



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
of THE MARY ESTHER CITY COUNCIL
July 6, 2026 - 6:00 PM**

195 Christobal Road – North, Mary Esther, FL 32569

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT

Chris Stein, Mayor
April Sutton, Councilmember
Bernie Oder, Councilmember

Susan Coxwell, Mayor Pro Tem
Larry Carter, Councilmember
Richard Lawson, Councilmember

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jared Cobb, City Manager
Hayward Dykes, City Attorney
Dillon Morris, City Clerk

Kelvin Cherry, Code Compliance Officer
Heather Day, Finance Director
Tyler Reed, Community Development Director

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Rader, OSCO Captain

Jeff Wagner, OCWFD Chief

1. INVOCATION

Jeff Wagner, Ocean City-Wright Fire Control District, gave the invocation.

2. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Stein at 6:00 p.m.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Stein led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ROLL CALL

The City Clerk called the roll as reflected above.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Stein asked if the council wished to make any changes to the agenda. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Lawson initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Larry Carter
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem Susan Coxwell
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

6. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Yard of the Month - July 2026

City Clerk Morris presented the yard-of-the-month submissions for July. There was some discussion among the council about the submissions. Mayor Stein asked for a motion to select 3 Caswell Circle as the Yard of the Month for July 2026 and 147 Brewer Circle as the Yard of the Month for August, with the 2 other nominations receiving honorable mentions. Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Stein asked if the council wished to make any changes to the consent agenda. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilmember Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember April Sutton
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem Susan Coxwell
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

- 7.1. **Minutes of the May 18th, 2026, Local Planning Agency Meeting**
- 7.2. **Minutes of the May 18th, 2026, Special Council Meeting**
- 7.3. **Minutes of the June 1st, 2026, Local Planning Agency Meeting**
- 7.4. **Minutes of the June 1st, 2026, Regular Council Meeting**
- 7.5. **Monthly Financial Report**
- 7.6. **Monthly Performance Report**

8. CITIZENS WHO HAVE REQUESTED TO BE PLACED ON THE AGENDA

- 8.1. **Chris Waggenspack - 23 E. Lane**
Chris Waggenspack, 23 E. Lane, did not attend the meeting.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

Patricia Ward, 147 Brewer Cir, discussed sending a letter to the city manager and code officer, reading what was sent into the record.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 10.1. **Ordinance 2026-02: Electric Bicycles, Motorized Scooters, and Micromobility Devices**
Community Development Director Tyler Reed entered the staff report into the record and discussed Ordinance 2026-02 and the revisions from the previous first reading. Mayor Stein asked whether this ordinance would keep the city in line with the sheriff, and Community Development Director Reed stated it would. Councilmember Sutton asked if the governor's veto affects this ordinance, and Community Development Director Reed stated it would not. Mayor Stein asked City Clerk Morris to read the title of Ordinance 2026-02 into the record, to which he did.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-02

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER, FLORIDA; CREATING ARTICLE V UNDER CHAPTER 18 OF THE MARY ESTHER CODE OF ORDINANCES, TITLED "ELECTRIC BICYCLES, MOTORIZED SCOOTERS, AND

MICROMOBILITY DEVICES”; AND PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, CODIFICATIONS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Stein asked if the council wished to discuss the topic further. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve a first reading of Ordinance 2026-02 creating Article V of Chapter 18 of the Code of Ordinances to establish regulations governing electric bicycles, motorized scooters, and micromobility devices within the City of Mary Esther. Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Carter. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Councilmember Larry Carter
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

10.2. Ordinance 2026-03: Election Date Change

City Clerk Dillon Morris presented Ordinance 2026-03 to the council for the second reading. Mayor Stein asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked City Clerk Morris to read the title of Ordinance 2026-03 into the record, to which he did.

ORDINANCE 2026-03

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER; AMENDING SECTION 3.05 TITLED “ELECTION AND TERMS”; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR BALLOT QUESTION AND SUMMARY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve a second and final reading of Ordinance 2026-03 amending the charter of the city to change the regular election date to the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even general election year. Councilmember Oder initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lawson. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Councilmember Richard Lawson
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

10.3. Ordinance 2026-04: Rezone Request for 180 Mary Esther Boulevard

Community Development Director Tyler Reed entered the staff report into the record and discussed the rezone request for 180 Mary Esther Boulevard. Mayor Stein asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked City Clerk Morris to read the title of Ordinance 2026-04 into the record, to which he did.

ORDINANCE 2026-04

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE

ZONING MAP OF APPROXIMATELY ONE POINT SIX EIGHT (1.68) ACRES OF LAND GENERALLY LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF MARY ESTHER BLVD. AND SOUTH OF HOLLYWOOD BLVD: FROM C-1 (LIMITED COMMERCIAL) TO C-2 (GENERAL COMMERCIAL); PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE INTENT, IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS, A SAVINGS PROVISION, SCRIVENER'S ERRORS, CONFLICTS, AND SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Stein asked for a Motion to approve a second reading of an ordinance of the City of Mary Esther, Florida, amending the zoning map of approximately one point six eight (1.68) area of land generally located on the east side of Mary Esther Blvd. and south of Hollywood Blvd: from C-1 (limited commercial) to C-2 (general commercial); providing for legislative intent; implementing actions, a savings provision, scrivener's error, conflicts, and severability; and providing for an effective date. Councilmember Lawson initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Richard Lawson
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1. Resolution 26-12: Approval of FDEP Grant Agreement No. L0260 for Stormwater Drainage Improvements

City Manager Jared Cobb discussed the city receiving a grant for a ditch in the Scottsdale and Springdale neighborhoods and the agreement with FDEP. Mayor Stein asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked City Clerk Morris to read the title of Resolution 26-12 into the record, to which he did.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-12

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER, FLORIDA, APPROVING GRANT AGREEMENT NO. L0260 WITH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR THE MARY ESTHER STORMWATER DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Stein asked for a motion to adopt Resolution 26-12, approving FDEP Grant Agreement No. L0260 for the Mary Esther Stormwater Drainage Improvements project in the amount of \$250,000, and authorizing the Mayor to execute the agreement on behalf of the City. Councilmember Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember April Sutton
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem Susan Coxwell
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder

NAYS:	None
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11.2. Consideration: 2026 Florida League of Cities Annual Conference Voting Delegate Selection

There was some discussion among the council about who would be the voting delegate for the city. Mayor Stein asked for a motion to select Councilmember Carter as the 2026 FLC Annual Conference Voting Delegate. Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	April Sutton, Susan Coxwell, Richard Lawson, Larry Carter, Bernie Oder
NAYS:	None

11.3. Discussion: Veterans Day Parade & Celebration — Event Operations Plan

City Manager Jared Cobb discussed the upcoming Veterans Day Parade and Celebration, the operations plan for the council to review the event process and gather feedback, upcoming work on the event, and the city float. Mayor Stein asked when construction on the big-box store would begin, with Community Development Director Tyler Reed stating there was no date yet. Councilmember Carter discussed potentially moving the parade route entirely to the mall property. There was some discussion among the council on route planning, road conditions, and the city float. Mike Rader, OCSO, and Jeff Wagner, OCWFD, answered the council's questions on this topic.

11.4. Discussion: Code and Blight issues

Councilmember April Sutton discussed code issues affecting local businesses and homes, namely trash, and asked that patrols be stepped up, following a similar discussion with the council in previous meetings. Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell agreed with Councilmember Sutton but also discussed keeping some businesses in the city cleaned up, Fort Walton Beach's quadrant sweeps, and whether the pictures presented are already known cases. City Manager Cobb answered Coxwell's question, noting the city's website portal. Councilmember Sutton discussed the issue of citizens not wanting to report the problems. City Manager Cobb asked whether the council wanted more code enforcement and whether the processing time is the issue. City Manager Cobb discussed some cities cutting grass after a certain amount of time and billing the citizen, and the city would look into it if the council wants. Councilmember Carter shared Councilmember Sutton's concern and discussed developing a process to identify corrective actions, Mary Esther's historic code enforcement profile, the magistrate, and the city to address the city's image, which may not reflect changes in code enforcement or property conditions. City Manager Cobb discussed presenting the current workflow for a property and asking if there is a priority for a certain type of violation. City Attorney Dykes added comments on codes that can restrict parking within front and side-yard setbacks. Councilmember Sutton discussed roads being blocked due to vehicles. There was some discussion on this topic among the council. Councilmember Oder discussed agreeing with addressing the issues, but also the state passing anti-anonymity laws pertaining to code complaints, and complaints should not only be filed by councilmembers on citizens' behalf; a hoarding house problem and outside groups helping clean the issues and issues with limited manpower options, and ADA problems with blocking the sidewalks. Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell discussed Fort Walton Beach posting signs stating "no vagrancy," and City Attorney Dykes stated that the city can draw on solutions from other cities. There was discussion on council on the timeline of procedures for code enforcement and the fee structure. City Manager Cobb discussed bringing a cost-recovery item to the August regular meeting, along with the list of items the council discussed that night. Councilmember Oder discussed having some flexibility in the process to accommodate the code officer's future time-off requests.

11.5. Discussion: Citizens Appearing Before the Council Policy

Councilmember Carter discussed wanting problems resolved before being brought to the council, with the city vetting citizens' requests to speak with the appropriate departments before coming to the council and requiring that requests be turned in 10 days before the meeting. There was some discussion among the council on this topic, with the consensus being 10 business days. City Attorney Dykes suggested bringing the language back as a policy and resolution in the next council meeting.

12. COUNCILS' STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS

Councilmember Sutton wished Mayor Stein a happy birthday, having lunch with the lieutenant governor and Representative Patt Maney.

Mayor Pro Tem Coxwell asked if there was any more information about the hospice trees program, with the council putting her in charge of the program.

Councilmember Lawson had no additional comments.

Mayor Stein discussed the upcoming Veterans Day parade meeting and the Yard of the Month.

Councilmember Carter asked for an update on the status of the new city hall. There was discussion among the council on this topic. Councilmember Carter asked how citizens are informed about the budget process, with City Manager Cobb stating that they are notified through the council meeting notices, the public workshop, and two public hearings. Councilmember Carter asked whether the school board had discussed selling the school building to the city, with City Manager Cobb stating he attended the proposals meeting, but the school district is going with an official broker.

Councilmember Oder discussed attending the unveiling of the new ladder truck (see attachments), the upcoming property tax discussion and how cities are informing citizens, and further discussed City Hall, the legal procedures, and how long they have taken. There was further discussion among the council about the city hall.

13. OTHER COMMENTS

City Attorney Hayward Dykes had no additional comments.

City Clerk Dillon Morris reminded council to check their mailboxes and complete their cybersecurity and ethics training, and discussed when they would like to hold the Azalea Park ribbon cutting, with the date and time set for July 27th at 9:00 a.m.

City Manager Jared Cobb had no additional comments.

14. ADJOURN

The council meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Minutes approved at the meeting. 8/3/2024


Dillon Morris, City Clerk







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OCEAN CITY-WISCONSIN
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FISH CONTROL DEPARTMENT



OCEAN CITY-WISCONSIN
TRUCK 3

911

T3













