

**City Commission Meeting
December 16, 2025
6:00 p.m.**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Adrian Pettila, Mayor
Karen Marriott, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, District 1
Lisa Robinson, Commissioner, District 2
Betty Rzewnicki, Commissioner, District 3
Jon Maldonado, Commissioner, District 4

STAFF PRESENT:

Frances Robustelli, City Manager	Jim Kilpatrick, Fire Chief
Ralf Brookes, City Attorney	Camden Mills, Public Services Director
Renee Rose, City Clerk	Brandon Berry, Senior Planner
Kristin Coman, Planning Manager	Gil Martinez, Senior Planner

Mayor Pettila called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

City Manager Robustelli requested to continue items 5b and 6d to January 13, 2026 at 6:00pm. Commissioner Maldonado requested to add two items for discussion: Pass-a-Grille dog beach and CRD-EA. Commissioner Robinson requested to add Commission Meeting dates for discussion. City Attorney Brookes recommended continuing item 5e to January 13, 2026 at 6:00pm, stating that the statutory notice to the Department of State must be published at least 30 days prior to an ordinance becoming effective. He said the notice has been published, but the 30-day period has not yet been met. As a result, the effective date would be delayed until after the next meeting. Mayor Pettila requested to add a discussion item on permitting.

Motion: **Commissioner Rzewnicki moved, Commissioner Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the December 16, 2025 City Commission Agenda, as amended.**

2. PRESENTATIONS

a. Proclamation Recognizing St. Pete Beach Fire Department Personnel for Exceptional Emergency Medical Response

Mayor Pettila read a proclamation recognizing Firefighter/Paramedics Ty Uelvich, Max Lichtig, and Scott Burford for their response to a medical emergency that resulted in an unexpected field childbirth. The crew assessed the situation and provided skilled, compassionate care, working together to safely deliver the baby. Their calm response and teamwork were later recognized by the Pinellas County EMS Medical Director and the Director of EMS & Fire Administration, highlighting the high level of care provided by the St. Pete Beach Fire Department. Chief Kilpatrick thanked them for their actions and presented each of them with tokens of appreciation.

b. Merry Pier Bait Shack

Camden Mills, Public Services Director, gave a presentation on the status of the Merry Pier Bait Shack and to request direction on next steps. His presentation was made a part of the meeting record. He reviewed prior Commission direction to obtain an updated appraisal and solicit bids to evaluate the feasibility of rebuilding the structure in compliance with current building and FEMA standards. The structure is not designated historic and was determined to be substantially damaged by both the City's Building Official and FEMA. An updated appraisal valued the building at \$210,000. Competitive bids were solicited for a compliant rebuild, with the lowest qualifying bid totaling approximately \$210,682, excluding permitting and engineering costs. When those additional costs are factored in, the estimated rebuild cost is approximately \$250,000. Insurance proceeds increased from \$62,000 to \$82,000 since April, while the previously obtained demolition bid remains just under \$66,000. FEMA review is ongoing, but any insurance proceeds would offset potential FEMA assistance, and no additional FEMA funding is anticipated beyond insurance. He explained that because the structure is substantially damaged and located in a VE flood zone, any rebuild would require compliance with current floodplain

regulations, including elevation or wet/dry floodproofing. A rebuild would also require coordination and permitting with the City, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and Pinellas County due to the overwater location. Two options were presented for Commission consideration: demolish the structure and not rebuild or perform selective demolition and rebuild to current standards. Current available funding totals approximately \$144,650, consisting of insurance proceeds and FY26 CIP funding, resulting in a projected funding gap if a rebuild is selected. He noted that a decision is required in order to proceed with renewal of the City's submerged land lease for the pier.

The discussion focused on the feasibility and implications of rebuilding the Merry Pier Bait Shack versus demolishing the structure. It was clarified that the construction bids reflected a rebuild to current building and FEMA floodproofing standards, not an "as-is" replacement, and that while a more basic design might reduce costs, any rebuild would still need to comply with applicable floodplain requirements. It was confirmed that if the structure is fully demolished, it could not be rebuilt under current regulations, making demolition a permanent loss. Further clarification was provided regarding FEMA's 50% rule and how it applies differently to commercial structures, noting that wet floodproofing is permissible and less restrictive than residential standards. Questions were raised about the status of the submerged land lease. Mr. Mills explained that the lease has expired but extensions are available due to post-hurricane conditions, and that maintaining the lease is necessary to preserve and operate the pier and related structures. Discussion also addressed the condition of the pier, which was reported to be in good condition aside from the bait shack, and that insurance valuations and leases are separate for the building and dock. Financial considerations were reviewed, including current insurance proceeds, CIP funding, anticipated rebuild costs, and estimated carrying costs. The remaining funding gap could potentially be recovered within a few years through lease revenue, framing the rebuild as a financially viable investment. There was discussion on the community value of the Merry Pier Bait Shack, noting strong public support for preserving it. While acknowledging the need to control costs and avoid unnecessary enhancements, there was general consensus that rebuilding the structure, if feasible within reasonable financial parameters, would benefit the community and preserve an important feature.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following spoke in support of saving Merry Pier Bait Shack:

Ehren Hollenback

Carl Hollenback, 2541 E. Vina Del Mar Blvd

Bill Loughery, 2405 Pass-a-Grille Way

John Kavanagh, current Pier leaseholder

Amy Loughery, 102 19th Ave

Motion: Commissioner Maldonado moved, Commissioner Rzewnicki seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the rebuilding of the Merry Pier Bait Shack with revisions and scaling down.

c. House Relocation to Pass-a-Grille Park

Frances Robustelli, City Manager, provided a presentation outlining options and considerations related to the donation and relocation of a 1925 wood-framed house to replace the former Shuffleboard Building. She provided background assumptions, including that the structure is a contributing resource but not locally designated historic, that \$177,000 is currently budgeted through insurance proceeds and the FY26 CIP, and that demolition quotes and rebuild estimates for the existing Shuffleboard Building have already been obtained. She reviewed what is known and unknown about the proposed relocation, including cost uncertainties, lack of formal community outreach, unknown long-term use of the structure, potential hidden conditions with a 100-year-old building, insurance implications, and ongoing operations and maintenance costs. A site overview was presented showing the donor house, the Shuffleboard park location, and constraints related to size, layout, trees, and existing park conditions. The house's size and residential configuration were contrasted with the former small, open-air

Shuffleboard Building, highlighting challenges in adapting the structure for community use. The presentation detailed regulatory and procedural requirements needed to proceed, including historic designation, certificates of appropriateness, engineering inspections, surveying, demolition and utility disconnects, relocation permits, accessibility and ADA compliance, site preparation, and coordination of temporary or permanent placement. She noted that relocating and converting the house for public use would trigger significant building code and accessibility requirements. A comparable project in Sarasota was presented as a case study, noting a three-year timeline and total cost of approximately \$425,000, despite donated services. Based on current construction costs, regulatory requirements, and staffing considerations, it is estimated the proposed project could cost approximately \$650,000 plus staff time, with a best-case timeline of roughly 24 months.

Discussion highlighted that the estimated 14-month timeline to complete the move would conflict with prior commitments to the homeowners and would impact their rebuild. While initial community outreach generated strong interest and enthusiasm due to the historical and community significance of the Shuffleboard site, support declined as cost, timing, and feasibility concerns became clearer. It was acknowledged that time constraints and projected costs, including examples of comparable projects, made the proposal difficult to justify at this stage, and that there is insufficient time to scale the project down in a meaningful way. The discussion reflected that, despite a strong start, the project is not supported in District 4, and that lessons learned should inform future efforts. Additional comments noted similar feedback from residents, with early support giving way to questions about overall cost and whether the project should be prioritized given current City needs. Questions were raised regarding whether funds currently allocated to the Shuffleboard project could be redirected if the scope were reduced or the project discontinued. Staff clarified that the funding consists of general fund and insurance proceeds, both of which could be reallocated by Commission action, including potential use toward funding needs at the Merry Pier project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following spoke in reluctant support of abandoning house moving project:

Bill Loughery, 2405 Pass-a-Grille Way

Michael Pezza, 103 24th Ave

Jay Anderson, 202 Pass-a-Grille Way

The following spoke in support of moving forward with house moving project:

Charles Jordan, New World Builders, DeLand, FL

Commissioners expressed disappointment that the historic home could not be preserved due to timing and financial constraints, while emphasizing the importance of continued efforts to protect historic properties in the community. Appreciation was extended to the homeowners, preservation advocates, subject matter experts, and City staff for their work and commitment. It was noted that a potential private-sector effort to relocate the home within St. Pete Beach may still be explored administratively. Consensus was acknowledged to abandon the project.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

David Hubbard, 1240 Boca Ciega Isle Dr, thanked City staff for a successful tree lighting event and Festival of Trees, suggested improved communication and promotion of charitable components and participating local businesses, expressed interest in a volunteer-based outreach program to help publicize community events, and noted that limited publicity may have contributed to low participation in the boat parade.

Kathy Garchow, 3607 Casa Blanca Ave, expressed appreciation for the City's transparency and collaboration, and encouraged the Commission and City Manager to consider providing clearer, regular updates on the status and progress of major capital improvement projects, noting the importance of tracking priorities and communicating openly when projects are delayed, changed, or no longer feasible.

David Garcia, Government Affairs for Spectrum, thanked the City for its ongoing partnership, particularly during hurricane response efforts, expressed appreciation for clarification on a recent communications and fiber

infrastructure ordinance, and reaffirmed interest in continued collaboration with City officials.

4. CONSENT

- a. Approval of the Corey Avenue Business Association Temporary License Agreement Renewal for the Corey Avenue Sunday Market.
- b. Approve the dedication of a memorial tree and bench, and authorize the renaming of the St. Pete Beach Library Community Room in honor of Bonnie Traiman.
- c. Accept Expenditures for Emergency and Repairs FY 2025 for Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton.

Mayor Petrila called attention to item 4c, emphasizing the importance of transparency in City spending, noting that approximately \$12.5 million has been expended to date on hurricane recovery efforts, with reimbursement anticipated through insurance and FEMA, supported by a previously approved interest-free bridge loan. The detailed expenditure list reflects the extensive operational demands placed on staff during recovery, including long work hours that required providing meals, and that the cost tracking remains ongoing.

Motion: Vice Mayor Marriott moved, Commissioner Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the December 16, 2025 City Commission Consent Agenda, as amended.

Mayor Petrila called for a recess at 7:28pm. The meeting resumed at 7:36pm.

5. ORDINANCES

a. Final Reading of Ordinance 2025-23: Amendment of Procurement Regulations and Procedures

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA PROVIDING AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE III, DIVISION 4, SECTIONS 2-281 THROUGH SECTIONS 2-295 OF THE ST. PETE BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING PURPOSE AND INTENT; UPDATING AND CLARIFYING THE DEFINITIONS; ESTABLISHING THE AUTHORITY AND DUTIES OF THE PROCUREMENT MANAGER; CLARIFYING THE AUTHORITY TO AWARD; UPDATING THE PROCUREMENT METHODOLOGY AND EMERGENCY PROCUREMENTS; CHANGING CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION; PRESCRIBING PROCUREMENT PROTESTS; ESTABLISHING A VENDOR SUSPENSION AND DEBARMENT PROCESS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; CONFLICTS; SEVERABILITY; CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERROR; CONSTRUCTION; PUBLICATION; AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Attorney Brookes read Ordinance 2025-23 in title only. He also noted a change in Sec. 2-283, subsection 20. The language reads county attorney and will be corrected to read city attorney.

The discussion addressed corrections to 2.283 Exemptions by removing a duplicate reference to travel expenses (item 26) and clarifying that item 24 applies only to software upgrades or modification services, not general software purchases. A general comment also emphasized the importance of ensuring procurement processes compare equivalent proposals and reflect careful, cost-conscious evaluation consistent with best purchasing practices.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward.

Motion: Vice Mayor Marriott moved, Commissioner Maldonado seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the final reading of Ordinance 2025-23 with changes.

b. Final Reading of Ordinance 2025-21: Amending Land Development Code standards pertaining to accessory structures, ancillary equipment, and nonconforming uses and structures, and allowing encroachment of stairs and balconies under specified circumstances.

c. Final Reading of Ordinance 2025-22: Adopting Land Development Code Sec. 6.26. pertaining to reasonable accommodations for certified recovery residences

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, CREATING LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE SECTION 6.26. – CERTIFIED RECOVERY RESIDENCES; ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CERTIFIED RECOVERY RESIDENCES AND A PROCESS FOR REQUESTING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FROM LOCAL LAND USE REGULATIONS AS MANDATED BY NEW FLORIDA STATUTE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Brookes read Ordinance 2025-22 in title only.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward.

Motion: Vice Mayor Marriott moved, Commissioner Rzewnicki seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the final reading of Ordinance 2025-22.

d. Final Reading of Ordinance 2025-25: Amending Land Development Code Sec. 3.14 Appeals

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENTS TO LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE 3.14 APPEALS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, CONFLICTS; SEVERABILITY; CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; CONSTRUCTION; PUBLICATION; AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Brookes read Ordinance 2025-25 in title only.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward.

Motion: Commissioner Maldonado moved, Commissioner Rzewnicki seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the final reading of Ordinance 2025-25.

e. First Reading of Ordinance 2025-24: Revising Code of Ordinances Chapters 131 & 132 Pertaining to Communication and Small Wireless Facilities

6. ACTION ITEMS

b. Resolution 2025-28: Approving Conditional Use Permit No. 25112 for Phase I & II Pump Station 1 Improvements at 0 & 8665 Boca Ciega Dr

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 25112 PURSUANT TO LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE SECTIONS 6.19. AND 19.2. FOR THE PHASE 1 AND 2 IMPROVEMENTS OF MASTER PUMP STATION 1 AT 0 AND 8665 BOCA CIEGA DR, WITH PARCEL NUMBERS OF 25-31-15-97686-000-0010 AND 25-31-15-95202-000-0050; PROVIDING FOR CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERROR AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Brookes read Resolution 2025-28 in title only. City Clerk Rose swore in all those who would be speaking or presenting to the Commission.

Commissioners declared their ex-parte disclosures:

Commissioner Maldonado reviewed the packet and spoke with staff.

Commissioner Rzewnicki reviewed the packet and spoke with staff.

Mayor Petrila reviewed the packet and spoke with staff.

Commissioner Robinson reviewed the packet.

Vice Mayor Marriott reviewed the packet.

There was a request from staff to hear item 6b first, due to technical difficulties.

Brandon Berry, Senior Planner, presented Conditional Use Permit No. 25112 for 8665 Boca Drive, involving two adjacent City-owned properties. The request is for improvements associated with Phases 1 and 2 of the Pump Station No. 1 Rehabilitation Project, including replacement of the exterior odor control unit, replacement of

submersible pumps, installation of a new elevated generator, and related interior, exterior, and underground improvements. The properties are located at the southeastern end of 87th Avenue and are zoned RU-2 Residential and Transportation Utility District. Because the site is located in a residential zoning district and is under three acres in size, public utility improvements require approval through a conditional use permit. A site survey and plans for both phases were reviewed as part of the presentation. Phase 1 improvements include decommissioning the existing second-story generator, installing a new generator with a sound-reducing enclosure on the north side of the building, relocating odor control equipment, installing underground improvements, and constructing an eight-foot simulated stone wall to provide partial screening of the generator and odor control equipment. Phase 2 improvements include building renovations with no significant change to the existing footprint, additional landscaping to improve visual screening, and adjustments to exterior lighting. Landscaping is planned to be installed in Phase 2, with fast-growing buttonwood trees expected to provide effective screening within several years. Noise, visual impacts, lighting, and compatibility with surrounding residential uses were addressed. The generator enclosure would reduce noise by approximately 25 decibels at one meter, with testing limited to five minutes per month during daytime hours, and continuous operation only during emergency events. Lighting impacts will be reviewed and addressed during the building permit stage to avoid spillover to adjacent properties. The request is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, including policies related to minimizing nuisances, providing efficient and cost-effective public facilities, and prioritizing critical infrastructure improvements. Staff identified no basis for denial, and recommend approval of the conditional use permit as presented, with no conditions proposed.

The discussion focused on community outreach and potential impacts related to the Pump Station No. 1 improvements. It was confirmed that formal notice was sent to surrounding property owners, including the Pinellas County School Board for the nearby school, but no direct outreach to the school administration occurred. There were concerns regarding the effectiveness of the new odor control system, based on past odor issues affecting the school and nearby residences. Camden Mills, Public Services Director, confirmed that the existing odor control equipment will be fully replaced with a new system expected to significantly improve performance. Noise impacts from the proposed generator were also discussed, particularly in relation to the nearby school and residential areas across the water. Mr. Berry clarified that the stated noise level of approximately 90 decibels is measured at one meter and would be significantly reduced at greater distances, including at the school. The generator would only operate during power outages and would be tested for approximately five minutes per month during daytime hours. The enclosure would surround the generator, and while enhanced sound-reduction enclosures are available, they would involve substantially higher costs. The generator has already been purchased and has a long lead time for delivery. Additional questions addressed the generator's size, its operation over water where sound may travel farther, and whether alternative power sources such as battery storage or solar were considered. Mr. Mills indicated that other options, including natural gas, were evaluated previously and that the diesel generator was determined to be the most feasible solution, though staff agreed to follow up with additional technical details. The importance of carefully scheduling generator testing to minimize potential disruption was also noted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward.

Motion: Commissioner Robinson moved, Vice Mayor Marriott seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve Resolution 2025-28.

a. Resolution 2025-27: Approving Conditional Use Permit No. 25133 for open deck dining on the second and third floors of a newly constructed restaurant on the property located at 804 Pass-a-Grille Way.
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR OR OPEN DECK DINING ON THE SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS OF A NEWLY CONSTRUCTED RESTAURANT ON THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 804 PASS-A-GRILLE WAY AT

PARCEL NUMBER 19-32-16-58932-005-0030 WITH ADDRESS OF 804 PASS-A-GRILLE WAY PURSUANT TO LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE SECTION (LDC Sec. 40.4.(b); INCORPORATING THE CONDITIONS OUTLINED HEREIN; AND PROVIDING FOR CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERROR AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Brookes read Resolution 2025-27 in title only. City Clerk Rose swore in all those who would be speaking or presenting to the Commission.

Commissioners declared their ex-parte disclosures:

Commissioner Maldonado met with the applicants, conducted a site visit, reviewed the TRC meeting, read the LDC pertaining to the application, and conducted outreach in the community.

Commissioner Rzewnicki conducted a site visit, spoke with residents in the area and watched the TRC meeting. Mayor Petrila reviewed the application package, read the LDC and comp plan, conducted a site visit and spoke with residents.

Commissioner Robinson conducted a site visit, spoke with residents, reviewed the packet as well as the TRC minutes and the LDC.

Vice Mayor Marriott read the full packet, the application packet, and the TRC, and conducted a site visit.

There was a request from staff to hear item 6b first, due to technical difficulties.

Gil Martinez, Senior Planner, summarized Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Case No. 25133 for the property located at 804 Pass-a-Grille Way. The applicant seeks approval to establish open-air deck dining on the second and third floors of a newly constructed three-story restaurant, with the third-floor outdoor dining area requiring conditional use approval pursuant to Land Development Code Sections 40.4(b) and 4.12. The property is located within CRD-EA. The proposed development includes covered outdoor patios integrated into the building design and oriented toward the Pass-a-Grille Channel. The second floor would include approximately 500 square feet of outdoor dining with 52 total seats on that level, while the third floor would include approximately 640 square feet of outdoor dining with 107 total seats on that level. The total seating capacity for the restaurant is approximately 159 seats. Renderings, surveys, zoning maps, and floor plans were presented to illustrate the building's orientation, layout, and relationship to surrounding properties. Mr. Martinez reported that no live or amplified music is proposed for the outdoor dining areas and that the proposed hours of operation are 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., consistent with nearby commercial and recreational uses. The project was found to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and applicable LDC standards, including flood-resilient construction requirements. The design was described as modest in scale, architecturally integrated, and compatible with the coastal character and mixed-use pattern of the district, with no anticipated adverse impacts to nearby residential areas. He recommended approval of the conditional use permit, with conditions that the permit run with the land, prohibit outdoor live or amplified music, and require that any changes to loading, unloading, or operational logistics be reviewed through a CUP amendment. Future amendments would also be required for any proposed changes that could introduce new impacts, ensuring continued protection of the surrounding area's character.

Discussion focused on support for the proposed project and staff's recommended conditions. It was noted that the site and building design were well suited to the area, with the nearest residences located approximately 316 feet to the south and 328 feet to the north, and that the rear alley loading area was appropriately sized for deliveries. The project was described as reflective of the historic character of Pass-a-Grille, with no negative feedback reported from the surrounding district. Additional comments expressed support for the project, characterizing it as a low-impact development with high community benefit and an appropriate fit for the area. A question was raised regarding parking requirements for the proposed seating capacity, and Mr. Martinez clarified that there is no parking requirement within the CRD-EA, noting that an ADA-accessible parking space will be provided at ground level.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ruth Schiros, 1002 Pass-a-Grille Way, spoke in support of the project. She lives north of the property.

Mayor Petrila described the project as an example of responsible, high-quality redevelopment that is compatible with the historic character of the neighborhood, appearing as though it has always belonged in the area and representing a positive addition to Pass-a-Grille Way and 8th Avenue.

Motion: Commissioner Maldonado moved, Commissioner Rzewnicki seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve Resolution 2025-27.

c. Resolution 2025-29: Live Local Act Property Tax Exemption

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, PURSUANT TO SECTION 196.1978(3)(o), FLA. STAT., ELECTING TO NOT EXEMPT PROPERTY FROM AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAX UNDER SECTION 196.1978(3)(D)1.A., FLA. STAT., COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE “LIVE LOCAL ACT PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION”; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS, REQUIRED FINDINGS, DIRECTION TO THE MAYOR, DIRECTION TO THE CITY MANAGER, APPLICABILITY, SEVERABILITY, AND A CONDITIONAL EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Brookes read Resolution 2025-29 in title only.

Attorney Brookes stated that adoption of the resolution is a statutory requirement that must occur before January 1, but availability of the required Shimberg Report was delayed due to a federal government shutdown. The resolution authorizes execution prior to the deadline, with final filing contingent upon the 2025 Shimberg Report confirming the City’s eligibility to opt out. If eligibility is confirmed, the action would allow the City to retain more ad valorem tax revenue for local use.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward.

Motion: Commissioner Robinson moved, Vice Mayor Marriott seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve Resolution 2025-29.

d. Approval of Settlement Agreement and Amended Development Order — Red, White & Booze, LLC.

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

a. Discussion regarding dog beach at PAG

Commissioner Maldonado opened a discussion regarding the petitions to convert the Pass-a-Grille dog beach to an off-leash area. He asked if the Parks and Recreation Committee can review the request. Discussion included researching feasibility, including ADA compliance, safety considerations, costs, potential fencing needs, impacts to adjacent private properties, and possible unintended consequences. Comparisons to other municipalities with off-leash dog beaches were discussed, noting both potential benefits and concerns related to public safety, nearby residences, children, traffic, and enforcement challenges. The possibility of private funding support for infrastructure such as fencing was raised, along with questions about whether fencing is permissible on the beach. There was general agreement that the issue is not urgent but warrants further study, with the intent for the Parks and Recreation Committee to review the matter and report back to the Commission, potentially at a future meeting following committee review.

b. Discussion regarding CRD-EA and height limits

Commissioner Maldonado brought a request to consider a formal review of the CRD-EA designation in Pass-a-Grille due to increasing conflicts between CRD-EA, ROR, and other zoning provisions that are creating interpretation challenges for boards, applicants, and staff. It was noted that the CRD-EA appears to have been established for a specific project that was never realized, and that its continued application may no longer serve its original purpose. Recent development proposals have highlighted boundary issues and unintended impacts on the historic character of Pass-a-Grille, placing staff in a difficult position when interpreting overlapping

regulations. He requested to bring this item back for discussion at a January Commission meeting to provide clearer guidance, particularly ahead of upcoming Board of Adjustment cases where precedent may be set. He also raised concerns regarding height limits in Pass-a-Grille, particularly how base flood elevation and rooftop or ancillary spaces are being calculated and perceived. Limited historical documentation and varying interpretations have contributed to confusion and public skepticism about allowable heights. He requested a review to better understand the original intent of these regulations, assess whether adjustments or clarifications are needed, and establish clearer guidance moving forward. His goal is to improve clarity, acknowledge where grandfathering may be required, and set a more consistent and transparent framework for future development in Pass-a-Grille.

Discussion focused on how overlapping zoning designations and evolving interpretations are creating confusion for applicants, boards, and staff. It was noted that the CRD-EA was originally established for a specific development concept that did not proceed, and questions were raised about whether the district still serves a valid purpose or is now producing unintended consequences, including conflicts with ROR zoning and impacts on the historic character of the area. Limited availability of historical records was identified as a challenge, contributing to inconsistent interpretation and reliance on professional judgment. The discussion also addressed height limits, especially how base flood elevation and allowances for non-habitable rooftop elements such as elevator shafts, mechanical equipment, and accessory spaces are being applied. Recent development trends are pushing structures to maximum height and mass, creating perceptions of overbuilding and raising community concerns. The discussion emphasized the need for clarity, transparency, and uniform standards to reduce uncertainty, repeated board discussions, and operational inefficiencies. There was discussion about process and timing, including whether the immediate goal should be clarification of existing regulations or potential future amendments to the Land Development Code. Senate Bill 180 may limit the City's ability to adopt more restrictive changes, but providing clearer guidance could still be valuable. Staff will return with information for further discussion at an upcoming meeting.

c. Discussion regarding Commission meeting dates

Commissioner Robinson has out of state obligations for the July 28 and August 11 Commission meetings. She is unable to attend virtually and asked for consideration of meeting date changes. City Manager Robustelli will work with the City Clerk to distribute an electronic poll to commissioners to assess alternative dates. It was acknowledged that any changes may be constrained by the budget season schedule and related Finance and Budget Review Committee meetings, which could limit available options or require additional adjustments.

d. Discussion regarding permitting

Mayor Petrila opened a discussion on building and permitting reform following the City's processing of more than 6,000 permits over the past 13 months. While acknowledging the progress made and the patience shown by residents, businesses, and contractors, he noted that current processes are not meeting desired service standards and that improvements are needed to better support recovery, customer service, and compliance requirements. He presented a proposed reform framework, organized into a short-term 90-day action plan and longer-term initiatives targeted for implementation by June 1, ahead of the next hurricane season. Near-term concepts included gathering feedback from permit volunteers, improving communication standards and customer service culture, implementing same-day permits for routine low-risk work, assigning a single point of responsibility for each permit, consolidating departmental reviews into one coordinated response, expanding in-person assistance and extended hours, and establishing clear, predictable review timelines. Longer-term initiatives included improving and simplifying the permitting website, evaluating whether the current permit portal remains viable or should be replaced, and exploring AI-assisted permit review tools to flag issues early and improve efficiency during high-volume periods. He requested input from staff and leadership on feasibility, sequencing, and resources needed to advance these reforms within the proposed timeframes.

The follow-up discussion included agreement that the City's permitting challenges stem primarily from process issues rather than staffing quality. Permitting and building staff are professional and motivated but constrained by inefficient workflows and systems. Extended email exchanges often replace what could be resolved through

brief phone calls or in-person meetings, and those delays carry real financial impacts for residents who continue to pay mortgages, rent, insurance, and storage costs while waiting on permits. There was support for the proposed concepts, particularly assigning a single point of contact for each permit, consolidating departmental reviews to avoid shifting requirements, and treating the 30-day review period as a maximum rather than a default timeline. Discussion also included exploring whether certain low-risk activities could be exempt from permitting, conducting both exit and employee interviews to identify bottlenecks, and continuing limited use of trained volunteers to assist with applicant communication. There were concerns about inconsistent interpretations of requirements for similar projects, which undermines public confidence. While a single-contact model was supported, the need for backup coverage was noted to prevent delays. The possibility of extended or evening hours was discussed cautiously due to cost and safety considerations, with suggestions to pilot the concept on a limited basis. Website and portal improvements could begin immediately and many elements of the plan could be implemented sooner than originally proposed, recognizing permitting reform as a top priority for residents and businesses.

City Manager Robustelli thanked the Commission for recognizing staff efforts and progress to date, noting that while improvements have been made, continuous improvement is necessary as laws, ordinances, and community needs evolve. She stated that the proposed reform concepts are generally reasonable and aligned with work already underway, and that hearing feedback collectively was helpful for guiding leadership and process improvements. She proposed providing monthly updates beginning in January to report on progress made, actions completed, and next steps, and welcomed continued feedback from Commissioners based on community input. She noted that most items in the 90-day action plan appear achievable, though implementation of same-day permits may require additional legal review and research into best practices and eligible permit types. Regarding longer-term initiatives targeted for June 1, she explained that some items may require funding and further scoping, particularly website improvements and evaluation of a new permitting system. Staff is already working to define requirements for a future permitting platform while making interim improvements to the existing system. She also noted that significant staff capacity has recently been devoted to critical finance and payroll system implementations, which has affected the pace of other initiatives.

8. CITY CLERK, CITY MANAGER, CITY ATTORNEY, AND CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Renee Rose, City Clerk – no report

Frances Robustelli, City Manager – She reported on a proposed beach event sponsored by Tradewinds and Country Thunder, for which a permit application has been submitted. The event is tentatively scheduled for May 8–10 and would coincide with the start of sea turtle and black skimmer nesting seasons. Staff held an initial meeting with the organizers to outline requirements and noted that permit applications have been submitted to FWC and FDEP. Additional coordination is underway with local turtle monitors and other stakeholders to evaluate potential impacts. The event is expected to sell approximately 10,000–12,000 tickets per day. No state or City permits have been issued at this time.

She also provided an update regarding elevation projects. Meetings were recently held with two specialty contractors to address procedural challenges, resulting in quicker resolution and improved coordination. She said these issues were resolved promptly and that efforts are ongoing to meet directly with contractors and applicants to help navigate permitting processes more efficiently.

She read a statement expressing appreciation for the community's resiliency, cooperation, and civic pride. She expressed gratitude for the City's preparedness during hurricane season and the efforts of residents, businesses, volunteers, and staff. Many residents continue to recover from last year's storms; the city will continue to support every step of the way. She concluded with holiday well wishes.

City Attorney Brookes – no report

Commissioner Maldonado – He thanked the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for its response to a recent incident

involving a vehicle pursuit and helicopter assistance, which resulted in a successful apprehension. Holiday and New Year well wishes were shared, along with appreciation for the collaboration and cooperation among City staff, fellow commissioners, and the community. He highlighted the value of working together through established processes to achieve meaningful results.

Commissioner Rzewnicki – She thanked staff, the Commission, and City leadership, with holiday well wishes as this marked the final meeting of 2025. She acknowledged that many residents continue to face hardships following the storms, including displacement, delayed permits, and financial challenges. Community members were encouraged to look out for neighbors in need and to share available local resources during the holiday season.

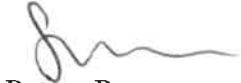
Commissioner Robinson – She announced that the Three Palms Point Neighborhood Association will hold its annual luminary display on Christmas Eve, marking its 53rd year. Luminary bag assembly will take place Saturday, December 20, at 10:00 a.m. at 475 64th Avenue. She thanked Linda Macy for hosting preparations and to the neighborhood board for organizing the event. Caroling will take place at the library tomorrow night. Holiday well wishes were extended to the community.

Vice Mayor Marriott – She shared that Beach Meats grocery deli is making progress and is expected to open in January. Appreciation was expressed to City staff and the Corey Avenue Business Association for successful holiday events, and residents were advised that fire department sirens on Saturday will be part of a Santa event. Holiday well wishes were extended.

Mayor Petrila – He reflected on the past year of service, noting it was challenging but rewarding, and expressed appreciation for serving the community. Recent holiday events were highlighted as successful and well attended. He concluded with holiday well wishes and recognition that this was the final commission meeting of the year.

Mayor Petrila adjourned the meeting at 9:50pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: JANUARY 13, 2026



RENEE ROSE
CITY CLERK



ADRIAN PETRILA
MAYOR