

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Regular City Commission Meeting
Monday, June 8, 2026

The City Commission met in formal session Monday, June 8, 2026, at 5:00 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline, and the following were present:

1. Roll Call: Nancy Sikes-Kline, Mayor/City Commissioner
Barbara Blonder, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner
Cynthia Garris, City Commissioner
Jim Springfield, City Commissioner
Jon DePreter, City Commissioner

Also Present: David Birchim, City Manager
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Darlene Galambos, City Clerk
Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager
Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager
Jaime D. Perkins, Director, Community Services
Julie Courteny, Historic Preservation Officer
Candice Seymour, Historic Preservation Planner
Jabri White, Night Life & Permits
Melissa Wissel, Director, Communications
Jeffrey Collins, Assistant Police Chief
Sergeant Eric Yarborough, Police Department
Carlos Aviles, Fire Chief
Elyse Wiemann, Senior Recording Secretary

MOMENT OF SILENCE and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline requested a moment of silence and Vice-Mayor Barbara Blonder led the pledge of allegiance.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

2.A. Modification and Approval of Regular Agenda

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline **MOVED** to approve the Regular Agenda. The motion was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Jon DePreter and **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.**

3. Special Presentations, Recognitions and Proclamations

3.A. Proclamation 2026-24: Proclaims June 2026, as Pride Month (N. Sikes-Kline, Mayor)

3.B. Highlighting St. Augustine's Florida Preservation Award Recipients (J. Courtney, Historic Preservation Officer)

4. General Public Comments (3 minutes per individual)

The Commission heard from the following members of the public:

- Doug Russo
- Dylan Russo
- Shawn Morrison
- Evan Morrison
- Roger Carlson
- Molly Malone
- Scott York
- Patricia Ramos
- Jesse Sabo
- Joshua Luke
- James Hill
- Nancy Astralaga
- Dawn Mariotti
- Joanna Engel
- Chris Fulmer
- Joanne Werling
- Ally Burchfield
- Judy Glazebrook
- Sara Bloomberg
- Gary Haddock
- Ted Hill
- Jacqueline Wolfe
- Kelsey May
- Blaise Morrell
- Heather Wilson
- Katherine Zodda
- Dave Chatteron
- Thomas Reynolds
- Manda Geber
- Lloyd Pierce
- Vicki Pepper
- BJ Kalaidi

5. Consent Agenda

David Birchim, City Manager, read the Consent Agenda.

CA.1 Preview of upcoming Commission meetings.

CA.2 THE FOLLOWING ORDINANCES ARE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR SECOND READING ON July 13, 2026:

- Ordinance 2026-10: Amending Vehicles for Hire (Ch27) Ordinance (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)
- Ordinance 2026-11: Amending Franchises (Ch14) Ordinance (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)

CA.3 Reminder of Upcoming Meetings:

- June 22, 2026, 5:00PM, Regular City Commission Meeting
- July 13, 2026, 3:00PM, Special Budget Meeting
- July 13, 2026, 5:00PM, Regular City Commission Meeting

CA.4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR COMMISSION MEETINGS:

- April 13, 2026, 5:00PM, Regular City Commission Meeting
- April 27, 2026, 5:00PM, Regular City Commission Meeting
- May 11, 2026, 5:00PM, Special City Commission Meeting

CA.5 RELEASES OF LIEN FOR UNIT CONNECTION FEE MORTGAGE(S): NONE.

CA.6 PROPOSED PROCLAMATIONS, CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION/RECOGNITION. (COMMISSION APPROVAL REQUIRED). (TO BE READ AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING).

Proclamation 2026-30: Proclaims July 4, 2026, as the 250th Anniversary of American Independence (N. Sikes-Kline, Mayor)

CA.7 NOTIFICATION OF PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION ISSUED: NONE.

CA.8 Strategic Plan Revisions (D. Birchim, City Manager)

END CONSENT AGENDA

5.A. Additions, deletions or modifications to Consent Agenda

(None)

5.B. Approval of Consent Agenda

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner DePreter and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.¹

6. Appeals

(None)

7. General Public Presentations, Items of Great Public Importance, and Other Items Requiring Public Hearings

7.A. General Public Presentations

7.A.1. St. Johns County Continuum of Care - 2026 PIT Data Presentation (D. Birchim, City Manager)

David Birchim introduced Hannah Evans, St. Johns County Continuum of Care Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) coordinator to present the Point in Time count (PIT) of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness.

Ms. Evans reviewed the PIT and provided a presentation.²

Commissioner Jim Springfield asked if more services were offered for adults with children than there were for individual adults.

Ms. Evans replied that the PIT accounted for one night and perhaps more adults with children were present. She said there were services for both.

¹ Commissioner Springfield was not present for vote.

² Presentation attached to original packet.

Commissioner Springfield said that reasons for homelessness would be the same for adults with or without children. He added there were a lot of services in town that focused on families. He suggested providing more services for adults only.

Commissioner DePreter thanked Ms. Evans for the presentation and commented that 20% of homelessness was due to affordable housing, which was lower than he expected.

Commissioner Cynthia Garris asked if some of the contributing factors could be from a lack of income, loss of job, relationship breakdown, and domestic violence.

Ms. Evans agreed those were some of the contributing factors and that when doing surveys other factors were mental health and law issues.

Commissioner Blonder thanked Ms. Evans and said this information was very useful to help meet the needs related to this issue.

Mayor Sikes-Kline thanked Ms. Evans for the presentation and said this was good information and a very important issue to the City.

7.B. Items of Great Public Importance

(None)

7.C. Other Items Requiring Public Hearing

(None)

8. Ordinances and Resolutions – Public Hearing Required.

8.A. Ordinances – Second Reading

8.A.1. Ordinance 2026-14: Amendments to anchoring and mooring of vessels to conform with updates to state statute (I. Lopez, City Attorney)

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, presented Ordinance 2026-14.

Public hearing was opened; however, there was no response.

MOTION

Commissioner DePreter MOVED to pass Ordinance 2026-14 on second reading. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield.

Ms. Lopez read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-14

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE V, SECTION 7-93 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE PROVIDING FOR ANCHORING AND MOORING TO CONFORM WITH UPDATES TO STATE STATUTE; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: DePreter, Springfield, Garris, Blonder, Sikes-Kline

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

8.B. Ordinances – First Reading (only if required by law)

(None)

8.C. Resolutions – Public Hearing (only if required by law)

(None)

9. Ordinances and Resolutions - No Public Hearing Required

9.A. Ordinances – First Reading

9.A.1. Ordinance 2026-10: Amending Vehicles for Hire (Ch27) Ordinance (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)

Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager, reviewed Ordinance 2026-10 and 2026-11.

Board Discussion:

- Felt the insurance rate should be reduced to \$300,000, which was above state standard
- Asked how many accidents had occurred

Mr. Franklin replied that an accident analysis was conducted over the past ten years and there were approximately forty total accidents for the industry, and out of those thirty-six had zero injuries or alcohol involvement. He added that he met with Herbie Wiles of Herbie Wiles Insurance, who told them they had very little claims for those that they insure.

Commissioner DePreter asked if the insurance rates were lowered would the City be more exposed.

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, replied that under sovereign immunity limits the State capped the City's exposure to \$350,000 per person and \$500,000 per incident.

Discussion Continued:

- Did not believe the reduction of insurance would increase the City's liability
- Supported the decrease in insurance rates
- Many operators would increase their debt or not have a positive return if insurance rates were increased
- Felt lowering the rate would be a positive for operators
- Suggested if an operator had consistent accidents, rates for them should be increased, but that would be case by case
- Felt a high level of coverage would help reduce the City's exposure

- More concerned with the road rage by drivers because of slower speeds
- Understood the need to lower the insurance requirements

There was consensus to decrease the insurance requirement to \$300,000.

Mr. Franklin clarified that the insurance rates were for the Tier 2 operators; VFH and the horse carriages.

Mr. Franklin said feedback was received regarding the Code of Conduct, which was included in both ordinances.

Commissioner Blonder said during the workshop held on May 8, 2026, she specifically asked if requiring a Code of Conduct would infringe on freedom of speech. She asked for clarification regarding the inclusion or exclusion of the Code of Conduct.

Ms. Lopez replied that the City dealt with First Amendment issues for a variety of topics. She said anytime the government restricts the content of a person speech the government entered scrutiny review, which had a high threshold for government to effectively enforce those ordinances. She said it would be a challenge to have staff witness and determine if the speech was protected or not as opinions differed. She said the ordinance contained a clause noting if any portion of the ordinance was deemed unconstitutional, the rest of the ordinance would stand.

Commissioner Blonder recalled the inappropriate comments that were reported during the holidays. She encouraged people to report comments if inappropriate and hoped the business community would regulate themselves accordingly and discourage bad behavior. She said she supported keeping the language as it was, but if it had to be removed, she would not contest it.

Mr. Franklin said only the Code of Conduct section would be removed and nothing else from that section.

Commissioner Springfield supported keeping the Code of Conduct in the ordinance to help discourage bad actors. He said certain behavior was expected during public meetings and felt franchisees should also maintain a standard.

Ms. Lopez stated that this meeting was not considered a tradition public forum, which allowed the establishment of decorum rules. She said for constitutional challenges, the risk was potential attorney's fees.

Commissioner DePreter suggested removing statement B of the Code of Conduct, which stated 'Avoid abusive language, harassment, bullying, or discrimination with passengers and the public'.

Commissioner Garris commented that she supported the increase of passengers from nine to ten with the driver being the eleventh passenger, which could cause hardship for operators if they were required to change vehicles.

Commissioner Springfield commented that it would be a total of ten passengers with one driver for a total of eleven, but anything over eleven would be a tier 1. He felt three carts were more reasonable than limiting them to two, for a total of forty-five slow moving vehicles instead of thirty.

Mr. Franklin stated that for tier 2, three carts were allowed and two pedicabs were allowed.

Discussion:

- Suggested allowing operators to have five carts during the Nights of Lights season
- Could help assist bringing people into the downtown area where trolleys were unable to go

Commissioner DePreter said that more than likely there was more revenue with tours than transportation. He suggested having two different categories for pedicabs; one pedicabs and another pedicab tour. He thought this would limit the number of tours that could be done because if capped at fifteen operators with two carts it could add thirty tours, which he felt that was not the goal of the mobility plan. He questioned if a residential property could be considered a loading and unloading zone as noted in section 27-67. He asked if the pedicabs temporary parking locations had been identified. He asked if air conditioning was expected to be added to open air carts. He asked if clear expectations would be given to motor vehicles for them to abide by the requirements as noted in section 27-70.

Mr. Franklin replied that tier 1 franchises allowed people to be picked up on their property and that was the reason for adding the provision. He said the restricted locations required permission from the owner. He said air conditioning was only required in motor vehicles. He said once the ordinance was adopted an application would be created that would mirror the items listed in section 27-70.

Discussion Continued:

- Felt that medallions for horse carriages could be used for an electric carriage
- Original intent for electric carriage was not to allow an additional medallion but to use one of the three medallions for an electric carriage
- Agreed the language regarding electric carriages and medallions should be revised

Commissioner Blonder asked if there were other specific topics that needed to be addressed, because she wanted to ensure all items were discussed.

Mr. Franklin clarified that most of what was discussed was for the VFH ordinance. He reiterated the decisions based on the discussion along with what took place at

the workshop meeting, the following would be revised:

- Reduction to insurance
- Remove section B of the Code of Conduct
- Discussed the exclusion areas
- Penalties
- Noise Restrictions- no music

Mayor Sikes-Kline said no music was based on feedback from the workshop and asked if everyone was still in agreeance.

Commissioner Garris commented that she felt music should be allowed but it should be kept low and within the vehicle, as music was controllable.

Ms. Lopez commented there was a state law, which advised that music in the vehicle could not be clearly audible within twenty-five feet away. She said an additional statement to that law indicated the music could not any louder than necessary for the occupants within the vehicle to hear it.

Commissioner Springfield spoke concerning enforcement. He said it was almost impossible to enforce the code when passing by; whereas, no music would be easy to enforce. He agreed that soft music was enjoyable but to ensure the noise ordinance it would be enforced it was easier with none. He noted that the trolleys were allowed, which was double standard.

Mayor Sikes-Kline noted that the trolleys directed the music inward and felt that would be an option for pedicabs. She said the alternative would be to not allow music.

Commissioner Blonder agreed that having no music would make it easier, and the video shown by resident Scott York captured the noise from one cart, which she had experienced on multiple occasions.

Ms. Lopez clarified that the state law applied for motor vehicles and pedicabs

would default for the City noise ordinance or anything specific added to this ordinance.

Commissioner Springfield commented that if music was allowed and penalties were in place, two violations would result in a \$500 fine.

There was consensus to not allow music on pedicabs; however, Commissioner Garris did not agree.

Mr. Franklin advised the last item was to decide if another category was needed for pedicabs tours. He said staff did not feel that it was necessary at this time. He said if the Commission felt otherwise, a third tier could be created for tours within the franchise ordinance.

Commissioner DePreter questioned the need for the third tier since it was allowed to be done now with a certified guide. He suggested if each franchise was allowed two pedicabs, one could be a certified guide, which would help achieve mobility goals.

Mr. Franklin said that pedicabs would have the option to operate as both a VFH and a pedicab tour, as the ordinance allowed for both.

Mr. Birchim commented that it seemed that the type of customer utilizing the service would dictate if it was a tour or a VFH.

Commissioner Springfield suggested reviewing the ordinance in a year and if there was a reason to increase the number of pedicabs or add an additional franchise tier, that could be done at that time.

Mr. Birchim recommended moving the ordinance to second reading, since it has public hearing. He said substantial feedback had been provided for VFH and the language could be updated for second reading.

Commissioner DePreter requested that electric carriages were allowed, it should be added to the definitions.

MOTION

Commissioner DePreter MOVED to pass Ordinance 2026-10 on first reading and moved to second reading with the additions as noted in the discussion. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield.

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, read the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-10

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 27 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE PROVIDING FOR REGULATIONS FOR VEHICLES FOR HIRE; AMENDING ARTICLE I – IN GENERAL, ARTICLE II – VEHICLE DRIVERS, ARTICLE III – MOTOR VEHICLES FOR HIRE, ARTICLE IV – TRAILER TRAINS AND SIGHT-SEEING BUSES, AND ARTICLE V – TRANSPORTATION BY ANIMAL-DRAWN VEHICLES FOR PURPOSES OF TOURING; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: DePreter, Springfield, Garris, Blonder, Sikes-Kline

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

9.A.2. Ordinance 2026-11: Amending Franchises (Ch14) Ordinance (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)

Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager, reviewed Ordinance 2026-11. He said after discussion, the following were updated:

- First penalties for Horse Carriages would be a \$500 fine and impoundment
- Exclusionary zone and City approved routes
- Insurance rates were lowered to \$300,000
- Code of Conduct-eliminate subsection 'B'
- Work period was reduced to five days a week during the summer months (June-August)
- Use the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) provided by the City Marina
- Included the WBGT in the definition with the cutoff for work to be 90 degrees
- Tier 2 would have a maximum number of three vehicles with fifteen total operators

Mr. Franklin advised that the number of passengers had been undecided. He stated that at the workshop the number of passengers was reduced to nine but had heard ten and eleven.

Mayor Sikes-Kline questioned the ten passengers, and if that included the driver.

Mr. Franklin replied the driver was not included. He said the way it was written; it would be eleven passengers plus a driver for a total of twelve.

Mayor Sikes-Kline agreed with Commissioner Springfield and appreciated the fact that additional vehicular traffic could be reduced.

Commissioner Springfield commented that the carts that were able to hold nine could add an additional person in the front seat with them for a total of ten passengers.

Mayor Sikes-Kline recalled that the discussion at the workshop pointed out not rewarding bad behavior. She said after further discussion she was not opposed to eleven passengers with a driver.

Commissioner DePreter asked if those in operation now had ten passengers and one driver.

Mr. Birchim commented that currently there were a total of twelve people in the vehicle.

Commissioner DePreter said Commissioner Garriss did not want operators to obtain different carts or customize them for City standard.

Mr. Franklin stated that overtime, carts that held twelve people did not exist and then when they came on the market and were purchased, more were in the City. He said that was one of the reasons for updating the ordinance because if the operator had more than nine passengers, that would qualify them as a franchise.

Commissioner DePreter asked if an operator had a vehicle that could hold twelve passengers, could they leave one seat empty and not purchase another vehicle.

Mr. Birchim replied that it was not preferred. He said they tried to enforce removal of one seat to be in compliance and it was difficult to enforce.

Mayor Sikes-Kline pointed out that it could be viewed as rewarding bad behavior but overall, it was the structure of the vehicles.

Commissioner Garriss said she thought they had agreed to ten passengers with a driver.

Mr. Birchim replied that the vehicles were designed to have eleven passengers with one driver for a total of twelve people.

There was consensus to allow eleven passengers with one driver.

Mr. Franklin requested clarity on the ownership transfer requirement for franchises. He said there had been discussion at the workshop and asked how this could be incorporated.

Commissioner DePreter said that businesses usually had equity in them; however, if the business was transferrable, the medallion cost could be increased. He asked how it was possible for businesses to keep their equity. He asked if a franchise was sold, would it have to go before the Commission.

Mr. Birchim stated that if the franchise were granted to a company, that would be unable to be prevented, but the discussion was whether the Commission should review it.

Commissioner Springfield asked if a franchise owner was allowed to change their name.

Mr. Birchim replied that businesses were allowed the 'doing business as' (DBA) option. He asked how much control was needed over the transferability of franchises that the Commission granted. He suggested having control over how often the franchise was used and how many vehicles were allowed was enough control without micromanaging.

Ms. Lopez commented that there were two concepts, one was medallions or franchises could be bought and sold on the open market and fully transferable, which was not allowed historically and could be restricted. She said the main concern was if the ownership had changed but the entity remained the same or if 50% of the shareholders changed then the Commission could review the franchise or deregulate completely.

Commissioner Springfield said owners should be able to sell their business; however, the medallions were leased from the City. He felt a business owner should be able to build a business sell it, and the City can approve the sale as the lessee of the medallion.

Commissioner DePreter questioned the length of the franchise agreements.

Mr. Franklin replied that the tier 2 agreements were ten years.

Commissioner Garris said she was not opposed to a transfer as long as the City was notified. She felt there should be more flexibility.

Ms. Lopez clarified that as long as it was the same business, they would continue to hold the medallion.

Commissioner DePreter said there were other thresholds the business had to meet and a review after ten years.

Mr. Franklin proposed that an electric carriage could be used and interchangeable with the medallions, and an electric carriage would be defined. He said the last item was the prevision of use, which was once in sixty days.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said that would eliminate the "pop-up" operators.

MOTION

Commissioner DePreter MOVED to pass Ordinance 2026-11 on first reading and moved to second reading with the changes as discussed. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield.

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, read the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-11

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 14, ARTICLE I, OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE PROVIDING FOR REGULATIONS FOR FRANCHISES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: DePreter, Springfield, Garris,
Blonder, Sikes-Kline

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

9.B. Resolutions

9.B.1. Resolution 2026-11: Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Agreement to Continue the Transit Corridor Development Program (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)

Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager, reviewed Resolution 2026-11.

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to pass Resolution 2026-11. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner DePreter.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Sikes-Kline, DePreter, Garris, Springfield

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY³

9.B.2. Resolution 2026-12: Florida Department of Transportation Intersection Improvement Project — Deed 100.1, 1001.1 (M. Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager)

All resolutions reviewed simultaneously.

Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the Resolution 2026-12.

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to pass Resolution 2026-12, Resolution 2026-13, and Resolution 2026-14. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield.

³ Commissioner Blonder not present for vote.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Sikes-Kline, Springfield, DePreter, Garris

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY⁴

9.B.3. Resolution 2026-13: Florida Department of Transportation Intersection Improvement Project — Temporary Easements 700.1, 701.1 (M. Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager)

Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the Resolution 2026-13.

Vote for Item under Item 9.B.2.

9.B.4. Resolution 2026-14: Florida Department of Transportation Intersection Improvement Project — Perpetual Easement 800.1, 801.1 (M. Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager)

Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the Resolution 2026-14.

Vote for Item under Item 9.B.2.

10. Staff Reports and Presentations

10.A. Zora Neale Hurston Park Historic Marker Language and Sign Style Review (J. Perkins, Community Services Director)

Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director, provided a report on the Zora Neale Hurston Historic Marker language and options for sign design.

Mayor Sikes-Kline asked what material would be used for the sign.

Ms. Perkins replied that the material being used would be bronze, which was similar to the other historic markers throughout the City. She said information about the City and the City Crest would be added.

⁴ Commissioner Blonder not present for vote.

Commissioner DePreter felt it was advantageous to keep the style of the markers coordinated throughout the City.

MOTION

Commissioner Garris MOVED to proceed with the Zora Neale Hurston Park Historic Marker as presented. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner DePreter APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

11. ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY

11.A. Statutory notice of proposed Madeira CDD budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. No action necessary. (I. Lopez, City Attorney)

Provided by the City Attorney's Office for information purposes.

12. ITEMS BY CITY CLERK

12.A. Reminder: Open Positions on Boards and Committees (D. Galambos, City Clerk)

Darlene Galambos, City Clerk, informed the Commission that there were open positions on the following citizen boards:

- Audit Committee (1 position)
- 1977 City Employees' Retirement System of the City of St. Augustine, Board of Trustee (2 positions)
- Planning and Zoning Board (1 position)

13. ITEMS BY CITY MANAGER

David Birchim, City Manager, advised that June 2, 2026, the Florida House of Representatives passed a joint Resolution to amend the State Constitution to substantially reduce property taxes, which was a source of revenue for the City. He said this proposal would appear on November 3, 2026, ballot and would need 60% support from voters to pass. He said if it passed the revenue of the City would be reduced, which was used to provide

community services and sustain operations. He said the property appraiser deducted \$50,000 from the assessed value of the property to determine the taxable value and then uses the mileage rate to calculate the annual property taxes. He said the \$50,000 discount was known as the homestead property tax exemption and if this amendment were to be passed, the tax exemption would then increase to \$150,000 in 2027 and to \$250,000 in 2028 and would be adjusted yearly based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) yearly until it reached zero. He added that this would not apply to school tax but would apply to City, County, and the other taxing authorities. He stated that the maximum annual property tax increase assigned to non-homestead properties such as commercial properties, vacation rentals, industrial properties etc., was now capped at ten percent a year, and would be reduced to a maximum of five percent per year. He said this could also result in a loss of revenue for the City. He said staff was trying to understand exactly how this would impact the City.

Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager, provided a brief overview of how this could impact the City. She said the City currently had 2,976 properties with homestead exemptions out of a total of 9,412. She said that equated to 31.6% of the properties being homesteaded. She said based on the City's taxable values in the fiscal year 2028, the property tax reduction would equal a reduction of \$2.1 million in the General Fund. She added that in fiscal year 2029, there would be a reduction of \$4.2 million for the General Fund. She said for fiscal year 2026, ad valorem revenue was \$25 million, and those funds were used to pay for the following:

- 93% Police Department budget
- 60% Fire Department budget
- 80% of street paving repair
- 55% of the Grounds division to include parks and conservation lands

- 100% of the City's required transfer to the Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs)
- 100% of the City Commission budget
- 25% of the City's Administration (City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, Human Resources, Risk Management, Finance, and Purchasing)

Ms. Breidenstein said the remaining general fund expenditures were funded by other sources to include state revenues, user fees, grants, and transfers from enterprise funds. She said the rest of the general fund paid for the following: Public Works, Community Services, Code Enforcement, Planning and Building, Communications, Historic Preservation, Events, Fleet, Customer Service, Facilities, Property Maintenance, the rest of administration, police, fire, streets and grounds. She said in order to meet the deficit City staff would review each position that was open and each service provided to the community. She added all recommendations would be brought to the City Commission throughout fiscal year 2026 and 2027 in order to allow the community and residents to be in the best position for the upcoming years.

Commissioner Garris requested for this information to be provided to each commissioner.

Mayor Sikes-Kline asked the best way to disseminate this information to the community.

Mr. Birchim said they had reviewed other cities' education efforts and decided to prepare a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet that explained this information easier for everyone to understand.

Commissioner Springfield questioned if 93% of the police department's budget was funded by property tax alone or was it by all property tax.

Ms. Breidenstein replied that it was funded by ad valorem revenue. She said the

difference was there were some officers that were school resource officers for public school and Flagler College who paid the City a stipend.

Commissioner Springfield asked if this included the ad valorem tax for the businesses and Airbnb's.

Ms. Breidenstein replied in the affirmative and stated she did not break out the types of ad valorem tax.

Commissioner Springfield said this law made it seem that the budget would have to be reduced by 90% because of the Police Department. He added that when information was provided to the public, it should be as accurate as possible. He asked since there would be a \$2.1 million deficit, were they investigating ways to make up for the loss in revenue. He felt there were many ways to help offset the loss.

Mr. Birchim replied that there had been discussions on how to increase user fees such as parking, which was the largest that generated income for the City. He said raising parking rates was a sensitive issue and ultimately at the discretion of the Commission. He said they were reviewing each option to help increase the revenue in anticipation of the loss of ad valorem dollars.

Commissioner Springfield commented that the State mentioned helping local communities that were in need.

Mr. Birchim stated that was not included in the final version of the joint resolution.

Commissioner Blonder felt devastated as she knew jobs could be affected, and the decrease in revenue would not help the residents. She said increasing parking fees to help fill the gap could discourage tourism.

Commissioner DePreter felt a lot of people would be tempted to vote for this; however,

he thought a lot of communication was needed. He felt there were creative ways to increase revenue. He stated he was not in support of the change, but overall voters would decide and the City would have to react.

Commissioner Garris said this was definitely a concern but knew there were many citizens who had concerns about taxes during the budget process. She felt there were some larger projects that would need large amounts of funds, and she thought those may have to be postponed until the financial impacts were fully understood. She stated there was a lease holder that spoke during public comment about his lease not being renewed and she felt that should be addressed, as leases were a source of income for the City; however, understood the City needed bathroom. She felt it was best to hold off on some projects until the City stabilized. She said the loss in jobs could prevent the performance of the City, and she did not want that to happen. She said until there was confirmation of the grant for the Fire Station it may need to be postponed as well as the Broudy project. She said plans should be in place in case it passed. She felt the state would have to award some money to help with the financial burden.

Mayor Sikes-Kline commented that in the original bill help from the State was included; however, it had been eliminated from the passed joint resolution. She felt the State did not have the intention to help ease the burden. She said the City had a duty to provide accurate information to the voters. She said that voters should understand what was at stake. She questioned if the budget for the police department could be affected, as she thought it was secured and there was a law in place not allowing for funds to be decreased for Firefighters or Police officers.

Ms. Lopez said it was not included in this resolution; however, she would look into it.

Mr. Birchim commented that a previous version of this bill did protect police and firefighters, but it was stricken from the version that was passed.

Mayor Sikes-Kline felt this was another way to remove power from local areas and give it to Tallahassee, which she felt had been a trend with this legislature. She said if this passed, she felt we would be moving quickly into mediocracy.

14. Items by Mayor and Commissioners

Commissioner Blonder requested support from the Commission to support Judy Glazebrook and Ally Burchfield, as they requested speedbumps and the addition of restrictions for parking during large events, based on the model from Nights of Lights. She understood that this had been brought to the attention of Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager, and had the support of the neighbors as well as the petitions required. She asked how this could be moved forward and if her fellow commissioner supported the idea.

Mr. Birchim replied that a study had been conducted, but the study did not warrant a speedbump, and he was unsure if there was an appeals process.

Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager, said from policy, speed was the main thing and results indicated there was not speeding on Rohde Avenue, but there was cut through traffic. He said there was not a policy prohibiting the addition of speedbumps if there was a cut through area. He said this would be looked at as a cut through issues, instead of speeding to help mitigate the traffic. He said the parking could be enacted just as NoL because the area was impacted with the spring events in town.

Commissioner Garris said speedbumps would be beneficial especially after seeing the video of the vehicle being hit.

Mr. Franklin stated the City conducted traffic and speed studies but it was done when that took place. He reiterated that the City's policy only identified speeding, but speedbumps could be added for other reasons.

Commissioner Garris added she had received an email regarding speeding in South Davis Shores and concern that no sidewalks were in the area. She asked for it to be monitored, to understand what was happening in the communities for them to be able to address residents' concerns.

Commissioner Blonder asked if there was consensus to move forward with the concerns on Rohde Avenue.

Commissioner Garris stated she supported the idea.

Mayor Sikes-Kline asked if there was someone who agreed to have the speedbumps in front of their house and if it would be one or two sets of speedbumps. She said she was in support of moving forward.

Mr. Franklin said it would be two sets of speedbumps. He said he would work with the residents to ensure everyone was in support of this.

Commissioner Springfield said the other streets in the area would need to be monitored to make sure it would not flow over to the other streets. He said she was in support of the request.

Commissioner DePreter asked if this had been done before for cut through traffic.

Mr. Franklin replied in the affirmative.

There was consensus to move forward with the speedbumps and parking issues on Rohde Avenue.

Commissioner Blonder said there was a River to Sea Bike Trail, which was a popular place to ride bikes. She asked if

the City would support the loop that went through the City.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said it had been approved prior.

Commissioner Blonder said since it was approved, she wanted to reiterate the City's support of the trail during this critical time.

15. Adjournment

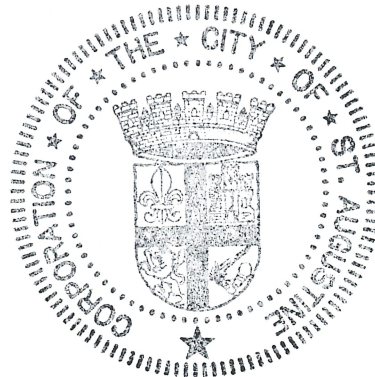
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07P.M.⁵



Nancy Sikes-Kline, MAYOR



Darlene Galambos, CITY CLERK



⁵ Transcribed by Elyse Wiemann