City Commission Meeting
June 23, 2026
6:00 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:
Scott Tate, Mayor
Karen Marriott, Commissioner, District 1
Lisa Robinson, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, District 2
Al Causey, Commissioner, District 3
Jon Maldonado, Commissioner, District 4

STAFF PRESENT:
Frances Robustelli, City Manager
Ralf Brookes, City Attorney
Renee Rose, City Clerk
Adam Poirrier, Assistant City Manager
Camden Mills, Public Services Director
Brandon Berry, Senior Planner

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

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Maldonado requested to add a discussion item on hyper-scale data centers as item 6a. City Manager Robustelli requested to pull Consent item 3c to be heard as an action item.

Motion: **Commissioner Marriott moved, Commissioner Causey seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the June 23, 2026 City Commission Agenda, as amended.**

2. AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Amanda Sanyigo, 46th Ave, asserted the public's customary use rights to St. Pete Beach and urged the City to formally codify those rights in the City Code.

Vincent Tormenia, Casablanca Ave., requested an update on the Publix/Brixmor property and raised concerns about short-term rentals and corporate ownership of residential properties, including impacts on the community and tax compliance.

Deborah Schechner, Boca Ciega Isle Dr., shared that visitors value St. Pete Beach's low-rise character and raised concerns about street lighting, lack of an update on the mothball issue, and preserving public access and customary use of the dry sand beach.

Phyllis Parker, Casablanca Ave., noted a proposal she sent to Commission to reduce the minimum vacation-rental stay to 14 days and establish a licensing fee, stating both measures should remain linked to support neighborhood protections, homeowner participation, and revenue for resiliency projects.

Kathy Garchow, Casablanca Ave., encouraged early collaboration with residents, volunteers, businesses, and the City on community events. She highlighted an upcoming regional flood listening session, urging public participation and requesting that it be recorded.

Dana Richardson, Bahama Way S., spoke in opposition to signage and restrictions that could impair customary use of the beach, requested that any signs be placed landward of the CCCL, and asserted the public's right to continued customary use of both the dry and wet sand areas.

3. CONSENT

a. Approval of the June 9, 2026 City Commission Work Session Minutes and Regular Meeting Minutes
b. Authorize the ratification of the tentative collective bargaining agreement (CBA) Article 24: Pay Plan (Wage Reopener) reached between City Administration and the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 4966 for the period October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2028.
c. ~~Adopt Resolution 2026-20: Modifying and reapproving rules of procedure for the Historic Preservation Board, primarily to reduce the number of members required for conduct and approval of most business~~

~~from four to three.~~

d. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Services Agreement with Free Agent Marine LLC for Commercial Diving Services in the amount not to exceed $50,000 annually.
e. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Services Agreement with See Dive LLC for Commercial Diving Services in the amount not to exceed $50,000 annually.
f. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Services Agreement with Dive-Tech International, Inc. for Commercial Diving Services in the amount not to exceed $50,000 annually.
g. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with RCM Utilities, LLC for Wastewater System Rehabilitation Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
h. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with Rowland (DE), LLC for Wastewater System Rehabilitation Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
i. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with SAK Construction, LLC for Wastewater System Rehabilitation Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
j. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with Flotech Environmental, LLC for Wastewater System Rehabilitation Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
k. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with Hinterland Group, LLC for Wastewater System Rehabilitation Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
l. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with PCS Civil, LLC for Civil On-Call Construction Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
m. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with Southern Road and Bridge, LLC for Civil On-Call Construction Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
n. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC for Civil On-Call Construction Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
o. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with BCS Construction Group for Civil On-Call Construction Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
p. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement with Cathcart Construction Company Florida, LLC for Civil On-Call Construction Services on an as-needed basis in an amount not to exceed annually appropriated funding.
q. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Contract with Marolf Environmental for the Pump & Lift Station Rehabilitations capital improvement project in the amount not to exceed $2,950,000.00.

Motion: **Commissioner Marriott moved, Commissioner Maldonado seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the June 23, 2026 Consent agenda, as amended.**

3c. Adopt Resolution 2026-20: Modifying and reapproving rules of procedure for the Historic Preservation Board, primarily to reduce the number of members required for conduct and approval of most business from four to three.

Commission discussion focused on the proposed amendment to the Historic Preservation Board rules to reduce the quorum for most business from four members to three while preserving the stricter voting requirement for floodplain variance requests. City Attorney Brookes explained that floodplain variances must receive an affirmative vote of four members in order to maintain the City's CRS standing and related flood insurance benefits. To address situations where only three board members are present, the amendment was revised so that a floodplain variance denied on a 2-1 vote would be appealed at the next regular meeting with four or more members present. It was clarified that the revised procedure applies only to floodplain management variance requests and does not affect appeal procedures under Section 3.14 of the Land Development Code or other Historic Preservation Board actions such as certificates of appropriateness or historic preservation matters. Discussion also raised whether a similar appeal process should apply more broadly to other board actions when only three members are present. City Attorney Brookes said that issue could be brought back for future consideration but recommended moving forward with the floodplain-related amendment at this time due to pending applications.

Motion: **Commissioner Maldonado moved, Vice Mayor Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve Resolution 2026-20.**

4. ORDINANCES

a. Final Reading of Ordinance 2026-11: Adopting an amendment to the sign ordinance to prohibit stakes, poles, piers, and other sign structures within 50 feet of the mean high or visible water line along the Gulf, specifying exceptions and permit requirements, and detailing standards for type, number, dimensions, density, and illumination of signs, along with removal requirements.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE RELATING TO SIGNS BY CREATING SUBSECTION 26.14.(w) TO PROHIBIT SIGNS, POSTS, AND POLES WITHIN FIFTY (50) FEET OF THE MEAN HIGH OR VISIBLE WATER LINE OF THE GULF; REQUIRING A PERMIT FOR INSTALLATION OF SIGNS ON THE BEACH; PROVIDING FOR RECITALS, CODIFICATION, CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERRORS, CONSTRUCTION, PUBLICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attorney Brookes read Ordinance 2026-11 in title only. He summarized that this is the second reading of Ordinance 2026-11, which would codify the emergency ordinance adopted on April 28, 2026 establishing no signs within 50 feet of the Gulf. He advised that if the ordinance was not adopted in some form, the emergency ordinance would expire on June 27 and the current prohibition on signs within that area would lapse. He reviewed proposed revisions developed in response to Commission and public input, including clarifying that the 50 feet would be measured from whichever line is more landward between the mean high water line and the visible water line, and adding language stating that nothing in the sign code would supersede or infringe upon Florida's Customary Use Doctrine. He explained that the ordinance is intended to address public safety, environmental protection, and beach management concerns associated with signs, posts, and poles near the shoreline, including potential hazards to pedestrians and impacts on sea turtle nesting. The presentation also outlined staff's recommended regulatory framework for signs outside the prohibited 50-foot area, including limiting beach signs to portable A-frame or sandwich board signs, prohibiting illumination, requiring removal at sunset, establishing spacing and quantity limits, and requiring a permit application with supporting survey and property documentation. Governmental signs and markers placed pursuant to governmental direction, including marine turtle nesting markers, would remain exempt from the prohibition.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dominic Isgro, 46th Ave, asserted customary use rights, requested stronger sign restrictions to prevent interference with public beach access, and requested limits on signage seaward of the CCCL, including cones, with no more than one sign per lot.

Deborah Schechner, Boca Ciega Isle Dr., requested the City ensure any signage changes do not undermine customary use rights, called for prompt removal of threatening or illegal signs, and emphasized protecting public access to the dry sand beach for residents and visitors.

Robert Czyszczon, Gulf Blvd, spoke in opposition of the ordinance, asserting property owners' right to post permanent markers or signage identifying private beach areas, stating current signs reduced conflicts, and warning the proposed restrictions could create enforcement issues and potential legal challenge.

Alyssa Gagnon, St. Petersburg, argued the ordinance is unconstitutional, overly broad, and preempted by state trespass law, and urged the Commission not to adopt it due to potential legal challenges and enforcement concerns.

Dana Richardson, Bahama Way S., asked the City to protect customary use rights, move any allowable signage landward of the CCCL, and address beach misconduct through law enforcement rather than signs that could be used to support trespass claims against the public.

Melanie Vandegrift, Pass-a-Grille, said the property needs signage to establish private boundaries, address safety and liability concerns, and allow sheriff enforcement, particularly given late-night trespassing and the lack of established customary use on that stretch of beach.

Commission discussion focused on balancing public safety, beach aesthetics, private property concerns, and the need to act before the emergency ordinance expired. There was concern about the proliferation of signs on the beach, noting that permanent or excessive signage conflicts with the City's sign ordinance goals of minimizing visual clutter, protecting scenic beauty, and preserving the character of St. Pete Beach. Concerns were also raised about fairness in allowing multiple signs per zoning lot and whether the proposed spacing and sign-count provisions were workable. There was general agreement that the immediate priority was establishing and maintaining a clear, sign-free area within 50 feet of the water for public safety. Discussion highlighted hazards posed by permanently affixed signs to pedestrians, beachgoers, and emergency access, particularly at night. At the same time, commissioners acknowledged private property owners' concerns about trespassing, disorderly behavior, and liability, and expressed interest in continuing to explore other tools to address those issues without overburdening the beach with signage. The Commission also discussed how the proposed ordinance would function between the 50-foot setback and the dunes, including the requirement for permits, surveys, and limits on portable A-frame signs. Questions were raised about whether the proposed 300-foot spacing requirement should apply between all beach signs or only signs on the same zoning lot, and whether allowing up to four signs per zoning lot was appropriate. Commissioners recognized the ordinance may not fully resolve all competing concerns but generally agreed some action was necessary to preserve the emergency protections and prevent a return to unlimited warning signage on the beach. Several commissioners also supported including language clarifying that the ordinance does not supersede, negate, or infringe upon Florida's customary use doctrine.

Following discussion, the Commission reached consensus on several modifications to the ordinance, including retaining the allowance of up to four signs per zoning lot; adding the word "and" and adding the phrase "more landward at any time"; inserting "rebar" into the prohibited sign-support language; revising the spacing requirement to 300 feet from any other sign on the same zoning lot; and adding language stating that nothing in the sign code shall supersede, negate, or infringe upon Florida's customary use doctrine.

Motion: **Commissioner Marriott moved, Commissioner Causey seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to adopt Ordinance 2026-11, with changes as amended and recited by the City Attorney.**

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. City Manager Annual Evaluation

City Manager Robustelli provided a brief overview of her annual evaluation, noting that the evaluation materials were included in the agenda packet. She explained that the process included a 360-degree evaluation with input from selected staff across multiple levels of the organization, as well as feedback from the Mayor and Commission. She reported that overall feedback was positive, with continued improvement in staff morale, operational effectiveness, process improvements, documentation, and implementation of new systems and policies. She said key takeaways from the evaluation included the Commission's emphasis on infrastructure, continued community engagement and resident outreach, and ongoing staff development and organizational improvement. She appreciated the feedback received and for the opportunity to serve the City. She also outlined proposed amendments to her employment agreement, including a two-year extension of her contract term, aligning future cost-of-living adjustments with those provided to general employees, and adding a 90-day post-election transition period before any employment action could be taken following a change in Commission membership. She noted that clarifying language had been requested for the transition provision to specify that it would apply only if an election, appointment, or recall resulted in a change to the composition of the City Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward.

Commissioner discussion included strong support for the City Manager's performance, commending her professionalism, calm leadership, responsiveness, and the operational and process improvements made since her appointment. Several commissioners highlighted her ability to guide and educate the Commission, maintain neutrality while helping elected officials navigate City processes, and lead the organization through a period of transition and recovery. Positive comments also highlighted staff development, customer service, strategic thinking, teamwork, and the City Manager's availability and steady leadership style. There was general support for the proposed Second Amendment to the City Manager's employment agreement, including the contract extension, alignment of future cost-of-living adjustments with general employee COLA increases, and the post-election transition provision as amended.

Motion: Commissioner Marriot moved, Vice Mayor Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve, as amended to include post-election transition language.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

a. **Hyper-scale Data Centers** (Added)

Commissioner Maldonado introduced the concept of hyperscale data centers and raised concerns about their potential impacts on St. Pete Beach, including significant demands on electricity and water resources, strain on local infrastructure, and possible environmental impacts to the aquifer and surrounding community. He highlighted the desire to proactively address the issue before such facilities are proposed within the city or its municipal boundaries, including submerged facilities in adjacent waters. He proposed exploring an ordinance to prohibit hyperscale data center development within St. Pete Beach and also suggested support for state legislation regulating AI and data center development in order to protect local authority, residents, environmental resources, and community interests.

Commission discussion included general support for a resolution item supporting the recent state law and cautious interest in researching a local ordinance, while noting hyperscale data centers do not appear to be an immediate or likely threat to St. Pete Beach. There was concern about devoting significant staff time to an issue that is not imminent, though there was interest in preserving local control and understanding potential long-term implications. Discussion also highlighted the need to avoid unintentionally discouraging smaller-scale technology or economic development opportunities. City Attorney Brookes advised that additional research would be needed to distinguish between different types and sizes of data centers and to avoid unintended consequences. There was consensus for a resolution supporting state legislation and to allow limited preliminary research on the topic without making it a high-priority staff initiative.

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

Renee Rose, City Clerk – nothing to report.

Frances Robustelli, City Manager – She shared an update on Publix, and explained that redevelopment of the site will require a developer-hosted public community meeting before any site plan is submitted. If the project is rebuilt within the existing square footage and only elevated to remove the first floor from the floodplain, it could proceed administratively through site and building permitting without further public hearings or Commission approval. However, if the redevelopment proposes additional square footage or greater height beyond the minimum compliant elevation, a new conditional use permit and public hearings before the City Commission would be required. She noted that no formal redevelopment proposal or commitment to a specific path forward has been submitted by the property owner at this time.

City Attorney Brookes – nothing to report.

Commissioner Maldonado – He thanked the Vina Del Mar Island Association for bridge decoration.

Commissioner Causey – He encouraged continued focus on beach-related issues over the coming weeks and noted that a personal blog had been posted to his website to share current thoughts and invite public feedback. He also stated that weekly neighborhood visits will continue, with a revised schedule intended to provide greater consistency by holding neighborhood meetings on the same day each week, and directed residents to the website for updated times and locations.

Vice Mayor Robinson – She has Library Hours on Wednesday, July 8 from 5-5:45pm.

Commissioner Marriott – She thanked the Community Development and Building Departments, noting positive feedback from residents that the permitting process appears to be improving and that rebuilding activity is increasing throughout District 1. She highlighted visible progress in neighborhood recovery and redevelopment, with homes being elevated and new construction underway. She also encouraged support for local community amenities, including the Sunday Market and the reopened Beach Theatre, and remarked on the positive momentum and vibrancy returning to the community.

Mayor Tate – He thanked the community, Commission, City Manager, and staff for their work and engagement on complex issues before the City, noting the importance of continued collaboration on difficult matters. He also highlighted the strong community spirit visible throughout the city ahead of the Fourth of July and the nation's semi quincentennial celebration, encouraged residents to participate in upcoming festivities, and expressed appreciation for the positive civic engagement taking place across St. Pete Beach.

Mayor Tate adjourned the meeting at 8:26pm

MINUTES APPROVED: JULY 14, 2026

RENEE ROSE
CITY CLERK

SCOTT TATE
MAYOR