

Town of Melbourne Beach

SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING

September 10, 2025 at 5:30 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
Town Attorney Ryan Knight
Town Clerk Amber Brown

1. Call to Order

Mayor Alison Dennington called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call

Commission Members Present

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

Staff Members Present

Town Attorney Ryan Knight
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr
Town Clerk Amber Brown

3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Mayor Alison Dennington 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.

Steve Walters – 416 Sixth Ave – Said on 9/5/2025, he received an email from melbournebeachmom that on the April 1st and June 10th 2025 election, candidate Terry Cronin voted in Indialantic. 8/4/2025 he switched his address back to Melbourne Beach. On

8/11/2025, he announced he was running for Town Commission. At the 8/20/2025 STCM, he swore under oath that he was a resident for 6 months prior to qualifying. Requests the Commission remove the candidate from the ballot.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about being aware of this issue and has the records. Said that person swore under oath living here continuously for 6 months. There is nothing the Commission can do, they took testimony under oath.

Susan Stark – 307 Fifth – Spoke about being a Commissioner twice. Asked the Commission to proactively communicate with one another for the community to address the very serious public safety issues that have been brought forward. The public safety issue was presented 7 months ago and it will most likely take another 7 months to get through the process. Said the volunteer firefighters are feeling disheartened. The negative comments towards them and the Chief and the MBVFD are not respectful of their volunteer service to the Community. Asked the Commission to commit to delivering the best cost effective option to provide the best and most reliable emergency service responses we all should expect from government leaders.

5. New Business - 13:35

- A. Discuss the Interim Town Manager Candidate submissions, develop a short list of candidates for the position, and provide guidance to staff regarding interviews. – Town Attorney Ryan Knight

Town Attorney Ryan Knight spoke about how the 3 minimum qualifications are a bachelor's degree, 3 years experience as Town Manager or Assistant Town Manager or comparable experience in the field, familiarity with Florida Sunshine Laws, budgeting processes, and local governance.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about the importance of the candidates meeting the minimum qualifications.

The Commission decided to provide each of their top candidates and then discuss if those candidates meet the minimum qualifications.

- Christopher Edwards – no
- Colin Donnelly - yes
- Gary Stevens - yes
- Jack Butler - no
- Javion Brown - no
- Lakisha Burch - no
- Lisa Frazier - yes
- Patrick Jordan - no
- Peggy Castano - no
- Ron Clare - no
- Taylor Brown - yes
- Theo Melancon – no

The Commission decided to discuss the top 4 candidates and if they meet the minimum requirements.

Colin Donnelly – Masters in Public Administration, and a Bachelors in Political Science, Town Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Grant Administrator. Meets the minimum requirements. - 24:45

Town Attorney Ryan Knight spoke about the process moving forward. Once the Commission has narrowed it down to the amount of candidates they want to continue with, references would be checked, interviews scheduled and background checks done. Said there could be a group interview or one-on-one.

Mayor Alison Dennington said she thinks 4 is a great number. Would like to call another Special Meeting to vet these 4 candidates quickly. Referenced a meeting in the past where the Commission had a chance to ask each candidate questions (while the other candidates were sequestered).

Town Attorney Ryan Knight said if some candidates could not attend the meeting in person, they could Zoom in.

Town Clerk Amber Brown said they had the capability to make the Zoom interviews happen, but the Town does not pay for Zoom so the free option is limited on time.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight said he has an account that can be utilized.

Gary Stevens – Bachelor's in Computer Science and Management Information Systems, does not have local government experience but his experience of managing in the government field is extensive. - 33:24

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about loving that a Town resident applied, but that they would need to have municipal experience to hit the ground running.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how the Town Attorney would be able to help teach them quickly.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about how the candidate has attended several meetings which says a lot.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about including him in the short list and then if there is a difference, it would be vetted out during the interview process.

Lisa Frazier – Master of Science, Bachelor of Science, American Institute of Certified Planners, Former Member of Indialantic Town Council and Deputy Mayor. Meets the minimum and preferred qualifications.

Taylor Brown – Various relevant government experience for several years in different positions and cities. Has Bachelor's degree and began a Master's program in Community Planning. Meets the minimum qualifications.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that we invite Colin Donnelly, Gary Stevens, Lisa Frazier and Taylor Brown to an interview process that we will conduct in a panel interview, 30 minute segments for each candidate for the Interim Town Manager position; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Marc Lower – 206 Elm – Provided an application someone sent in July that the Town cannot find. Provided a document and spoke about a timeline for the process to get an Interim Town Manager. Asked if anyone had spoken with FCCMA because they provide Interim Town Managers. Everyone who applied for the interim position is hoping to be full-time, but the Town hired a search firm. - 39:30

Commissioner Robert Baldwin confirmed with Marc Lower that the applicant would be willing to fill the Interim Town Manager.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how she was told that there are people that applied as soon as they knew the Town might be looking for a new manager and the Commission was not given this information.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said all people who applied for this position as Town Manager prior to the advertising, anybody who sends an application or resume gets held for one year. Emphasized that the position was not posted. When the position was posted, then all applications went to Town Attorney Ryan Knight.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight spoke about advising the Finance Manager not to send the Commission applications as she receives them, but rather send them all at one time once the submission date closes.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how before anything was posted, if something comes in that says dear Mayor and Commission, believes that that should be provided to the Mayor/Commissioners.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked about adding a fifth as a backup. None of the other Commissioners spoke up about that being necessary.

Motion carried 5-0.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight asked how the Commission would like to proceed. Said typically, there is one person designated to reach out to call the references, that way they are only being contacted by one person.

Mayor Alison Dennington said she plans on calling references herself. In her experience, less than 25% of the people even call back, especially with a tight time frame.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin suggested designating one person to call the references, but the Mayor could still call anyone that is not one of their named references.

Mayor Alison Dennington says she plans to call the references they provided. Said she might not call them all.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that we delegate the Finance Manager who manages our HR activities to call the references of these 4 candidates; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Kari Ross – 206 Flamingo Ln – Spoke about someone contacting people they know that are not on the reference list. Concerned that as an applicant, the candidate might not want their current employer to know they are looking for a new position. - 50:16

Katie Cox – 1408 Atlantic St – Spoke about how she worked with Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr and she is professional and will provide a report that is fair and unbiased.

Marivi Walker – 511 Riverside Dr – Spoke about how Florida Tech is not a private company and this is exactly how we do it. HR contacts all of the references. Calling their employer is completely out of line.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about how the Mayor is not going to listen to whatever the Commission decides, but requests that she allows Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr to reach out first and let the candidates know, if they want to maintain their candidacy, just know someone may contact other people than the references provided. This would allow them the opportunity to withdraw their application.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how she is not planning on calling any current employers.

Motion carried 5-0

The Commission discussed dates/times to set a meeting to interview candidates.

First choice is Wednesday 1:00-4:00 pm. Second choice is Tuesday 1:00-3:00 pm. The third choice is Thursday 2:00-4:30 pm (or a combination of these 3 dates/times)

6. Adjournment

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow moved to adjourn; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.



**Alison Dennington
Mayor**

ATTEST:


Rachel Pembroke (Oct 9, 2025 14:30:39 EDT)

**Rachel Pembroke
Transcriptionist**

