

# Town of Melbourne Beach

## TOWN COMMISSION WORKSHOP

June 23, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.

COMMUNITY CENTER – 509 OCEAN AVENUE

## MINUTES

### Commission Members:

Mayor Alison Dennington  
Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow  
Commissioner Robert Baldwin  
Commissioner Anna Butler  
Commissioner Tim Reed

### Staff Members:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro  
Deputy Clerk Cyd Cardwell

### 1. Call to Order

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm.

### 2. Roll Call

Deputy Clerk Cyd Cardwell conducted roll call.

### Commission Members Present

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow  
Commissioner Anna Butler  
Commissioner Tim Reed

### Staff Members Present

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro  
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr  
Deputy Clerk Cyd Cardwell

### Commission Members Absent

Mayor Alison Dennington  
Commissioner Robert Baldwin

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 4. Public Comments

After being acknowledged by the Mayor, members of the public should state their name and address for the record. The Commission encourages citizens to prepare their comments in advance. Each individual will have three (3) minutes to address the Commission on any topic(s) related to Town business, not on the Agenda.

**5. New Business – 2:10**

**A. Discussion regarding the FY 2025-2026 budget**

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if the 3rd package they received was the same as the new one on the website.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said no, it has been updated. Said she had sent an updated version on Friday.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said it would be helpful to add this to the packet online.

Mayor Alison Dennington arrived at 3:15 pm.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about a few of the changes to the budget draft in the packet. Spoke about how she would call this week to figure out if they could get their health insurance covered by the County/State. Said a lot of final numbers will come in July. Directed the Commission to page 34 of the agenda packet, which is Fund 103, Special Revenue Fund, a donation fund for the Fire Department.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked why the fund isn't part of Dept. 22.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro explained that donations may have specific purposes, so they are kept in a separate fund. These are not items that the Town will pay for, these are purchased by the Fire Dept, usually donations from MBVFA. - 13:50

Mayor Alison Dennington asked for an explanation of the differences between pages 23 and 23A.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the cost difference if additional firefighters were added. Page 23 is without the additional, 23A is with 6 full-time firefighters. This does not include the offset for the SAFER grant because this is only an expense sheet. She spoke about the three options for the Fire Dept. staffing issue.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about bypassing Fire for now and returning to the topic later in the meeting.

Commissioner Tim Reed confirmed that donations can't be mixed with the general fund; asked about the line item for transferring in from the general fund.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr explained we don't transfer into this fund from the general fund, but the line item exists for each fund.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said they separated boards because they are all taking in money that cannot be commingled in the general fund. Spoke about how the EAB has donation money separated and so does Parks Board, MBPD has a donation fund too. Town Hall is the only department whose donations would go to the general fund but donations to Town Hall are rare.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked what the Sunshine Jim donation is.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said it was an older donation that they are spending down. Spoke about the GL number not showing, but it does have one.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow confirmed they are increasing the EAB fund from \$3,000 to \$4,000.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said this was because it is what they give the Parks Board.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow asked if the distribution of funds from the street sign sale was depicted. - 27:25

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said they are not.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about reducing the allocation to the Parks Board to \$2500 because they have excess funds.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how sea oats and adopt-an-area have always been paid for by the Town, which is \$500.

Mayor Alison Dennington said the amount from selling the signs would cover the \$500. Suggested crossing out the \$4,000 and doing \$500 which was from the signs.

Commissioner Anna Butler agreed and spoke about the boards coming to the Commission later if funds are needed.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about having additional funds from the parking increase and how that could go to the boards if necessary.

Mayor Alisno Dennington proceeded to page 36.

Town Manager Mascaro spoke about \$11,500 in funds that the Parks Board hasn't expended yet for the butterfly garden and Circle Park; up to the Commission on how to handle it. If they don't spend, the money will be rolled back in. Kids Business Fair is usually a wash. \$1000 is the amount expected for Honor Walk bricks.

Commissioner Reed spoke about how the Parks Board hasn't presented a plan.

Vice Mayor Barlow disagreed and spoke about them having a plan but that the Commission needed an update from them.

Town Manager Mascaro spoke about the \$4000 transfer changing to \$500 for Parks Board and EAB.

Commissioner Reed asked how many boards are getting sign funds.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said she would reach out to see what the update is on the butterfly garden and Circle Park upgrades.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about four boards: Parks, EAB, HCB, HPAB. The Parks Board has been focused on Hometown Heroes banners and Honor Walk bricks.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked what fund 121 is about.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said this revenue comes in from tickets.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said anything that goes through the Clerk of Courts, a percentage comes back to the Town and must go into a Police education fund.

Mayor Alison Dennington said it makes it difficult to be able to see where you can save money when you're paying for the same thing in 2 different spots.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about projecting numbers based on the prior year's spending.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about reducing the line item for training in Department 21 by \$2,500 since the money is sitting in another area. - 43:00

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said no and spoke about sending Police Officers to school in Jacksonville for a week being expensive. Spoke about providing a spending breakdown for the Police Department training.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said the revenue side of it is a distribution from the state level which is why the fund must remain separate and distinct and we show the expenses.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if the fund was in the monthly finance report.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said no, monthly is only the general fund.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if we will spend the combination of what's in 121 and 21 on training for FY26 or if it is just in case.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about predicting that both will be spent.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if the Town looks at what MBPD needs for training and subtracts \$2500 from 121 to figure out what 21 gets.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the summer and winter conferences for the Chief and Deputy Chief. \$2,500 for college courses, supervisory and administrative classes.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked the Town Manager to provide information on what was spent on training and schools last year. Asked to move on to the next department.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the Building Dept. education fund going towards books, conferences, online training. Spoke about the amount being dictated by building permits and must be put into the fund per state statute.

Commissioner Tim Reed confirmed the fund is mandated to be training. Said this is a relatively small amount, does not have an issue with it.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow asked to move onto fund 125.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the Building Department previously paying Town Hall back and having to pull funds from the general fund into Building.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow confirmed that the 159 figure on expenses is reflective of the updated salaries.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said she reduced the contract amount for professional service to \$20,000.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if the full-time Building Official contract is OBE, \$180,960.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the \$180,000 figure being for a private provider, so since we have gone to a full-time employee, that will come off the budget.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked how the revenue for Building was calculated because it's more than last year. - 57:08

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about it being \$10,000 less.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about new houses under construction bringing in new permit fees.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked about a negative \$50,000 returning to the general fund.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about that being an overage the Building Department returned to the general fund in FY24.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked for the expense for BS&A software for the Building Department and asked if all departments pay for it.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said that was on page 41 in the packet and confirmed that yes, all departments pay.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said she could total all BS&A expenses up for the Commission.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about consolidating departments and cutting staff.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about staying on topic regarding the Building Department.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about consolidating the Finance and Building Clerks.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about educating the Commission on staff's duties.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked to shadow the staff.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said no and spoke about there being a better way to educate the Commission.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about building revenue being self-sustaining and the department needing both employees.

Commissioner Tim Reed recommended moving on to fund 141, stormwater. Said this covers the cost of keeping the drains clean. It is maintenance, not anything related to future improvements.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how there are engineering fees if there is a project going on that may come out of this fund, but primarily it is the baffle boxes, the construction when they are crushed.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if the repair at the end of Avenue A came out of 141.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro responded that it came out of 341. Spoke about the way stormwater funds are separated and why.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin arrived at 4:21 pm. - 1:13:08

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if the Town Manager has a list of the funds, the year they were started and what they are for.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said they can generate a list. Spoke about how they try not to open and close funds arbitrarily at the request of the Town's accountants. Said they can talk to accountants about a separate fund, but we can't have a fund for everything.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about having a schedule for a fund rather than multiple funds.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro confirmed they do that for the long-term capital fund.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about general fund 19, government.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro confirmed that the Finance Manager could help her go in and break down what balances are in each item. It would be a spreadsheet that takes the total numbers and breaks them down into what makes up that number. They would also get the Commission the 5-year projections as well.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about fund 341 looking at FY25.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro asked about going back to page 42 because it was skipped. Spoke about a small collapse near curbing on one of the "tree" streets that could be paid for with fund 141.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said funds carry forward within themselves at the end of the fiscal year after the budget is closed out. Spoke about anything over \$5,000 going to capital assets.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if she would get that with the requested inventory.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about it being its own spreadsheet separate from inventory.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked for a copy of both capital and inventory.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about looking at a name change for fund 141 reflective of what it's used for.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said If we are making changes to our funds, we want to run it by the accountants to make sure they are okay with the changes because there are rules that need to be followed.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin said splitting something out might be easier than combining things together, suggested seeing what the accountants have to say. - 1:32:06

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about moving to page 45, Ocean Park revenue and expenses.

Commissioner Tim Reed questioned using that revenue to fund the Police Officer position.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said she would get the Commission a copy of the agreement they have with the state indicating what they can use that money for.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow asked for confirmation that the numbers did not reflect the increase in the hourly parking rate to \$3.50.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about last year's numbers being down due to cold weather and less snowbirds visiting the beach; spoke about trying to be conservative with estimates. Spoke about providing the Commission updated numbers reflecting the new parking rate. Said the projection for FY26 is that expenses will be in excess of revenue by \$726.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked for a paper list of the different funds.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said the staff could provide that; spoke about moving to page 48, Ryckman Park revenue and expenses.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked why parking revenues can't be a revenue stream into general expenditures.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about being unable to see what the actual expenses are; spoke about how the Town used to have fund 72 for Founders Day, movies in the park, etc.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about keeping it as an expense fund only.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about how people used to ask what was earned on parking and where it was going, so the Commission at the time created this fund.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about it providing transparency.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about taking the excess that is not spent and putting it into a roads capital fund.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said they are unable to separate it from the general fund.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about it being a good idea to keep tracking it; if the state ever came after parking revenue we could show where it goes.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about not needing to track it separately and using the monies to help the Town's bottom line.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow disagreed and thought it is important to keep it separate. There are capital expenses that this park needs to capture. What happens when playground equipment needs to be replaced? Residents have expressed opposition to fundraising because it gets taxed. Suggested having a strategy that says 80% of excess funds are held in reserve for capital improvements.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about transferring the money into the existing long-term capital for parks.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said she reduced the transfers to EAB, parks from \$4,000 to \$500 a piece. Spoke about the recreational programs in the park being the biggest expense.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked for information on the frequency and attendance of free classes in Ryckman Park. There are roughly 4 classes a week and Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow gave some estimates of how many attendees per class.

Commissioner Tim Reed wanted to see if there was consensus to take that 75/80% out to put to long term capital. The Commission discussed what to do with the money (roads, park equipment) but ultimately decided not to put a label on where to spend the money yet.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about the playground equipment being on borrowed time and probably costing around \$300-400,000 to replace. - 1:52:05

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the bathrooms in Ryckman Park being budgeted out of Public Works, but we can start to budget out of fund 175 if the Commission wants.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow asked as an example which fund the swing at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue came from.



Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr stated it came from grounds maintenance.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about tracking where the parking money is going and said the more you have things segregated, the easier it is to follow.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro asked if the Commission was in agreement that the parking revenues would cover all structures in Ryckman Park and Ocean Park such as Pavilion, bathrooms, etc.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about other parks that don't have parking such as Bicentennial staying under Public Works fund. Spoke about the importance of being able to track the expenses that the parking money is going towards.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro asked if the groundskeeper's salary should come out of parking revenues because he spends a significant amount of time working on Ryckman Park.

Commissioner Tim Reed stated yes to capital items but not salaries.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about the Commission holding reserves towards long-term capital for parks.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about his concern that the Town is not funding stormwater.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked what the interlocal administrative costs are. - 2:09:15

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about how it is a bill from the County.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow asked to move to the Fire Department fund since the meeting had a hard stop of 6:00 pm.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about the summary he had written and his conversation with Fire Chief Brown; shared his opinion that County was the best choice cost wise but not the best option for fastest response. Wanted to start a discussion amongst the Commissioners about how they feel about a volunteer force, the County option, etc. Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about whether there would be a separation of responsibility for paid versus volunteer firefighters and how that comes into play when it comes to marine rescue calls.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about response times and the 2-in, 2-out NFPA requirement being an issue if we go with Indianantic or County.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how it might not be good to enter into anything but basic aid if we have a paid department. Said they have a good chance of getting the grant. Still thinks it needs to be a referendum but understands that it is difficult.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about the issues of voting turnout in an off-year election.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about the issue needing to be put to a referendum, but if it can't then staff cuts could help.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow asked if the Mayor could identify \$600,000 in cuts. - 2:26:04

Mayor Alison Dennington said no but the grant could help. Said she would like to do the referendum right away or try to come up with the \$157,000 by cutting positions. This would get them 2 years to figure out a tax structure and put that to voters. Spoke about a twenty-year tax according to Chief Brown.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about being unaware of a twenty-year tax.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about even if there's a twenty-year tax we could reduce it to virtually nothing.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about following up to get the facts.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about the timing issue and that the sense of urgency wasn't expressed earlier, but it's not a reason to avoid a referendum.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about the timing quandary between the referendum and the SAFER grant, and that they would have to accept the grant before knowing the results of the referendum.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about concerns with the referendum and misinformation circulating on social media; questioned how to educate residents properly.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about having a mailer with substantial information that could be sent out by Friday to residents.

Commissioner Tim Reed said you could put out a summary of the big points and point them to a hotline or somewhere online they can get that information.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said she met with the Fire Chief and suggested walking through a resident's tax bill line-by-line to see how the different options affect it, and about their responsibility to juggle public safety and fiscal responsibility. The residents need to know what happens to their tax bill.

Mayor Alison Dennington said it bothers her that this is rushed because this has been an issue for years, but there is no need to place blame and it does not change the fact that they are where they are. Does not want to lose the Fire Department. Believes if Fire Chief Brown leaves, many firefighters will go with him. Said they could fund it for year one, assuming they got the SAFER grant. Said in the referendum it could say in year 4 when we have to pay for this 100% would you like to keep it or not. Spoke again about finding the \$157,000 (25% of what is needed to fund the firefighters) by eliminating positions like the Finance Clerk and the Permit Tech. Those 2 positions are \$149,000.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said the Permit Clerk is supported out of permit fees, not the general fund. Said there will be tax increases in the future whether that is year 1 or year 4 and they need to plan for that regardless of whether they get the grant or not.

Commissioner Anna Butler said bringing up elimination of 2 positions with no evidence that they are not needed is irresponsible to say.

Mayor Alison Dennington said she did have reasons. We have had these positions for so long when everything was on paper. We now have software to have everything online. We are not in the business of charity. Believes there is a lot of redundancy.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said the computer software does not install itself. A human must do that. Accounts receivable, accounts payable, permits, etc all still must be entered in by a human.

Commissioner Anna Butler requested a day-to-day routine of those positions to verify whether or not there is redundancy.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said we created a new position and we paid for more technology this year. The argument of technology and people is not one for one.

Commissioner Tim Reed said in regard to fiscal responsibility, if we are going down this path, we need to be prepared to do it even if the grant does not come through.

The Commission discussed the hybrid model.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin noted the time and confirmed that the meeting had a hard stop of 6:00 pm.

## 6. Adjournment

**Commissioner Robert Baldwin moved to adjourn; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded; Motion carried 5-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:02 pm.

  
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**Alison Dennington**  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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**Rachel Pembroke**  
Transcriptionist

Rachel Pembroke (Aug 19, 2025 09:42:36 EDT)

