

**MINUTES
CITY OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH
CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION
Tuesday, July 14, 2026
5:00 p.m.**

The City of Indian Rocks Beach City Commission held a work session at 5:00 p.m. on July 14, 2026, in the Civic Auditorium/Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 1507 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach, Florida.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Commissioner Vaughan called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present:

- Mayor Commissioner Lan Vaughan
- Vice Mayor Commissioner Janet Wilson
- Commissioner John Bigelow
- Commissioner Hilary King
- Commissioner Kellee Watt

Staff Present: City Manager Ryan Henderson, Administrative Director Robin Gomez, Public Works Director Dean Scharmen, City Clerk Lorin Kornijtschuk, Planning and Zoning Consultant Hetty Harmon and Public Information Officer, Mishelle Hargett.

(To provide continuity for research, items are listed in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.)

1. REVIEW OF Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan FY 2027-2031 and the FY 2026-2027 Proposed Budget

Staff Presentation

Presented by: City Manager Ryan Henderson and Administrative Director Robin Gomez

City Manager Henderson opened by explaining the budget reflects community priorities established in the April strategic planning session with SGR. Five strategic priorities were identified:

- Attend to hurricane needs
- Create a master plan
- Enforce city ordinances
- Increase residential population
- Protect home rule

Key Budget Highlights:

- **Millage Rate:** Proposed FY 2027 budget maintains the millage rate at 1.73 (unchanged for 4th consecutive year)
- **Property Values:** Total tax roll assessed value increased 5.26% from \$2 billion to \$2.25 billion, generating approximately \$201,000 in additional property tax revenue
- **Property Tax Revenue:** Total estimated property tax revenue: \$3.8 million (at 97% collection rate: \$3.775 million)
- **Fee Adjustments (effective 10/1/25):**
 - Budget tax receipts increase 5% (estimated revenue \$2,250)
 - Vacation rental registration fee increases from \$300 to \$433 per unit (estimated additional revenue \$110,000)

New Parking Fund:

Creation of separate Parking Fund to account for all parking revenues/expenses from expanded paid parking program (280 total spaces: 204 at 18th St Ave beach access plus 76 at Pinellas County lot).

- FY 2027 estimated parking revenue: \$1.5 million (likely higher based on 90% compliance rate observed)
- Estimated expenses: \$1.45 million
- 40% revenue share with county
- 5% administrative fee to general fund
- Approximately \$750,000 to be transferred to Capital Improvement Fund for stormwater/flood control projects (avoiding need for stormwater assessment fee)

Personnel:

- Proposed 4-5% cost of living salary increases for all staff (4% increase = \$81,000; 5% increase = \$92,000-93,000)
- Recommendation for market rate study within next 12 months
- Total of 27 FTEs
- **Staffing Additions:**
 - Additional Code Enforcement Officer to enable two officers seven days/week for enhanced enforcement of ordinances, parking, solid waste/recycling, construction hours, and weekend inspections (fully allocated to parking fund)
 - Move Librarian position from part-time back to full-time to support library operations and volunteers

Contracted Services Additions:

- CitizenServe software (\$14,400 carryover)
- Cybersecurity software (state-mandated)
- Forerunner software for floodplain management
- Catalyst Communications for public relations/communications strategy (\$60,000 annually, \$5,000/month for 12 months)
- Land Development Regulations review/update contractor
- JustFOIA software for public records request management

Law Enforcement:

- Contract with Pinellas County Sheriff's Office: 6% increase

Additional Budget Details:

Administrative Director Gomez presented detailed budget analysis covering:

- Property valuations and tax history from 1992-present
- Comparison of millage rates with 16 other Pinellas County cities (Indian Rocks Beach among lower rates; highest is Town of Belleair, historically St. Petersburg and Clearwater)
- General Fund revenue analysis showing property taxes comprise 62-63% of total revenue
- Fines revenue budgeted lower due to parking citations moving to Parking Fund and expected increased vacation rental compliance through CitizenServe
- Miscellaneous revenue in current year includes \$650,000 insurance proceeds from Hurricanes Helene and Milton
- Expense increases driven by personnel additions, 4-5% wage increases, and 5% increase in health insurance rates through Public Risk Management pool

Solid Waste Fund:

- Enterprise fund with 8% tipping fee increase from Pinellas County (year 3 of 4)
- Public Works and Code Enforcement salary allocations split between general fund, solid waste, and parking fund

Capital Improvement Plan:

Funded by:

- Local option sales tax (restricted to infrastructure/law enforcement equipment)
- Penny for Pinellas
- SWFWMD grants
- Parking revenue for stormwater/flood control projects

Equipment replacement schedule includes AV vehicle, packer truck, and future street sweeper (considering outsourcing vs. purchase).

City Reserves:

- \$4.2M in bank plus \$4.1M in three investment funds
- Approximately 80% of general fund budget, well above \$100K minimum requirement
- No formal investment committee exists; may review with Finance Budget Committee

New State Requirements:

- Searchable online budget with position/salary listings
- Budget simplification efforts with bullet points and links for public access

Council Discussion

Commissioner Hilary King asked, Does the property tax revenue projection assume passage of the 'Save Our Homes from Excessive Taxes' amendment?

Response by Administrative Director Robin Gomez: No, it does not assume passage. If adopted in November 2027, it would be effective January 1, 2027, but the budget and tax rolls would already be approved based on current data.

Commissioner Hilary King asked, Does the parking revenue projection assume any expansion to current paid parking areas? Response by Administrative Director Robin Gomez: Correct, it does not assume expansion. After completing the six-month pilot program, staff will bring back results, data, observations and recommendations to the Commission.

Mayor Commissioner Vaughan emphasized the importance of the \$750,000 transfer from parking fund to capital improvements for stormwater/flood control projects.

Administrative Director Gomez noted parking revenue estimates are conservative due to weather volatility and limited data; expects to bring budget amendment in December or March based on six months of FY 2027 activity.

Extended Discussion on Vacation Rental Registration Fees:

Commissioners discussed the proposed increase from \$300 to various amounts to cover program costs of approximately \$628K annually:

Commissioner Bigelow noted \$400 does not cover program costs without fines, and Short-Term Rental owners should pay their own way, not burden taxpayers. He advocated for \$1,000 fee citing Cocoa Beach's \$2,500 first year/\$1,500 renewal model.

Commissioner King noted Cocoa Beach uses sliding scale at \$220 per maximum guest occupancy

The Commission agreed to send additional comments to Finance and Budget Advisory Board for further review.

Documents Referenced

- Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan FY 2027-2031
- FY 2026-2027 Proposed Budget
- Strategic Plan from April SGR session
- Stormwater Master Plan (completed 4 years ago, 20-year plan)
- Property valuation data from Pinellas County Property Appraiser
- Millage rate comparison worksheet (1992-present)
- General Fund revenue/expense analysis (last 3 years)
- Departmental expenditure breakdowns

2. APPROVE Resolution 2026-14 - Establishing the proposed millage rate for FY 2026/2027

The City Attorney noted this work session was noticed as a workshop rather than a special city commission meeting, requiring continuation to the regular City Commission meeting for proper procedural compliance with rules of order and operation.

Motion: Move the discussion about Resolution 2026-14 the mileage to the Regular City Commission meeting to open at 6:00 PM.

Moved by: Vice Mayor Commissioner Wilson

Seconded by: Commissioner Watt

Motion passed (5-0)

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** Commissioner Watt, Commissioner King, Commissioner Bigelow, Vice Mayor Wilson, Mayor Vaughn
- **Nays:** None

3. NEIGHBOR COMMENTS

No neighbor comments were made during this portion of the meeting.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Vice Mayor Commissioner Wilson, which was seconded by Commissioner Watt, to adjourn at 5:50 p.m.

ATTESTATION

These minutes constitute a true and accurate summary of the proceedings of the City Commission Workshop held on Tuesday, July 15, 2026.

8/19/2026

Date Approved



Mayor Commissioner Lan Vaughan

Lorin A. Kornijtschuk

ATTEST: Lorin A. Kornijtschuk, City Clerk

