TO AUGUST 18TH REGULAR COUNCIL MTG: Sea Chase: livery vessel agreement partial extension request (Sheri Andrews)

This item was removed from the agenda.

- C. Resolution 25-15 Social Media Policy for Elected Officials and Board/Committee Appointees

The City Manager introduced the item, explaining it was a proposed social media policy for elected officials and board appointees at the request of the council. The policy primarily addressed Sunshine Law compliance, prohibiting online discussions of matters that may foreseeably come before officials, to avoid inadvertent violations. It also covered quasi-judicial matters and clarified that public records are determined by content rather than the device used.

Councilmember Destin moved to adopt Resolution 25-15, establishing a social media policy for city elected officials and city board and committee appointees; seconded by Councilmember Trammell.

The mayor expressed disagreement with the policy as drafted, arguing it restricted transparency and free speech, and should focus instead on protecting the city’s liability without limiting elected officials’ communications with constituents. He cited Supreme Court rulings about distinguishing personal from city authority and expressed concern about government overreach.

Councilmember Hebert supported the policy, referencing her ongoing ethics training, which emphasized the risks of officials commenting on social media. She suggested using the Public Information Officer (PIO) to communicate city matters to avoid Sunshine issues.

Councilmember Schmidt also opposed the policy as written, feeling it overly restricted engagement with citizens in today’s social media environment, where most public input occurs online rather than through traditional channels. He clarified he agreed some limits were necessary, but viewed the policy as too prohibitive.

The City Attorney explained the legal rationale, noting Sunshine Law has no exceptions for social media and violations can be civil or criminal; inadvertent “likes” or responses can be problematic. She also described public records retention challenges when officials use personal accounts for city business.

Councilmember Braden supported having some policy to prevent Sunshine violations, emphasizing the need for caution to protect the council’s reputation.

Councilmember Geile admitted he was not active on social media and criticized it as an ineffective way for citizens to engage, but was open-minded.

The City Attorney further clarified retention and Sunshine issues, emphasizing best practices until state law changes.

The Mayor reiterated his disagreement, warning against government censorship and fear of technology.

Councilmember Trammell agreed with the attorney's points about inadvertent violations. The council debated extensively, with back-and-forth comments on free speech, technology, and generational differences.

Councilmember Schmidt offered a substitute motion to bring this item back at the next council meeting, and direct staff to conduct additional research and provide examples of other policies; seconded by Councilmember Geile. Substitute motion failed 2-5 (Council members Schmidt and Geile voted "yes"; Council members Hebert, Bagby, Destin, Trammell and Braden voted "no.")

The original motion made by Councilmember Destin and seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to adopt Resolution 25-15, establishing a social media policy for city elected officials and city board and committee appointees passed 6-1, with Councilmember Schmidt dissenting.

After the vote, the mayor stated he respected his colleagues but, absent an ordinance with penalties, he intended to continue exercising his freedom of speech, even as he agreed to sign the resolution.

D. No Wake Zones for Joe's Bayou

The City Manager began by presenting slides on the existing no-wake zone signage at Joe's Bayou, noting the current markers and the potential to add an additional sign at the apex of the arc between existing markers. He explained that extending protections would require further improvements, such as a kayak launch and approval by Florida Fish and Wildlife (FWC), and potentially an ordinance to establish a new 500-foot no-wake zone. Mr. Mike Norberg, Okaloosa County's Coastal Resource Manager, described his role overseeing boating safety zones and explained the statutory framework for creating such zones. He emphasized that local governments must comply with state statute, requiring an ordinance and FWC permit, and that facilities like boat or kayak launches must be improved and maintained to justify additional zones. He also clarified that maintenance and periodic renewal are needed to keep zones valid and noted the county's willingness to help manage zones for continuity.

Councilmember Hebert expressed concern for Joe's Bayou as a residential area with children on paddleboards and asked about making it safer through an ordinance, possibly with county support. Mr. Norberg responded that state waters access is tightly regulated, and outside the statutory criteria, options are limited; only things like kayak launches or blind-corner buffers are generally allowed.

Councilmember Trammell asked about the existing finger-jetties no-wake zones, and Mr. Norberg confirmed those were properly established and remain valid if maintained. Councilmember Trammell expressed skepticism about adding a kayak launch due to terrain and parking challenges.

Councilmember Destin then raised concerns about excessive speed and asked about imposing reasonable speed limits. Mr. Norberg explained the difference between slow-speed (off-plane) and idle zones and said he would work with staff and FWC to see if speed limits could be lawfully implemented. The City Attorney added that state statute allows speed restrictions when specific criteria are met, and those should be examined.

Councilmember Geile asked about enforcement, and Mr. Norberg stated that FWC and the sheriff's office enforce these zones, though both face staffing constraints. Capt. Fulghum from the Sheriff's Office confirmed they already enforce harbor and Joe's Bayou regulations and could enforce any new zones. The discussion then covered the types of boating safety zones: idle/no-wake, slow speed, and vessel-restricted zones. The City Attorney read directly from Section 327.46(1)(c) of Florida Statutes outlining criteria for slow-speed zones (e.g., blind corners, hazardous traffic, accident data).

Councilmember Bagby requested staff prepare a matrix summarizing the types of zones, the statutory requirements, and possible justifications, noting only one statutory "or" criterion is needed to qualify. Councilmember Schmidt added context about water safety complaints and noted ADA compliance would be needed for any kayak facility, which staff confirmed.

Councilmember Bagby moved to direct city staff to develop and return with a justification for establishing a slow speed zone in Joe's Bayou, based on the criteria outlined in Florida Statute 327.46(1)(c), including but not limited to:

- **Presence of blind corners,**
- **Unsafe levels of vessel traffic congestion,**
- **Navigational hazards, or**
- **Credible data indicating a threat to boating safety (such as accident reports or citations).**

The motion further includes that once the city and the county agree that such justification exists, an ordinance may then be drafted to formally establish the slow speed zone. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0.

E. Re-Striping Airport Road Discussion

The City Manager summarized prior conversations about options for Airport Road and the need to review its lane configuration.

The City Engineer explained that the current layout consists of two lanes of about 11.5 feet each, with limited room for expansion without major construction. He presented options to restripe the road with either equal 11-foot lanes or an 11-foot inside lane and a 12-foot outside lane to give bicycles and e-bikes slightly more space.

During the council discussion, members debated where e-bikes and mopeds should be allowed to travel, noting that state law currently permits them on both sidewalks and roads. Some council members questioned whether ordinances could restrict high-speed e-bikes to the roadway and discussed shared-lane symbols and even raising the speed limit, though concerns about safety and low-speed vehicles were raised. Capt. Fulghum of the Sheriff's Office explained that by Florida law, any bike-like vehicle exceeding 28 mph is classified as a moped and is not allowed on sidewalks; however, distinguishing between e-bikes and mopeds visually is difficult. He described significant enforcement

challenges for sidewalk speed limits, explaining that radar and laser technology are ineffective on small targets and that consistent speed detection is nearly impossible. He suggested a city permitting system with visible placards for true e-bikes as a more enforceable approach.

Ultimately, the conversation returned to the original purpose – restriping – and after discussion on safety, speed, and bike lane feasibility, a motion was made.

Councilmember Schmidt moved to restripe Airport Road with two 11.5-foot vehicular travel lanes, as previously configured, and proceed with the overlay as scheduled. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Destin and passed 6-1, with Councilmember Trammell dissenting.

F. Draft Minutes of Volunteer Board & Committees - Informational Only

G. Announcements

1. Councilmember Trammell and the City Manager recently met with Representative Maney at the Matty Kelly outfall site. Representative Maney was visiting to observe how the previously allocated \$1 million state appropriation would be used. He expressed satisfaction with the project's direction and was excited to be part of the effort.
2. During the visit, Representative Maney also shared that the state budget includes an additional \$1 million earmarked for Celebrate Florida 250, commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States, which will be celebrated in July 2026. As a member of the committee responsible for awarding those funds, he encouraged the city to participate in the program. In response, Dr. Young, the city's Public Information Director, is working alongside various partners to develop a proposal and pursue a share of that funding.
3. Perez Planning Group, which is assisting with the City's Parks Master Plan, will be conducting a public engagement event on Thursday, from 4:00 to 5:00 PM, the group will meet with the Parks and Recreation Committee to present their findings and gather feedback. Following that, a public meeting will be held at City Hall from 5:30 to 7:00 PM to provide residents with the opportunity to share their input and help shape the future of local parks.
4. School is scheduled to start next week. Residents are urged to be cautious, particularly while driving, and to use their social media platforms.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. First Reading of Proposed Ordinances 25-14-LC – Creation of Design Standards for Low-Speed Vehicles (LSV) Parking on City-Owned Property

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-14-LC by title, and then presented it to the council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA; REMOVING SECTION 20.06.00 OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE "UNSAFE BUILDING ABATEMENT"; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR REMOVAL FROM 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 approve proposed Ordinance 25-14-LC on first reading passed 7-0.

- B. First reading of Ordinance 25-05-CC - Relating to livery vessels; amending Article VIII "Registration of livery vessels" of the city Code of Ordinances; amending provisions related to transferability of permits, providing for additional required training and safety measures.

The City Attorney read proposed Ordinance 25-05-CC by title, and then presented it to the council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA RELATING TO LIVERY VESSELS; AMENDING ARTICLE VIII "REGISTRATION OF LIVERY VESSELS" OF THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES; AMENDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO TRANSFERABILITY OF PERMITS; PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL REQUIRED TRAINING AND SAFETY MEASURES; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The mayor opened a public hearing to receive comments for or against the proposed ordinance.

Ms. Patti Brown of 86 Shira Street shared her thoughts on citizen participation and her experiences in Destin. She noted her long involvement in community meetings despite personal discomfort with public speaking. She recalled past activism such as the "red wave" of pilots opposing airport housing plans, stressing that effective advocacy requires effort. She also addressed concerns about social media communications, clarifying that community reaction to posts from the mayor's page was due to perceived official endorsement. Switching "hats" to speak as a livery vessel operator, Ms. Brown thanked the city for implementing the new permitting system smoothly and asked whether an owner could upgrade a vessel while retaining its permit.

The City Attorney responded that permits must be assigned to a vessel but can be transferred within the same company when upgrading; they cannot be sold separately except under certain conditions

Having no further comments from the public, the mayor closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to the city council for their discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Braden emphasized that the term "medallion" is misleading, as the registration is simply a sticker used by code compliance to track vessels.

Councilmember Hebert referenced recommendations from Mr. John Stephens regarding transfer provisions, particularly reducing the restriction on re-transfers from two years to one.

Councilmember Hebert moved to adopt the ordinance to include the one-year modification; seconded by Councilmember Geile.

Councilmember Bagby expressed concerns about creating bidding wars and objected to language capping sale prices of vessels or registrations, arguing the city should not control private sale prices. He clarified that when equipment is sold, the registration ends unless the new owner applies for a permit, and he requested removal of limits on sale amounts.

Councilmember Schmidt asked about the fate of expired registrations, and the City Attorney explained that under the proposed ordinance, lapsed permits revert to the city and count toward the overall cap of 490, though a moratorium currently prevents issuing new registrations until its expiration.

The council engaged in further discussion about caps, moratorium implications, and concerns about reselling permits. They debated whether to impose limits on sales during a one-year grace period and how to handle returned permits, with some questioning potential unintended consequences and public safety impacts.

Due to lingering uncertainties and the complexity of the issue, Councilmember Bagby recommends tabling the matter until the next meeting to allow additional staff discussions and clarification.

Motion by Councilmember Bagby, seconded by Councilmember Schmidt, to move this item to the next council meeting agenda passed 6-1, with Councilmember Hebert dissenting.

- C. Second reading of Ordinance 24-17-CC - Amending Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances to create a new Article 5, "Property Maintenance Code."

The City Attorney read Ordinance 24-17-CC by title, and then presented it to the council on second reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA; AMENDING CHAPTER 6 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO CREATE A NEW ARTICLE 5, "PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE"; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; 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 Trammell moved to adopt Ordinance 24-17-CC. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0.

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

- A. Councilmember Braden
- B. Councilmember Trammell

Councilmember Trammell made a motion to schedule a CRA Board meeting on Monday, August 18th, at 5:30 PM, preceding the regular city council meeting which begins at 6:00 PM, to

address the motions made by the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee during their previous meeting. Councilmember Hebert provided a second to the motion, which passed 7-0.

C. Councilmember Destin

Councilmember Destin asked the City Manager for an update on the danger swimming signs that the council had previously approved for the area where a young girl tragically drowned. The City Manager reported that the city has added signage at its O'Steen access points warning of strong currents, while the Tourist Development Council (TDC) has installed signs at the end of the jetties and near the pools at Norriego Point. Discussions are also underway with Emerald Grande to place additional signs on their property. He noted that the TDC's signs were somewhat wordy, so the city is working to install clearer and more succinct versions that simply warn of strong currents, with a goal of having them up by Labor Day.

D. Councilmember Bagby

1) Parks Foundation update

Councilmember Bagby provided an update regarding the Parks Foundation's efforts to acquire a parcel for the city, noting that staff is still waiting for a decision from the Lee family. He also announced that the city recently received an Army Corps permit for the Four Prong Lake project and that the next steps involve seeking contractors and securing additional funding, potentially with help from the county.

E. Councilmember Hebert

F. Councilmember Geile

1) Projects Status/Updates

Councilmember Geile asked to have the existing Sheriff's Office law enforcement service agreement placed on the agenda for review at the next council meeting, with the Sheriff's Office present to answer questions, as preparation for the upcoming renewal in October.

G. Councilmember Schmidt

Councilmember Schmidt shared thoughts related to an earlier social media discussion, noting that while a few meetings have seen high attendance and vocal public opinion, such sentiment has not always translated into the desired outcomes. He encouraged more openness in discussion regardless of political maneuvering.

Councilmember Schmidt inquired about the city's animal services contract with PAWS, and the City Manager explained that the city is currently operating under a handshake agreement at PAWS' requested rate while awaiting a formal contract. The contract will include a "most favorsnlr negotiation" clause to ensure Destin receives the same or better rate as Okaloosa County if a more favorable county contract is later negotiated.

Councilmember Schmidt raised concerns about the city's business tax receipt (BTR) renewal process and software, recalling that years ago there were discussions about improving BTR renewal notifications. He cited examples from the county, such as postcard notifications with QR codes, and expressed concern that some business owners were unaware of renewal requirements.

The City Manager responded that the city transitioned from Compass to MGO software, sent out two notices, and added a banner to the old system directing people to the new portal. Councilmember Schmidt remarked that despite this, some business owners have not received notices and suggested further process improvements. He also asked about BTR revenue trends, and the Finance Director reported that revenue has held steady at around \$120,000 annually, though it was higher in the past. She explained that Florida law prevents simplifying the rate structure, which complicates invoicing.

Regarding staffing, Councilmember Schmidt asked about the status of code enforcement hiring. The Deputy Community Development Director reported that there have been 15 applicants, with six first-round interviews completed, two more pending, and three second-round interviews scheduled.

Councilmember Schmidt raised questions about the installation of Flock license plate reader cameras after hearing concerns from citizens. The City Manager explained that these cameras are installed under a Sheriff's Office contract with appropriate right-of-way permits; there are currently four on city rights-of-way and four on state rights-of-way within city limits. Councilmember Schmidt acknowledged hearing both positive public safety reports and concerns about privacy and overreach.

Councilmember Schmidt also questioned the process surrounding the city's planned transition to the Florida Retirement System (FRS). He expressed concern that the council had not received a comprehensive presentation about the plan. The City Attorney responded that staff had previously presented slides comparing the existing thrift plan with FRS and confirmed that they were consulting with an ERISA attorney to finalize details. She noted the thrift plan needs to be restated this year regardless, and the ordinance implementing FRS would still go through two public hearings.

H. Mayor Wagner

I. City Attorney

1) Resolution to Engage Outside Counsel at Flat Fee to Join Senate Bill 180 Litigation

The City Attorney discussed a potential statewide legal challenge to Senate Bill 180, which limits municipal authority over land development regulations. She recommended that Destin join the litigation led by a firm handling other city legal matters. The participation cost is a \$10,000 flat fee plus \$5,000 per appeal if necessary.

Councilmember Bagby moved to approve Resolution 25-16 to engage outside counsel of flat fee to join Senate Bill 180 litigation. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 7-0.

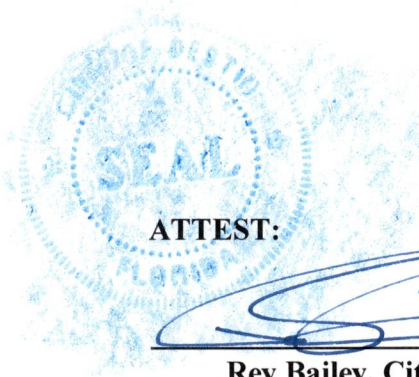
7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Gary Saunders spoke about ecological concerns in Spring Lake. He described invasive torpedo grass and algae that have been spreading near his property, requiring expensive treatments from private contractors. When he contacted city staff, he was told the lake is considered private and that maintenance is the homeowners' responsibility. Mr. Saunders questioned how the lake could be private when there is public access at Kelly Street, where residents and visitors use the water for recreation. He asked for clarification on ownership and maintenance responsibility, noting that if the lake is truly private, perhaps public access should be restricted. The mayor and city staff agreed to meet with him after the meeting to discuss next steps and potential resources.

Mr. Gary Troup raised concerns about a proposed provision related to livery boat medallion transfers, warning that using boat value models like NADA to cap sale prices could unfairly affect businesses with higher investments in engines, electronics, and revenue streams. He suggested allowing independent appraisals and noted the need to differentiate between the value of boats and businesses. He also asked about the installation of a new large black pole along Old Highway 98 near Destiny East and the Seahorse Motel. Staff explained it is a 5G antenna placed in the public right-of-way, allowed under state law without property owner veto.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.



Rey Bailey, City Clerk

Bobby Wagner, Mayor