

**REGULAR MEETING  
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL  
MARCH 16, 2026  
ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
6:00 PM**

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

**Destin City Council**

Mayor Bobby Wagner  
Councilmember Sandy Trammell  
Councilmember Jim Bagby

Councilmember Terésa Hebert  
Councilmember Kevin Schmidt

**Destin City Staff**

City Manager Larry Jones  
Projects/Grants/Contract Manager Jeffrey Cozadd  
Public Information Director Tamara Young  
Public Works Director Michael Burgess  
City Engineer Robert Tomasek  
Code Compliance Manager Christopher Koch  
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey  
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Firth  
Principal Planner Daniel Butler  
Building Official Noell Bell  
Finance Director Krystal Strickland  
HR Director Jaime Haynes  
IT Director Andy Peters

**CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bobby Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Councilmember Jim Bagby gave the invocation, which was then followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

- **Include consideration for approval of Resolution 26-05 in Agenda Item 4B.**
- **Move Agenda Item 4D – *City Clerk Confirmation* – to the first discussion under City Manager Reports.**

**Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve the agenda, as amended, passed 4-0. Council members Geile, Destin, and Braden were absent from the meeting.**

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

Mr. Ricky Lyn Grant Jr., 175 Main Street, Destin, spoke about his involvement in the community, particularly his participation in a local food drive, and invited others to attend. He shared updates on his personal business efforts, including independent contracting, real estate, and

wholesale deals, noting that he had experienced recent setbacks but remained determined to try again using new strategies like weekend advertising. He also mentioned his interest in sports and making money within that space, while emphasizing his desire to stay active and engaged in the community.

Mr. Rob Valatin, 508 Norriego Road, Destin, expressed strong support for preserving the Norriego Point property as a pristine public space. He referenced prior communication from county officials highlighting the environmental value of the land and emphasized that it should remain undeveloped, natural, and accessible to the public. He supported the City of Destin taking over management of the property, arguing that it would be more efficient and consistent with the city's stewardship of the adjacent park, ultimately benefiting both the environment and the community.

Mr. Alan Osborne agreed that the property should remain preserved but clarified that the site is technically a seawall along a channel rather than a true beach. He raised concerns about transparency, alleging that county officials may not be fully complying with public records laws and suggesting that plans for commercial marina development existed before being publicly disclosed. He proposed an alternative approach that would retain part of the marina as a fishing pier while selling boat slips to nearby residents, using the proceeds to fund critical repairs to the west jetty in order to better protect the area from erosion and environmental damage.

Mr. Joe Fitzpatrick 3879 Indian Trail, Destin, addressed an ongoing issue with stormwater runoff negatively impacting his property. He pointed out that the problem is likely to worsen during the upcoming rainy season and urged the city to provide clear direction and a timely resolution. He emphasized his willingness to cooperate and provide any necessary documentation to help move the process forward, focusing on finding a practical solution.

Mr. Ted Martell, 202 Cyber Avenue, Destin, spoke about environmental concerns related to pollution in the harbor, specifically calling attention to the impact of fireworks being set off in the pass. He questioned why there is significant focus on regulating development for environmental protection while recurring pollution from fireworks appears to be overlooked. He urged officials to take action and address this inconsistency in environmental priorities.

### **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. DEP Grant 26PLN51 Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan Updates
- B. Work Authorization for Dewberry - DEP Grant 26PLN51
- C. PZ-2026-5-605 Choctaw Ave. Residential Marine Construction
- D. PZ-2026-19- 702 Harbor Blvd. Residential Marine Construction
- E. PZ-2026-15- 82 Indian Bayou Dr. Residential Marina Construction
- F. PZ-2026-24- 823 Cross St. Residential Marine Construction
- G. Resolution 26-04 Rename Porter Ln to Foxtail Way
- H. Approval of minutes of January 20, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting
- I. Approval of minutes of March 2, 2026, City Council Executive Session - Rainbow Frost Ice Cream vs. City of Destin
- J. Approval of minutes of March 2, 2026, City Council Executive Session - Mercurio vs. City of Destin

**Councilmember Hebert moved for the approval of Consent Agenda items 3A through 3J, as printed above, seconded by Councilmember Trammell. Motion passed 4-0.**

#### 4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

##### A. Scheduling of Quasi-Judicial Hearing for Harbor Walk Village PH 2

The City Manager explained that the council needed to determine when to hold the hearing. He presented two options: scheduling it during the next regular council meeting on April 7 or holding a separate special meeting due to the anticipated length and complexity of the item. He noted that a special meeting might be more appropriate to allow focused attention, while also mentioning that the applicant preferred an April date.

During discussion, the mayor expressed support for holding a special meeting, stating that a project of this magnitude deserved dedicated time and focus. Council members generally agreed with this approach.

**Motion by Councilmember Bagby, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to schedule a Special Council Meeting on Monday, April 13, at 6:00 PM to conduct a quasi-judicial hearing for Harbor Walk Village Phase 2, passed unanimously (4-0).**

##### B. Update: Newly Acquired State Park on Holiday Isle

The City Manager introduced a resolution requesting that the State of Florida authorize the city to serve as the local managing entity for the newly acquired property. He explained that the resolution also expressed the city's willingness to commit up to \$5 million to maintain the land as a conservation area and to collaborate with the county and state.

The City Attorney added context, noting that the county currently has no legal interest or lease in the property, that no approved management plan exists, and that both the city and residents have consistently expressed support for city management of the site.

During discussion, council members strongly supported the resolution. Councilmember Bagby outlined three possible paths: continuing the current approach with the county, pursuing a partnership, or moving forward with a city-led effort. He warned that failure to reach agreement could result in prolonged litigation, potentially delaying improvements for years. He also stressed that the \$5 million commitment would require reallocating funds from other planned projects, highlighting the seriousness of the decision. Other council members emphasized the importance of local control, efficiency, and continuity with existing city-managed parkland.

**Councilmember Trammell moved for the approval of proposed Resolution 26-05 – *City of Destin Request for Support (Holiday Isle park property adjacent to city-owned Norriego Point Park – and to forward copies to state delegates.* Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 4-0.**

##### C. Joe's Bayou Commercial Activity Plan

The City Manager introduced a strategy developed by code enforcement to address illegal commercial operations, particularly in the bayou area. He explained that the plan included installing electronic signage stating that commercial activity is prohibited, with the signage serving as the required warning before citations are issued.

During discussion, Captain Fulghum from the Sheriff's Office clarified that when code enforcement issues a citation, deputies can also issue a trespass warning, which would apply across all city properties and allow for arrest if violated.

Council members emphasized the need for strict enforcement to protect businesses that are operating legally and to deter illegal operators. There was strong support for a zero-tolerance approach, with council members stating that the signage itself should count as the warning and that violations should result in immediate citations rather than additional verbal warnings.

Staff agreed to revise the plan's language to reflect this stricter enforcement approach. The use of cameras for evidence collection was also noted.

#### D. City Clerk Confirmation

The City Manager began the City Clerk confirmation item by introducing Ms. Lisa Wallace as the candidate for the position, noting that she had spent a full day at City Hall participating in extensive interviews. He explained that both he and the current City Clerk had the opportunity to evaluate her closely and were impressed with her qualifications, experience, and overall performance. Her resume and credentials had been provided to the council in advance.

During discussion, the City Clerk emphasized that Ms. Wallace demonstrated a strong understanding of the responsibilities of the role, along with professionalism and an engaging personality. He added that her references, including two mayors, spoke very highly of her character, work ethic, and abilities.

Ms. Wallace briefly addressed the council, expressing her enthusiasm about joining the team.

**Motion by Councilmember Trammell, which was seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to confirm the City Manager's recommendation to hire Lisa Wallace as the next Destin City Clerk passed 4-0.**

#### E. City of Destin Employee Commuter Survey- Informational Only

The City Manager reported on the results of a staff survey regarding use of the Mid-Bay Bridge for commuting between Niceville and Destin. Out of 115 total employees, 56 responded to the survey, and 16 indicated they use the bridge every workday, accounting for two crossings per day. The City Manager explained that while the standard toll cost would total approximately \$160 per month, discounts through SunPass and an additional reduction for making 32 or more monthly crossings lower the cost to about \$80 per month for daily users. He noted that some employees use the bridge less frequently or only occasionally, but \$80 represents the maximum monthly cost for regular users.

Councilmember Schmidt then proposed the development of an employee transportation reimbursement program that would provide up to \$40 per month per employee, contingent upon proper documentation. He emphasized that the benefit should be available to all employees, not just those who use the bridge, framing it as a general transportation benefit to help offset rising commuting costs such as fuel and tolls. He described the proposal as a modest but meaningful form of support, amounting to roughly \$500 per year per employee.

**Councilmember Schmidt moved to direct staff to return to council with a proposed policy establishing an employee transportation reimbursement program. The intent of the program is to offer a general employee benefit to help offset commuting and transportation costs. The program would provide eligible employees the opportunity to receive up to \$40 per month in**

**reimbursement for transportation-related expenses, contingent upon submission of appropriate documentation. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 4-0.**

- F. Capital Project Status - Informational Only
- G. TDC Monthly Report - Informational Only
- H. Operations Financial Report - Informational Only
- I. Draft Minutes of Standing Boards & Committees - Informational Only
- J. Announcements

- The City Manager announced that the Town Center discussion originally scheduled for tonight was postponed to the next meeting (April 7) due to the arrival of a new Community Development Director. The council then discussed how to structure the upcoming meeting schedule.

**Councilmember Bagby moved to hold the CRA Board meeting at 5:30 PM, and to begin the regular City Council meeting at 5:35 PM, or as soon thereafter as it could reasonably be heard. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hebert and passed 4-0.**

- Parking enforcement in the harbor district would be extended for St. Patrick's Day, with coverage from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM.
- The city's annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 4th at 9:00 AM at Morgan Sports Center, with participation open to children age 12 and under.
- A Vertical Oyster Garden event will be held on April 18th from 1:00 to 2:00 PM in partnership with Keep Okaloosa Beautiful and Okaloosa County America 250, offering an educational session and demonstration.
- A ribbon cutting for Norriego Point is being planned for April 28th at 10:00 AM, pending confirmation of that date.

## **5. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- A. Second reading of Ordinance 26-12-LC – Amending the Land Development Code to define "Indoor Sports Recreation Establishments"; Amending Table 7-2 "Table of Allowable Uses" to allow indoor sports recreation establishments as a permitted use in the Industrial zoning district; Amending Article 8 "Transportation," Table 8-6, "Number of Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Spaces Required"; Modifying parking requirements for indoor sports recreation establishments as set forth herein.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 26-12-LC by title, and then presented it to the council on second reading.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, AMENDING ARTICLE 7, "LAND USE, TYPE, DENSITY, INTENSITY, ZONING AND REGULATORY CONTROLS", OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; AMENDING TABLE 7-2 "TABLE OF ALLOWABLE USES" TO ALLOW INDOOR RECREATION ESTABLISHMENTS AS A PERMITTED USE IN THE INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT; DEFINING "INDOOR RECREATION ESTABLISHMENTS"; AMENDING ARTICLE 8 "TRANSPORTATION", TABLE 8-6 "NUMBER OF VEHICLE AND BICYCLE PARKING SPACES REQUIRED"; MODIFYING PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN INDOOR RECREATION ESTABLISHMENTS AS SET FORTH HEREIN; 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 Schmidt, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to adopt Ordinance 26-12-LC on second reading passed 4-0.**

- B. First reading of Ordinance 26-14-LC - Amending the official zoning map in the Land Development Code, Section 7.12.01(A)2, to include a change in the zoning designation of real property generally located at 446 Calhoun Avenue.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 26-14-LC by title, and then presented it to the 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 REAL PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 446 CALHOUN AVENUE, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN EXHIBIT "A", CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY .78 ACRES, FROM BAY ESTATES (BE) TO RECREATION (REC); PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR JURISDICTION; PROVIDING FOR A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
(OKALOOSA COUNTY PARCEL ID NUMBER: 00-2S-22-0310-000D-038C).

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 Schmidt, seconded by Councilmember Hebert to approve Ordinance 26-14-LC on first reading passed 4-0.**

- C. First reading of Ordinance 26-15-PC - Amending the comprehensive plan; 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 real property generally located at 446 Calhoun Avenue.'

The City Attorney read Ordinance 26-15-PC by title, and then presented it to the 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 REAL PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 446 CALHOUN AVENUE, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN EXHIBIT "A", CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY .78

ACRES, FROM BAY ESTATES (BE) TO RECREATION (REC); PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (OKALOOSA COUNTY PARCEL ID NUMBER: 00-2S-22-0310-000D-038C).

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

Having none, the mayor closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to the city council for their discussion and consideration.

**Motion by Councilmember Trammell, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve Ordinance 26-15-PC on first reading passed 4-0.**

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

- A. Councilmember Braden
- B. Councilmember Trammell

Councilmember Trammell thanked the city's Parks & Rec Director for her work organizing the Captain's/Fisherman's Hall of Fame event and expressing appreciation for the effort and quality of the program.

- C. Councilmember Destin
- D. Councilmember Bagby

Councilmember Bagby urged staff to prioritize updating the Land Development Code, noting delays due to other projects and highlighting a rise in dock-related agenda items as a sign that clearer regulations are needed.

- E. Councilmember Hebert

Councilmember Hebert echoed praise for the Hall of Fame event, commending the Parks & Recreation Director for her work and highlighting both the strong support behind the event and its emotional impact on attendees.

- F. Councilmember Geile
- G. Councilmember Schmidt

Councilmember Schmidt commented that upcoming changes to the dock approval process should improve efficiency by reducing procedural steps. He noted that substantial funds have remained unused for years and encouraged the council to utilize available resources, along with grants and other funding sources, to advance park improvements and other projects.

- H. Mayor Wagner

Mayor Wagner shared the feedback from a recent community fireside chat about the working harbor was mostly positive. Key concerns included how delivery vessel fees are used, progress on harbor dredging, challenges with East Pass dredging beyond city control, and the lack of amenities like restrooms at Crab Island. He also noted strong support for increased camera coverage, continued harbor management efforts, and broader community engagement.

Councilmember Schmidt noted that he had received follow-up calls from residents who appreciated the mayor's acknowledgment of the council's role, particularly his statement that he implements what the council votes on. He expressed gratitude for his emphasis on teamwork and unified representation of the city's leadership.

The City Attorney addressed the mayor's suggestion of including councilmembers in future fireside chats, explaining that the Florida Sunshine Law restricts such participation unless proper procedures are followed. These include public notice, appropriate documentation such as minutes, and compliance with open meeting requirements. She clarified that council members' absence from such events is not due to disinterest but legal limitations. As an alternative, she suggested inviting members of the public who attend fireside chats to speak at official council meetings, where all councilmembers can legally participate in discussions.

City Attorney

1) Authorization to Foreclose Code Compliance Lien at 201 Main Street

The City Attorney introduced the foreclosure of a code enforcement lien on a property located at 2011 Main Street. She explained that the property had been in violation of city codes for several years due to excessive trash and debris accumulation. A lien had accrued at a rate of \$250 per day over approximately 880 days, totaling around \$220,000. The property is vacant and not designated as a homestead. After multiple unsuccessful attempts to contact the owner, she requested authorization from the council to initiate foreclosure proceedings.

**Motion by Councilmember Hebert, seconded by Councilmember Schmidt, to foreclose Code Compliance Lien at 201 Main Street passed 4-0.**

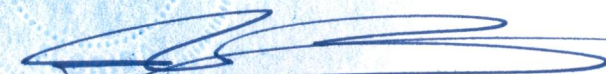
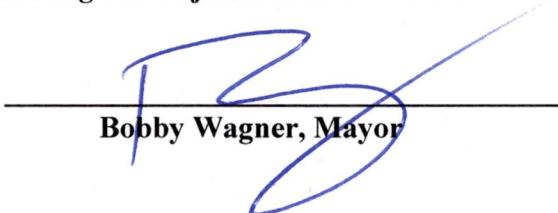
## 7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Alan Osborn raised concerns about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology in code enforcement. He cautioned that relying on AI, drones, or automated systems could create unnecessary conflict between neighbors by identifying violations that residents themselves do not perceive as issues. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a human element in enforcement decisions to preserve community harmony. He also warned about potential privacy risks, noting that increased data collection could make residents vulnerable to profiling or fraud. While acknowledging that such technologies can be useful tools, he urged the council to exercise restraint and careful consideration in their implementation, particularly in cases where no formal complaint has been made.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 PM.**

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rey Bailey, City Clerk  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bobby Wagner, Mayor