

MINUTES
City of Cocoa
Regular Meeting of The City Council

June 10, 2025

A Regular City Council Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, in Cocoa City Hall, in City Council Chambers, located at 65 Stone Street, in Cocoa, Florida, 32922, as publicly noticed.

I. Opening Matters:

Mayor Blake called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Chief Lamm provided the invocation, and Commander Dovale led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The City Clerk took the roll.

PRESENT:	Michael C. Blake	Mayor
	Patricia Weeks	Deputy Mayor
	Alex Goins	Councilmember
	Lavander Hearn	Councilmember
	Lorraine Koss	Councilmember
	Anthony Garganese	City Attorney
	Stockton Whitten	City Manager
	Monica Arsenault	City Clerk

ABSENT:

OTHER STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Abby Morgan, Public Works Director; Rebecca Bowman, Finance Director; Charlene Neuterman, Community Services Director; Jonathan Lamm, Fire Chief; Evander Collier, Police Chief; Jack Walsh, Utilities Director; Samantha Senger,

Communications and Economic Development Director; Lorne Stinnett, HR Director; Rob Beach, Chief Technology Officer; and Dalyn Sims, Helpdesk Support Tech.

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

1. Agenda: Regular Meeting of June 10, 2025. (2025-429).

* **MOTION by Councilmember Goins; Seconded by Mayor Blake to approve the agenda for the Regular City Council meeting of June 10, 2025 with an amendment to add a presentation to Mayor Blake from Rockledge Youth Football.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn, Koss

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

2. Minutes: (a) Town Hall Meeting of March 25, 2025. (2025-430).

Minutes: (b) Town Hall Meeting of April 24, 2025. (2025-534).

* **MOTION by Councilmember Koss; Seconded by Councilmember Goins to approve the minutes for the Town Hall Meeting of March 25, 2025 and the Town Hall meeting of April 24, 2025 as written.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn, Koss

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

II. Awards and Presentations:

1. Presentation to Mayor Blake and the Blake family by the Rockledge Youth Football organization. **(Walk-on Item)**

Courtenay Blunt, on behalf of the Rockledge Youth Football organization, offered their deepest condolences to the Blake family regarding the passing of Mayor Blake's father, Dick Blake. She, along with Councilmember Goins, presented the Mayor with a token of appreciation for his family.

2. Proclamation recognizing Aging Matters for 60 years of service in Brevard. (2025-522). (Mayor Blake)

Deputy Mayor Weeks read the proclamation into the record.

IV. Delegations:

Celeste Corrado, talked about the fundamental rights to speak and spoke about the May 13, 2025 Council meeting. She believes Councilwoman Koss was prevented from being able to vote on a very important decision. By excluding her vote, she feels that her district has no representation and asked that Council consider reinstating her ability to vote.

City Attorney Garganese provided clarification regarding the Florida Commission on Ethics standing on Councilwoman Koss's ability to vote on Ordinance 03-2025.

Councilwoman Koss spoke to this and provided further clarification as to what the Commission has based their decision on. She does not necessarily agree with the decision; however, she will recuse herself this evening and abide by their ruling. She added that she is hoping for the best tonight.

V. Consent Agenda:

1. To Approve Amendment 1 to Task Order 2024-01 under Continuing Services Agreement RFQ-23-12-COC with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$53,436 for Engineering Services for the South Courtenay Parkway Water Main Replacement Project; To Approve a Resolution Amending the FY2025 Budget, BAF 25-067-IFT. (2025-490). (Utilities Director)
2. Approve BAF 25-064-T to shore up Fire Department Overtime Budget for the rest of the year. (2025-491). (Finance Director)
3. Approve the Purchase of an ILA ALPHA EAGLE Boom Mower with attachments utilizing Florida Sheriff's Association Contract FSA23--EQU21.0. Approve a Resolution Amending the FY25 Budget, BAF#25-070-A, in the amount of \$330,422. (2025-521). (Public Works Director)

- * **MOTION by Councilmember Hearn; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Weeks to approve the Consent agenda.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn, Koss

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

VI. Public Hearings:

1. Approve Ordinance No. 03-2025 on second reading, amending Section 22-5 and creating Section 22 -5.2 of the City Code to update the City's Mandatory Sewer Hookup Policy and authorize sewer system connection requirements following expansion projects To Provide Direction to Staff for Funding and New Policies, if Necessary, for the Indian River Drive Septic to Sewer Conversion. (2025-528). (City Manager)

Mayor Blake wished to read a portion of the Ordinance out loud in order to establish an understanding of the item as a whole. He

City Attorney Garganese announced that this is the Second and Final Reading of Ordinance No. 03-2025 and read the title into the record as follows:

Ordinance No. 03-2025

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COCOA, BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA; CREATING A NEW SECTION 22-5.2 OF THE CITY CODE AUTHORIZING THE CITY COUNCIL TO REQUIRE A PROPERTY OWNER TO DISCONTINUE AND REMOVE AN EXISTING FUNCTIONING SEPTIC TANK OR OTHER EXISTING FUNCTIONING ONSITE SEWERAGE TREATMENT OR DISPOSAL SYSTEM AND CONNECT TO THE CITY'S SEWER SYSTEM IN CONJUNCTION WITH A CITY SEWER LINE EXPANSION PROJECT THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DEEMS FINANCIALLY AND PRACTICALLY FEASIBLE TO CONSTRUCT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE PUBLIC; AMENDING SECTION 22-5 OF THE CITY CODE CLARIFYING THE CONNECTION CONDITIONS THAT GENERALLY APPLY WHEN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL HOUSES, BUILDINGS OR PROPERTIES WITH EXISTING PROPERLY FUNCTIONING SEPTIC TANKS OR OTHER EXISTING PROPERLY FUNCTIONING ONSITE SEWERAGE TREATMENT OR DISPOSAL SYSTEMS MUST CONNECT TO AN AVAILABLE PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER OF THE CITY; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF PRIOR INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS, INCORPORATION INTO THE CODE, SEVERABILITY, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Attorney Garganese explained the changes that staff is asking Council to consider.

Councilmember Koss stated that she is recusing herself based on the Ethics Commission's ruling.¹

Deputy Mayor Weeks shared that she would like to remove Subsection F from the Ordinance.

Mayor Blake opened the hearing to the public.

¹ Exhibit A: Councilmember Koss submitted a Form 8B

Greg Henry, 1907 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, spoke about the conflict of interest and that he did not understand the ruling. Additionally, he spoke about his concerns regarding Subsection F in the Ordinance and provided some suggestions for the Council to consider.

Janice Smith, 2107 Clairemont Dr., Cocoa, shared that she lives just west of Indian River Drive and east of US1. They do not have sewer service at the moment but are hopeful that they will be able to connect in the future. She talked about her concerns regarding the mandatory hookup ordinance and the responsibility of the cost overruns on the homeowners.

Keith Wood, 2125 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, spoke about his time in the military and the opportunity it gave him to learn how to make things work with what was given to him. He does not feel it is fair for those who have already connected to advanced septic and now have to abandon that to connect to sewer. He asked Council to slow down and consider the homeowners who have recently connected to advanced septic.

City Attorney Garganese provided an explanation as to how this Ordinance came about. He explained the Florida Law on requiring mandatory hookups and stated that the City does not have a blanket ordinance in place to require mandatory hookups which is why this has come before Council.

Frank Sullivan, 1705 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, has lived in Cocoa for many years. He is retired and does not have a lot of extra money to pay for the unknown costs of this project. He does not want to be treated differently simply because he lives on Indian River Drive.

Tammy Carter, 1809 Indian River Dr., Cocoa, shared her concern that Council keeps calling this Ordinance a framework. If it's a framework, is it binding? Additionally, if it's a framework, why is Councilwoman Koss excluded from the vote? She asked for clarification regarding the two classifications identified in the ordinance and the Utility Director's ability to make exemptions. She also pointed out that on the City's website it says that an assessment will be done in 2026.

In response, City Manager Whitten shared that this is a guesstimate at a timeline, but it is not set in stone. Furthermore, City Attorney Garganese provided clarification as to why the ordinance is written the way it is.

Celeste Corrado, 2606 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, stated that no one wants to be forced into a decision. She spoke about the House Bill and pointed out that the House Bill gives options to homeowners but the language in this ordinance is restrictive. The

homeowners feel they have been backed into a corner and that's why Council is experiencing so much energy from the residents.

Ms. Corrado also spoke on behalf of Gary Aguinaga who could not be here this evening. She read his concerns into the record and shared that he has questioned the special benefits.

Councilmember Goins asked Ms. Corrado if she is in support of septic or sewer. In response, Ms. Corrado shared that she is in favor of advanced septic if it makes sense, however she is also in favor of the sewer connection because that seems to be a good option as well.

Bill Riddle, 2130 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, talked about the history of the river and shared that as of late he has seen the river improving. He asked what everyone else on the lagoon is doing to address this problem. He asked for clarification on some of the language in the ordinance and talked about the homeowners who have septic.

Tank Sherman, 1125 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, shared that things have changed over the years and he applauded the Council for addressing the problem. This has been going on for twenty-nine years and he understands that it is a difficult decision. The project is necessary for the safety and benefit of the public, however he feels that some of the language is contradictory. He added that if everyone benefits from this, then everyone should pay for it.

Jeanne Day, 855 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, asked Council to modify the language in the ordinance. The residents love the Indian River Lagoon, so much so that they live on it. She pointed out that the Indian River Lagoon did not vote for Council, she did and is Council's constituent. She feels she has an obligation to Council and they have one to her. She asked that Council consider striking Subsection F from the ordinance. She stated that this is not a win-win situation. The win-win solution would be for Council to operate within the budget they have, and not to overspend and pass that cost onto the homeowners.

Todd Riggs, Indian River Dr., Cocoa, spoke on behalf of Linda Dolphin who could not be here this evening. He referenced an email she wrote to Council and shared her questions about the fairness of this process and the City's policies. She would like to see Subsection F struck from the ordinance.

Mr. Riggs spoke about the meaning surrounding the book Common Sense that was written by Thomas Paine. In order to move forward, he feels that we need to figure out the numbers and go from there. Additionally, he would like Council to consider striking Subsection F from the ordinance.

Astrid Heard, 861 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, spoke about her issues with the ordinance. She would like to see Subsection F removed and for an amendment to be made to Subsection C to abandon their septic instead of removing it.

Michael Biggs, 859 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, shared that this is his first meeting. His neighbor explained to him Subsection F and the cost overruns of the project. He did not believe this explanation was correct and is surprised to hear that it is this evening. He feels that the cost should be shared by the City as a whole as they all benefit from this.

Sara Spradlin, 925 N. Indian River Dr., Cocoa, thanked the Mayor for voting against this monstrosity. She is very stressed about this and has lived in the area for approximately fifty years. She thanked the City Attorney as well.

Xavier Rivera, 2131 Indian River Dr., Cocoa, talked about the financial impacts of this project. He asked Council to consider amending the ordinance and provided several suggestions to various sections that he has concerns with.

There being no further questions or comments, the public portion of the hearing was closed.

Deputy Mayor Weeks expounded on her stance to strike Subsection F from the ordinance. She talked about the real estate market and assessments hanging over homes. She feels that at this point in time, it should be removed and possibly revisited later. This will also help to provide some peace of mind to the homeowners.

- * **MOTION by Deputy Mayor Weeks to approve Ordinance 03-2025 with amendments to remove Subsection F and amend the language on Page 7 and 8 to say "...discontinue and abandon or remove" and under Section C to say "affected property owner shall make the connection and discontinue and abandon or remove."**

Motion died for a lack of second.

- * **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Councilmember Goins to approve Ordinance 03-2025 with amendments to amend the language under Subsections C and M to say "...discontinue and abandon or remove", with discussion.**

Councilmember Hearn asked Mayor Blake if he would consider amending his motion to approve the advancement of the septic system.

- * **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Councilmember Goins to approve Ordinance 03-2025 with amendments to amend the language under Subsections C and M to say "...discontinue and abandon or remove."**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:

AYES: Weeks

NAYES: Blake, Hearn Goins

THE MOTION FAILED (1-3)

- * **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Councilmember Hearn to approve the advancement of the advanced septic system, for discussion.**

Deputy Mayor Weeks expressed that she is floored at this decision. This is not forward thinking and the majority of property owners do want this project, they just don't want the cost unknowns hanging over their heads.

City Manager Whitten added that he would ask for a motion to direct staff to apply for the advanced septic grants. Negotiations would then be held with SOIRL for advanced septic instead of the sewer project. Staff would also then be directed to rescind the application for grant funding that has already been submitted for the sewer project.

Deputy Mayor Weeks asked Council if there is anything that can be done to get the septic to sewer project to move forward.

Councilmember Goins shared that he sees it two ways: either keep Subsection F, or they add language for a 60/40 split with the City so the City has skin in the game. It was clarified that the residents would be responsible for forty percent of the cost overruns, not the overall cost of the project.

- * **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Weeks to take a ten-minute break.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)

- * **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Weeks to return from the break.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:**AYES:** Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)**

Mayor Blake stated that he would like to ask for Council's consensus to withdraw the motion to approve the advancement of the advanced septic system and go back to the motion to approve Ordinance 03-2025 with amendments to amend the language under Subsections C and M to say "...discontinue and abandon or remove" and leave Subsection F in the ordinance.

- * **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Councilmember Hearn to reconsider the motion to approve Ordinance 03-2025 with amendments to amend the language under Subsections C and M to say "...discontinue and abandon or remove" and leave Subsection F included in the Ordinance.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:**AYES:** Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)**

- * **MOTION by Councilmember Hearn; Seconded by Mayor Blake to approve Ordinance 03-2025 on Second and Final Reading with an amendment to the language under Subsections C and M to say "...discontinue and abandon or remove" and leave Subsection F included in the Ordinance.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:**AYES:** Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)****VII. Council Business:**

1. Discuss and provide direction on (1) museum operations; (2) program and exhibit development; (3) facility maintenance and capital improvements; and (4) volunteer recruitment and development for the Leon and Jewel Collins Museum of African American History and Culture. (2025-518). (Community Services Director)
- * **MOTION by Councilmember Goins; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Weeks to table this item to the July 8, 2025 City Council meeting.**

THE VOTE ON THE MOTION WAS:

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn, Koss

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

VIII. City Business:

1. Consider Approval of a Donation Application Request in the amount of \$1,000 dollars for Marine Resources Council. (2025-492). (City Clerk)

* **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Councilmember Koss to approve the item.**

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn, Koss

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

IX. Informational Agenda:

1. Data showing the relation between the estimated and actual income and expenses to date. (2025-524). (Finance Director)
2. FY 2025 May Budget Adjustment Report (2025-525). (Finance Director)
3. Approved change orders to construction contracts that the City Council has authorized the City Manager, by resolution, to approve in excess of the City Manager's spending authority. (2025-526). (Finance Director)
4. Informational Only - The City of Cocoa's Open Board Vacancies. (2025-531). (City Clerk)
5. Bi-Weekly Report for May 8, 2025-May 22, 2025. (2025-533). (City Manager)

X. Reports:

Deputy Mayor Weeks shared photos from events she recently attended. She spoke about the IEMO conference and shared it was a great event. Additionally, she shared that she is very proud to announce that Sherriff Wayne Ivey thought she had the best speech at the Mayor's Breakfast and thanked Samantha Senger for her help with writing the speech.

Councilmember Goins shared photos from events he recently attended and talked about the museum. He shared that he tabled the item tonight because most of the people who wanted to speak about it are not here.

Deputy Mayor Weeks suggested that Councilmember Goins ask Lead Brevard to take a look at this and see if there is anything they can do to help.

Councilmember Koss shared that the median near SR520 and Fiske Boulevard needs some work. It's a bit of a blighted area and she would love to make a better impression there. Additionally, she asked that an item be brought to City Council at the next meeting to talk about bringing back the Utilities Advisory Board.

Councilmember Hearn talked about an Emergency Management conference he recently attended and connected with Chief Lamm there as well. He shared that he is proud of staff and proud of Chief Lamm for representing the City of Cocoa.

Mayor Blake shared that he is very proud of the City and of City Council because although they may agree to disagree, they are moving the City forward.

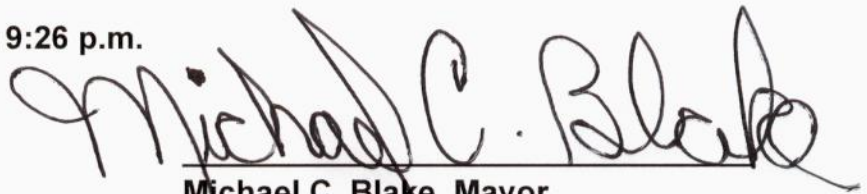
XI. Adjournment:

- * **MOTION by Deputy Mayor Weeks; Seconded by Councilmember Hearn to adjourn the Regular meeting of June 10, 2025.**

AYES: Blake, Weeks, Goins, Hearn, Koss

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.


Michael C. Blake, Mayor

ATTEST:


Monica Arsenault, CMC, City Clerk



