City Council Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2026, 4:00 PM

100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Lauren Kleiman, Mayor Pro Tem Noah Blom, Councilmember Michelle Barto, Councilmember Robyn Grant, Councilmember Joe Stapleton, Councilmember Sara J. Weber, Councilmember Erik Weigand

Invocation

The invocation was led by the Reverend Canon Dr. George Okusi, St. John the Divine Episcopal Church.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Barto.

II. PRESENTATIONS

Proclamation Recognizing Newport Harbor High School Baseball Team for Winning the CIF Southern California Regional Division II Championship

Mayor Kleiman read a proclamation honoring the Newport Harbor High School Sailors baseball team for their 25–10 season record and CIF Southern California Regional Division II Championship victory over Bakersfield Christian (5–1), recognizing captains as well as head coach Josh Lee.

III. STUDY SESSION

Results of the REAP 2.0 Mixed-Use Study

Deputy Community Development Director Liz Westmoreland provided background on the state-funded REAP 2.0 grant study, explaining that the City received consulting assistance through the Orange County Council of Governments to evaluate mixed-use zoning regulations in support of Housing Element Policy Action 4H. Assistant Planner Jerry Arregui presented the study's findings, which included conceptual development analyses of three mixed-use sites. The analyses concluded that none of the sites were financially feasible under current zoning standards due to small lot sizes, parking constraints, and limited revenue-generating floor area. Staff recommended several zoning amendments to improve project viability, including streamlined administrative approval for smaller developments, bedroom-based parking requirements, a minimum residential density of two units, parking waivers for resident-serving commercial uses, and revisions to open-space and building bulk standards. The Planning Commission reviewed the study in May and provided additional feedback, including consideration of allowing residential-only developments in additional zoning districts and exercising caution regarding the use of parking waivers.

Councilmember Weigand noted the City's substantial ongoing housing workload and expressed a preference to receive and file the study without pursuing immediate code amendments, characterizing the study as useful background information to be revisited at a future date.

Public Comment:

Nancy Gardner noted the difficulty of workforce and affordable housing in high-value areas and expressed hope to work with the Council on state-mandated housing challenges in the future.

Denys Oberman agreed with Councilmember Weigand's suggestion to defer action, expressing concern that the proposals could force high-density residential builds into already constrained areas, and encouraged the Council to explore better-suited locations.

Susan DeSantis, former Housing Element Update and General Plan Update Committee member, thanked staff and consultants for the study, acknowledged its regulatory and economic value and encouraged future community outreach, case studies from successful mixed-use communities, and a field learning tour before any implementation.

Staff confirmed that presentation of the study to the Planning Commission and City Council satisfied the grant requirements and that no further action by the City Council was necessary. The Council subsequently reached a consensus to take no additional action at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Adam Leverenz raised concerns about the City's Tidelands management review, presenting two alternative square-footage rental rates from the State Lands Commission report and suggesting the Council adopt the state benchmark rate to reduce potential increases for dock permittees and remove local appraisal variability.

Gary Osterberg, Newport Coast resident, urged the Council to honor the original annexation agreement that he understood to preclude trash and recycling fees for Newport Coast residents, expressing concern that a proposed organic recycling fee would circumvent that commitment.

Laura Curran encouraged the Council to conduct a study session or Finance Committee review of the Visit Newport Beach budget (Item 19). She further suggested that the Police Headquarters Advisory Committee evaluate the recently sold Newport Beach car wash property, along with other commercially zoned properties on the market, as potential locations for a future police headquarters.

Jim Mosher commended the City’s new Zoom public participation option and suggested that it be more widely publicized to encourage greater public participation. He also announced that John Wayne Airport’s quarterly aircraft noise meeting would be held the following day at 2:00 p.m. and would be accessible online through ocair.com.

CITY COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ORAL REPORTS FROM CITY COUNCIL ON COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Councilmember Weigand announced his annual 4th of July bike parade in Dover Shores, beginning at 10:30 a.m. at Santiago and Mariners Drive, organized with assistance from Recreation Director Sean Levin.

Councilmember Barto reported attending the Lifeguard All-Hands meeting, the Newport Beach Junior Guards Summer Kickoff, and the Oasis Senior Center Wine and Cheese event.

Councilmember Grant reported attending an Association of California Cities tour of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station and praised the safety and environmental stewardship of the decommissioning process. She also thanked the Balboa Bay Club and John Wortman for the 19th Annual Father's Day Car Show.

Councilmember Weber expressed appreciation for the placement of 250th anniversary flags by City staff.

Councilmember Stapleton echoed praise for the anniversary flags, reported attending the Lifeguard All-Hands meeting and Junior Guards program kickoff, the Employee Service Awards, and the AAA Auto Club ribbon cutting on Birch Street. He also announced a 4th of July parade on the Balboa Peninsula beginning at 38th Street, and recognized Recreation Director Levin on the occasion of his final City Council meeting after nearly 25 years of service.

Mayor Pro Tem Blom noted the Employee Service Awards and humorously recognized Deputy City Manager Ben Zdeba for his attire, which he described as fully ‘punk rock’, bringing back the true idea of the nineties.

Mayor Kleiman invited Recreation Director Levin to address the Council. Recreation Director Levin thanked the Council and staff for their support throughout his over 24 years of service, crediting the Council for enabling departmental growth and the staff for making all programs possible.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

Prior to the consent calendar vote, City Manager Seimone Jurjis provided the required government code summary for Item 7, noting amendments to the Key & Management Compensation Plan which included eliminating the dollar limit on executive physical examinations, increasing annual telecommuting hours from 80 to 100, and discontinuing 4/10 work schedules effective June 30, 2026.

Councilmember Weigand announced a recusal on Item 4 (Personal Wireless Service Facilities) due to a conflict of interest, and commended Mayor Kleiman's regional partnership work in connection with Item 18. Councilmember Weber and Councilmember Stapleton each commended staff and one another for collaboration on Item 5 (Grants and Sponsorship Policies) without pulling the item for separate discussion. Councilmember Stapleton announced a recusal on Item 10 due to a real property interest, and pulled Item 20 for separate discussion. Councilmember Grant pulled Item 18 for a separate discussion.

Public Comment on Consent Calendar:

Jim Mosher expressed concern about the increased grant funding in Item 5, questioning whether Finance Committee deliberations were adequately transparent and whether individual Council discretionary grants should exist as a policy at all. He also urged the Council to call up for review the Planning Commission's approval of a 30-unit housing project near the Environmental Nature Center (Item 21).

Adam Leverenz raised concerns about Items 2, 3, and 16, including the scope of citation authority, a potential compliance issue for vessels with portable sanitation devices under the revised harbor code, and the significant increase in administrative citation hearings necessitating the two new law firm agreements.

Nick Laborde, on behalf of Miracle Makers International Film Festival, argued that Miracle Makers qualified for funding under either the new Policy A-12 or Policy B-12 frameworks in Item 5 and requested the Council approve funding for the festival.

Erin Miracle, Miracle Makers International Film Festival founder, introduced herself and the festival, described its planned activities at the Regal Edwards Newport Beach Theatre, and respectfully requested any level of financial support from the Council, asserting the festival's eligibility under the revised grant policies.

The balance of the Consent Calendar (Items 1–17, 19, and 21, excluding Items 18 and 20) was approved by unanimous vote, with Councilmember Weigand recused on Item 4 and Councilmember Stapleton recused on Item 10.

Motion: *Mayor Pro Tem Blom moved, seconded by Councilmember Stapleton, to approve the balance of the Consent Calendar (Items 1–17, 19, and 21).* Motion carried by unanimous vote.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes for the June 9, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting.

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

2. Ordinance No. 2026 - 08: Updating Title 1 (General Provisions) of the Newport Beach Municipal Code Related to City Employees' Enforcement of the Municipal Code and State Law

3. Ordinance No. 2026 - 09: Amending the Newport Beach Municipal Code to Regulate and Manage Certain Activities within Newport Harbor

ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

4. Ordinance No. 2026 - 07: Updating Titles 13 (Streets, Sidewalks and Public Property) and 20 (Planning and Zoning) of the Newport Beach Municipal Code Related to Personal Wireless Service Facilities

RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

5. Community Programs Grants, Community Event Assistance and Strategic Sponsorship Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2026 - 27

6. Resolution No. 2026 - 45: Recognizing the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America, July 4, 2026

7. Resolutions Nos 2026 - 46 & 2026 - 47: A Side Letter Agreement Between the City of Newport Beach and the Newport Beach City Employees Association Related to Alternative Work Schedules and the Telecommuting Program; and Modifications to the Key & Management Compensation Plan Related to Executive Management Physicals and the Telecommuting Program

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

8. Public Bathroom Gate Fabrication and Installation Notice of Completion for Contract No. 9761- 1

9. Fire Station No. 2 HVAC Retrofit Notice of Completion for Contract No. 9959 - 1 (25R02)

10. Concrete Replacement Program Fiscal Year 2025-26 Notice of Completion for Contract No. 9945 - 1 (26R06)

11. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with GMU Geotechnical, Inc. for Pavement Management Program and Inspection Services (Contract No. 9966 - 1) (27R01)

12. Award of Professional Service Agreements for the Newport Terrace Closed Landfill Gas Control System to American International Environmental, Inc., and Tetra Tech BAS.

13. Renewal of Microsoft License Agreement

14. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Davis Farr LLP for Professional Audit Services

15. Irrigation Controllers Replacement Phase 4 Award of Contract No. 10128-1

16. Professional Services Agreement with Serviam Law LLP DBA Serviam by Wright LLP and Nastich Law, a Professional Corporation for Hearing Adjudication Services

17. Amendment No. One for an Agreement with Interior Office Solutions, Inc. DBA PeopleSpace Inc. for Space Planning and Freestanding Modular Furniture Installation Services (Contract No.10127 - 1)

18. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Cities of Huntington Beach and Newport Beach Regarding the Huntington Beach Navigation Center

MISCELLANEOUS

19. Visit Newport Beach, Inc. Fiscal Year 2027 and 2028 Destination Business Plan Budget, Leisure Marketing (TOT) Fiscal Year 2027 28 Budget and Performance Standards Report

20. Appointments to Police Headquarters Advisory Committee

21. Planning Commission Agenda for the June 18, 2026, Meeting

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

18. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Cities of Huntington Beach and Newport Beach Regarding the Huntington Beach Navigation Center

At Councilmember Grant's request, staff presented the proposed MOU. Assistant City Manager Tara Finnigan explained that the agreement would provide 10 dedicated shelter beds at the Huntington Beach Navigation Center, a part-time social services worker for Newport Beach clients, and associated overhead, at a total cost of $44,100 per month plus a one-time $9,000 vehicle conversion fee, for a total not-to-exceed amount of $529,200. The agreement replaces the existing arrangement with the City of Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter (20 beds plus PATH social services at approximately $120,000 per month combined), representing an annual savings of approximately $1,000,000.

Councilmember Grant pulled the item to highlight the City's accomplishment of reducing street-level homelessness by more than 90% and to acknowledge the dedicated work of staff. She expressed support for right-sizing the shelter commitment and praised the savings achieved.

Councilmember Barto thanked staff for managing a constituent concern during the transition.

Mayor Pro Tem Blom offered extended praise for the Mayor's leadership in negotiating the Huntington Beach partnership and acknowledged the years of effort invested by staff and the full Council in addressing homelessness.

Motion: *Mayor Pro Tem Blom moved, seconded by Mayor Kleiman, to*
a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
b) Approve the Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Huntington Beach and the City of Newport Beach Regarding the Huntington Beach Navigation Center and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Memorandum of Understanding for a total not-to-exceed amount of $529,200.

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

20. Appointments to Police Headquarters Advisory Committee

Councilmember Stapleton introduced the item, noting that 31 applications were received, and invited colleagues to discuss any recommended adjustments to the proposed appointments.

Councilmember Weigand raised concerns regarding applicant Ronald Rubino's application, noting questions about a prior plea of guilty to a misdemeanor in connection with the 1994 Orange County bankruptcy, and whether the expungement of that record should have been disclosed on the application. He expressed discomfort appointing an individual with that history to a committee overseeing an estimated $150 million project, and indicated support for substituting alternate candidate Paul Watkins.

Mayor Pro Tem Blom acknowledged the concern, offered a friendly amendment to substitute Paul Watkins for Ronald Rubino, and called for a vote.

Councilmember Grant noted that Mr. Rubino had provided clarifying information regarding the expungement of a matter from approximately 30 years ago and expressed that he would have been a qualified contributor, while also affirming support for Mr. Watkins.

Councilmember Weigand added that the core issue was the absence of voluntary disclosure on the application, regardless of the expungement's legal effect.

Public Comment:

Adam Leverenz cautioned the Council to distinguish between the terms "expungement" and "exoneration," noting that the applicant's materials may have used the word "exonerated," which carries a different legal meaning.

Susan DeSantis expressed that it was inappropriate to disqualify a community member from volunteer service based on a decades-old matter in which he was exonerated, and stated that his background was well-suited to the committee's purpose.

The Council approved the appointments with Paul Watkins substituted in place of Ronald Rubino as a citizen member of the Police Headquarters Advisory Committee.

Motion: *Mayor Pro Tem Blom moved, seconded by Councilmember Weber, to*
a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly;
b) Make appointments to the Police Headquarters Advisory Committee of four members: Thomas Maloney, Sandra Meadows, Robert Olson, and Paul Watkins;

c) Appoint Councilmember Sara J. Weber, Councilmember Michelle Barto, and Mayor Pro Tem Noah Blom as the three members of the Newport Beach City Council;

d) Appoint Councilmember Sara Weber as Chair and Mayor Pro Tem Blom as Vice Chair of the Police Headquarters Advisory Committee.

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

22. Resolution Nos. 2026-48 and 2026-49: Overriding the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission and Adopting the Newport Beach 2050 General Plan

Deputy City Manager Zdeba presented the item, summarizing a seven-year community-driven effort to update the 2006 General Plan with a new planning horizon of 2050. He noted no changes to development limits or land use patterns, completion of SB 18 tribal consultation, preparation of a CEQA addendum, and the ALUC override process following a March 2026 inconsistency determination. A General Plan Advisory Committee and Steering Committee collectively met over 100 times and voted 25–1 to support the draft. An online, searchable version of the General Plan is planned for near-term launch.

Councilmember Weber requested clarification that the word "parcels" in Policy LU 28.1 includes "sites" consistent with the zoning code. Deputy City Manager Zdeba confirmed this could be added to the policy language.

Public Comment:

Nancy Gardner expressed support for adoption and urged the Council to establish an annual General Plan Review Committee as recommended by the GPAC to monitor implementation of the plan's policies.

Denys Oberman acknowledged the effort involved and emphasized the need to update the Circulation Element to align with housing-driven land use changes resulting from state mandates.

Jim Mosher raised questions about the ownership and maintenance of the new online general plan platform, noted a discrepancy between population projections in the General Plan and those in the recently adopted Urban Water Management Plan and Housing Element EIR, and questioned whether anomaly table LU-1 accurately reflected all approved developments.

Susan DeSantis thanked all participants in the process, endorsed the plan's emphasis on environmental stewardship and neighborhood character, and encouraged continued monitoring of implementation effects, early community engagement in future planning, and transparency regarding growth assumptions.

Motion: *Mayor Pro Tem Blom moved, seconded by Councilmember Weber, to*
a) Consistent with Section 15164 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, find that the Addendum prepared to the certified final Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Newport Beach Housing Element Implementation Program (SCH No. 2023060699) adequately analyzes the approval and implementation of the Newport Beach 2050 General Plan, and that no new environmental impacts or no impacts of greater severity would result from it;
b) Adopt Resolution No. 2026 - 48, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach, California, Finding the Comprehensive Update of the Newport Beach General Plan, Also Known as the "Newport Beach 2050 General Plan," Consistent with the Purposes of the State Aeronautics Act and Overriding the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission's Determination of Inconsistency with the 2008 John Wayne Airport Environs Land Use Plan (PA2022 080); and
c) Adopt Resolution No. 2026 - 49, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach, California, Adopting the Comprehensive Update of the Newport

Beach General Plan, Also Known as the "Newport Beach 2050 General Plan" (PA2022 080).

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

23. Resolution Nos. 2026-50 and 2026-51: Collection of Sewer and Recycling Fees and Charges Through the Property Tax Roll

Administrative Services Director Jason Al-Imam and Finance Manager Jessica Nguyen presented the item, clarifying that this action does not establish a new fee or increase existing fees, but authorizes continued collection of established sewer and recycling charges through the Orange County property tax roll for approximately 5,600 accounts that do not receive City water service. Collection via the tax roll was implemented in 2022 and has improved collection rates while reducing staff administrative burden.

Councilmember Grant asked how the item related to a public comment about recycling fees in Newport Coast. Staff confirmed this item covers only recycling charges and sewer fees for accounts without City water billing; it is not related to the trash collection fee question raised by the Newport Coast resident.

Public Comment:

Jim Mosher noted that for properties within the City's pre-November 1, 1996 boundaries receiving curbside refuse service, Municipal Code Section 604.14 may require that the cost of collecting and disposing of recyclables be covered entirely by ad valorem tax revenue, suggesting a supplemental recycling charge for such properties could be legally questionable.

Adam Leverenz asked whether placement of fees on the property tax roll could result in liens against a property for nonpayment of recycling fees.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Blom moved, seconded by Councilmember Barto, to

a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly;
b) Adopt Resolution No. 2026 - 50, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach, California Confirming the Sewer Service Fee Report for Fiscal Year 2026 - 27 and Authorizing Collection of the Fee Through the Orange County Tax Roll; and
c) Adopt Resolution No. 2026 - 51, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach, California Confirming the Recycling Fee Report for Fiscal Year 2026 - 27 and Authorizing the Collection of the Fee Through the Orange County Tax Roll.

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

VI. MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION

No motions for reconsideration were offered.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:51pm.