

**REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 17, 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 Pro Tem Dewey Destin
Councilmember Kevin Schmidt
Councilmember Sandy Trammell

Councilmember Jim Bagby
Councilmember Torey Geile
Councilmember Terésa Hebert

Destin City Staff

City Manager Larry Jones
Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd
Deputy Comm Dev Director Steve O'Connor
Community Development Director David Prichard
Public Information Director Tamara Young
Finance Director Krystal Strickland
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
IT Director Andy Peters
HR Director Jaime Haynes
Principal Planner Daniel Butler
City Engineer Robert Tomasek
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Firth

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

AGENDA APPROVAL

Agenda items 4G and 4H were removed from the agenda.

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

- 1. PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS / SPECIAL / PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Ricky Lyn Grant Jr., who lists his address as 175 Main Street, USPS General Delivery, describes his efforts to buy his first home using an FHA loan with a low down payment. He explains that he is a licensed real estate agent in Florida working toward becoming his own broker, building his own website, and aiming for a high monthly income. He outlines several ambitious real estate and business projects, including multiple properties and luxury-related ventures, and emphasizes that he works independently, lives simply, and is focused on achieving his personal goals through consistent effort.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. 5 Cross Court Residential Marine Construction - HWB-001693-2025
- B. Approval of minutes of October 6, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting

Councilmember Trammell made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 3A and 3B, as printed above. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 6-0.

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

- A. Public Service Announcement re Citizen and Business Coordination with OCSO Real-Time Crime Center

Captain Fulghum of the County Sheriff's Office provided an overview of the Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC), explaining that it is staffed by crime analysts who monitor and analyze live and recorded video feeds from both public and privately owned camera systems that voluntarily participate. The center is designed to eventually operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but is currently staffed during normal business hours. Using the video integration platform, the RTCC can connect to nearly any existing camera system without requiring new cameras or major infrastructure investments. Access to each camera is fully controlled by the owner and can be limited by time, location, or specific circumstances, ensuring privacy protections remain in place.

Captain Fulghum also explained that the RTCC enhances officer safety and investigative effectiveness by allowing analysts to monitor live body-worn camera footage, track suspects across multiple camera feeds, and provide real-time support to deputies, particularly during situations where radio communication is limited. He noted that the system has already been used successfully to solve cases, identify false or inaccurate reports, and support emergency responses in all Okaloosa County schools by helping analysts locate active threats and guide deputies through buildings using live camera feeds.

A video presentation to the city council described a secure, cloud-based platform that integrates public and private camera systems into a single operating environment. The presentation emphasized that video feeds are encrypted and shared only when authorized, in accordance with policy guidelines and camera owner consent. It also demonstrated how the platform integrates with 911 dispatch software, allows law enforcement to request live or recorded video during investigations, and improves communication and coordination through camera registries and mobile applications.

Councilmember Hebert moved to direct the City Manager to have a public service announcement created and published on social media and the city website informing the public of the opportunity for citizens and local businesses to partner with the OCSO's real time crime data center. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Trammell and passed 6-0.

Council members also discussed the status of city-owned cameras, particularly in the harbor area, and noted that some had been disconnected due to equipment changes.

Councilmember Trammell moved that all city-owned cameras be connected to the system so that they are fully accessible and integrated; seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 6-0.

B. Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Recommendation for Underground Phasing

The City Manager introduced an item originating from the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee regarding a request to reprioritize underground utility work. The proposal would shift the next approved phase – currently planned to extend east from Airport Road to Matthew Boulevard – to instead focus on the northern portion of the Harbor CRA district. The City Manager explained that the item had taken several months to reach the council due to process issues and noted that this delay is being addressed to avoid recurrence. He also cautioned that the request may be premature for city council consideration because it has not yet been reviewed by the CRA Board, leaving it to council’s discretion whether to discuss or defer it.

Councilmember Trammell asked clarifying questions about whether this request was part of older motions made by previous Harbor CRA advisory committees that were never brought forward. Staff and Chair John Stephens clarified that the motion originated with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee, not the CRA Board, and that while some advisory motions eventually reached council, many – including this one – did not. As a result, the CRA Board has never formally reviewed this recommendation.

Councilmember Bagby expressed concerns about discussing the item at this stage. He questioned the funding source involved, emphasized the original prioritization strategy for undergrounding utilities, and outlined the city’s focus on securing external funding through resiliency, tourism, or economic development grants. He explained that the established priorities were tied to restoring major transportation routes and electrical substations critical for emergency response and recovery, which do not align with the northern Harbor CRA area. Given the number of unanswered questions and the lack of CRA Board review, he stated that the item was not ready for council consideration.

Councilmember Bagby made a motion to refer this item to the CRA Board; seconded by Councilmember Trammell. Motion passed 6-0.

C. RFB 25-11-PW, Debris Monitoring Continuing Services, consideration of contract Awards

Motion by Councilmember Trammell, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to award RFP 25-11-PW, Disaster Debris Monitoring Services to Volkert, Inc., as the primary contractor and Tetra Tech Inc, as the secondary/backup contractor, subject to successfully negotiating contracts with these firms passed 6-0.

D. RFB 25-13-PW, Mattie Kelly Outfall Project, consideration of contract award

The City Manager introduced Item 4D concerning the Matty Kelly Outfall Project and recommended awarding the contract to RBM Contracting Services, the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, in the amount of \$548,250.25. He noted there were five bidders and that RBM and CW Roberts tied in evaluation scores, with RBM selected based on price as the primary tiebreaker. He also explained that remaining funds from the \$1 million state appropriation may be used for a future Phase Two within the same watershed.

Councilmember Trammell moved to award RFB 25-13-PW, Mattie Kelly Outfall Project, to RBM Contracting Services, LLC in the amount of \$548,250.25, subject to the successful negotiations of a contract, which will be brought back to the city council for approval; seconded by Councilmember Hebert.

Councilmember Schmidt raised concerns about using a contractor the city had not previously worked with and made a substitute motion to award the contract to H&T Contractors, despite H&T ranking third and costing approximately \$10,000 more. He justified the substitute motion based on familiarity and perceived reliability.

During discussion, staff clarified that RBM and CW Roberts were equally qualified, that H&T ranked third, and that experience, qualifications, and DOT certifications were part of the evaluation. Councilmember Bagby expressed concern that selecting the third-ranked bidder would undermine the bid committee process and that for that reason, he would not support the substitute motion.

Councilmember Schmidt offered a substitute motion to award RFB 25-13-PW, Mattie Kelly Outfall Project, to H&T Contractors, LLC; seconded by Councilmember Geile. Motion failed 2-4 (Council members Schmidt and Geile voted “yes”; Council members Hebert, Bagby, Destin, and Trammell voted “no”).

The council then voted on the original motion made by Councilmember Trammell to award RFB 25-13-PW, Mattie Kelly Outfall Project, to RBM Contracting Services, LLC in the amount of \$548,250.25, subject to the successful negotiations of a contract, which will be brought back to the city council for approval; seconded by Councilmember Hebert. Motion passed 5-1, with Councilmember Schmidt dissenting.

E. RFB 25-16-PW, Norriego Point Harbor Restoration Project Bid Document

Councilmember Trammell moved to approve and advertise RFB 25-16-PW; seconded by Councilmember Bagby.

Councilmember Bagby recommends adding language to the RFB requiring that dredged sand be placed specifically in the embayments rather than spread broadly along the south side of Norriego Point. His intent is to address the erosion occurring in those embayments, some of which are nearing the dunes. He noted that staff is working on this but did not see the updated wording in the document.

Amended Motion: Councilmember Trammell moved to approve and advertise RFB 25-16-PW; adding language to the RFB requiring that dredged sand be placed specifically in the embayments rather than spread broadly along the south side of Norriego Point. The amended motion was seconded by Councilmember Bagby and passed 6-0.

F. 4th St Right-of-Way

The City Manager explained that 4th Street Right-of-Way is a public right-of-way approximately 100 feet wide that extends past Fourth Street over Beach Drive to the water. Two properties, 700 and 702 Beach Drive, use the right-of-way for access. While 700 Beach Drive also has frontage on Beach Drive, 702 Beach Drive relies solely on the right-of-way for ingress and egress. Staff, including engineering and public works, inspected the site and reported that a range of improvement options exists – from minimal trail maintenance to more substantial development – depending on council direction. Any improvements would need to preserve access for the affected property owners.

Councilmember Hebert questioned whether the intent was simply to allow continued access by the property owners. She sought clarification on why the issue was being brought before Council.

The City Manager clarified that because the right-of-way is public and historically served as access to a formerly unified parcel, the city would likely face legal issues if it attempted to deny access. He emphasized that improvements could be made without interfering with existing ingress and egress, regardless of whether the area remained a trail, roadway, or parking area.

Councilmember Trammell recommended a low-cost approach: removing invasive vine species, preserving healthy trees, and creating a simple path from the existing gravel area to the water. She noted that the site appears heavily wooded but is largely overgrown with invasive vegetation and could be cleaned up easily. She suggested this would provide neighborhood access to the waterfront and potentially create a small “pocket park” without significant expense.

Councilmember Bagby suggested that staff return with a cost estimate for the limited improvements described, noting that the previously mentioned \$35,000 estimate seemed high for the scope discussed.

Councilmember Destin recommended that once staff returns with estimates, the item be referred to the Parks and Recreation Committee and that a public hearing be held, noting that neighbors often have strong opinions about park-related improvements.

Staff asked for clarification on the extent of clearing, specifically the size threshold for tree removal and what level of vegetation should be addressed.

Councilmember Trammell responded that clearing should be limited to invasive vegetation and very small trees (generally six inches in diameter or less), with an emphasis on methods that could be handled using basic equipment such as a walk-behind bush hog.

Councilmember Bagby supported this approach, stating that anything requiring more extensive tree removal could be considered later at additional cost.

G. Code Compliance 2026 Action Report

Removed from the agenda.

H. 3420 Scenic Hwy 98 - Sea Oats Motel

Removed from the agenda.

I. Announcements

- 1) The City Manager raised concerns about quorum and meeting effectiveness due to the December 1st meeting falling immediately after Thanksgiving. A discussion followed among the council members about travel, potential agenda items, and whether to consolidate business into the later December meeting. Opinions were mixed, with some members favoring cancellation and others preferring to keep the meeting scheduled in case time-sensitive matters arose.

A motion was made by Councilmember Geile and was seconded by Councilmember Hebert to cancel the December 1st city council meeting. Motion failed 3-3 (Council members Hebert, Geile, and Schmidt voted “yes”; council members Trammell, Bagby, and Destin voted “no”).

- 2) A meeting was recently held with Representative Patronis' office regarding navigation lights and buoys. Staff and council expressed appreciation for the support and the productive discussion.
- 3) Upcoming meetings of the Okaloosa Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) will take place at the annex this Thursday, November 20th.
 - a. Citizens' Advisory Committee: 9:30 a.m.
 - b. Technical Coordinating Committee: 1:30 p.m.
 - c. TPO Board Meeting: 3:00 p.m. (Mayor Wagner will attend as Chairman)
- 4) Holiday events (with detailed schedules available on the City website and Facebook page):
 - a. Tree Lighting at the Community Center: December 4
 - b. Visit with Santa at the Library: December 5
 - c. Christmas Parade: December 13 — theme: *Seashells and Sleigh Bells*
 - d. Holly Jolly at Captain Royal Melvin Park: December 14, featuring multiple school bands and a new Holiday Market earlier in the day
- 5) Appreciation was extended to John Stephens, Gene Eisenmann, and Laurie Sanders for providing valuable written statements about the hazardous conditions of current channel markers. These materials have been forwarded to Congressman Patronis' office.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Second reading of Ordinance 25-19-CC - Amending Chapter 2 - Administration, of the Code of Ordinances relating to city membership in the Florida Retirement System (FRS); providing for membership in the FRS for the benefit of city employees.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 25-19-CC by title, and then presented it to the council on second reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 2-ADMINISTRATION, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATING TO CITY MEMBERSHIP IN THE FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM ("FRS"); PROVIDING FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM ("FRS") FOR THE BENEFIT OF CITY EMPLOYEES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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

Councilmember Bagby moved to adopt Ordinance 25-19-C on second reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert.

Councilmember Schmidt stated he could not support the ordinance due to the absence of a budget amendment. He questioned how a program costing between approximately \$500,000 and \$750,000 could move forward without being formally budgeted, and expressed concern that the item had been removed from the adopted budget. He stated that approving the ordinance before a budget amendment was confusing and procedurally improper.

The City Manager explained that funding for full FRS participation (approximately \$700,000) had originally been included in the tentative budget but was removed after the first public

hearing when the item failed to advance. Those funds were placed back into fund balance. He explained staff's intent was to first determine which employees elected to participate, then bring forward a budget amendment based on actual costs rather than encumbering the full amount upfront.

The HR Director stated that once the ordinance was adopted, the signed ordinance would be submitted to FRS and the administrative enrollment process would begin. All required information must be submitted to FRS by December 15 to begin participation on January 1, with payroll deductions beginning at the end of December.

The Finance Director confirmed the original FRS funding was included in the tentative budget and later moved to fund balance. She stated the city currently has adequate budget capacity early in the fiscal year and that personnel and benefits are budgeted as a single line item, which can accommodate the expense pending a formal budget amendment.

Councilmember Schmidt reiterated that despite available funds, the adopted budget presented to the public did not include this expenditure and that approving the ordinance prior to a budget amendment was unclear and inconsistent with the normal budget process.

Councilmember Bagby explained that the approved personnel and benefits line item totaled approximately \$8.7 million and that FRS qualifies as a benefit within that account. He stated that funds were technically available, that participation would likely be less than 100%, and that a later internal transfer or budget amendment would be consistent with standard practice. He indicated willingness to support a follow-up budget amendment to formalize the funding.

Motion passed 5-1, with Councilmember Schmidt dissenting.

Councilmember Bagby made a subsequent motion to direct staff to bring back a budget amendment no later than the December 16th meeting, in an amount not to exceed \$532,570, to fund the FRS initiative from the fund balance, within the Personnel and Benefits account. Motion passed 6-0.

B. First reading of Ordinance 25-17-LC - Relating to platting, requiring administrative review, processing, and approval of plats pursuant to Chapter 177, Florida Statutes.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 25-17-LC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA RELATING TO PLATTING; REQUIRING ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW, PROCESSING, AND APPROVAL OF PLATS PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 177, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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

Motion by Councilmember Schmidt, seconded by Councilmember Geile, to approve proposed Ordinance 25-17-LC on first reading reading passed 5-1, with Councilmember Destin dissenting.

- C. First reading of Ordinance 25-23-LC - Deleting Article 1, "General Provisions/Legal" of the Land Development Code to remove and replace the existing Article 1 in its entirety, providing for title, jurisdiction and intent, containing regulations related to vested rights, code compliance and enforcement.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 25-23-LC by title, and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, DELETING ARTICLE 1, "GENERAL PROVISIONS/LEGAL" OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO REMOVE AND REPLACE THE EXISTING ARTICLE 1 IN ITS ENTIRETY; PROVIDING FOR TITLE, JURISDICTION AND INTENT; CONTAINING REGULATIONS RELATED TO VESTED RIGHTS, CODE COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT; 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 Pro Tem opened a public hearing to receive comments for or against the proposed ordinance. Having none, the Mayor Pro Tem closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to the city council for discussion and consideration.

Motion by Councilmember Schmidt, seconded by Councilmember Geile, to approve proposed Ordinance 25-23-LC on first reading passed 6-0.

- D. Ordinance 25-27-CN - Amending FY 2025 Budget. Amending appropriations for Certain expenditures, expenses, capital improvements, and certain indebtedness for the City of Destin for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2025.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 25-27-CN by title, and then presented it to the city council.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN AMENDING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN EXPENDITURES, EXPENSES, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND CERTAIN INDEBTEDNESS FOR THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2024 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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

Councilmember Trammell moved to adopt Ordinance 25-27-CN, seconded by Councilmember Bagby. Motion passed 6-0.

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

- A. Councilmember Braden
- B. Councilmember Trammell
- C. Councilmember Destin
- D. Councilmember Bagby
- E. Councilmember Hebert
- F. Councilmember Geile
 - 1) Projects Status/Updates

G. Councilmember Schmidt

Councilmember Schmidt congratulated the City of Destin PeeWee Dolphins football team for winning the Super Bowl, noting it as a significant achievement. He then requested that city staff arrange for the team to attend an upcoming council meeting so they can be formally recognized by the city.

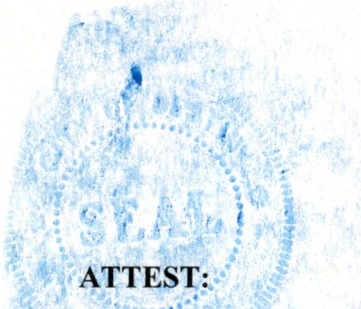

H. Mayor Wagner

I. City Attorney

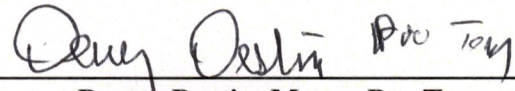
7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 PM.


ATTEST:


Rey Bailey, City Clerk



Dewey Destin, Mayor Pro Tem