

**MAYOR**  
Brian West

**MAYOR PRO TEM**  
Monty Parks

**CITY COUNCIL**  
Bill Garbett  
Spec Hosti  
Tony Ploughe  
Nick Sears  
Kathryn Williams



**CITY MANAGER**  
Bret Bell

**CITY CLERK**  
Fabian Mann

**ASST CITY MANAGER**  
Michelle Owens

**CITY ATTORNEYS**  
Edward M. Hughes  
Tracy O'Connell

## **CITY OF TYBEE ISLAND**

**City Council Regular Meeting  
May 8, 2025 — 6:30 PM**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

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**Call to Order** — The City of Tybee Island City Council held a regular city council meeting on Thursday, May 8, 2025, 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 Monty Parks, Councilmember Bill Garbett, Councilmember Michael "Spec" Hosti, Councilmember Tony Ploughe, Councilmember Nick Sears, and Councilmember Kathryn Williams were also present.

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

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**Invocation** — The invocation was led by **Father John Lyons**.

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

### **Announcements**

- Historic Preservation Commission Visioning Session, May 14, 2025, 6:00 PM, Tybee Guard House
- All Saints Episcopal May Lunch and Learn on May 14, 2025, cancelled

### **Recognitions**

- Proclamation issued by Mayor West designating May 2025 as "Lupus Awareness Month"

### **Consideration of Items for Consent Agenda**

- City Council Regular Meeting Minutes: April 24, 2025
- Agreement with Junior Guards USA to Create a Program on Tybee Beach that Trains Youth to Become Future Lifeguards for Tybee Island
- Amended Contract with Nextiva to Install Telephones in City Facilities
- Memorandum of Agreement with Visit Tybee to Govern Operation of the South End Information Hut
- Award of RFP 2025-783: South End District Lighting and Electrical Project to Preferred Power Solutions LLC for the Installation of Low Voltage Lighting for the Palm Trees on Butler Avenue from 14th Street to Tybrisa Street and Outlet Posts on Strand Avenue from Tybrisa Street to 17th Street
- Resolution 2025-10, Designating the City of Tybee Island a Bee City USA

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### **Consideration of Board Appointments**

**Councilmember Garbett** made a motion to approve the Main Street Nomination Committee vacancy recommendations as provided, Joy Horn as voting member and Steve Farace and Ron Rimawi as ex-officio members. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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### **Citizens to be Heard**

David Baker: City Right-of-Way Permanent Parking  
**Request withdrawn on May 5, 2025**

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### **Public Comments**

No comments were received.

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### **Consideration of Approval of Consent Agenda**

**Councilmember Parks** made a motion to approve the consent agenda. **Councilmember Williams** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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### **Public Hearings**

#### **Site Plan: amendment to install Motus tower– 37 Meddin Drive – Zone R-1/NEC -40001 03012 – Tybee Marine Science Center (City of Tybee Island)**

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel approached the Mayor and Council and provided an overview of the site plan amendment request. The property is owned by the City of Tybee Island and leased by the Tybee Marine Science Center. The property is within the North End Cultural overlay district, thus the site plan amendment requires city council approval. The site plan request includes the addition of a 30 feet motus tower to track tagged birds and insects in conjunction with the network of similar towers nationwide. The Planning Commission recommended approval unanimously. Likewise, city staff recommend approval of the site plan amendment, since the addition of a motus tower promotes educational opportunities in alignment with the city's comprehensive plan.

#### **City Council Comments**

Councilmember Williams requested Director Sinel to reiterate the motus tower's hurricane rating. Per Mrs. Sinel, the motus tower must meet the high wind requirement of 140 miles per hour.

Councilmember Garbett asked Chantal Audran from the Tybee Marine Science Center if the public would be able to access the information provided by the motus tower. Ms. Audran stated that signage and a monitor would be installed to allow the public to view the information.

**Councilmember Parks** made a motion to approve the site plan amendment. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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**Variance: encroachment into front setback – 9 5th Avenue – Zone R-1-B – 40003 08004A – Jeffrey & Stacie Burton**

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel reapproached the Mayor and Council and provided an overview of the variance request. The property was built in 1977 and currently has two preexisting front yard encroachments. The property is classified as nonconforming. The requested encroachment is an additional 6'7" feet into the front yard setback for a double width staircase. Mrs. Sinel provided that the applicant is seeking this variance for safety reasons. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended denial of the variance request. Likewise, city staff recommends denial of the site plan.

**Councilmember Parks** made a motion to deny the variance request. **Councilmember Williams** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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**Variance: encroachment into toe of dune setback – 6 Lovell Avenue - Zone R-1 -40003 18006– Simon Richardson, Robert Forrest, and 6 Lovell, LLC**

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel reapproached the Mayor and Council and provided an overview of the variance request. The original 1930s shell cottage on the property was largely demolished illegally in February 2025 with only a 10' by 10' corner section of the structure remaining. In 2022, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources approved the encroachment into the Shore Protection Act jurisdiction. In January 2025, an addition/remodel permit was issued to the applicant for the construction of a 3,200+ square foot structure on the property. However, due to the illegal demolition of the original structure in February 2025, city staff cancelled the addition/remodel permit in March 2025, since the proposed construction no longer qualified as such. The proposed toe of dune encroachment request as a new construction project is approximately 970 square feet in conditioned and unconditioned floor area. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the variance request by a 3-2 vote. Likewise, city staff recommends approval.

Public Comments

Robert Matkowski spoke in opposition of the variance request.

Robert Forrest, variance request applicant, provided a timeline of the property's history.

City Council Comments

Councilmember Williams requested Director Sinel to reiterate that the structure was demolished intentionally and not resulting from an act of God. Mrs. Sinel clarified such.

Councilmember Sears voiced concerns regarding the inexistence of a hardship thus voiding the allowance of a variance.

**Councilmember Sears** made a motion to deny the variance request. **Councilmember Williams** seconded the motion. **Councilmembers Garbett** and **Ploughe** voted aye to deny the variance request, and **Councilmembers Hosti** and **Parks** voted nay. **Motion passed 4-2.**

**Council Considerations**

Councilmember Sears: Approval of Resolution 2025-09, Providing Schedules and Procedures for Setting Council Meeting Agendas

**Councilmember Sears** made a motion to table Resolution 2025-09 until the May 22<sup>nd</sup> city council meeting. **Councilmember Garbett** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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**Executive Session**

Executive session was not held.

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**Adjournment**

**Councilmember Garbett** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Councilmember Williams** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**City of Tybee Island**

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**Brian West, Mayor**

**Attest:**

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**Fabian Mann, Jr., City Clerk**

