

**CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA
NORTH MYRTLE BEACH CITY HALL
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, June 16, 2025, 5:00 PM
Amended Minutes**

1A. ROLL CALL:

Mayor Hatley called the meeting to order and asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Marilyn Hatley
JO Baldwin
Bubba Collins
Fred Coyne
Nicole Fontana
Trey Skidmore
Hank Thomas

A quorum was established

1B. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mayor Hatley called for a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal briefing regarding Parag Sharma, Kevin Bryden and Melanie Bryden v. Dye Townhomes Property Owners' Association, Inc., and The City of North Myrtle Beach Civil Case No.: 2025-CP-26-03138, a discussion regarding potential appointments to the Recreation Commission, and a discussion regarding a proposed contract with the City Manager. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Councilman Thomas. The motion passed 7-0. The Council returned to Chambers at 6:00 PM. Mayor Hatley announced that no votes were taken and called for a motion to come out of Executive Session. The motion was made by Councilman Collins and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. The motion passed 7-0. The regular meeting started at 6:00 PM.

1C. CONTINUATION OF CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM

A. Invocation – Reverend Dr. Charles Randall, Saint Delight Pentecostal Church

B. Pledge of Allegiance- Mayor Marilyn Hatley

2. MINUTES:

The motion to approve the minutes for the City Council Meeting of Monday, May 19, 2025, the Special Called City Council Executive Session of Wednesday, May 30, 2025, the Special Called City Council Executive Session of Friday, May 30, 2025, and the Special Called City Council Meeting of Thursday and Friday, June 5-6, 2025, as presented, was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

3. COMMUNICATIONS:

Assistant City Manager Fabbri recognized Emerson L. Gross and Allison Galbreath for 5 years of service and Ryan A. Stanley for 10 years of service and presented them with a gift and a check.

Department Monthly Reports for May 2025 are available online

4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL:**

Mayor Hatley announced that the July 4th Cantata would be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 28 and 29, 2025, at 3:30 PM. Allison Galbreath, City Clerk, noted that tickets were available at City Hall as well as at the J. Bryan Floyd Community Center.

Councilman Collins thanked Billy Floyd, Fire Chief, for the opportunity to meet the fourteen new recruits at the Push-In Ceremony for the new rescue vehicle. Councilwoman Fontana commended Chief Floyd on the impressive graduation ceremony.

5. **CONSENT:**

A. RESOLUTION: Two appointments to the Fireman's Insurance and Inspection Fund

B. RESOLUTION: Approving the Annual Assessment Report and an updated Assessment Roll for the Cherry Grove Improvement District

C. RESOLUTION: To update the Schedule of Application Fees for Planning and Zoning Actions

D. MOTION TO APPOINT: One reappointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals

Mayor Hatley asked that items 5A-5D be considered together. Councilman Collins asked that 5C be considered separately. Mayor Hatley read items 5A and 5B by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilman Coyne. Mayor Hatley noted that the appointees to the Fireman's Insurance and Inspection Board were Matt Gibbons and Angela Westmoreland, both North Myrtle Beach residents.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion passed 7-0.

Mayor Hatley read Item 5C by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. Councilman Collins asked that the reasons for the fee changes be explained publicly. Assistant Director Pritchard stated that the update to the Schedule of Application Fees was necessary due to an increase in staff time required for various planning and zoning actions. She noted that requests from lenders, insurance companies, and real estate companies for verification of zoning districts or allowed uses were taking up more staff time. Additionally, Address Verification Letters were also noted to be time-consuming. Assistant Director Pritchard emphasized that these tasks were becoming increasingly demanding on staff resources. Mayor Hatley added that the new fees were more in line with the City of Myrtle Beach.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

Mayor Hatley read Item 5D by title and called for a motion to approve. Mayor Hatley stated that Mendel Bell's term had expired on the Board of Zoning Appeals, and he was willing to serve a second term. The motion was made by Councilman Collins and seconded by Councilman Thomas. Councilman Skidmore noted that Mr. Bell enjoyed serving on the board and did a good job.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

ORDINANCE/SECOND READING: Amendment to Chapter 20, Land Development Regulations, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing street and rights-of-way standards in Planned Development Districts (PDD). Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Councilman Coyne and seconded by Councilman Skidmore. Mayor Hatley stated that this addressed the issue Council had with the last development that requested a change, specifically with driveway length and parking on streets.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Public hearing on the proposed FY 2026 budget.

Ryan Fabbri, City Manager, presented the proposed budget for fiscal year 2025/2026. He emphasized that the budget was more than just a collection of numbers, but rather a reflection of the community's priorities and a strategic plan to maintain and enhance the quality of life in North Myrtle Beach. The total proposed budget for all city funds, including enterprise operations and capital projects, was stated to be \$211,872,744, representing a 1.9% increase from the current fiscal year. The general fund budget, which covers core city services, was proposed at \$66,553,655, a 9.2% increase over the current year. Manager Fabbri emphasized that the budget was balanced and achieved all strategic goals without proposing an increase in the property tax rate. He also mentioned that the budget was forward-thinking, fiscally sound, and enhanced public safety while investing in critical infrastructure and expanding recreational opportunities. Key investments highlighted in the budget included:

- \$33,500,000 for water and sewer improvement projects
- \$12,000,000 for the construction of Fire Station Number 7
- \$6,500,000 for the expansion of the Sports Park
- \$6,400,000 for the development of a new pickleball complex and improvements to Central Park

Jolene Puffer, 3506 Turner Drive, North Myrtle Beach, expressed concern about Coast RTA and the lack of ridership data. She questioned whether the \$310,000 expenditure was justified. Manager Fabbri acknowledged that the service was not getting the anticipated participation and suggested reassessing the program after the summer. He mentioned that marketing efforts could be improved to increase awareness and usage of the service. Ms. Puffer asked for a report on ridership, and Manager Fabbri agreed to research the data and get back with her. Mayor Hatley added that new programs take time to catch on. Manager Fabbri stated that Ms. Puffer's concerns were valid and that he would reach out to Coast RTA for more information. Mayor Hatley noted that the bus stop markers were hard to identify.

Dana Brown, 2314 Vera Way, Longs, SC, commended the visual presentation of the budget summary but expressed disappointment with the location of the off-site budget retreat, which made it difficult for her to attend. She requested that future retreats be held closer to the city or in a place with more accommodations for public attendance.

- B. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** An ordinance setting the tax levy for FY 2026. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Councilman Coyne. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin questioned the millage rate in the budget. He stated that Council did not want to raise taxes and asked for clarification. Manager Fabbri clarified a technical point about the millage rate depicted in the budget. He explained that due to a reassessment last year, the rate was adjusted from 48 mills to 45 mills. He noted that it should have been 45.1 mills but was rounded down to 45 mills. The difference amounted to about \$60,000 in property tax revenue. He stated that the budget would be adjusted to reflect 45 mills as per the Council's directive. Councilman Thomas thanked Manager Fabbri for the clarification.

Councilwoman Fontana amended the motion to reflect the corrected tax levy rate of 45 mills and was seconded by Councilman Coyne.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- C. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** An ordinance to provide for the adoption of the budget for FY 2026. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- D. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** Amendments to Chapter 23, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing the definition of motel. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. Mayor Hatley asked Jim Wood, Planning and Development Director, to explain the amendment. Director Wood stated the change was needed to accommodate virtual check-ins at motels. He added that the amendment updated the definition of a motel to include motels that may not have a physical employee.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- E. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** Amendment to Chapter 21, Traffic, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing annual parking fee exemptions. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion. The motion was made by Councilman Collins and seconded by Councilman Skidmore. Councilman Collins stated that this amendment allowed issuance of a parking pass to employees who may or may not live within the City limits as a benefit for working for the City.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- F. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** Amendment to Chapter 21, Traffic, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, regulating the use of golf carts. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve.

The motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin. Mayor Hatley stated that the South Carolina General Assembly recently changed the golf carts laws and allowed municipalities to set their own hours of operation. Councilman Skidmore noted that this was a common-sense law, and setting the hours from sunrise to sunset made it easier for residents, visitors, and officers.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- G. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** Petition for Annexation and Zoning Designation for ±2.00 acres on Water Tower Road. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion. The motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilman Coyne. Councilman Collins asked if this property was located beside City property. Director Wood stated the property was across Water Tower Road from Forest Wood Development. Councilman Collins questioned the zoning change request because this would allow many activities close to the neighborhood. Director Wood explained that when property was annexed, it must also receive City zoning. In this case, the property housed J and J Air, a newly constructed building. He stated that the goal was to find a zoning district that most closely resembled the existing use on the property. The staff and the Planning Commission had evaluated the site based on what zoning district would be required for that business if it were proposed as a new business in the City and concluded that Light Industrial (LI) zoning was the best fit.

He described the allowed uses in the LI district, which included light manufacturing, institutional processing and assembly, warehousing, wholesale, office buildings, and some retail sales. He noted that the LI district prohibited noxious uses and regulated noise, dust, and smoke levels.

Councilman Collins expressed concern about the LI zoning, noting that concrete and asphalt plants might be allowed in this district, which could be detrimental to neighboring properties. Director Wood acknowledged this concern but emphasized that the LI district was more restrictive than the current county zoning, Commercial Forest Agriculture (CFA) and that the Highway Commercial (HC) district would allow even more uses. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin stated he still did not understand why the land could not be zoned Commercial. Assistant Director Pritchard stated that Commercial zoning would be a more intense use. Director Wood noted that HC allowed 5-6 times more uses than LI allowed. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin stated he was concerned with concrete and asphalt plants being allowed with the LI zoning. Director Wood noted that changing to Commercial zoning would require abandoning the current application and re-advertising, which would delay the process.

Mayor Hatley stated she had concerns about this annexation and Councilman Thomas agreed. Councilman Thomas noted that he was not in favor of expanding the City limits at this time. Councilman Coyne stated this company did 80-90 percent of their business in the City limits, and he felt this was a complementary addition. Councilman Skidmore noted that he was also uneasy with LI zoning. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin asked if Commercial zoning had been ruled out and if this would be considered spot zoning. Director Wood stated that Highway Commercial would be no less spot zoning than LI. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin discussed the possibility of tabling the decision or passing it on first reading and revisiting it before second reading. He suggested providing more information

on the comparative impacts of Light Industrial versus Commercial zoning for the area. Chris Noury, City Attorney, stated that the applicant would be required to resubmit the application, readvertise, and the matter would have to go before the Planning Commission for recommendation before coming to Council again.

Dana Brown, 2314 Vera Way, Longs, SC, expressed surprise that the applicant was not present at the meeting. She cautioned that annexation might not provide the "prestige" the applicant was seeking, as the property would likely remain in a zip code other than North Myrtle Beach.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve failed 1-6. Mayor Hatley, Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin, Councilman Collins, Councilwoman Fontana, Councilman Skidmore, and Councilman Thomas voted nay.

- H. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** Adoption of revisions for the City of North Myrtle Beach Employee Personnel Manual. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin. Mayor Hatley stated this allowed for an additional holiday for employees and more flexibility with the use of the holiday bank.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- I. **ORDINANCE/FIRST READING:** Amendment to Chapter 6, Buildings; Construction; Related Activities, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing permit fees. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin. Mayor Hatley stated that this amendment updated the permit fees, which had remained unchanged for decades.

Having no further comment from Council or the public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jolene Puffer, 3506 Turner Drive, North Myrtle Beach, SC, addressed the Council regarding a recent meeting about short-term rentals. She requested that the next meeting with short-term rental owners be scheduled for September to allow for more participation from out-of-town owners. She also suggested that the city correlate data on complaints, noise, trash, and parking issues, as well as revenue generated by short-term rentals, to better communicate with citizens.

Manager Fabbri acknowledged that the previous meeting did not go as anticipated and apologized for the format, which was not suitable for the larger-than-expected turnout. He explained that the intent of the meeting was to hear from full-time residents living next to short-term rentals, not to steer the conversation or present a specific narrative. He noted that future meetings would be better organized and held at a larger venue. Councilman Collins stated that the atmosphere of the meeting changed when it had to be moved into Council Chambers. He noted that the City intended to gather information at the meeting for Council. Mayor Hatley stated that was why Council did not attend. She noted that the meeting was not for Council, but to allow staff to gather information. Ms. Puffer stated she felt the meeting

became a mob environment. Manager Fabbri stated that staff knew the conversation would be one-sided. Councilman Collins noted that it did not help that the meeting was held two weeks after Bike Week. Councilman Thomas stated that the City Manager did not need to apologize for the meeting. He noted that the meeting was scheduled and advertised as an open forum, and although it did not go as planned, the City did not need to apologize.

Cheryl Kilday, Destination North Myrtle Beach, stated that June 16, 2025, was the last day to oppose offshore drilling. She noted that Council had passed a Resolution in the past opposing offshore drilling, and she asked that Council remind citizens of the City's opposition.

Neil Whitkin, 3019 Winding River Drive, North Myrtle Beach, raised concerns about the safety of Water Tower Road, particularly in relation to the new fire station. He stated that there was no place on the road to yield for a fire truck. Chief Floyd addressed these concerns, explaining that they were aware of the road's limitations and were implementing measures to ensure safe operations. These included soundproof sirens, driver training, and potential future road expansions. He emphasized that response times would improve with the new station, despite the current road conditions. Councilman Collins noted that the fire station would be built, and it would make response time faster. Mr. Whitkin suggested removing the median. Mayor Hatley stated that Council may revisit the issue in the future.

Dana Brown, 2314 Vera Way, Longs, SC, reported issues with the Code Red evacuation app, noting that the PIN for her house was not dropping in the correct location. She suggested that this problem be addressed to ensure the app's effectiveness during emergencies. Chief Floyd stated that the City did not use Code Red. She added that her FEMA flood zone was also incorrect on the Code Red site. Ms. Brown stated that there were over 28,000 veterans in the area and asked that the City consider building a veteran's cemetery. Mayor Hatley thanked her for her comments.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Hatley called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Councilman Collins. The motion passed 7-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela C. Westmoreland, Assistant City Clerk

MARILYN HATLEY, MAYOR

Minutes approved and adopted this 21st day of July 2025