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
August 13, 2026 — 6:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order — The City of Tybee Island City Council held a regular city council meeting on Thursday, August 13, 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, City Attorney Edward Hughes, and City Attorney Tracy O'Connell were present.

Invocation — The invocation was led by **Mike Miller.**

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 following considerations: remove Items 5 and 15 until additional contract details are provided and table Item 13. **Councilmember Williams** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- Item 5 — Citizens to Be Heard: Motorola Solutions — First Responder Takeoff Drone Program
- Item 15 — Motorola Solutions & BRINC "Drone as First Responder Program" Agreement
- Item 13 — Major Subdivision with Variances – 104 17th Street- 40008 18001 - C-1 – Southern Belle Rentals, LLC (Walt Freeman)

Councilmember Hale made a motion to table Item 13 until the September 10, 2026, city council meeting. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Recognitions

Employee of the Second Quarter — Amberly Warren

Amberly Warren serves as a communications officer and open records coordinator for the Tybee Island Police Department. She was recognized for her dedication and willingness to perform additional duties.

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Consideration of Items for Consent Agenda

- City Council Regular Meeting Minutes — July 9, 2026
- City Council Special Called Meeting — July 16, 2026
- Marine Science Center Restroom Project — Contract Modification No. 1
- YMCA Roof Replacement Project — Contract Modification No. 1

Consideration of Approval of Consent Agenda

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

Citizens to be Heard

- Stephanie Kaple, Executive Director of the Chatham-Savannah Interagency Council on Homelessness — Five-Year Strategic Plan Overview to End Homelessness in Chatham County

  Stephanie Kaple presented the Council on Homelessness' five-year strategic plan focused on preventing and ending homelessness, increasing affordable housing, and expanding workforce opportunities. She encouraged community involvement and support for the plan.

- Beth Reed — Broken-Window Theory

  Beth Reed explained the broken-window theory and its application to Tybee Island. She described how minor infractions and visible disorder can negatively impact a community's sense of safety and security.

City Manager Report

City Manager Bret Bell provided a high-level overview of the following city council-driven directives: short-term rental certificate administration, Memorial Park master plan status, beach renourishment efforts, new fire station development, and the Butler Avenue pedestrian safety plan.

Public Comment

- In reference to the proposed administrative civil penalties ordinance, **Dawn Shay** presented a slideshow detailing the direct and indirect city costs of supporting short-term rentals.

Public Hearings

- Comprehensive Plan Process and Progress. 2026-2031 Tybee Island Comprehensive Plan. Coastal Regional Commission. (GA Comp. R. & Regs. R. 110-3-2)

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Chelsie Fernald, Coastal Regional Commissioner Planning Manager, provided an update on the development of the city's 2026-2031 comprehensive plan. This public hearing served as one of the two required hearings.

- Map Amendment: Change from R-2 to C-2 - 923 B Old Hwy 80 – 40026 08028 – Michael Fulkerson (Owner) & Mark Fulkerson (Representative)

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the map amendment request. The applicant seeks to rezone the duplex property located at 923B Old US Highway 80 from R-2 to C-2 to match the existing zoning of the other side of the duplex, 923A Old US Highway 80. The Planning Commission voted 5-1 to approve the map amendment with staff recommendations, requiring protective screening per Section 3-160 and an updated survey.

Mayor and City Council Considerations

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to approve the map amendment with staff recommendations. **Councilmember Jackson** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- Site Plan: Change of Use (Vape Store) – 204 1st Street Unit F -40004 01022 – Doug Hall (Owner) Mohammed Al Shaebi (Applicant)

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the site plan. The applicant seeks site plan approval for the use of a retail vape store, the Smoke Cave. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the site plan with staff recommendations. Such recommendations include the following conditions:

- Neon lighting is strictly prohibited. No glowing, gas-filled tubes (neon) may be used for internal or external window/door/wall framing.
- Maximum 25% of the total available window space may be used for signs; the remaining window space shall remain clear for interior visibility from the outside.
- No messaging, graphics, or imagery related to illegal substances is permitted.
- The signage must adhere to all other Article 6: Sign Regulations of the Land Development Code, including height and placement restrictions.
- A sign permit is required and must be approved prior to the installation of any signage.

Public Comments

Muhammad Eli, applicant, explained the business' refusal to sell restricted products to underage customers.
Debbie Kearney requested clarification regarding the allowance of underage individuals inside the business.

Mayor and City Council Considerations

Councilmember Williams made a motion to deny the site plan. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Williams** and **Sears** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Jackson, Hosti, Ploughe,** and **Hale** voted against the motion. **Motion failed 4-2.**

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

- Minor Subdivision and Combination: 10 Horsepen Point Drive -R-2/EC- 40012 03002 – James Alexander AND 12 Horsepen Point Drive – R-2/EC- 40012 03003 – Leo Sheehan (Ashley Flagella White)

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the minor subdivision request. The applicants own one lot with each consisting of a residential structure and coastal marshland. They are requesting to split off the marsh areas of their parcels, separate from the properties containing their respective residences, and combine the marsh area into one lot, creating three total lots. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the minor subdivision request with staff recommendations. Such recommendations include the following considerations:

- On the final version, include the zoning districts.
- On the final version, include a statement upon the plat to the effect that all drainage requirements must be met prior to the issuance of a building permit on any lot in the subdivision.
- On the final version for the City Signature Block, Mayor and Community Development Director are required signatures for Minor Plats.
- Include a 20' private access easement between lots A and B from Horsepen Point Drive to lot C to protect lot C from being landlocked.

Mayor and City Council Considerations

Councilmember Williams made a motion to approve the minor subdivision request. **Councilmember Hosti** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- Minor Subdivision: 4 Tenth Terrace -R-2- 40006 16012 –Slotin & Company LLC (Chad Zittrouer)

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the minor subdivision request. The applicant is requesting to split the 0.47-acre area (lots 2, 3, 4, and extension), legally described as E PT & EXT OF BEACH LOT 63 WD 3 TYBEE, into three lots that meet the minimum lot requirements of the R-2 zoning district and the subdivision regulations. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the minor subdivision request with staff recommendations. Such recommendations include the following considerations:

- Two (2) on-site parking spots shall be available on each parcel for each residential unit.
- The applicant shall adjust the location of the exterior staircase on the existing residential structure to remove any setback encroachment into Parcel C prior to pulling any building permits for Parcel C.

Public Comments

The applicant, **Chad Zittrouer**, expressed the owner's intent to preserve the historic home on the property.

A **neighboring resident** at 6 10th Place expressed concerns about flooding following construction.

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Mayor and City Council Considerations

Councilmember Williams made a motion to approve the minor subdivision request. **Councilmember Hale** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- Major Subdivision with Variances – 104 17th Street- 40008 18001 - C-1 – Southern Belle Rentals, LLC (Walt Freeman)/Tabled

Public Comments

The applicant, **Walt Freeman**, requested that city staff review past meeting minutes and internal emails before this item returns for consideration.

- Text Amendment: Update to Article 4 -Zoning Districts, Section 4-051 – Short Term Rentals – City of Tybee Island (First Reading)

*Councilmember Ploughe recused himself from this discussion related to short-term rentals due to potential conflicts of interest.

Community Development Director Patricia Sinel provided an overview of the proposed short-term rental ordinance changes and the history of the ordinance's development.

Public Comments

David Roberts, Anita Schrimsher, Robert Matkowski, Dale Williams, Debbie Kearney, Bruce Scruggs, Colleen Bozard, Sally Chandler, Ben Goggins, Shirley Wright, Elizabeth Reed, Jeanne Hutton, and Mary Sheffield expressed opposition to the proposed text amendment.

Sara Bacon, Neal Estroff, Maureen Tankersley, Matt Campbell, Ginny Willett, Corey Jones, Chrissy Campbell, Keith Gay, John Byrne, and Grace Porterfield expressed support for the proposed text amendment.

Mayor and City Council Considerations

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to approve the first reading of the text amendment. **Councilmember Jackson** seconded the motion.

Councilmember Sears made a motion to amend the proposed text amendment included in the packet to incorporate the redlined changes reflected in the draft distributed Wednesday night, along with the following additional provisions:

- "Shall" replaced with "may" (Section 4-051.3)
- "Immediate family" definition to include grandchildren (Section 4-051.2)

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- Floor plan with application must coincide with the Chatham County tax records for bedrooms/bathrooms and other pertinent city records (Section 4-051.3)
- Short-term rental permit revocation lasts 36 months; any sale within this period must be bona fide (Section 4-051.50)
- Loss of business license tied to three short-term rental permit revocations within a 24-month period (Section 4-051.45)

Councilmember Hale seconded the amendment. **Amendment passed unanimously.**

Councilmember Williams made a motion to amend the proposed text amendment, including a window in the definition of a "bedroom" per Section 4-051.2. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Williams** and **Sears** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Jackson, Hosti**, and **Hale** voted against the motion. **Motion failed 3-2.**

Councilmember Williams made a motion to amend the proposed text amendment, including both sides of Lovell Avenue into Sector 2 per Section 4-051.20. **Councilmember Sears** seconded the motion. **Councilmember Williams** and **Sears** voted in favor of the motion. **Councilmember Jackson, Hosti,** and **Hale** voted against the motion. **Motion failed 3-2**.

Councilmember Williams made a motion to amend the proposed text amendment to include only the non-emergency phone number on signs, removing the emergency contact number and code enforcement number per Section 4-051.4. **Motion died for lack of a second.**

Councilmember Hosti, Jackson, and Hale voted to approve the main motion as amended. **Councilmember Sears** and **Williams** voted against the main motion as amended. **Motion passed 3-2.**

Consideration of Ordinances and Resolutions

- First Reading of Ordinance 2026-04 — Amending Code Section 43-1, "Administrative Civil Penalties"

  Councilmember Williams made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2026-04 to include the updated fine schedule as provided during the meeting. **Councilmember Jackson** seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

  *Councilmember Ploughe returned to the dais.

Executive Session

No executive session was taken.

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Adjournment

Councilmember Hosti made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Councilmember Hale** 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

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