



City of Naples

City Council Chamber
735 Eighth Street South
Naples, Florida 34102

City Council Regular Meeting – March 4, 2026 – 8:33 a.m.

It is noted for the record that all: 1) documentation electronically appended hereto is also contained in the file for this meeting with the City Clerk's Office; 2) experts who testified during quasi-judicial hearings were accepted as qualified to do so in their respective fields of expertise; 3) added items are referenced in red as "ADDED ITEMS", and 4) added attachments are referenced in red as "ADDED ATTACHMENT".

1) CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

City Council Members Present

Teresa Heitmann, Mayor

Berne Barton
Bill Kramer
John Krol
Linda Penniman
Scott Schultz (arrived at 8:36 a.m.)

Council Members Absent

Ted Blankenship, Vice Mayor

Staff Present:

Gary Young, City Manager
Ciro Dominguez, Police Chief
Chad Merritt, Community Services Director
David Rivera, Traffic Operations Supervisor

Matthew McConnell, City Attorney
Phillip Pennington, Fire Chief
Sean Phillips, Master Police Officer
Alison Bickett, City Engineer

Others Present:

James Henderson
John Redhead
Fabian Caceros-Vasquez
Daria Zaitseva
Marshall Dunn
Andre Ferdinand
Patrick O'Connor
William Dwight
Michael Hunter
Mary McCartan
Jay Kohlhagen
Slate Dabney
Nathan Gordon
Michael Critell
Charissa Dines

Nat Smith
Sarah Tatum
Josh Hildebrand
Cory Kratovil
Shawn Connors
Anthony Renda
Jim Johnson
Mark Enger
Bob Piekenbrok
Nathan Gordon
Jim Johnson
Maureen Minker
Meg Stepanian
Robert Martin

2) INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pastor James Henderson, Celebration Community Church, gave an invocation. Mayor Heitmann subsequently led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) SET AGENDA (add or remove items)

City Manager Gary Young announced that Item 14.E, an Executive Session, will be held at 12:30 p.m. He also requested that Item 14.A, a Resolution accepting a \$250,000 donation from the

Nommensen family for matching funds at Lowdermilk Park, be moved ahead of Item 10.A to recognize the family's presence at the meeting.

Mayor Heitmann requested that a legislative update be added to the end of the agenda. City Attorney Matthew McConnell asked that the minutes reflect Council Member Schultz entered the meeting at 8:36 a.m.

MOTION by Barton to SET AGENDA, subject to moving Item 14.A ahead of Item 10.A; seconded by Penniman and unanimously carried (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

4) ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.A) Do the Right Thing Presentation.

Master Police Officer Sean Phillips recognized the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 38, as that month's sponsor of the Do the Right Thing (DTRT) Program, represented in attendance that day by Corporal John Redhead.

Master Officer Phillips then announced the recipients of that month's DTRT Award, Naples High School student Fabian Caceros-Vasquez, who found a platinum credit card and turned it in to school administration so it could be returned to the student who lost it. Daria Zaitseva of Saint Ann School was recognized for her kindness and encouragement toward others. Marshall Dunn of Gulfview Middle School was recognized for assisting a teacher by helping repair a flat tire on the teacher's vehicle. Naples High School student Andre Ferdinand was recognized for his leadership and service through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and volunteer activities supporting his school and community. In response to Council Member Kramer, he stated that he plans to continue his academic and athletic career at Princeton University.

Patrick O'Connor, Chair of the DTRT program, commended the students for demonstrating honesty, service, and strong character.

4.B) Black History Baggage Car Project Presentation, Delivered by William Dwight, President of the Friends of the Collier County Museums.

City Manager Gary Young introduced William Dwight, President of the Friends of the Collier County Museums, to provide an update on the Black History Baggage Car project at the Naples Depot Museum and to inform the new City Council of the previously approved \$50,000 contribution.

Mr. Dwight explained that the project will convert a 1940s-era Pullman baggage car into a permanent exhibit highlighting African American history in Naples and Collier County. He noted that the initiative began several years earlier through collaboration with the NAACP and community partners.

City Manager Young reported that the project received \$15,000 in seed funding for architectural renderings, a \$400,000 State grant, approximately \$100,000 in private donations, and a \$50,000 City contribution approved in May 2022. He explained that progress was delayed following Hurricane Ian, but construction began in December 2025, and the exhibit is expected to open by June 1, 2026. Mr. Dwight confirmed that the project will include an outdoor paved area that can accommodate seating and small events.

5) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Hunter addressed the City Council regarding the intersection of Crayton Road and Mooring Line Drive. He said he submitted a list containing 30 signatures supporting the installation of a roundabout at the intersection, which he said had been discussed since 2022. Mr. Hunter emphasized safety concerns, noting that families with children now live nearby and that residents on all four corners of the intersection support the roundabout. **Mary McCartan** stated that she owns property on Park Street and is currently attempting to sell the lots. She expressed concern that during special events, dumpsters, tents, and other equipment are placed in front of her property, which she said negatively affects the property's appearance and accessibility. She

requested that Park Street remain a residential street and that such uses be reconsidered. Mayor Heitmann apologized for the situation and indicated that the matter would be reviewed. **Jay Kohlhausen** addressed the City Council regarding enforcement of the City's Special Events Permit Manual. He stated that all events using City services should be required to pay associated costs and comply with the manual's requirements, including timely payment of invoices and adherence to permit conditions. **Slate Dabney** addressed the City Council on behalf of himself and the Old Naples Association regarding proposed state legislation affecting the governance of the Naples Airport Authority (NAA). He commended the City Council for recent appointments to the NAA and expressed concern about proposals that would shift appointment authority to a countywide electorate. Mr. Dabney stated that airport governance should remain with a deliberate appointment process to ensure qualified leadership and noted that residents are communicating their concerns to state officials. **Donna Adan** spoke about Naples Pride events held at Cambier Park and the Norris Center, expressing concern about the appropriateness of certain activities for children and questioned compliance with the City's Special Events Permit Manual. Ms. Adan stated that she is organizing a petition opposing future events and submitted photographs to the City Clerk for the record. **Nathan Gordon**, a resident of the southwest corner of Crayton Road and Mooring Line Drive, spoke in support of installing a roundabout at that intersection. He cited safety concerns, noting several collisions and near misses involving vehicles, cyclists, and e-bikes. Mr. Gordon stated that residents on all four corners of the intersection, along with several local organizations, support the roundabout and urged the City Council to consider it as a safety improvement. **Michael Critelli**, a resident of Gulf Shore Boulevard North, also addressed traffic safety at nearby intersections. He recommended that the City collect additional data on near-miss incidents and consider design modifications if a roundabout is implemented, including reducing entry and exit speeds and exploring separation of bicycles from vehicular traffic. **Nat Smith**, representing the Naples Pathways Coalition, spoke in favor of roundabouts as a safety improvement. He stated that studies from the Federal Highway Administration show that modern roundabouts significantly reduce fatal and injury crashes by slowing traffic and reducing conflict points, and he encouraged the City Council to support a roundabout to improve safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

[Photographs \(ADDED ATTACHMENT / D. Adan\)](#)

[Special event information \(ADDED ATTACHMENT / J. Kohlhausen\)](#)

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Penniman to APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA; seconded by Kramer and carried 6-0 (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

6) MINUTES

6.A) Approval of the January 21, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[January 21, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes](#)

7) RESOLUTIONS

7.A) *RESOLUTION 2026-15817* - A Resolution Accepting A 15 Foot By 660 Foot Utility Easement From Collier County To The City Of Naples To Construct, Excavate, Install, Access, And Maintain Utilities On The West 15 Feet Of Tract No. 128, Unit No. 71, Golden Gate Estates, According To The Plat Recorded In Plat Book 5, Page 7, Public Records Of Collier County, Florida, Said Property Containing 9,990 Square Feet Of Land, More Or Less, More Fully Described Herein; Authorizing The Mayor To Execute The Deed Of Utility Easement; Directing The City Clerk To Record The Deed of Utility Easement; And Providing An Effective Date.

Title of the Resolution not read.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Resolution](#)

[Utility Easement](#)

[Exhibit A - Utility Easement](#)

- 7.B) **RESOLUTION 2026-15818** - A Resolution Approving a First Amendment to Task Order No. 26-01-04-15-26Q02 Between the City of Naples and Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc., a Massachusetts Corporation, Authorized to do Business in the State of Florida, for Design, Permitting, and Construction Services to Replace the Underground Fuel Tanks at the Naples City Dock, Increasing the Original Task Order Amount of \$49,038.87 by \$102,394.41 for a Total Not to Exceed \$151,433.28; Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the Amendment to Task Order; Providing for Scrivener's Errors; and Providing an Effective Date.

Title of the Resolution not read.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Resolution](#)

[First Amendment - Task Order](#)

[Task Order No. 26-01-04-15-26Q02](#)

- 7.C) **RESOLUTION 2026-15819** - A Resolution approving a First Amendment to the Contractor's Services Agreement between the City of Naples and Project Combo, Inc., an Illinois Corporation, Authorized to do business in the State of Florida, for the annual Supply and Installation of Decorative Street Signs for (3) three additional years at the adjusted price increase beginning on October 1, 2025 and ending on September 30, 2028; Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the First Amendment; and Providing an Effective Date.

Title of the Resolution not read.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Resolution](#)

[Resolution 2023-15146](#)

[2023-15146B Project Combo, Inc.](#)

[First Amendment 23-022 Agreement](#)

- 7.D) **RESOLUTION 2026-15820** - A Resolution Approving a Standard Grant Agreement between the City of Naples and the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (L0280) to Providing Funding for the Naples Basin IV Stormwater Improvement Design Project in the Amount of \$550,000, Subject to Certain Terms and Conditions; Authorizing the Mayor to Execute the Standard Grant Agreement; and Providing an Effective Date.

Title of the Resolution not read.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Resolution](#)

[FDEP Agreement L0280](#)

[Basin IV Improvements - Phases 1 2 3](#)

- 7.E) **RESOLUTION 2026-15821** - A Resolution Waiving The Competitive Bidding Process For The Purchase Of John Deere Landscaping Equipment As Provided In Section 2-663(1)(d) Of The Code Of Ordinances, City Of Naples; Approving A Piggyback Agreement With EFE, Inc., A Florida Corporation, DBA Everglades Equipment Group, Inc., A Florida Corporation, Pursuant To The Fiscal Year 2026 Sourcewell Agreement No. 011723-JDC In An Amount Not-To-Exceed \$77,793.72; Authorizing The City Manager To Execute The Piggyback Agreement; And Providing An Effective Date.

Title of the Resolution not read.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Resolution](#)

[Everglades Equipment Group, Inc. Piggyback Agreement](#)

8) **OTHER**

- 8.A) Consideration of the Repeat Special Event Applications Enumerated Below:
1. Together We Rise 5K Run, Walk and Community Fair - Baker Park; **2.** Third Street South Farmers Market - Third Street South; and **3.** DJ for Event - Hyatt House.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Together We Rise 5K Run, Walk and Community Resource Fair 4.25.2026](#)

[Third Street South Summer Farmers Market 5.2.2026](#)

[DJ for Event 12.6.2026](#)

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

9) **PUBLIC HEARINGS - None.**

10) **REGULAR AGENDA**

14.A) **RESOLUTION 2026-15822 - A Resolution Accepting a Cash Donation of \$250,000 from the Nommensen Family for the Purpose of Contributing Matching Funds to Enhance the Playground Project at Lowdermilk Park, which is Funded in the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Capital Improvement Project (430) in the amount of \$250,000 (26R05); and Providing an Effective Date.**

City Attorney Matthew McConnell read the title of the Resolution. Community Services Director Chad Merritt explained that the Nommensen family approached the City seeking a way to contribute to improvements in the City's park system. After discussing several projects, the Lowdermilk Park playground replacement was identified as an appropriate opportunity. The project was already funded at \$250,000 to replace the playground damaged during Hurricane Ian, and the donation will match those funds, increasing the total project budget to \$500,000 and allowing for additional enhancements.

Director Merritt noted several modest requests from the donor, including incorporating a natural barrier near the park entry road to help prevent children from running toward the street, incorporating the color yellow into the playground design, and notifying the family when the playground eventually requires replacement. He added that the donor also requested that the playground be named the "Sunshine Playground" and that a plaque be installed honoring Gary and Wanda Shaw for their contributions to education and encouraging recognition of teachers.

Council Members expressed appreciation for the family's generosity and the recognition of educators.

Sarah Tatum, representing the Nommensen family, thanked City staff for their cooperation and expressed the family's enthusiasm for contributing to a project that honors their grandparents and benefits the community.

MOTION by Kramer to APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-15822; seconded by Barton and carried 6-0 (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

Pursuant to discussion, there was an amendment to add notice to the family in the event the playground is replaced to enable the donation of additional funds.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Resolution](#)

[Donation Letter - Nommensen Family](#)

[Resolution 15-13730 Naples Donation Policy](#)

10.A) BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Discussion and Selection of the Recipient of the 2026 Sam Noe Award.

City Clerk Patricia Rambosk presented the item regarding the selection of the 2026 Sam Noe Award recipient. She explained that the award is presented annually to recognize exemplary service by a current or former member of a City-appointed board or committee, including the Naples Airport Authority, in honor of the late Samuel Noe. She noted that the award was established by City Council in October 2006 and is presented at the second regular City Council meeting in March.

City Clerk Rambosk noted that the City Clerk's Office received one nomination for the 2026 award, submitted by Council Member Schultz for John Cross, who served on the Planning Advisory Board from 2018 through 2025.

During discussion, Council Member Kramer noted that he would have nominated Rita Cuddihy, former chair of the Naples Airport Authority, and commended her service during a challenging

period, but acknowledged that the nomination deadline had passed. Council Members expressed appreciation for the service of City volunteers.

Council Member Schultz commended Mr. Cross for his service and dedication to the Planning Advisory Board. The award will be presented at the second regular City Council meeting in March.

MOTION by Penniman to SELECT JOHN CROSS; seconded by Krol and carried 6-0 (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[John Cross Nomination by Council Member Schultz](#)

[Sam Noe Resolution 2015-13622](#)

11) ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA (If Needed)

None.

12) LAND USE MATTERS - None.

13) OLD BUSINESS

13.A) Receive Update by Johnson Engineering, City's Engineering Consultant, on the status of the Roundabout Design and Provide Direction to Finalize for Construction.

City Manager Gary Young introduced the item, an update on the roundabout design for the Crayton Road and Harbour Drive intersection. He explained that the intersection had been previously designed as a mast arm traffic signal and later reconsidered as a roundabout, and that the purpose of the item was to present the refreshed roundabout concept and obtain City Council direction so staff could proceed with a Request for Proposal (RFP) and move the project forward.

City Engineer Alison Bickett stated that the existing span-wire signal system at the intersection requires ongoing maintenance after storms to maintain proper clearance and is not ideal for a coastal location.

Transportation Engineer Josh Hildebrand of Johnson Engineering, utilized an electronic presentation to summarize roundabout project goals, specifically improving safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists; improving traffic operations; and limiting impacts to adjacent residential properties and City infrastructure.

Cory Kratovil, Project Engineer with PBS Engineering and Environmental, described key roundabout design elements including pedestrian refuge islands, ADA-accessible crossings, and pedestrian flashing beacons. He also detailed bicycle accommodations that allow experienced cyclists to travel through the roundabout with traffic, while providing off-ramps for others to use shared-use paths and crosswalks. He additionally addressed operational considerations such as residential driveway access, vegetation preservation, speed control, lighting, line-of-sight, and accommodation of large and emergency vehicles.

Transportation Engineer Hildebrand noted that the roundabout design accounts for utility impacts and that the project schedule anticipates bidding and contractor selection in April or May 2026. He stated construction is expected to begin in summer 2026, with an estimated duration of approximately ten months, extending into early to mid-2027.

Council Member Schultz asked about the history of the mast arm signal alternative and referenced public comments opposing the roundabout. He expressed concerns regarding potential traffic delays, driver familiarity with roundabouts, emergency vehicle navigation, and impacts from heavy vehicles such as beach renourishment trucks. He also questioned potential curb and roadway damage and associated maintenance costs and indicated a preference for reconsidering the mast arm signal option.

City Engineer Bickett summarized the project history, explaining that the City initially retained Johnson Engineering to design a mast arm signal. Following a pedestrian fatality in November

2024 and subsequent public discussion, City Council directed staff in June 2025 to shift to a revised roundabout design, with a task order approved in September 2025 to advance the roundabout plans. City Manager Young noted that the mast arm design remains available and that City Council direction is required to determine which alternative will move forward.

Project Engineer Kratovil explained that vehicle modeling confirms the roundabout can accommodate emergency vehicles, dump trucks, and most large vehicles, with only the largest semi-trailers occasionally using the central truck apron constructed with durable pavers. Traffic Operations Supervisor David Rivera added that all intersection types require maintenance and noted that the thicker pavers used by the City improve durability and that the intersection's location is unlikely to experience the congestion observed at other City roundabouts.

Council Members discussed resiliency and safety considerations associated with the design, including new drainage infrastructure, bioretention opportunities, and the ability of roundabouts to function during power outages.

City Engineer Bickett reviewed the staff report and summarized outreach conducted with nearby property owners. She noted the roundabout design was revised to address feedback related to driveway access, landscaping, safety, and drainage improvements. She explained that the proposed roundabout design is similar to that at 8th Street and Central Avenue and would include brick pavers consistent with other City roundabouts. She said the utility design and landscaping plans for the Harbour Drive corridor will be finalized following City Council direction. In addition, she stated that either option could move forward quickly and that construction is targeted for the off-season to minimize community impacts. Fire Chief Phil Pennington confirmed that fire apparatus can navigate the intersection.

Council Members expressed support for the roundabout design, citing safety improvements, environmental benefits, resiliency features, and additional green space that can assist with stormwater absorption. Transportation Engineer Hildebrand explained that several nearby homes have loop driveways, allowing residents to maintain access by using the driveway farther from the roundabout. Mayor Heitmann noted that different intersections may require different design solutions and stated that adjustments to the roundabout concept were made in response to resident concerns.

Public Comments: **Shawn Connors**, representing the Moorings Property Owners Association, spoke in support of the roundabout, noting that roundabouts are widely used throughout the United States and Florida and are recognized for improving safety and reducing vehicle speeds. **Anthony Renda**, speaking on behalf of Naples Velo, expressed support for the roundabout, stating that it improves cyclist safety and reduces high-speed collision risks. He also stated that the organization would provide rider education on navigating roundabouts. **Jim Johnson**, whose residence is located at the Crayton Road, Harbour Drive intersection, stated that he generally supports the roundabout but requested additional communication with adjacent property owners regarding design details, particularly bicycle accommodations and pedestrian interactions. **Mark Enger**, a member of the Gulf Shore Association of Condominiums (GSAC), spoke about the intersection's importance as a primary access point for Gulf Shore Boulevard and expressed concern that the construction timeline could extend into the next season. **Bob Piekenbrok**, a resident at the corner of Crayton Road and Harbour Drive for over 25 years, stated that although he initially opposed the roundabout, discussions with staff and engineers addressed his concerns. He expressed support for the project, noting the prior fatal accident at the intersection and stating he believes the roundabout will improve safety. **Nathan Gordon**, a resident of Crayton Road, cited national studies indicating that roundabouts significantly reduce fatal crashes, particularly at intersections, and expressed support for the project based on safety benefits. **Nat Smith** urged the City Council to prioritize safety and expressed support of the roundabout design. **Jim Johnson** was not present when called.

Following public comment, the following consensus was proffered.

Consensus was reached directing staff to finalize the roundabout design and advance plans to upgrade the intersection to improve resiliency.

City Manager Young explained that staff would finalize the design, coordinate utilities, incorporate resiliency improvements, and proceed with a RFP for construction, with funding anticipated from the one-cent sales tax. City Engineer Bickett clarified the ten-month construction estimate is preliminary and may change after contractor selection. She noted full closure could shorten the timeline, while maintaining access would likely extend it, with final logistics determined during contract negotiations.

MOTION by Kramer to PROCEED to final design of a roundabout at Crayton Road and Harbour Drive which will include the resiliency aspect, utility coordination, and the RFP process, with Council approval of the final contract; seconded by Barton and carried 6-0 (Blankenship-absent, Barton-yes, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Roundabout Roadway Plans](#)

[Roundabout Signage and Marking Plans](#)

[Roundabout Fastest Paths and Truck Turning](#)

[2026 Email Correspondence](#)

[Safety Survey Report April 2025](#)

[June 4 2025 Agenda Memorandum Crayton and Harbour](#)

[April 8, 2025 - Harbour & Crayton Intersection - Moorings Association Power Point](#)

[Resolution 2025-15711](#)

[Presentation](#)

[Photographs \(ADDED ATTACHMENT / N. Gordon\)](#)

[Survey \(ADDED ATTACHMENT / M. Hunter\)](#)

Recess: 11:06 a.m. to 11:18 a.m. It is noted for the record that the same Council Members were present when the meeting reconvened.

13.B) Presentation to Mayor and Council of New Design for the Naples Pier for the Landside Area Based on Council Recommendations From the June 16, 2025, Workshop.

City Manager Gary Young introduced the item, the final review of landside design changes for the Naples Pier reconstruction before finalizing revisions with the contractor. He briefly summarized the project history, noting that the original design included concessions and outdoor dining, but subsequent revisions added a restroom for Police Department beach patrol officers and a small office space. He stated the current proposal represents what staff hope will be the final configuration.

Maureen Minker, Studio Director at MHK Architecture, explained that, following City Council direction, the design was revised to reduce the size of landside structures and remove the concession and outdoor dining areas. She then utilized an electronic presentation that featured the updated floor plan and renderings comparing the previous and current designs. She noted that the north men's restroom will include a small beach patrol office with a dedicated restroom, and the existing changing room will be converted to pier storage. In addition, she explained that the south women's restroom area will include a small shade structure with benches and space for educational displays, with outdoor showers nearby. The revised design significantly reduces deck space and building volumes, she added.

Council Member Barton reiterated concerns about eliminating concessions, stating residents and visitors may be dissatisfied if the pier offers no food or beverage options. To address nearby residents' concerns, he suggested limited concessions such as pre-made items or heated foods without cooking exhaust. Mayor Heitmann noted the community has expressed interest in having limited refreshments available, such as ice cream or bottled water, consistent with what was historically offered at the pier.

Council Member Kramer opposed permanent concessions, explaining federal regulations prevent locating them where they previously existed. He stated many locals bring their own food and suggested a mobile vendor or cart selling items such as ice cream or water as an alternative. Council Member Schultz expressed support for portable vendors, similar to those used at sporting events, allowing beverages or ice cream to be sold without constructing permanent facilities.

Council Member Penniman expressed concerns about competing with local businesses but indicated support for a limited or portable option as a compromise. Council Member Barton noted previous concessions generated approximately \$100,000 annually for the City and helped offset pier maintenance costs. City Manager Young clarified that pier maintenance is funded through a \$500,000 annual Tourist Development Council grant, paid parking revenues, and beach funds, and that reconstruction debt will be paid from the beach fund rather than the general tax base.

City Manager Young stated that while a mobile vendor or cart might be possible, the current design does not include a dedicated concession space. He explained that staff could review the plans to determine whether electrical connections or a location could be incorporated to support a temporary cart, while ensuring no additional enclosed concession area is created.

Council Members expressed support for exploring a limited concessions option, such as a portable cart providing water or ice cream. Mayor Heitmann noted that current City policy does not allow food trucks and would require further discussion to change.

Consensus was reached to proceed with the proposed design while directing the City Manager to evaluate whether electrical service and space could accommodate a portable vendor offering limited items.

City Manager Young then provided a construction update, reporting that all EPA-treated wood has been removed and approximately 30 to 40 percent of the concrete demolition has been completed, with the material being recycled for highway use. The first barge shipment to the reef site is expected within two weeks, he added. He also noted that temporary air-conditioned restroom trailers will be installed in the pier parking lot by March 10th or 11th.

Director Minker confirmed that an underwater observation camera remains included in the project.

Council Member Schultz commended Collier County officials for providing a staging area near Isle of Capri and Marco Island to assist with the project.

MOTION by Kramer to PROCEED with the amended landside design including the patrol station and attached restroom, and to evaluate the electrical capacity to determine the ability to have a vendor near or around the Pier; seconded by Schultz and carried 6-0 (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[MHK Presentation](#)

14) NEW BUSINESS

14.B) Discussion and Direction on the Design Options for the Baker Park Restroom and Office Project.

City Manager Gary Young introduced the Item. He explained that residual funds from the original Baker Park project had been appropriated approximately one year earlier to address deficiencies identified after the park opened. He stated that staff had not advanced the design earlier due to workload demands and hurricane recovery efforts. He said the item that day was intended to review conceptual options before proceeding with design.

Community Services Director Chad Merritt explained that staff evaluated how Baker Park functions with daily users and special events at the Gomez Center. Director Merritt stated that weddings and other rentals at the center often conflict with general park users accessing restrooms. He explained that individuals using the playground, kayak dock, and trails must

currently cross the formal lawn and event space to reach the restrooms located on the far side of the Gomez Center.

Director Merritt explained that the original Baker Park plan included a restroom near the playground; however, its location within vegetation would leave it partially concealed and difficult to see. He presented conceptual alternatives to improve visibility and usage, noting that Option 1 would relocate the facility to the open lawn for maximum visibility but greater visual prominence, while Option 2 would provide visibility from the playground while remaining partially screened. He recommended Option 2 as it balances improved visibility with reduced visual impact. He explained that the restroom would be similar in size to the existing restroom facility at the park, approximately 17 by 26 feet.

In response to Council Members' questions, Director Merritt explained that water and sewer connections had already been installed near the originally planned location. He stated that relocating the building farther would increase project costs but noted that staff attempted to balance visibility, function, and cost when developing the options. In addition, he noted that the project budget is approximately \$950,000 and final costs will depend on bids.

Council Member Kramer thanked staff and stated that restroom access had created issues during events, noting that park users sometimes walked through formal gatherings to reach the Gomez Center restrooms. He expressed confidence that the proposed restroom would address that problem. Following discussion, the following consensus was proffered.

Consensus was reached to direct staff to proceed with Location 2.

Director Merritt outlined proposed office and storage improvements at the Gomez Center, noting that increased event rentals require on-site staff presence, but the facility lacks adequate workspace and storage. He explained that staff currently operate from a closet, limiting both functionality and storage capacity, and that existing storage behind the kitchen is largely occupied by cleaning supplies. He stated the proposal would add dedicated office space and expanded storage for tables, chairs, and event equipment, reducing the need to transport items from River Park, with the design maintaining symmetry by placing office space on one side and storage on the other.

Director Merritt stated that the new storage space would measure approximately 8.5 by 28 feet and reduce equipment transport between parks. He also confirmed that a defibrillator is located at Baker Park and is maintained by the Fire Department.

MOTION by Barton to PROCEED with the plans as presented using Option 2 for the restroom (visible only from playground area) and the office/storage plan provided; seconded by Krol and carried 6-0 (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Baker Park Project - OPC](#)

[Baker Park Project - Renderings](#)

[Baker Park Project - Plans](#)

14.C) A Presentation and Discussion on After-Action Items Related to the 2025 City of Naples Christmas Parade and the 2026 New Years Fireworks.

City Manager Gary Young introduced an after-action report reviewing the 2025 Christmas Parade and New Year's fireworks events. Community Services Director Chad Merritt summarized the operational changes, attendance, and feedback received from participants, staff, and the community.

Director Merritt reported that the Christmas Parade was held December 9, 2025, with an estimated attendance exceeding 20,000 and a peak online broadcast viewership of approximately 4,200. Operational adjustments that year included moving the parade to the second Tuesday in December to align with the 5th Avenue South Christmas tree lighting, adding an additional street for staging, relocating the broadcast to Sugden Plaza to improve flow and visibility, delaying street

cleaning until after midnight to avoid pedestrian conflicts, and installing French barricades along both sides of the parade route to prevent spectators from entering the roadway. He stated the changes significantly improved operations and safety. He announced that the parade duration was reduced from nearly three hours in 2024 to approximately ninety minutes in 2025, allowing bands and floats to move more efficiently while maintaining adequate spacing. He then utilized an electronic presentation that featured barricades in use and noted that a safer environment was created for participants and spectators by keeping the route clear and allowing marching bands to use the full width of the street.

Director Merritt summarized survey feedback from parade participants, noting strong satisfaction with the event organization, staging, and parade route flow. He said most participants were returning groups averaging 26 to 50 members, and more than 70 percent reported feeling safe due to the added safety measures. He said staff feedback similarly indicated the event operated more smoothly than in prior years. Additional survey results, he noted, show that only a small percentage of parade attendees reported concerns related to traffic, parking, or the overall experience.

Council Members generally supported continuing the operational changes, noting improved safety and efficiency, particularly the barricades and shorter parade duration. Council Members also noted that the adjustments helped reduce safety risks previously caused by spectators entering the parade route.

Mayor Heitmann raised concerns about parade staging impacts on nearby residential streets and noted feedback from 3rd Street businesses regarding reduced visitor flow since staging was moved off Broad Avenue. She requested staff evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of returning staging to Broad Avenue.

Council Members discussed pedestrian crossings and access during parades, exploring potential improvements along the parade route that would enhance pedestrian access while maintaining public safety. Police Chief Ciro Dominguez emphasized that once the parade route is secured, it must remain closed to pedestrian crossings to maintain safety, noting that crossings may occur before and after the parade, but allowing crossings during the event would create safety risks with vehicles and parade participants.

Council Members discussed the broadcast location and overall event operations. Observations were made that the broadcast and staging area near Sugden Plaza required space and occasionally slowed the parade near the reviewing area, although Director Merritt indicated the relocation improved overall flow and reduced congestion elsewhere along the route.

Director Merritt requested direction regarding whether the operational changes implemented for the 2025 Christmas Parade should continue. City Manager Young noted that French barricades had been rented at a cost of approximately \$40,000 and suggested that the City consider purchasing barricades to support multiple annual parades rather than continuing to rent them. Council Members expressed support for continuing the use of French barricades, emphasizing their importance for public safety and crowd control. Council Members also supported the City purchasing barricades for long-term cost efficiency.

Consensus was reached to direct staff to maintain operational changes implemented for the parade, including the second Tuesday scheduling, relocating the broadcast to Sugden Plaza, delaying street cleaning until after midnight, and maintaining the current parade size of approximately 100 entries.

The presentation then transitioned to the discussion of the New Year's fireworks event, but the item was paused due to a scheduled executive session.

It is noted for the record that the discussion of Item 14.C was suspended from 12:27 p.m. until 1:04 p.m. in consideration of time certain Item 14.E Executive Session which is written in its entirety below.

Director Merritt presented the after-action report for the New Year's fireworks held January 3, 2026, at Naples Beach near the Naples Pier, with an estimated attendance of approximately 18,000. He noted that the event was moved from New Year's Eve to the first Saturday after New Year's following the cancellation of the 2024 fireworks.

Director Merritt said the revised date resulted in a smaller, more local and family-oriented crowd. He noted that traffic cleared up within approximately one hour and no significant incidents were reported. He said the event was manageable, although the ongoing Naples Pier construction will require consideration for future shows. He added that the fireworks contract is expiring, and the upcoming bid process may include options to enhance the quality and pacing of the show.

Director Merritt shared results of community feedback, which indicated that 36 percent attended the January 3rd event, while 58 percent were aware of the fireworks but did not attend. When asked about preferred timing for future events, he said 54 percent favored returning to New Year's Eve, while 27 percent supported keeping the first Saturday after New Year's.

Council Members discussed the timing of the fireworks and emphasized public safety and staffing capacity. Police Chief Dominguez explained that separating the fireworks from New Year's Eve allows the Police Department to adequately staff both the holiday and the fireworks event. He added that New Year's Eve requires significant resources due to increased activity throughout the City, and holding both events on the same night strain available personnel.

Chief Dominguez noted that the event required fewer resources than prior New Year's Eve fireworks. He explained that large events require coordinated staffing along the beach, on the water, and throughout the City, with support from the Collier County Sheriff's Office, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and other agencies.

Council Members generally supported the fireworks continuing while maintaining the current scheduling approach to support public safety and available staffing. Council Members also discussed reviewing attendance trends and staffing levels annually when evaluating future scheduling.

Public Comment: None.

MOTION by Krol to hold the New Year's Fireworks on Saturday, January 2, 2027 and to evaluate the timing each year; seconded by Penniman and carried 6-0 (Barton-yes, Blankenship-absent, Kramer-yes, Krol-yes, Penniman-yes, Schultz-yes, Heitmann-yes).

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Presentation - After Action for 2025 Christmas Parade and 2026 New Years Fireworks](#)

[Christmas Parade Participant Feedback](#)

[City Resident Feedback on Winter Events](#)

14.D) A Presentation and Discussion Regarding the Special Event Permit Process, Security, and Usage of Public Space for Special Event Purposes.

City Manager Gary Young introduced a policy discussion on special events, noting the purpose was to provide direction on security, event capacity, and future manual revisions rather than take final action. He identified Cambier Park as the City's primary event venue and asked the City Council to consider both permanent and interim security measures.

Community Services Director Chad Merritt utilized an electronic presentation to review the special event process and noted that applications requiring City Council approval include events with street closures, amplified sound, off-site parking, City co-sponsorship, fireworks, air shows, or event attendance over 1,500. He also outlined recurring challenges, including safety concerns,

increasing competition for public space, traffic and parking impacts, late applications, inconsistent site layouts, permit violations, and growing use of City resources.

Police Chief Ciro Dominguez discussed safety planning for open-air events and explained that Naples uses nationally recognized law enforcement best practices for event security. He emphasized the vulnerability of parks and public streets to vehicle threats and large crowds and stated that permanent or portable barriers, defined perimeters, and consistent planning are necessary to reduce risk.

Chief Dominguez and Director Merritt recommended permanent security improvements at Cambier Park using a combination of bollards, planters, seating walls, or similar protective features designed to preserve the park's appearance. Chief Dominguez also presented a short-term option to acquire approximately 72 portable Archer barriers to secure Cambier Park and support other venues until permanent improvements are completed.

City Manager Young estimated permanent security improvements at Cambier Park would cost approximately \$850,000 to \$1 million and require eight to ten months to implement. He explained that portable barriers could also support 3rd Street South and reduce the need for event organizers to continue renting costly temporary security equipment.

Director Merritt reviewed security considerations for 3rd Street South and 5th Avenue South. City Manager Young explained that 3rd Street South may serve as a pilot location for permanent, removable roadway bollards, while 5th Avenue South will continue using temporary measures until future corridor redesign plans are finalized. He noted that fully securing 5th Avenue South with temporary barriers would require a significantly larger quantity than currently recommended and advised against purchasing additional equipment at this time.

Consensus was reached to support a capital investment to enhance security at Cambier Park through potential use of bollards, planters, or walls, and to purchase up to 75 portable Archer vehicle barriers.

City Manager Young indicated that the requested quantity of Archer barriers would allow Cambier Park to be secure and provide flexibility for use at other City venues as needed.

Chief Dominguez clarified that road closures required for immediate security needs are separate from closures associated with event permit approvals. City Manager Young explained that some events may still require road closures based on threat conditions, even if they otherwise fall within normal operating thresholds.

Chief Dominguez explained that fully securing 5th Avenue South would require approximately 332 permanent bollards or about 101 Archer vehicle barriers. He explained that if the City initially purchased 75 Archers, additional protection could be supplemented until permanent infrastructure is installed. He also noted that the final approach will likely combine permanent bollards and portable barriers, which would also reduce the need for police vehicles and personnel to serve as temporary barriers during events.

Director Merritt then reviewed event activity in City parks and public spaces. He reported that 131 events were permitted in 2025 and 73 had been permitted so far in 2026, with no weekends without events during the peak months of January through April. He noted that most events attract between 1,000 and 10,000 attendees, with several larger events exceeding 15,000 or 20,000. He explained that frequent events affect playgrounds, athletic programming, trails, parking, and general public use of City parks. He estimated that Cambier Park can generally accommodate about 1,000 attendees while still functioning as a passive public park, while events approaching 3,000 attendees significantly reduce normal public use.

City Manager Young stated that the policy question for the City Council was whether Cambier Park should primarily function as a passive park or continue to host a limited number of higher-

attendance events. Council Member Kramer emphasized that City-sponsored amenities and parks should primarily serve City of Naples residents and taxpayers. He expressed concern that some large events function primarily as commercial ventures for outside organizers rather than as a benefit for local residents and noted that the City should remain mindful of its responsibility to prioritize community use of public spaces. Council Members discussed balancing regular park use with community events and generally supported maintaining passive park use while allowing flexibility for a limited number of larger events. Council Members also discussed whether policy should distinguish between total attendance during an event and the number of people present at one time. Several members noted that some successful events exceed 1,000 attendees over the course of a day without overwhelming the park at any one time.

City Attorney Matthew McConnell advised that the discussion remain focused on general policy rather than specific events and stated that future manual revisions must be legally defensible and consistently applied. He also indicated he would review whether residency requirements for event applicants would be legally permissible.

Council Members suggested generally maintaining Cambier Park as a passive park, with routine events limited to approximately 1,000 attendees to minimize impacts on normal park use, while allowing a limited number of larger events to exceed that threshold, subject to further policy development and additional input from the Business Improvement District (BID) and nearby residents regarding the impacts of special events.

Public Comments: Meg Stepanian, Executive Director of the BID, stated that many events held at Cambier Park contribute significantly to the cultural character of the Naples community. She expressed support for installing permanent security infrastructure, such as bollards, to improve safety and potentially reduce rising event security costs. She noted that BID security costs have increased substantially, citing the 5th Avenue Christmas event, which rose from approximately \$10,000 in 2022 to about \$70,000 that year, and suggested that long-term infrastructure investments could improve efficiency and cost management. Robert Martin expressed support for the City's decision to implement bollards and reduce long-term security costs for events. He raised concerns regarding the interim financial burden on Celebration Church, noting weekly security costs ranging from approximately \$2,500 to \$7,000, and requested clarification on implementation timing and responsibility for those costs. He also highlighted the church's community contributions and stated that continued high security expenses could limit its ability to provide charitable services. Pastor James Henderson, representing Celebration Church, requested clarification regarding event attendance thresholds, street closure requirements, and how attendance will be measured for event permitting. He explained that the church hosts events of varying sizes throughout the year and noted that attendance drops significantly after the seasonal months, typically ranging from 250 to 400 attendees after April. He emphasized the importance of clear guidelines to allow organizations to plan for potential security costs and expressed appreciation for the cooperation and support provided by the Naples Police Department during recent events.

Recess: 3:27 p.m. to 3:42 p.m. It is noted for the record that the same Council Members were present when the meeting reconvened.

Director Merritt provided an overview of Baker Park event capacity, estimating that events of approximately 2,500 to 3,500 attendees can be accommodated depending on configuration. He noted that the park's larger layout allows events to occur while still maintaining general public use. He identified parking as the primary constraint but noted that weekend availability of City parking facilities improves capacity and event viability. He added that recent shifts of events from Cambier Park to Baker Park were largely driven by security requirements and may rebalance following recent Council direction on security improvements.

Director Merritt then outlined proposed revisions to the Special Events Manual. He recommended replacing the current uniform 120-day deadline with a tiered system based on event type and complexity so that smaller or less complex events can be processed more efficiently while

maintaining appropriate review for large public events. He also outlined additional policy changes under consideration, including not advancing incomplete or noncompliant applications, imposing stronger penalties for permit violations, prohibiting new applications from organizers with outstanding balances, strengthening cleanup requirements, and reserving the ability to revisit approvals if the City cannot adequately staff an event.

Council Members generally agreed that the revised manual should include venue-specific capacity guidance and more clearly defined standards for frequency, thresholds, and enforcement. Mayor Heitmann noted that additional clarification would still be needed regarding City-sponsored events and the number and capacity of major events on 5th Avenue South.

City Manager Young concluded that staff had received sufficient directions and would return with proposed revisions to the Special Events Manual and related event policies. He also noted that approximately 97 events occur during the peak season from January through May, compared with approximately 63 events during the remaining seven months of the year.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Presentation - Special Event Discussion](#)

14.E) Executive Session regarding Arolas, Rodolfo v. City of Naples, Office of the Judges of Compensation Claims, OJCC Case Numbers 24-006353JAW and 24-006350JAW (Time Certain 12:30PM)

City Attorney Matthew McConnell read the public notice of a request for an Executive Session closed to the public for the purpose of seeking advice concerning settlement negotiations or strategy related to litigation expenditures associated with litigation styled Arolas, Rodolfo V. City of Naples, Office of the Judges of Compensation Claims, OJCC Case Numbers 24-006353JAW AND 24-006350JAW. The City Council agreed to meet in an Executive Session during its City Council Meeting on March 4, 2026, as requested by the City Attorney at approximately 12:30 p.m. in the Conference Room on the Second Floor of City Hall. A public notice of the Executive Session was posted on February 19, 2026, by the City Clerk. The Executive Session is expected to last approximately one hour. Discussion during the Executive Session is limited to settlement negotiations or strategy related to litigation expenditures. The Executive Session is recorded by a certified court reporter, who records the times of commencement and termination of the session, all discussion and proceedings, the names of all persons present at any time, and the names of all persons speaking. No portion of the Executive Session is off the record. The court reporter's notes are fully transcribed and filed with the City Clerk within a reasonable time after the meeting. The following individuals will be present during the Executive Session: Mayor Heitmann, Council Members Kramer, Penniman, Barton, Krol, Schultz, City Manager Gary Young, City Attorney Matthew McConnell, Attorney Michael F. Tew, and Charissa Dines from Dines Court Reporting.

[Agenda Memorandum](#)

[Public Notice](#)

14.F ADDED ITEM - Legislative Update

Council Members discussed legislative updates related to House Bill 4005 (HB 4005) (amendments to Naples Airport Authority) and Senate Bill 180 (SB 180) (restrictions on land use regulations), including ongoing litigation associated with SB 180 and the advancement of HB 4005 through the House with significant support. City Attorney Matthew McConnell advised that SB 180 remains in active litigation and that further discussion is limited at this time, while noting HB 4005 is expected to proceed to the Senate Rules Committee, where local bills are typically considered collectively unless separately addressed. City Manager Gary Young confirmed coordination with the City's lobbyist and ongoing monitoring of legislative developments, including broader concerns related to property taxes, business tax receipts, and utility regulation.

Council Members expressed concern regarding HB 4005, specifically the potential loss of local control over City assets, particularly the airport, and discussed prior City Council direction to oppose the legislation without proposing amendments. Council Members considered whether maintaining an "all or nothing" position remained appropriate given the bill's momentum, and discussed alternative strategies including enhanced communication with legislators, public

engagement, and identifying a potential “off-ramp” such as requesting a delay to allow time for further evaluation under the newly constituted City Council.

Council Members also discussed the role of the City’s lobbyist, prior outreach efforts, and the level of public engagement on the issue. Council Members emphasized the importance of maintaining a unified City Council position while improving communication tone, reducing adversarial messaging, and expressing a willingness to collaborate with state officials and stakeholders, including the Federal Aviation Administration, on operational and policy improvements.

Consensus was reached directing staff to prepare and transmit a letter to the City’s legislative delegation and the appropriate State Government leadership reiterating the City’s opposition to House Bill 4005, outlining the City’s concerns, requesting that further action be delayed, and expressing the City Council’s interest in continued collaboration on the issue.

City Manager Gary Young indicated that the draft letter would be circulated to Council Members for review before it is sent.

ORDINANCES

15) FIRST READING ORDINANCES - None.

16) SECOND READING ORDINANCES - None.

17) PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

18) COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCIL, AND STAFF

Council Member Schultz informed Council Members that he would be attending a March 12th meeting with Pelican Bay residents regarding a proposed water park adjacent to their neighborhood. He requested a sense of Council support to express opposition to the project during the meeting. Council Members discussed the project and generally indicated no objection to Council Member Schultz conveying his opposition when speaking at the meeting. Discussion also noted that the project would be reviewed through Collier County’s planning process and that residents and homeowner associations within Pelican Bay are organizing opposition. Council Members further discussed the possibility of communicating the City’s position to Collier County Commissioners if the proposal advances.

Council Member Schultz raised concerns about certain special events, including Cars on 5th, and questioned whether City resources should continue supporting events with limited direct benefit to residents. He also requested further discussion with Police Chief Ciro Dominguez regarding the City’s broader security capabilities.

Council Member Penniman emphasized the importance of maintaining respectful discourse among Council Members.

Council Member Kramer requested a legal review of the City’s authority over anchored vessels in residential waterways following complaints from Port Royal residents. The following consensus was then proffered.

Consensus was reached to direct the City Attorney to review applicable maritime laws and recent regulatory changes related to vessel anchoring, and to identify any legal or enforcement options available to address impacts on nearby residents, including duration limits, public safety, and privacy concerns.

Council Member Kramer also shared Tourist Development Council data indicating visitor counts were down approximately five percent while spending and length of stay had increased.

Council Member Krol expressed support for the recently approved bollards and roundabout, provided an update from the Airport Noise Compatibility Committee regarding additional monitoring, and raised concerns about the City’s use of piggyback procurement. City Manager Gary Young responded that procurement policies, including piggybacking, will be returned to the

City Council for future review. City Attorney Matthew McConnell reported that the airport noise monitor agreement is still being finalized and advised Council Members to consult his office in advance regarding potential voting conflicts on quasi-judicial matters.

City Attorney McConnell provided clarification regarding voting requirements for quasi-judicial land use items. He explained that when voting to deny an application, Council Members must clearly state the specific criteria not met, consistent with Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, to provide a legal basis for the decision and ensure the applicant understands the reason for denial. He noted that while staff may determine that all standards have been met, Council Members may disagree based on evidence or testimony presented during the hearing; however, any denial must be supported by identified criteria. He added that motions to approve are generally presumed to have met the criteria based on the record, but staff will continue to prompt clarification as needed under updated procedures.

City Manager Young requested a City Council consensus to allow him to administratively approve of a Village School of Naples airport event that missed the standard application deadline. The following consensus was then proffered.

Consensus was reached to authorize the City Manager to administratively approve the Village School of Naples airport event despite the missed application deadline.

Mayor Heitmann announced the City's renewed participation in the Laws of Life program. In addition, she encouraged direct resident communication through City channels. Regarding the administrative approval process, she noted that if Council Members are dissatisfied with administratively approved items, the appropriate remedy is to amend the City's Codes; otherwise, existing Codes will continue to govern the process. She emphasized the need for greater transparency and directed staff to identify and compile administrative approvals issued over the past five years to better understand actions not reviewed by Council. She also cited examples of approvals that did not come before the City Council and stressed the importance of clearly understanding approval authority and processes.

19) ADJOURNMENT

5:27 p.m.

Teresa Lee Heitmann, Mayor

Patricia L. Rambosk, City Clerk

Meeting clerked by:

Jessica R. Rosenberg, Deputy City Clerk

Minutes prepared by:
David Horton, Executive Assistant

Minutes Approved: 4/1/2026.