MAYOR
Brian West

MAYOR PRO TEM
Spec Hosti

CITY COUNCIL
Nick Hale
Cam Jackson
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
October 8, 2026 — 6:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order — The City of Tybee Island City Council held a regular city council meeting on Thursday, October 8, 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 Nick Hale, Councilmember Cam Jackson, 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 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 Hosti made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of Item #6 (David Roberts — "Conditional Zoning Decisions"), per Mr. Roberts' request. **Councilmember Hale** seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

Recognitions

- Proclamation — "Retired Educators Day"

  Councilmember Williams presented the Chatham County Retired Educators Association with a proclamation recognizing Sunday, November 1, 2026 as "Retired Educators Day" on Tybee Island.

Consideration of Items for Consent Agenda

- City Council Regular Meeting Minutes — September 10, 2026
- Main Street / Downtown Development Authority Board Member Nominations
- 2026 Seafood Fest One-Day Special Event Alcohol License
- Verizon Temporary Telecommunications Site Agreement
- Onsite Ethics Training Services
- Resolution 2026-17 — Comprehensive Plan Update Adoption

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City Manager Report

City Manager Bret Bell provided high-level updates about the beach nourishment project, new fire station development, Memorial Park master plan update, LiveOak Fiber installation project, centralized city fleet management program, and the Tybee Island Maritime Academy facilities status.

Citizens to be Heard

Jeffrey Burton — "Traffic Safety Improvements"

Jeffrey Burton delivered a slideshow presentation outlining critical blind spots and pedestrian hazards across the island.

Public Comment

- **Melissa Hille** provided an overview of the inaugural Tybee Island Seafood Festival scheduled for November 8 through November 15.

Consideration of Approval of Consent Agenda

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

Public Hearings

- Special Review: Accessory Dwelling Unit (Guest Cottage) - 1216 Venetian Drive -R-2 -40011 01005 – Jim Bentley (Tony Lord)

  *Councilmember Sears recused himself from the discussion and consideration due to a potential conflict of interest.

  Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the special review request. The applicant is requesting special review approval for an accessory dwelling unit (guest cottage) on the lot at 1216 Venetian Drive. The principal structure is one-story while the proposed guest cottage is elevated to meet flood prevention requirements. The existing shed will be removed. Planning Commission recommended approval with the condition that a ten-foot fire separation is maintained between structures, by a vote of 5-0.

  Mayor and City Council Considerations

  Councilmember Ploughe made a motion to approve the special review request. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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* Councilmember Sears returned to the dais.

- Variance: Setback Encroachment (Finished New Construction) – 3 Hodges Street - R-2 – 40019 04007– Tom Oxnard (Toxannah Properties)

  Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the variance request. The applicant seeks a variance for encroachments into the front and side yard setback due to an error at the time of construction, during the foundation phase. This residential structure is new construction, has passed all required building inspections, but a certificate of occupancy has not been issued. Planning Commission recommended approval with staff recommended conditions by a vote of 4-1. If approved, staff propose the following conditions:
  A note shall be added to the as-built survey to the effect of: "No additions or expansions to the structure are allowed as long as it remains non-conforming due to noted setback deviations at the time of construction."
  The as-built survey shall be recorded and a copy provided to the city.

  Public Comment

  Applicant, **Tom Oxnard**, clarified that he and his partner are real estate owners and this was their first residential project with this general contractor.

  Dr. Helen Huff stated that her concerns included protecting an established strand of non-invasive bamboo that provides visual buffering.

  Chris Terry spoke in favor of the variance, stating that forcing an owner to tear down a newly built home would harm property values and discourage responsible investment.

  Mayor and City Council Considerations

  Councilmember Ploughe made a motion to approve the variance request with staff conditions. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Ploughe, Hosti, Jackson,** and **Hale** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Williams** and **Sears** voted against the motion. **Motion passed 4-2.**

- Variance: Swimming Pool in Coastal Marshland Buffer- 5 Alley 3 -R-2 -40010 03015 -Thomas McCarthy

  *Councilmember Hale recused himself from the discussion and consideration due to a potential conflict of interest.

  Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the variance request. The applicant seeks a variance to build a swimming pool in the coastal marshland buffer, located to the rear (seaward) of the principal structure. The area of the pool, including deck, is 1,244 square feet, of which almost all is located in the coastal marshland buffer area and the 5' pool buffer setback. Applicant states the pool will be a minimum of 10' from the side yard property line and 5' from the rear yard property line. Planning Commission unanimously recommended denial.

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Public Comment

Tom McCarthy expressed his willingness to compromise by reducing the overall dimensions of the pool or constructing a fully elevated pool.

Dawn Shay spoke in opposition to granting the variance, citing the recently approved 2026 Comprehensive Plan update.

Mayor and City Council Considerations

Councilmember Williams made a motion to deny the variance request. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Williams, Jackson, Sears,** and **Ploughe** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Hosti** voted against the motion. **Motion passed 4-1.**

*Councilmember Hale returned to the dais.

- Map Amendment and Site Plan Approval: Map Amendment - 0 Butler Avenue – R-2 to C-2 - 40004 02003 – New Fire Station-City of Tybee Island - Site Plan Approval: 103 Butler Avenue/0 Butler Avenue – C-2 - 4000402004/40004 02003 – New Fire Station-City of Tybee Island

  The map amendment and site plan approval are requested to construct the city's new fire station. Planning Commission recommended approval for the map amendment and site plan by a vote of 5-0 with the condition that 8-foot masonry fences are installed on the side property lines between the residential uses and the fire station.

  Mayor and City Council Considerations

  Councilmember Williams made a motion to approve the site plan with staff conditions (installation of 8-foot masonry wall and 5-foot vegetative buffer). **Councilmember Ploughe** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

  Councilmember Williams made a motion to approve the map amendment request from R-2 to C-2. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Session

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to move into executive session regarding real estate. **Councilmember Ploughe** 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.**

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Adjournment

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

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City of Tybee Island

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Brian West, Mayor

Attest:

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Fabian Mann, Jr., City Clerk