

CITY OF SAFETY HARBOR
MINUTES OF CITY COMMISSION MEETING
750 MAIN STREET, SAFETY HARBOR, FLORIDA
MARCH 2, 2026

Present: Mayor Joe Ayoub, Vice Mayor Carlos Diaz, Commissioner Nancy Besore, Commissioner Jacob Burnett, Commissioner Andy Steingold, City Attorney Sarah Allen, City Manager Josh Stefancic, Community Development Director Carol Stricklin, Recreation Director Julie Inman, City Arborist James Ryan, Library Director Britney Norsworthy, Public Works Director Renee Cooper, and City Clerk Rachael Telesca.

Mayor Ayoub called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Invocation was given by Reverend Jeff Davis, First Presbyterian Church, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PRESENTATIONS

1. TREE PLANTING IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY

Informational.

Mr. Ryan gave a presentation identifying appropriate locations to plant trees, as part of the first phase of the right-of-way tree planting program.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP Audit Agreements for the City and the CRA for Year Ending September 30, 2025.
2. Approval to execute a contract with Explosive Touch Enterprises for the July 4, 2026 Fireworks Display in the total amount of \$30,000.
3. Approval of contract with Library Interiors of Florida, Inc. in the total amount of \$35,000 for renovation of the Library Circulation Desk.
4. Approval of contract with Flooring Worx, Inc. in the amount of \$56,500 for removal and replacement of the first-floor library flooring.
5. Approval of Professional Services Task Order with Ardurra Group, Inc., for the engineering and design of the Bay Towne East Water Main Replacement for a total amount of \$512,522.

Mayor Ayoub inquired about the February 16, 2026 meeting minutes and Ms. Telesca explained that they were moved to the March 16, 2026 City Commission meeting.

Commissioner Steingold pulled Consent Item #2, Commissioner Burnett pulled Consent Item #5, and Mayor Ayoub pulled Consent Item #'s 3-4. Commissioner Besore moved, seconded by Commissioner Burnett, to approve Consent Item #1. Motion passed 5-0.

Item #2: Commissioner Steingold noted that the total increased by \$5,000 while the show duration decreased from twenty (20) minutes to fifteen (15) and Vice Mayor Diaz explained that the increase is likely due to tariff rates; Vice Mayor Diaz inquired about show location and viewing proximity and Mayor Ayoub asked about marketing and communication efforts to ensure people are aware of the new location; Ms. Inman stated that the show will take place at the City Park on Field #5; the display will be visible from the other fields as well, and the location has better restroom access and is nearby the Community Center; advertising the new location will be ongoing over the next several months through social media and website campaigns and CityScape newsletter articles; Commissioner Besore requested that staff continue to research drone-show alternatives for future displays.

Commissioner Steingold moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Diaz, to approve Consent Item #2. Motion passed 5-0.

Item #'s 3-4: Mayor Ayoub requested elaboration; Ms. Norsworthy explained that both the circulation desk and the flooring are worn and have reached their lifespan; the new circulation desk will offer a compatible layout that is conducive to serving patrons and will be designed by the original contractor; the first floor currently has six (6) different types of flooring including storm-damaged and stained carpet; Ms. Norsworthy showcased flooring samples and stated that the replacement will offer consistent flooring and durability and is necessary for high traffic areas.

Commissioner Steingold moved, seconded by Commissioner Besore, to approve Consent Item #'s 3-4. Motion passed 5-0.

Item #5: Commissioner Burnett inquired which services were included in the total and where funds stemmed from; Ms. Cooper explained that the total included design, permitting, and construction services; Water & Wastewater Enterprise Funds will be used and accumulate overtime from utility fees.

Commissioner Burnett moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Diaz, to approve Consent Item #5. Motion passed 5-0.

COMMISSION REPORTS

Vice Mayor Diaz: enjoyed the Links For Our Library Mini-Golf Main Street Festival & Golf Cart Cruise-In event on February 28th; recommended visiting Bar fly for great food and dining experience; reiterated the importance of our Auditors ensuring that organizational processes are analyzed to ensure proper internal controls and to keep the City moving forward; parking and building height restrictions need to be addressed in addition to downtown infrastructure improvements; recommended the Commission ensure overall long-term sustainability and

encourage growth; stressed the importance of the City's Watershed Management Plan and encouraged the Commission to continue efforts to ensure water quality, flood improvement and protection during storms, and management of watersheds for future development and prioritizing Capital Improvement Projects; strongly encouraged the Commission to continue investing and improving the City.

Commissioner Burnett: enjoyed the Links For Our Library Mini-Golf Main Street Festival & Golf Cart Cruise-In event on February 28th and the Art & Seafood on the Waterfront event; attended a Suncoast League of Cities presentation on education v. advocacy regarding Property Tax Reform and wishes to continue educating residents before it is potentially placed on the ballot in November; encouraged residents to vote in the upcoming Municipal Election on March 10th; Vice Mayor Diaz will be missed.

Commissioner Steingold: commended the Market on Main event; construction at the Waterfront Park looks great and looks forward to landscaping plans and the Safety Harbor Resort & Spa parking lot, however; more trees are needed and City Manager Stefancic explained that the plan will include trees on the east side of the lot; inquired when construction at the Dick Brock Memorial Pier and the City Marina will be finalized and City Manager Stefancic explained that completion is anticipated through the end of 2026; there is a substantial amount of work still, however; information including project timeline can be found by visiting: <https://cityofsafetyharbor.com/989/Hurricane-Recovery-Projects>; encouraged residents to vote in the upcoming Municipal Election on March 10th and wished the best of luck to both candidates; Vice Mayor Diaz will be missed in addition to his discussions and perspectives on topics; is concerned that the property tax bills will pass and believes more education from opposing parties is necessary to educate those on the potential impacts.

Commissioner Besore: Vice Mayor Diaz will be missed and will be remembered for his kindness from both him and his wife, Mrs. Diaz; spoke about the recent pause in recognizing particular groups in the form of proclamations, including Black/African American History Month for the month of February and Irish-American Heritage and Women's History Month for the month of March; recognition is temporarily on hold as legal researches Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) initiatives as it pertains to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); is hopeful to continue recognition efforts soon, however; in the interim, all three (3) groups were verbally acknowledged and Commissioner Besore honored her own heritage by wearing green to support Irish-American Heritage; encouraged residents to vote in the upcoming Municipal Election on March 10th; is optimistic that the property tax bills will not pass; commended the Touch-A-Truck and the Art & Seafood on the Waterfront events on February 21st.

Mayor Ayoub: commended the Touch-A-Truck and the Art & Seafood on the Waterfront events on February 21st; opposes the property tax proposals and agreed that education efforts on potential impacts should continue while possible; encouraged residents to vote in the upcoming Municipal Election on March 10th; Vice Mayor Diaz has had a tremendous impact on the City and he will be missed; understood that the Diversity Advisory Board (DAB) was placed on-hold, however; was unaware that proclamation recognition of DEI related groups was also paused; City

Manager Stefancic explained that the recognition of certain groups as outlined in Resolution No. 2021-08, *Inclusion and Community Recognition Policy*, and initiated by the DAB, have been temporarily paused as recommended by legal; Attorney Allen further explained that DEI related Boards are becoming increasingly problematic at both state and federal levels, however; we continue to research and will provide an update when possible.

City Manager Stefancic: CityScape Newsletters will arrive in mailboxes this week and include a property tax article similar to the previous edition; reminded the Commission of the upcoming Municipal Election for Seat # 4 and of the 6:00 p.m. Watershed Management Plan Public Outreach Meeting, both on March 10th.

Mayor Ayoub reminded the audience of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) meeting immediately following this meeting and following a five-minute recess.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

(THIS MEETING HAS BEEN RECORDED IN ITS ENTIRETY. THE RECORDINGS WILL BE KEPT ON FILE FOR THE REQUIRED RETENTION PERIOD. COMPLETE AUDIO CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.CITYOFSAFETYHARBOR.COM, OR BY CONTACTING THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK.)

Mayor