



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH TOWN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

TOWN HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
3614 S. OCEAN BLVD., HIGHLAND BEACH, FL

Date: February 03, 2026
Time: 1:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Jason Chudnofsky
Commissioner Judith Goldberg
Commissioner Donald Peters
Vice Mayor David Stern
Mayor Natasha Moore
Town Manager Marshall Labadie
Town Attorney Leonard Rubin
Town Clerk Lanelda Gaskins

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Town Commission led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

4. INVOCATION

None.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Goldberg/Stern - A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

6. PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

A. Resolution No. 2026-001

A Resolution of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida, ratifying the selection, appointments, and term of office of members of the Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board; and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Moore read the title of Resolution No. 2026-001 followed by Town Commission interview of Applicant Joseph Loeffler. Mr. Loeffler spoke about his

professional background and interest in serving on the Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board.

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2026-001. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Public Comments will be limited to five (5) minutes per speaker).

The following individuals gave public comments:

Mr. David Newman
Mr. Tim Ruotolo

8. ORDINANCES (Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Commission initial discussion.)

A. Ordinance No. 2026-001 (Second Reading/Public Hearing)

An Ordinance of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida, amending Article VII, "Administration and Enforcement," of Chapter 30, "Zoning Code," of the Town Code of Ordinances by adopting a new Section 30-124, "Reasonable Accommodation Procedure for Certified Recovery Residences;" providing for codification; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date (First Reading was January 06, 2026).

Mayor Moore read the title of Ordinance No. 2026-001.

Town Attorney Rubin explained that all municipalities are required to enact a procedure for the approval of certified recovery residences, which are mandated by state law. Language was added in the ordinance to explicitly state that certified recovery residences "shall be utilized solely for housing, peer support, and life skills training" and shall not be used for clinical substance abuse treatment of any kind.

The Town Commission was satisfied with language added in Sec. 30-124(a), Reasonable accommodation procedure for certified recovery residences of the ordinance.

Mayor Moore opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments from the public, public hearing was closed.

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2026-001. Upon Roll Call: Commissioner Goldberg (Yes); Commissioner Peters (Yes); Commissioner Chudnofsky (Yes); Vice Mayor Stern (Yes); and Mayor Moore (Yes). The motion passed on a 5 to 0 vote.

9. **CONSENT AGENDA** (These are items that the Commission typically does not need to discuss individually, and which are voted on as a group.) Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Commission initial discussion.

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes

January 06, 2026 Town Commission Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to approve the Agenda. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

10. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** (Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Town Commission initial discussion.)

A. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) RRR Project Update

Town Manager Labadie provided an update, stating that the project is substantially complete, with contractors currently addressing punch list items in coordination with Public Works Director and staff.

He clarified that the steel plates visible at the south end of Town are not part of the Florida Department of Transportation project but are associated with sewer and water connections for future condominium development. He further noted that, once proper compaction is achieved, the affected area will be repaved.

In response to inquiries regarding flooding, Town Manager Labadie acknowledged that certain areas would continue to experience flooding, particularly at Seagate and Ambassadors. He explained that while the roads might be clear, the right-of-way may still be subject to flooding, and the Town will need to coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation to develop a long-term solution. He also reported that the Town has submitted an appropriation request to the State for funding to support embedded crosswalk lighting and the repaving of the walking path.

Additionally, Town Manager Labadie mentioned that the Town's engineers are exploring the possibility of adding a crosswalk for Bel Lido, Russell, and Bel Air drives to enhance pedestrian safety and provide safer beach access.

B. Building Department Recertification Program Update

Katerina Jaddaoui, Administrative Assistant/Permit Technician, provided an update on the Building Recertification Program, noting the Monterey House has been recertified, bringing the total number of recertified buildings to 31 out of 54. Two buildings are under Phase 1 review, having submitted both structural and electrical reviews, and 18 buildings remain under permit for restoration.

C. Continued discussion of Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Strategic Priorities Plan

Town Manager Labadie presented the updated Strategic Priorities Plan based on the Commission's comments from the January 6 meeting. He noted that he reorganized and re-ranked priorities, added roughly five new projects based on Commission comments, and removed completed projects like the A1A project.

He explained that once the rankings are accepted, he will bring back the full strategic priorities plan for approval at the next meeting. The plan will then be used to build the five-year forecast for the budget. He confirmed that larger projects like the fire annex, police reconstruction, and marine dock would require Commission authorization for final amounts.

Regarding the Bel Lido Bridge project, Town Manager Labadie explained this project would begin the following Monday and might cause some traffic interruptions during the day, though efforts would be made to avoid rush hours and school times. He also addressed the inquiry regarding the Police Marine Docking and securing the annual FIND grant.

It was suggested to regularly include one or more items on the agenda to update the Commission on strategic priorities and CIP projects throughout the year. Town Manager Labadie agreed to implement this suggestion moving forward. He will bring back strategic priorities plan for Commission final approval at the next meeting.

Overall, the Town Commission was satisfied with the strategic priorities plan and capital improvement project list.

Mayor Moore opened public comments, and the following individuals provided comments:

Mr. Timothy Routolo
Mr. David Newman
Mr. Richard Greenwald

11. NEW BUSINESS (Public Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker per item after Town Commission initial discussion.)

A. Introduction to a proposed amendment to the Town Code of Ordinances regarding hard surfaces (for walking, gathering or sitting) as they pertain to seawalls, etc.

Mayor Moore read the title of Item 11.A.

Town Planner Ingrid Allen explained that this proposed amendment stemmed from a Planning Board motion on August 14, 2025. The issue arose when reviewing a special exception for a property at 2564 South Ocean Boulevard that

included installing a 105-foot seawall and seawall cap, along with a boat lift and dock. She provided visual illustrations showing that the current code only allows hard surfaces up to the property line, but in cases where seawalls are beyond the property line, property owners need a path to access their docks and boats. The Planning Board's proposal would allow hard surfaces to extend from the property line to seawalls when necessary for access.

Mr. Greg Babij, a Planning Board member and sponsor of the proposed amendment, explained that the issue is straightforward: allowing residents to have a walking path all the way to their dock, even when the seawall extends beyond their property line. He noted this is not just for aesthetics but also for safety, as it is difficult to transport items on a cart across mixed surfaces.

The Commission discussed several aspects of the proposal, including liability questions, maintenance responsibilities, and potential limitations on pathway width. Town Attorney Rubin clarified that while property lines do not automatically extend, the municipality still has permitting authority over the area.

Mayor Moore opened public comments, and the following individual provided comments:

Mr. Richard Greenwald.

Town Manager Labadie mentioned that a related request regarding controlling outward seawall movement over time was also under consideration, but regulatory changes could not be implemented until 2027 due to state statutes.

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters – A motion was made and seconded refer to the Planning Board to take up this issue to study and review. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

B. Introduction of a proposed ordinance revising Town's Platting Procedures.

Mayor Moore read the title of Item 11.B.

Town Attorney Rubin explained that this ordinance addresses another mandate from the recent legislative session requiring plats to be administratively approved rather than through public hearings. He noted that plats are straightforward and either meet statutory requirements or do not, making them suitable for administrative approval.

The proposed changes would designate the Building Department to receive applications and the Town Manager as the administrative official with final authority. Given the age of Highland Beach's planning regulations and the unlikelihood of new subdivisions, Town Attorney Rubin recommended minimal changes to comply with the law rather than completely redrafting the plotting regulations. He suggested this matter go to the Planning Board for review.

MOTION: Goldberg/Peters - A motion was made and seconded to refer this matter to the Planning Board for review. The motion passed unanimously, 5 to 0.

Mayor Moore allowed public comments, and the following individual provided comments:

Mr. Timothy Ruotolo.

12. TOWN COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Jason Chudnofsky inquired about mangrove removal near Toscana, noting that residents were concerned about the precedent this might set for other properties between Coronado and Casuarina condominium. Town Manager Labadie explained that the property owner obtained state permits for clearing mangroves and purchased mitigation credits as required. The town is preempted by state law from stopping such removals once proper permits are secured. While the owner had proposed nine townhomes on the 0.8-acre site, no development applications have been submitted to the town yet.

Commissioner Judith M. Goldberg wished everyone a wonderful week and happy Valentine's Day.

Commissioner Donald Peters commented about the turtle conservation meeting that he attended. He encouraged everyone to stay warm.

Vice Mayor David Stern also commented about the turtle conservation meeting that he attended. He noted discussions about path safety and potential state legislation that could affect town guidelines.

Mayor Natasha Moore had no comments.

13. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Town Attorney Rubin noted that there are a lot more preemptions coming and will see how it plays out during the legislative session.

14. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Labadie expressed concern about the state legislature's increasing preemption of local government authority. He thanked resident Martin Berman for his donation to the police department and compliments about the town's public safety and beauty. He also noted that the first quarter financial report had been distributed, showing the town is tracking well financially and on plan.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Moore read the announcements as follows:

Board Vacancies

Code Enforcement Board	One (1) vacancy for a three-year term
Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board	One (1) Vacancy for an unexpired term ending April 2027

Meetings and Events

February 12, 2026	9:30 A.M.	Planning Board Regular Meeting
February 16, 2026		Town Hall closed in observance of Presidents' Day
February 17, 2026		Wine & Lite Bites Dune Event hosted by the Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board at Highland Beach Library from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Cost \$35.pp)
February 19, 2026	12:00 P.M.	Annual Advisory Board Luncheon
March 03, 2026	1:30 P.M.	Town Commission Meeting

Board Action Report

None.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:52 P.M.

APPROVED: March 03, 2026, Town Commission Meeting.

Signed Minutes on file in the Town Clerk's Office

ATTEST:

Natasha Moore, Mayor

Lanelda Gaskins, MMC
Town Clerk

03/03/2026

Date

Disclaimer: Effective May 19, 2020, per Resolution No. 20-008, all meeting minutes are transcribed as a brief summary reflecting the events of this meeting. Verbatim audio/video recordings are permanent records and are available on the Town's Media Archives & Minutes webpage: <https://highlandbeach-fl.municodemeetings.com/>.