



OFFICIAL MINUTES
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2025 – 9:00 AM
TOWN OF INDIAN RIVER SHORES

The regular monthly meeting of the Town of Indian River Shores Town Council was held on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers, 6001 Highway A1A, Indian River Shores, Florida. Councilmembers present were Brian T. Foley, Mayor; Bob Auwaerter, Vice Mayor; Sam Carroll, Councilmember and James Altieri, Councilmember. Also present were James Harpring, Town Manager; Heather Christmas, Finance Director; Peter Sweeney, Town Attorney and Janice C. Rutan, Town Clerk.

1. Call to Order

- a. Invocation
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Roll Call

Mayor Foley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Councilmember Carroll offered the Invocation. Mayor Foley led in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Town Clerk called the roll. All members were present except Councilmember Dane.

2. Agenda Reordering, Deletions, or Emergency Additions

There being no reordering, deletions or additions, a motion was made by Councilmember Carroll, seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter, and unanimously approved (4-0) to approve the agenda as presented.

3. Presentations/Proclamations

- a. Presentation of Dr. David K. Moore, Indian River County Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Moore was proud to announce that Indian River County School District had gone from having only 46% to 95% of its schools A rated. The district also boasts a 96% graduation rate, which is the highest in the State. Additional highlights included:

Ninety percent of high school students are in advanced classes or dual enrollment.

Most middle school students are enrolled in an accelerated course.

Third grade students are reading at or above grade level, again the highest in the state.

Vice Mayor Auwaerter extended compliments to Dr. Moore and his team.

In response to Councilmember Carroll, Dr. Moore explained that their curriculum was grounded in the science of reading using phonics as a base adding that the Indian River County School District's academic outcomes are much higher than average state levels.

Mayor Foley also extended his appreciation to Dr. Moore.

- b. Proclamation October 2025 as Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Mayor Foley read the Proclamation into the record.

Town Manager Harpring a possible shade session to discuss Town Cyber Security policies or if they would prefer to meet one on one.

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

None.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes of First Public Budget Hearing and Special Call Meeting dated September 16, 2025
- b. Approval of Minutes of Final Public Budget Hearing and Town Council Meeting dated September 23, 2025
- c. Adoption of Resolution No. 25-14 Mission Square Access Designation
- d. Adoption of Resolution No. 25-16 Adopting the Unified Local Mitigation Strategy Update of 2025
- e. Appointment of Danette Dieffenbach to MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- f. Approval of Public Safety Department Vehicle Purchase

A motion was made by Councilmember Carroll and seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The Town Clerk called the roll. All members present voted in the affirmative with the motion passing unanimously (4-0).

Vice Mayor Auwaerter introduced Danette Dieffenbach as the Town's newly appointed representative on the Indian River County Metropolitan Planning Organization Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Council expressed their appreciation to Ms. Dieffenbach for her willingness to serve on the committee.

6. Mayor's Report

Mayor Foley addressed inaccuracies in a recent article in 32963 regarding the Town's transition between Republic Services and Waste Management (WM) for Solid Waste and Recycling Services.

Mayor Foley next reported on the ongoing dialogue around property taxes and referenced a memo from Daniel Perez, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, outlining eight tax relief proposals. Two key provisions are prohibiting any reduction in funding for law enforcement, and the exemption of school taxes. Various possible impacts were discussed. Mayor Foley expressed his concern about having property tax reform without addressing utility rates and special taxing districts, explaining it would just be a shift from collecting real estate taxes to other assessments including special taxing districts.

Discussion continued concerning the tax reform issue and housing. Vice Mayor Auwaerter advised he reached out to the Indian River County Tax Collector's office and learned that no homesteaded property had gone to tax sale in the past 5 years. For non-homesteaded properties, there have been five tax sales in the past 5 years.

Vice Mayor Auwaerter felt it unfair to shift the tax burden from taxpayers over sixty-five to others, adding that although law enforcement could not be affected, fire department and EMS services could become a tax or fee.

7. Councilmember Items

- a. Vice Mayor Auwaerter
 - i. Florida League of Cities Policy Committee Report

Covered earlier

- ii. Vero Beach Finance Commission Meeting, Wastewater Plant Financing

Vice Mayor Auwaerter attended the City of Vero Beach Finance Committee meeting. The cost of the Water Reclamation facility had increased in price from the original proposed cost of \$82 million to \$164.8 million. He has been working with the city to assist them in trying to get lowest rates for financing. Vice Mayor Auwaerter presented a financing plan outlining the debt service projection for the project with the financing broken into two phases; borrowing \$55 million to get started and then an additional \$70 million for a total bond amount of \$125 million.

Vice Mayor Auwaerter noted that the figures being used were a close estimation, however, there is a “not to exceed” clause in the contract. The final cost could reach \$223 million due to financing.

Mayor Foley expressed his appreciation to Vice Mayor Auwaerter noting it was in the best interest of the Town to keep all costs down as it will benefit the ratepayers.

Discussion followed.

8. Discussion with Possible or Probable Action

- a. Approval of Ordinance No. 582 Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (Second Reading)

Attorney Sweeney read the title. Mayor Foley opened the Public Hearing. There being no comment, a motion was made by Councilmember Carroll and seconded by Vice Mayor Auwaerter to approve Ordinance No. 582 on second reading. The Town Clerk called the roll. All members in attendance voted in the affirmative. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

- b. Approval of Ordinance No. 584 Amendment to Section 165.16 (First Reading)

Attorney Sweeney read the title. Mayor Foley opened the Public Hearing. Councilmember Altieri explained that after his initial concerns, he had reviewed Senate Bill 180 as well as the FEMA Flood maps and was prepared to move forward.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Auwaerter and seconded by Councilmember Carroll to approve Ordinance No. 584 on first reading. The Town Clerk called the roll. All members in attendance voted in the affirmative. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

9. Staff Updates

- a. Building Official Report & Statistics

Building Official Held was present. Vice Mayor Auwaerter commented that there had been a year to date drop in number of permits issued.

- b. Code Enforcement Report

Code Officer Maikranz was present. Vice Mayor Auwaerter expressed his appreciation to Officer Maikranz for the new format of his report, including the graphs.

- c. Public Works Department Report

Town Manager Harpring offered the Public Works report noting they had been cleaning up the north and south entrances to the Town. Town Manager Harpring reported that both Public Works and Facilities were working extremely hard.

- d. Town Treasurer Report

Heather Christmas, Town Treasurer announced Erika Maeda had been hired as a bookkeeper.

- e. Public Safety Department Report & Statistics

Assistant Chief Ryer addressed the Town Council on matters relating to E-bikes on local streets. He explained that E-Bikes were afforded all rights and privileges as the operator of a regular bicycle. An operator may ride an electric bicycle where bicycles are allowed including highways, roadways, shoulders, bicycle lanes, and bicycle multiuse paths. A multiuse path is often a shared use path.

Chief Ryer noted the Town of Indian River Shores no Ordinance governing the operation of golf carts. Golf carts are not allowed to operate on sidewalks unless approved by local government. He went over the specific rules governing golf carts on streets and highways. Golf carts are not allowed to operate on Highway

A1A, they are only allowed to operate on roadways with speed limits of 30 mph or less. They are not allowed on sidewalks or on bicycle lanes.

Assistant Chief Ryer reported on PSD activity to include officers participating in an active shooter drill and other recertifications.

10. Town Attorney Report

None

11. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Harpring expressed appreciation to Town personnel for their excellent work.

12. Council/Committee Reports or Non-Action Items

a. Call for Committee Reports, Informational Updates or Comments

Councilmember Altieri reported that the next meeting of the City of Vero Beach Utilities Commission would be held in December.

It was announced five firms were bidding on the sand restoration project.

Mayor Foley attended the Treasure Coast Council of Local Governments meeting during which the main topic of discussion was the wide-ranging effect of Senate Bill 180. At the same meeting, there was a presentation by Career Source which serves as a search team where positions in local government need to be filled.

Vice Mayor Auwaerter attended the meeting of the Treasure Coast League of Cities during which proposed property tax reform was discussed. The Beach and Shore Preservation Committee meeting reported that this year had been an unprecedented green sea turtle nesting season.

Beach restoration will begin on December 1 for Sector 5 north of tracking Station down into the City of Vero Beach limits.

12. Call to Audience

None.

14. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Ton Council, the meeting adjourned at 10:13 a.m.

Approved: November 20, 2025



Janice C. Rutan, Town Clerk

