

**TOWN COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 3, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Pugh at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Town Clerk Avery led the roll call, which was answered by the following:

Mayor Pugh	Present
Vice Mayor Coz	Present
Commissioner Aijala	Present
Commissioner Cassidy	Present
Commissioner Hutchins	Present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pugh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT - (3-minute individual limit)

Mayor Pugh opened the floor for public comment. Hearing none, he closed the floor for public comment.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

- 1. What's Happening Now - *Momentum in 2026***
Strategic Priorities in Action

Focus: Progress Update on Capital and Strategic Priorities

- Cleanwater – Watermain Replacement Program
- Stormwater – Drainage and Pollutant Reduction
- Townwide Infrastructure Readiness

Town Manager Michelle Heiser provided an update on ongoing Town projects. She reported that the Harbor Drive North drainage project has received its Army Corps permit, while the SFWMD permit remains under review, with comments to be addressed by early December. One easement has been secured and another is pending, with a resolution expected at the December meeting. The Hudson Avenue seawall project remains on hold pending a potential grant award, and the Town will wait until February for a final decision, with funds budgeted if needed. Phase 2 and Phase 4 of the pipe modernization program are each approximately 30 percent designed, remain on schedule and within budget, and Phase 2 construction is expected to begin in late spring or early summer. The Town Hall and Police Department hardening project is in the bidding phase, supported by a \$250,000 grant, though roof bids have come in higher than anticipated. The generator replacement for Tropical is underway, with a January delivery expected. She also mentioned that several homeowners have installed effective tidal walls, and the Town is considering a similar installation along the existing easement due to continued deterioration of the berm.

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The Commission discussed the continued flooding issues on Hudson Avenue, including multiple potential sources of inflow. Commissioner Aijala referenced a 36-inch pipe, and there was further discussion regarding whether water was entering from the Intracoastal or from the north through the mangroves.

Town Manager Heiser also noted future items for consideration, including road-repaving priorities and potential property acquisitions to support long-term resiliency. Vice Mayor Coz requested that the existing paving list be reviewed and updated.

2. What's Happening Next – *Blueprints and Balance Sheets*

Focus: Financing the Future Projects of Ocean Ridge
Secondary Tier Capital and Deferred Capital Improvements

- Next Level Financial Overview
- Financing Strategies for Capital Projects
- Defining Policy Direction

Commissioner Aijala presented a 10-year financial projection model designed to evaluate the Town's long-term fiscal capacity and determine whether current revenues will support future capital needs. The model incorporates current budget figures, projected interest earnings on reserves, ad valorem growth based on historical trends, homestead exemption impacts, operating expense growth assumptions, and an annual capital expenditure estimate of \$2 million. He noted that preliminary projections show increasing future surpluses but emphasized that assumptions must be regularly updated. Future versions of the model will include more detailed annual variables.

Town Manager Heiser expressed concern regarding the State CFO's audit methodology, which measures tax collection solely against population growth and would disadvantage Ocean Ridge due to stable population but rising property values. She recommended exploring the State Revolving Fund as a potential financing option for resiliency and clean-water infrastructure projects, noting that the Town Hall loan will be paid off in 2027 and that revolving-fund loans currently carry interest rates of approximately 3%. A resolution to initiate the application process will be brought forward in December. She also outlined alternative revenue options should state legislation affect ad valorem revenues, including stormwater fees, franchise fees, utility taxes, and MSTUs.

The Commission reached consensus to hold another financial planning workshop in six to eight months.

TOWN COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

There were none.

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ADJOURNMENT

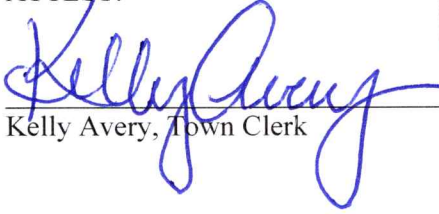
Meeting Adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Deputy Town Clerk Pinder and adopted by the Town Commission on January 12, 2026.



Geoff Pugh, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kelly Avery, Town Clerk

