

MAYOR
Brian West

CITY COUNCIL
Nick Hale
Cam Jackson
Tony Ploughe
Nick Sears
Kathryn Williams



CITY MANAGER
Bret Bell

ASST CITY MANAGER
Michelle Owens

MAYOR PRO TEM
Spec Hosti

CITY CLERK
Fabian Mann

CITY ATTORNEYS
Edward M. Hughes
Tracy O'Connell

CITY OF TYBEE ISLAND

**City Council Regular Meeting
February 26, 2026 — 6:30 PM**

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order — The City of Tybee Island City Council held a regular city council meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 78 Van Horne Avenue, Tybee Island, GA 31328. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Brian West at approximately 6:30 PM. Mayor Pro Tem Michael "Spec" Hosti, Councilmember Tony Ploughe, Councilmember Nick Sears, and Councilmember Kathryn Williams were also present. Councilmember Nick Hale and Councilmember Cam Jackson attended the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Administrative Staff Attendance — City Manager Bret Bell, Assistant City Manager Michelle Owens, City Clerk Fabian Mann, City Attorney Edward Hughes, and City Attorney Tracy O'Connell were present.

Invocation — The invocation was led by **Sheron Burgess**.

Pledge of Allegiance — The pledge of allegiance was led by **Mayor West**.

Consideration of Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Williams made a motion to remove Item 9 ("Updating the Code of Ordinances Related to Short Term Rentals — Discussion . . .") from the amended agenda. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Williams** and **Sears** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Hosti, Hale, Jackson,** and **Ploughe** voted against the motion. **Motion failed 4-2.**

Mayor West made a motion to remove Item 8 ("Approval of Resolution 2026-03 . . .") from the amended agenda. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Mayor West made a motion to approve the amended agenda. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Hosti, Hale, Jackson, Ploughe,** and **Sears** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Williams** voted against the motion. **Motion passed 5-1.**

Announcements

Mayor West presented Martin "Marty" Hogan, 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal, with a key to the city.



Recognitions and Proclamations

- Employee of the Fourth Quarter (2025) — Demia Beaver
- Employee of the Year (2025) — Whitney Hooker

City Manager Bret Bell and Human Resources Director Rachel Combs commended the employees for their dedication to the City of Tybee Island.

- Proclamation — "Black History Month"

Mayor West presented Julia Pearce, Co-Founder of Tybee MLK Human Rights, with a proclamation commemorating Black History Month.

Consideration of Items for Consent Agenda

- City Council Regular Meeting Minutes — February 12, 2026
- Approval of Two (2) Recommended Commissioners to the Historic Preservation Commission (John Simshauser and Allen Bosbyshell)
- Professional Services Agreement with AWR Strategic Consulting
- Award of RFP 2025-791: Professional Services for New Fire Station Design

Consideration of Committee Appointments

- Appointment of Five (5) Commissioners to the Ethics Commission

Lee Cheek, Mark Reed, and Beau Livingston were appointed for a two-year term. Chris Sturgess and Jackie Velickovich were appointed for one-year term.

Councilmember Sears: Lee Cheek, Dee Matkowski, Mark Reed, Robert Schafer, and Ruth Wilson

Councilmember Hosti: Lee Cheek, Beau Livingston, Mark Reed, Chris Sturgess, and Jackie Velickovich

Councilmember Ploughe: Lee Cheek, Nancy Frankenhauser, Ben Goggins, Jim Harrah, and Mark Reed

Councilmember Williams: Marie Beebe, Lee Cheek, Mark Reed, Robert Schafer, and Ruth Wilson

Councilmember Hale: Chris Sturgess, Jackie Velickovich, Lee Cheek, Beau Livingston, and Mark Reed

Councilmember Jackson: Chris Sturgess, Lee Cheek, Jackie Velickovich, Beau Livingston, and Mark Reed

* Councilmember Sears disclosed his personal relationship with applicant, Ruth Wilson.

City Manager Discussion

City Manager Bret Bell provided the Mayor and City Council with high-level updates of the following items: Memorial Park master plan project, Solomon Avenue planning, water tower equipment reimbursement, Live Oak Fiber status, historic district designation, new fire station, beach renourishment, short term rental application process, paid parking updates, fleet maintenance policy, AWR Strategic Consulting grants, Tybee Island Maritime Academy location, lifeguard hiring, and strategic plan status.

Citizens to be Heard

- Shirley Wright — “Why Tybee Island Needs a Strong Ethics Ordinance”

Shirley Wright expressed concerns about weakening conflict of interest protections. She urged the Council to maintain a strong code of ethics.

Public Comments

- Marianne Bramble expressed concerns about nepotism in commission selections.
 - Don Portell supported Shirley Wright’s sentiments that were shared earlier during the meeting.
 - Jenny Rutherford discussed the employee complaint policy and parking fees.
 - Debbie Kearney spoke in opposition to the proposed change of Tybee Island’s election system.
 - Elizabeth Reed also expressed her disapproval with the voting system revision.
 - Kathy Sanford suggested leveraging the definition of “family” in the Code to create a category of family short term rentals.
 - Dale Williams advised the City Council to be cautious of terms like “majority” without proper context.
 - Dee Matkowski encouraged the incoming Ethics Commission members to strengthen the ethics ordinance.
 - Keith Gay stated that stringent ethics guidelines can hinder citizens from serving their community.
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Consideration of Approval of Consent Agenda

Councilmember Ploughe made a motion to approve the consent agenda. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration of Ordinances and Resolutions

- Mayor West: Updating the Code of Ordinances Related to Short Term Rentals — Discussion and Refer to Staff to Draft Ordinance Changes and then to Planning Commission for Review

* Councilmember Ploughe recused himself from the discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Hale made a motion to direct staff to draft short term rental ordinance updates. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Hale, Hosti,** and **Jackson** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Sears** and **Williams** voted against the motion. **Motion passed 3-2.**

* Councilmember Ploughe returned to the dais.

City Attorney Considerations

- SPLOST VIII Bond Validation Authorization

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to approve the bond validation authorization. **Councilmember Williams** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Session

Councilmember Ploughe made a motion to move into executive session regarding real estate, litigation, and personnel. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to return to the regular meeting from an executive session. **Councilmember Ploughe** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Adjournment

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Councilmember Ploughe** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

City of Tybee Island

Brian West, Mayor

Attest:

Fabian Mann, Jr., City Clerk

DRAFT

