



City Council Budget Retreat Meeting Recap

PINOPOLIS, S.C. -- The North Myrtle Beach City Council met on Monday, April 14, at 8 AM at City Hall to convene the Budget Retreat Meeting.

City Council then immediately traveled to the Wampee Conference Center, located at 2213 Pinopolis Road, Pinopolis, SC, to continue the meeting.

Executive Session

On Tuesday, April 15, during the annual public Budget Retreat Meeting, City Council met in Executive Session, as authorized, pursuant to Section 30-4-70 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to discuss the following matters:

- A. A legal briefing regarding a proposed short-term rental ordinance
- B. A discussion regarding the potential conveyance of city property
- C. A discussion regarding the potential property acquisition
- D. A legal briefing regarding Chapter 6, Article II, Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance of the Code of Ordinances of the City of North Myrtle Beach, SC

No action was taken by City Council during the Executive Session.

Regarding the legal briefing for the proposed Short-Term Rental (STR) Ordinance, City Council has not yet reached a decision on an ordinance regarding short-term rentals in North Myrtle Beach. While the City continues to discuss the potential development of an STR Ordinance, City Council and Staff recognize that this is a complex issue with many legal considerations, and the City is committed to ensuring any proposed regulations are both effective and legally sound.

Throughout this process, City leadership remains mindful of the community's concerns and is working to strike a thoughtful balance. This item will *not* be on the Monday, May 5 City Council Meeting Agenda.

FY 2026 Highlights

The FY 2026 Preliminary Budget is approximately \$211,294,744. There is not a proposed increase for the millage rate. The current millage rate is 45 mils.

Major Budget Initiatives Highlights:

- Water and Sewer Capital: \$34,460,000
- The Construction of Fire Station 7: \$12,000,000
- Pickleball Courts and other Central Park Improvements: \$6,400,000
- Champions Boulevard Bourne Trail to Long Bay: \$6,400,000
- Fire Station 2: \$4,000,000
- Underground Utilities: \$4,000,000
- Road Paving: \$3,000,000
- Public Safety Training Facilities: \$1,750,000
- Ocean Outfalls: \$1,500,000

A 5% salary increase has been budgeted. Unlike a standard across-the-board cost of living adjustment, this year's raises will be determined based on employee performance. This performance-based approach is designed to recognize and reward individual contributions while remaining within the overall budgeted allocation.

The FY 2026 Proposed Budget will be voted on by City Council in June and will go into effect on July 1, 2025.

Public Works Highlights

There is a proposed 5% annual increase for impact fees, per the established policy. The water rate will increase 7 cents per 1,000 gallons, and the sewer rate will increase 8 cents per 1,000 gallons. The average household uses 5,000 gallons of water per month. These rate increases are based on pass-through rate increased from Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority. There are no proposed increases for the sanitation rates or the stormwater fees.

The Public Works Department discussed upcoming road projects, underground utility conversion projects, stormwater projects, utility capital improvements, drainage improvement projects, beach parking improvements, and provided an update on the Cherry Grove Canals.

Underground Utility Conversion Projects:

- Ocean Boulevard - 29th Ave N to 34th Ave N: Under Construction
- Park & Sports Complex Expansion: 2025
- Ocean Boulevard - 34th Ave N to 39th Ave N: 2027/2028 - Easements
- Ocean Boulevard - 7th Ave S to 11th Ave S: 2029/2030
- Ocean Boulevard - 11th Ave S to 15th Ave S: 2031/2032
- Ocean Boulevard - 39th Ave N to 46th Ave N: 2033/2034
- Ocean Boulevard - 46th Ave N to 53rd Ave N: 2035/2036

Stormwater Improvements:

17th Ave S Ocean Outfall

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project
- Federal Funding - \$28,000,000
- City of North Myrtle Beach Cost - \$10,000,000

Nuisance Flooding Improvements

- Palmetto Shores
- Cost: \$2,500,000
- Coordinating with Horry County

Planning & Development Highlights

The Planning & Development Department proposed new City Gateway Monuments, which would replace the current four and add two new monuments. The four current locations include Sea Mountain Highway, Highway 17 North End, Cherry Grove Boat Ramp, and Highway 17 South End. The two new locations would be Robert Edge Parkway and Water Tower Road. Each site is quoted at \$110,726. This cost includes excavation and fill dirt, sign masonry, foundations, decorative metalwork, lettering and the City logo, electrical work and lighting, sleeves, plant material, irrigation, soil, and engineering review of the structural details.

The other key goals of the Planning & Development Department include a Public Arts Program for community identity, development of the Highway 17 Commercial Overlay Design District and quality standards for landscaping, signage, and materials, a Wayfinding Signage Master Plan, and to transform Main Street.

Parks & Recreation Highlights

The top budget highlights for the Parks & Recreation Department include permanent restrooms at Hill Street Park, continued beach walkover renovations, and the purchase of an activity bus.

The City has 186 oceanfront beach accesses. Of the 186 oceanfront beach accesses, 105 have a beach walkover structure. The Department's goal is to add 10 additional beach walkover structures in FY 2026.

They provided an update on the proposed Pickleball Complex. This will include 15 pickleball courts, a covered championship court, small clubhouse with restrooms, vending, office space, and open lawn seating. The total estimated cost is \$6,500,000. Currently, the City is finalizing the construction documents and has begun the permitting process.

Currently, there are 7 beach restroom locations. The City acknowledges 5 possible future locations for new restrooms. Those possible locations include Sea Mountain Highway, 15th Ave N, 8th Ave N, 55th Ave N, and 14th Ave S. The estimated construction costs of each of these public beach restrooms is \$400,000.

Looking ahead to future recreational needs, the Parks & Recreation Department discussed an expansion of the North Myrtle Beach Aquatic & Fitness Center, as well as an expansion of J. Bryan Floyd Community Center or the construction of an additional Community Center.

Police Highlights

The Police Department outlined a comprehensive set of priorities for FY 2026 focused on enhancing public safety, expanding community engagement, and modernizing equipment and staffing. Their requests reflect growing operational demands and a continued commitment to proactive, community-oriented policing.

Among the department's top priorities for FY 2026 is a significant investment in vehicles and communication equipment. They are requesting 10 new patrol vehicles with full upfitting to replace aging units and maintain fleet reliability. To enhance officer communication and coordination, the department is also seeking funding for patrol vehicle radios and handheld radios.

Support for specialized units and public outreach is also reflected in requests for drones and training aids for the Bomb K9, which will strengthen surveillance, situational awareness, and explosives detection. A wash station and metal building is proposed to maintain Ocean Rescue vehicles and equipment, ensuring readiness and longevity. Additionally, electronic message boards are requested to improve public communication during events and emergencies. On the personnel side, the Department is advocating for key new positions across patrol, communications, detention, and beach safety, including full-time lifeguards, dispatchers, and public safety support roles—all underscoring a growing need for resources to meet the demands of a busy, expanding coastal city.

Fire Highlights

The Fire Department has outlined several key budget priorities for FY 2026. These investments are designed to enhance emergency response capabilities, modernize facilities, and support the long-term safety needs of our growing community.

Construction of Fire Station 7 (Water Tower Road Area): Funding is included to begin construction of Fire Station 7, to be located off Water Tower Road. This station is strategically planned to improve response times and service coverage in a rapidly developing area of the city. The facility is anticipated to open in late 2026 or early 2027.

Replacement of Fire Station 2 (Cherry Grove): Plans are underway to replace the existing Fire Station 2 in the Cherry Grove area, originally built in 1989. Funding has been requested to begin construction of a new facility as early as late 2025.

Joint Public Safety Training Facility (Long Bay Road): To support the professional development and readiness of both Fire and Police personnel, funding is requested to begin planning for a new joint Public Safety Training Facility. The center, proposed for a site off Long Bay Road, will serve as a central location for multi-agency training and simulations.

Acquisition of New Fire Apparatus: To maintain a reliable and modern fleet, funding is included for the purchase of 3 new fire apparatus, scheduled for delivery in FY 2026:

- 1 Pumper – Expected delivery in Spring 2026
- 1 Ladder Truck – Expected delivery in Spring 2026
- 1 Brush/Wildland Vehicle – Expected delivery in Spring 2026

Essential Equipment Upgrades: The Department is requesting funding to upgrade and expand critical equipment, including:

- New portable radios for improved communication
- Thermal imaging cameras for enhanced fire ground operations
- Atmospheric monitoring devices for hazardous environment detection
- Specialized gear for wildland firefighting and water rescue operations

Department Head Presentations

[Fire Budget Presentation](#)

[HR Budget Presentation](#)

[IT Budget Presentation](#)

[PIO Budget Presentation](#)

[Planning & Development Budget Presentation](#)

[Police Budget Presentation](#)

[P&R Budget Presentation](#)

[Public Works Budget Presentation](#)