

**REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
MAY 4, 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
Mayor Pro-Tem Teresa Herbert
Councilmember Jim Bagby
Councilmember Rodney Braden

Councilmember Dewey Destin
Councilmember Chatham Morgan
Councilmember Sandy Trammell
Councilmember Kevin Schmidt

Destin City Staff

Parks and Recreation Director Lisa Firth
Public Information Director Tamara Young
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
Community Development Director Tina Deater
Human Resources Director Jamie Haynes
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey (Outgoing)
City Clerk Lisa Wallace (Incoming)
City Engineer Robert Tomesek
Finance Director Krystal Strickland
IT Director Andy Peters
Principal Planner Daniel Butler

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

OATH OF OFFICE FOR INTERIM CITY COUNCILMEMBER CHATHAM MORGAN

City Attorney Kimberly Kopp administered the Oath of Office for Interim City Councilmember Chatham Morgan.

AGENDA APPROVAL

- *Add Two Easement Agreements at end of City Manager Reports*
- *Add Stephanie Rowe to List of Candidates to be Considered for Boards and Commissions*

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve the meeting agenda as amended (add 2 easements & board/committee candidate Rowe). The motion passed 7-0.

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

A. Proclamation - 2026 National Public Works Week

Mayor Wagner read the 2026 National Public Works Week Proclamation

B. Proclamation - Family Night

Mayor Wagner read the Family Night Proclamation

C. Proclamation - Mayors' Monarch Pledge

D. Proclamation - Drinking Water Week

Mayor Wagner read the Drinking Water Week Proclamation

E. Destin Parks Foundation America 250 Fireworks Request

John Stephens, on behalf of the Destin Parks Foundation, presented a proposal to assist the City with fundraising for the America 250 July 4th celebration. He stated that Parks and Recreation is seeking to raise up to \$10,000, including \$5,000 for an enhanced red, white, and blue fireworks grand finale and \$5,000 for large "250" display lettering planned at Noriego Point. Mr. Stephens explained that the Foundation could use its 501(c)(3) status to provide a structured donation mechanism, including a dedicated donation page and QR code, while staff would continue outreach efforts. Funds would be restricted to the project, tracked transparently, and used to reimburse approved eligible City expenses under a reimbursement grant model. He noted that the approach would maintain City financial controls, provide donor confidence, encourage private support, and potentially serve as a model for future projects.

Finance Director Krystal Strickland added that the City budgeted nearly \$40,000 from the General Fund for the Fourth of July fireworks, which has already been approved by Council. An additional \$10,000 in unbudgeted services has been requested for a red, white, and blue fireworks display and an LED "250" birthday display at Noriego Point. She noted that Pyro Shows, the City's continuing services contractor, will be brought forward at the next Council meeting to confirm dates, approve the down payment, and consider the additional services. If approved, the \$10,000 would initially be covered through an internal transfer from Parks and Recreation within the General Fund. If a grant agreement with the Destin Parks Foundation is finalized, a separate budget amendment would be brought back to increase revenue and expenses and return the General Fund money to Parks and Recreation.

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to support and direct the City Manager and City Attorney to finalize an MOU and bring back to council for consideration. The motion passed 7-0.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ricky Lyn Grant Jr., 175 Main Street, addressed the Council stating that he wished to speak positively and professionally and discussed his interest in becoming or working as a real estate broker. He also commented on working with government and military resources, energy-related topics, and personal legal matters.

Joe Fitzpatrick, 3879 Indian Trail, addressed the Council regarding drainage issues on his parcel. He stated that he had submitted two executed easements to the City, providing staff with access

and permission needed to continue the study. Mr. Fitzpatrick encouraged the City to maintain momentum toward a timely resolution and stated that his prior research may be useful as staff evaluates stabilization solutions. He requested that staff and any needed third-party consultants have sufficient authorization to proceed through all aspects of the study without unnecessary delays. He also suggested that one or two Council members remain engaged during the process to help provide continuity, understanding, and efficiency when future decisions come back before Council.

Alan Osborne of Gulf Shore Drive addressed the Council regarding the use of drones for future fireworks or special event displays. He suggested pursuing grant funding to purchase drones and involving local youth groups, scouts, or schools in operating or maintaining them, noting that drone shows could provide a unique opportunity to showcase Destin's youth and future technology.

Leanne of 14 Rue D'etretat, addressed the Council regarding recent warnings issued to residents in her neighborhood requiring vehicles to be moved off the streets. She stated that many homes have limited driveway space, leaving residents with multiple vehicles no option but to park in their yards, which negatively affects the appearance and usability of their properties. She noted that she has lived there for six years without prior issues and said garbage trucks have been able to access the street despite on-street parking. She requested that the City reconsider removing the parking restriction.

3. ***CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Parking for Blessing of the Youth
- B. Approval of minutes of April 13, 2026, Special City Council Meeting
- C. Approval of minutes of April 20, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting

Councilmember Herbert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 7-0.

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

Kimberly Kopp, as Acting City Manager in Dr. Jones' absence, provided the City Manager's report.

- A. Comprehensive Plan EAR - Inspire Placemaking Collective Work Authorization

Ms. Kopp introduced the Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Review (EAR), noting that Florida Statutes require the City to evaluate and amend its comprehensive plan every seven years to ensure compliance with state law and continued alignment with the City's vision.

Community Development Director, Tina Deater, reported that the City does not currently have the staff capacity to complete a full rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan in-house. The plan has not had a full rewrite since approximately 2005, and the 2019 Evaluation and Appraisal Review amendments were limited to the coastal element. Staff would like to take this opportunity to do a complete a full rewrite and recommended Inspire, an existing continuing services planning consultant, to assist with the process.

Councilmember Bagby made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Herbert, to direct staff to coordinate with Inspire and sharpen the proposal (needed tasks and costs) and bring back to council for further consideration. The motion passed 7-0.

B. Tow Truck Fees Discussion

The City Attorney introduced the tow truck fees discussion, noting that Council requested at the April 20 meeting that staff bring back information comparing the City's current fees with those of neighboring jurisdictions. Staff contacted nearby communities and included a chart in their packets comparing Destin's current fees, county fees, and the proposed fees. She stated that Council could provide direction at its discretion but suggested that aligning the City's fees with the county may be a reasonable option.

Councilmember Herbert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to adopt an updated towing fee schedule at the same rates as currently adopted by Okaloosa County and directed the City Attorney to draft a Resolution. The motion passed 6-1 with Councilmember Braden dissenting.

C. Update on State-Acquired Lands Adjacent to City's Norriego Point Park

Acting City Manager Kopp provided an update on state-acquired lands adjacent to Norriego Point Park. She stated that City representatives attended the April 21 Board of County Commissioners meeting to request support for City Resolution 2026-05 to lease and manage the park. Commissioners Sherry Cox and Carolyn Ketchel spoke in support of the City, while the remaining commissioners directed Commissioner Palmer to meet with state representatives before taking further action. The City Attorney also reported that the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission identified the site as important for nesting shorebirds and Audubon Florida planned to survey and post signage to protect nesting areas. She noted this supports Council's position to keep the property conservation-focused.

Councilmember Destin provided a brief update on the state meeting regarding Norriego Point that was scheduled but did not occur. He stated that Senator Gaetz had arranged the meeting with Senator Trumbull, the DEP Secretary, Commissioner Palmer, and himself during the special session, but the session ended early and some participants were unable to attend. The meeting is expected to be rescheduled during the next special session, anticipated for May 12–15. Councilmember Destin expressed hope that the parties can develop a plan addressing the City's, County's, State's, and shorebird protection needs, and noted the importance of FWC's independent role in evaluating the nesting shorebirds and conservation concerns.

D. Board & Committee Appointments

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Destin, to appoint Stephanie Rowe to the Board of Adjustments. The motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Bagby, to appoint Alan Osborne to the Board of Adjustments. The motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Herbert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Schmidt, to appoint Ross Haynes to the Board of Adjustments. The motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Bagby made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Herbert, to appoint Alan Osborne to the Harbor and Waterways Board. The motion passed 6-1 with Councilmember Braden dissenting.

E. Announcements

Public Information Director, Tamara Young, announced that, following Council's April 7th approval, survey and geotechnical soils investigation work will begin May 8 as part of the four-prong flood resilience project. Field crews will collect data, including soil borings at the lake edge, on land, and within the lake. Crews will wear safety vests and carry City verification, and the data collection is expected to take approximately two to three weeks.

F. Easement Agreements

City Attorney and Acting City Manager Kopp presented two temporary easement agreements related to drainage concerns previously discussed for 3879 Indian Trail and the adjacent property. The easements would allow City employees or contractors to access the properties for inspections, surveying, soil testing, and drainage analysis of the creek area. The easements are temporary and would run for approximately 60 days. She requested Council approval to accept the easements before recording them.

Councilmember Herbert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to accept temporary easement agreements at 3879 Indian Trail and the adjacent property to allow city staff/contractors to conduct inspections, surveying, soil testing, and drainage analysis. The motion passed 7-0.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. First Reading of Ordinance 26-06-LC. The City Attorney read Ordinance 26-06-LC by title and presented it to the council for first reading.

ORDINANCE 26-06-LC. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, RENUMBERING THE EXISTING ARTICLE 11 OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AS ARTICLE 7; CHANGING THE NAME OF EXISTING "ARTICLE 11 COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION" TO "ARTICLE 7 - RESOURCE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION, RESILIENCY, AND SUSTAINABILITY"; ADDING THE FOLLOWING EXISTING SECTIONS OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO "ARTICLE 7 - RESOURCE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION, RESILIENCY, AND SUSTAINABILITY": SECTION 7.05.00 - PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ARCHEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES, SECTION 7.17.04 - OUTDOOR LIGHTING STANDARDS FOR THE MARINE TURTLE CONSERVATION ZONE, AND SECTION 7.20.00 - SMALL-SCALE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY GENERATION REGULATIONS; 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.

Staff gave an overview of the proposed ordinance changes and Todd Buhr, Vice Chair of the Local Planning Agency, explained the proposed changes to the fee base. Mayor Wagner then opened the public hearing to receive comments from the public.

Mr. Alan Osborne spoke in opposition to the proposed fees, stating that private boat slip owners already pay significant property taxes, association fees, and installation costs. He argued that the proposed fee would unfairly burden residents and private slip owners who are not the primary users or contributors to harbor impacts, while commercial tour and charter operations place a greater demand on the harbor. He suggested that any additional costs should be directed toward the commercial or tourist-related users rather than private property owners.

There being no further public comments, Mayor Wagner closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to city council for their discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Bagby made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve first reading of Ordinance 26-06-LC with the proposed change from Councilmember Trammell to include clarifying language that the city is not responsible for wetlands. The motion failed 3-4. Councilmembers Bagby, Herbert, and Trammell voting “yes” and Councilmembers Destin, Schmidt, Braden and Morgan voting “no”.

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Destin, to approve a substitute motion for first reading of Ordinance 26-06-LC to include Councilmember Trammell’s amendment but to make no change to the NPEB at this time. Motion failed 2-5. Councilmembers Schmidt and Destin voting “yes” and Councilmembers Bagby, Hebert, Braden, Trammell and Morgan voting “no”.

Councilmember Destin made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Schmidt, to table first reading of Ordinance 26-06-LC until the next meeting. The motion passed 5-2. Councilmembers Destin, Herbert, Schmidt, Braden and Morgan voting “yes” and Councilmembers Bagby and Trammell voting “no”.

B. Second reading of Ordinance 25-24-LC. The City Attorney read Ordinance 25-24-LC by title and presented it to the council for second reading.

ORDINANCE 25-24-LC - DELETING ARTICLE 2 — ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO REMOVE AND REPLACE THE EXISTING ARTICLE 2 IN ITS ENTIRETY; DELETING ARTICLE 4 — PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO REMOVE AND REPLACE ARTICLE 4 IN ITS ENTIRETY; PROVIDING FOR REGULATIONS RELATING TO GENERAL ADMINISTRATION; DEVELOPMENT ORDERS; GUARANTEES SURETIES AND FUTURE IMPROVEMENT PAYMENT; PROVIDING FOR REVIEW PROCESSES FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND GENERAL REVIEW, LAND DIVISION APPLICATIONS; MISCELLANEOUS PLANNING APPLICATIONS, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS; MARINE CONSTRUCTION APPLICATIONS, CONDITIONAL USES, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, CHANGE OF USES, APPEALS, SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS, VARIANCES; PROVIDING FOR REGULATIONS RELATING TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND WIRELESS FACILITIES; PROVIDING FOR SITE DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW; PROVIDING FOR PUBLIC PROCEDURES AND MEETINGS; ESTABLISHING CITY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES; PROVIDING FOR PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING AND PROVIDING FOR DEVELOPMENT FEES.

Staff gave an overview of the proposed ordinance changes. Mayor Wagner then opened the public hearing to receive comments from the public.

There being no comments offered, Mayor Wagner closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to city council for their discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Bagby made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Braden, to approve second reading of Ordinance 25-24-LC. Councilmember Destin made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Bagby, to amend the ordinance by adding an exemption for single-family residential homes.

After some discussion, Mayor Wagner re-opened the public hearing and called for any comments from the public.

Mr. Alan Osborne spoke in opposition to the proposed ordinance and fee structure, stating that many Holiday Isle lots have longstanding recorded covenants allowing docks and that owners have already invested in and maintained seawalls, slips, and related improvements. He expressed concern that the ordinance had not been fully considered, could conflict with existing neighborhood documents, and could penalize vacant boat lot owners who already pay significant property taxes. He also stated that many Holiday Isle property owners may not be aware of the proposed changes and argued that other users and funding sources, including county-related impacts and non-resident boat traffic, should be considered instead of placing additional costs or restrictions on private property owners.

There being no further comments, Mayor Wagner closed the public hearing and called for the vote. Second reading of Ordinance 25-24-LC, as amended, passed 7-0.

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

A. Councilmember Braden

Councilmember Braden asked why warnings were issued to residents on Rue D'etretat. Community Development Director, Tina Deater, indicated that she would inquire with Code Compliance to get details on whether it was proactive or complaint based.

B. Councilmember Trammell

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Braden, to direct staff to review and bring back clearer definitions distinguishing vehicle repair from vehicle storage, particularly for vehicles kept on lots longer than 30 days, lacking tags, inoperable, or abandoned. The motion passed 7-0. Councilmember Trammell also volunteered to serve as Council liaison regarding Mr. Fitzpatrick's issues.

C. Councilmember Destin

Councilmember Destin noted that existing screening requirements for vehicle storage appear to remain in the City Code but may not currently be enforced. He suggested staff first review the regulations already on the books before considering additional definitions or changes.

Councilmember Destin provided an additional update on discussions with various board members regarding Norriego Point, stating that each indicated they were not in favor of preventing Destin from enforcing its Comprehensive Plan or Land Development Code. He noted that while a final resolution had not yet been reached, he had not found any board member who supported disregarding the City's rules.

D. Councilmember Bagby

Councilmember Bagby reported that preliminary property valuation numbers showed an estimated 1.1% increase, describing it as essentially flat. He stated that the upcoming budget year may be challenging and noted that discussions may include COLA policy considerations, possible merit

stipends instead of merit raises, and identifying potential 2% to 3% reductions in the operations budget.

E. Councilmember Hebert

Councilmember Hebert asked about the City's prior use of reminder stickers on trash cans to notify residents and renters of pickup days and the requirement to return cans to the property after collection. Dr. Young indicated that she would be happy to work with staff to have additional stickers made up.

F. Councilmember Morgan

Councilmember Morgan thanked Council for their support in selecting him as Interim City Councilmember and that he is in support of Council's position with Okaloosa County.

G. Councilmember Schmidt

1) Parking Lot – Options

Councilmember Schmidt discussed some issues he observed at the Terra Cotta parking lot area noting that the City might benefit from allowing shorter parking fee options.

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to direct staff to bring back a revised parking fee structure that encompasses a \$5.00 hourly rate for the Terra Cotta parking lot until Labor Day. The motion passed 7-0.

H. Mayor Wagner

Mayor Wagner asked staff to place under his name for the next meeting "Sunset Parking Fee Hours"

I. City Attorney

- 1) A call for an executive session on May 18 at 5:30 for 2025-CC-004246 Chandler, Lennox v. City of Destin.
- 2) A call for an executive session on May 18 at 5:45 for case 2025-CA-0694 Centeno, Daisy, v. Key Destin Owner LLC, City of Destin, et al.

Council acknowledged and agreed to the executive sessions.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Alan Osborne thanked the Council for the board appointments and stated he intends to bring solutions, not just concerns. He encouraged the City to think creatively about revenue and policy options, including retaining government surplus property, using vacant lots for vehicle storage or towing-related purposes, and addressing impacts from county-related tourism and boating activity.

Mr. John Stephens reported that during monthly water sampling with the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, SeaCoast High School students participated using underwater drones. While sampling in the harbor, visibility was poor and the bottom could not be seen, preventing effective drone use. He expressed concern that the issue may relate to the pump being out of service and hoped it would be repaired soon.

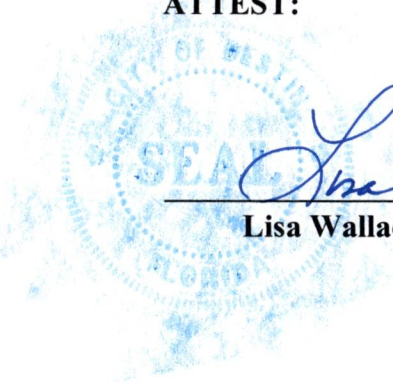
Josh of 221 Main Street commented on vehicle storage and towing regulations, noting that Florida law provides auto shops with a process to obtain and dispose of abandoned vehicles rather than allowing them to occupy valuable space. He emphasized that towing providers on the Sheriff's Office rotation are an essential part of public safety and stated that additional discussion is needed regarding towing fees and related regulations. He requested that the matter be revisited so Council can ask questions and make a more informed decision.

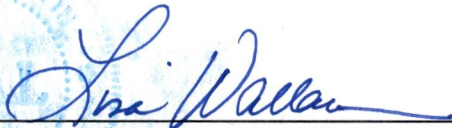
Stan Nikolov stated that the representatives of the towing companies were not requesting the City to match Okaloosa County's towing rates, but rather to allow higher rates due to the increased cost of operating within Destin. The speaker noted that the City's towing ordinance had not been updated in four years and emphasized that operating costs, including insurance and property costs, have increased significantly during that time. They expressed concern that matching County rates could discourage towing businesses from remaining in Destin and could result in longer response times if services had to come from neighboring areas such as Fort Walton Beach or Niceville.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

ATTEST:





Lisa Wallace, City Clerk



Bobby Wagner, Mayor