



# THE TOWN OF *INDIAN RIVER SHORES*

## **OFFICIAL MINUTES**

### **REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**Thursday, July 23, 2026**

**Immediately following the Budget Workshop**

**Town of Indian River Shores**

**6001 Highway A1A Indian River Shores, FL 32963**

The regular monthly meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Indian River Shores was held on Thursday, July 23, 2026 in Council Chambers, 6001 Highway A1A, Indian River Shores. Those present were Brian Foley, Mayor; Bob Auwaerter, Vice Mayor and Sam Carroll, Councilmember. Also present were James Harpring, Town Manager, Peter Sweeney, Town Attorney and Janice C. Rutan, Town Clerk.

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:44 a.m., immediately following the close of the Budget Workshop. The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance took place at the Budget Workshop. The Town Clerk called the roll. All members were present except Councilmember Altieri and Councilmember Tedesko.

#### **2. Agenda Reordering, Deletions, or Emergency Additions**

There being no reordering, deletions or emergency additions to the agenda, a motion was made by Councilmember Carroll, seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter and unanimously passed (3-0) to approve the agenda as presented.

#### **3. Presentations/Proclamations**

None.

#### **4. Comments From the Public Regarding Agenda Items(s)**

Theresa Morgan, 935 Beachcomber Lane. Ms. Morgan commented that proposed costs were much less when the project was first introduced in 2024. She noted that a grant cycle had just opened and although it would be too late to benefit the homeowners on Beachcomber Lane and Pebble Lane, she hoped it could be of assistance for future projects. She questioned the methodology of the shared cost allocations, specifically costs related to the property owners.

Mayor Foley responded that the conversion from septic to sewer was a State mandated requirement. As the utility provider, the City of Vero Beach would need to obtain any grant funding. In addition, the Town was prohibited from expending taxpayer funds to benefit private properties. Mayor Foley assured those present the Town was doing all it could to assist the property owners.

#### **5. Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of Minutes of Town Council Meeting dated June 23, 2026
- b. Resolution No. 26-05 Building Permit Fee Schedule

Councilmember Carroll made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter. The Town Clerk called the roll. All present voted in the affirmative with the motion passing unanimously (3-0).

#### **6. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Foley commented that discussion on E-Bike legislation would be addressed under the Assistant Chief's report.

## **7. Councilmember Items**

Vice Mayor Auwaerter narrated a Power Point presentation that highlighted the proposed Water and Sewer charges included in the City of Vero Beach's proposed FY 2026-2027 budget. He highlighted the proposed water and sewer fund transfer into the general fund in the amount of \$3.780 million, noting that the water and sewer customers fund 10.2% of the City of Vero Beach's general fund budget. Further, with the new plant coming online, rates for water and sewer would increase 45% with reclaimed water increasing 50%.

Vice Mayor Auwaerter further explained that municipal utilities, unlike public utilities, do not have to have rates approved by the Public Services Commission. Further, Town of Indian River Shores residents cannot vote for the City of Vero Beach City Council or the City Vero Beach Water Utility Committee who set the rates for the Vero Beach Utilities.

## **8. Discussion with Possible or Probable Action**

- a. Ordinance No. 597      Parking in Residential Areas      (First Reading)

Town Manager Harpring informed the Town Council he had moved the definition of pick-up truck from 162.08 to 162.07 (6). He added that Town had not received any opposition to the proposed Ordinance. Attorney Sweeney read the title. A motion was made by Councilmember Carroll to approve Ordinance No. 597 on first reading. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter. The Town Clerk called the roll. All present voted in the affirmative with the motion passing unanimously (3-0).

- b. Ordinance No. 598      Amendment to Sections 150.036, 160.02, and 161.07 (Second Reading)  
Utility Easement

Town Manager Harpring explained the proposed Ordinance offers the homeowners the process of seeking a waiver to allow fences, planting, etc. to be placed in the easement. Attorney Sweeney read the title. A motion was made by Councilmember Carroll to approve Ordinance No. 598 on second reading. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter. The Town Clerk called the roll. All present voted in the affirmative with the motion passing unanimously (3-0).

- c. Ordinance No. 599      Building Department Permits      (First Reading)

Town Manager Harpring explained that due to the recent enactment of HB 803 legislation, the Town needed to adopt Ordinance No. 599 to address specific areas of permitting within the Building Department. Attorney Sweeney read the title. A motion was made by Councilmember Carroll to approve Ordinance No. 599 on first reading. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter. The Town Clerk called the roll. All present voted in the affirmative with the motion passing unanimously (3-0).

- d. Approval of Auditor Selection Rankings and Auditor Selection

Finance Director Heather Christmas offered Staff's report. She reported that Auditor Selection Committee had ranked Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC No. 1. A motion was made by Councilmember Carroll, seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter and unanimously passed (3-0) to award RFP 26-01 to Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC (CRI) and to authorize the Town Manager to finalize and execute a written contract incorporating CRI's engagement letter.

e. Approval of Tentative Millage Rate

Heather Christmas, Finance Director offered Staff's report. Councilmember Carroll made a motion to set the tentative millage rate at 1.2402 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter and passed unanimously (3-0).

f. Approval of Preliminary Budget

Heather Christmas, Finance Director offered Staff's report. Councilmember Carroll made a motion to approve the preliminary budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter and passed unanimously (3-0).

g. Set Council Meeting dates for November and December 2026

A motion was made by Councilmember Carroll, seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter and passed unanimously (3-0) to defer action to the next meeting when the other two members would be in attendance.

h. Septic to Sewer Cost Allocation

The Town Manager presented Staff's report and narrated a power point presentation on the status of the Beachcomber Lane and Pebble Lane septic to sewer program, specifically the cost allocation between the City of Vero Beach, Town of Indian River Shores and the property owners on Beachcomber Lane and Pebble Lane.

**9. Staff Updates**

a. Building Department Report

Fred Held, Building Official reported that the Building Department continues substantial building activity in both residential and commercial projects. The department's fee revenue has also increased over the prior year. The department will continue to monitor and evaluate the impacts that HB803 may have on permit and inspection activities.

In response to Councilmember Carroll, Building Official Held reported that the construction of the John's Island parking garage was the commercial project he had referred to.

Mayor Foley expressed his appreciation to the Building Official and the department.

Finance Director Christmas, in response to Vice Mayor Auwaerter, noted that other than the Building Department fee amendments adopted earlier in the meeting, she did not anticipate additional amendments in this fiscal year.

b. Code Enforcement Report

Code Inspector, Jake Maikranz offered his report.

c. Facilities Department Report

Lucy Scheidt, Facilities Director, advised that in addition to the report, a meeting was hosted by Ronnie Jones, Indian River County Public Works Director. Mr. Jones formed the consortium consisting of the Public Works Department of Indian River County to share ideas, projects, etc. among the municipalities. The idea was well received with the next meeting scheduled for October. The January 2027 meeting would be hosted by the Town of Indian River Shores. Since the initial meeting, Indian River County Traffic Division had preplaced 3 of the Town's 4 streetlights. Council supported the networking opportunity.

d. Finance Department Report

Council had no questions for Heather Christmas, Finance Director.

e. Public Safety Department Report

Chief Tad Stone advised his department would be changing the format of their monthly reports for better accuracy. The new reporting system will better reflect response times, specifically for those calls that involve the mutual aid of the County. In response to Vice Mayor Auwaerter, the Chief will investigate presenting the raw data in a graph format.

Chief Stone next reported that both ambulances were out of service and the department was using a County unit in the interim.

Assistant Chief Ryer offered a power point presentation on e-bikes. Chief Ryer noted that proposed legislation regulating e-bikes had been vetoed by the governor. Presently the Town enforces state laws that regulate regular bicycles.

**10. Town Clerk Report**

**a. Election Update**

The Town Clerk reported that for the November 3, 2026, election. The Town of Indian River Shores had three seats available. One seat for a two-year term and two seats for four-year terms. The Town's qualification period ends July 24, 2026, at noon. Presently she has received qualification papers from three candidates. One for the two-year term and two for the four-year terms. If no further candidates come forward before qualification closes, the candidates who have qualified would be elected, having no opposition.

Key election dates for both the August 18, 2026, Primary Election and the November 3, 2026, General Election were provided.

**11. Town Attorney Report**

Attorney Sweeney reported on legislative issues including the recent utility bill that requires Utility Companies to test PFAs on a quarterly basis.

**12. Town Manager Report**

Town Manager Harpring reported that he and the Building Official had initiated conversation with the County to coordinate an Interlocal Agreement to address permitting procedures and locations during hurricanes and natural disasters.

Town Manager Harpring announced the retirement of Public Safety Director Chief Tad Stone effective September 3, 2026. He had the privilege of working with Chief Stone for many years, both with the Sheriff's office and the Town. He announced he would be appointing Assistant Chief Ryer to fill the Chief's position. Councilmember Carroll offered an analogy, referring to Chief Stone as the Kurt Gibson of Indian River Shores. Council offered both well wishes and congratulations to both Chief Stone and Assistant Chief Ryer.

**13. Council/Committee Reports or Non-Action Items**

**a. Call for Committee Reports, Informational Updates or Comments**

None.

**14. Call to Audience**

Mr. Chatterton, Pebble Lane. M. Chatterton questioned the cost share allocation for the residents as it related to the sewer to septic project.

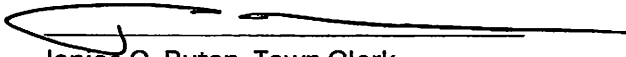
Willford Hart, Indian River County School District. Mr. Hart reported that the school district has been an A-Rated district for the past 4 years. He expressed his appreciation to the Town for its support. He noted the

high school was in need of tennis courts.

**15, Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Town Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Approved: August 27, 2026



Janice C. Rutan, Town Clerk

