

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF GALVESTON
WORKSHOP - AUGUST 28, 2025**

8/28/2025 - City Council Minutes

1 DECLARATION OF A QUORUM AND CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Brown declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2 ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Craig Brown, Mayor Pro Tem Marie Robb, Council Member Sharon Lewis, Council Member David Finklea, Council Member Bob Brown, Council Member Alex Porretto, and Council Member Beau Rawlins.

3 BOARD AND COMMISSION INTERVIEWS

3.A

1. Wharves Board - Ralph McMorris
2. Planning Commission - Nick Lankford

The City Council interviewed Ralph McMorris and Nick Lankford.

4 INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY INTERVIEWS

4.A

1. Donna Fairweather
2. Trevor Fanning

The City Council interviewed Donna Fairweather and Trevor Fanning.

5 DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5.A Clarification Of Consent And Regular City Council Agenda Items - This Is An Opportunity For City Council To Ask Questions Of Staff On Consent And Regular Agenda Items (1 Hour)**

Items 8C, 8D, 10D, 10G, 11C, 11D, 11J, 11K, 11N, 11T, 11U, 11V, 11Y, 11AA, 11DD, and 11EE were clarified by staff.

City Council took a five minute break at 11:57 a.m.

5.B Discussion of the City of Galveston's FY 2026 Proposed Budget, Tax Rate and Capital Improvement Plan, and any alternate proposals (C. Ludanyi - 30 min)

5.C Presentation and Discussion of the Updated Master Plan for the Port of Galveston (C Brown/V Pierson/R Rees - 20 min)

Port Director Rodger Rees, Wharves Board Chair Vic Pierson, and Vice Chair Jeff Patterson presented the updated Master Plan for the Port of Galveston. Mr. Rees reported on attendance at the recent open house. The most common issues raised were providing for port - city integration and waterfront access, improving traffic concerns, encouraging diversification of port business, focus on parking structures, sidewalks, and general financial issues. Discussion was held regarding Council Member Finklea's recommendation of the need for an off-port mobility plan, and looking at a global traffic study across the Island. Council Member Finklea offered his services to help develop a scope of services for a mobility plan.

5.D Discussion of the City Auditor's Plan for FY 2025 - 2026 (G Bulgherini - 15 min)

City Auditor Glenn Bulgherini discussed with Council the City Auditor's Plan for FY 2025-2026. Council reviewed 16 proposed audit items and will consider selecting 10 for the upcoming year, based on department capacity. The City Auditor recommended the inclusion of three audits (Items 1, 2, and 11). Additional audits were recommended by Council based on financial impact, efficiency, and timing, including a focused audit on Cruise Terminal 25 (combining Items 8 and 15), and reviews of procurement, fund balances, and city-maintained non-city properties. Items still in progress or of lower priority were not recommended for inclusion.

Audits for City Council consideration include:

#1 - 12 HOT Tax Audits

#2 - 10 Sales Tax Audits

#3 - Compliance Audit on the Park Board's FEMA and GLO contracts

#9 - Compliance Audit on the City's Procurement procedures

#10 - Efficiency Audit on the Internal Service Funds

#11 - Short Term Registrations - Audits of non-compliance per address

#12 - Detailed list of maintenance of city owned and non-city owned property

#13 - Audits of overtime

#15 - Audit observing structure, process, performance, and impact on operations on the procurement process for capital project contracts

#16 - Audit to fully understand the parking process

5.E Discussion of City Auditor Responsibilities (C Brown - 15 min)

- 1. Request for information outside of Audit Plan topics**
- 2. Request for Audit information prior to completion**

1. Requests for Information Outside the Audit Plan

Council discussed whether City Auditor Glenn Bulgherini should respond to questions that fall outside the approved audit plan. There was some support for allowing brief, straightforward responses (15–30 minutes of effort) as long as they do not disrupt ongoing audits. However, concerns were raised about the potential volume of such requests becoming unmanageable. Council members agreed that discretion should be used, the City Auditor’s time should be respected, and any responses should be shared with the full Council to ensure transparency.

2. Requests for Audit Information Before Completion

Council considered whether the City Auditor should provide information during the course of an active audit. It was clarified that while the Auditor may give general status updates—such as what work remains or reasons for any delays—he should not share preliminary findings. These updates should be provided to the entire Council rather than individual members to preserve neutrality and avoid misinterpretation. If the Council requires a status update, it should be formally requested through an agenda item, without seeking incomplete or draft findings.

5.F Discussion of installation times for water and sewer taps (Robb/Porretto/Rawlins - 10 min)

Council Members expressed concerns that some residents and developers were given six-week estimates for tap installations but ended up waiting 12 weeks, causing construction delays. Staff noted that the application form already states a timeline of "up to 10 weeks," but acknowledged that miscommunication frequently occurs. It was recommended that staff provide the maximum expected timeframe to set more realistic expectations and that communication be standardized across permit and customer service offices.

The discussion on water and sewer tap installation times highlighted the complexity and coordination involved, including utility locates, site preparation, and seasonal demand. Brandon Cook, Assistant City Manager, shared data showing a 40% improvement in median installation times over the past few years, dropping from 71 to about 42 days. However, some customers experience longer waits, sometimes doubling the quoted six weeks, due to communication breakdowns and unforeseen site issues. The city acknowledges the need to better communicate realistic maximum timelines—currently up to ten weeks on applications—and is open to private tap installations to speed up the process. Cost structures were also reviewed, emphasizing that rates cover actual costs without subsidizing larger developments, with plans to regularly reassess fees. Overall, improvements stem from better management, cross-training, and efficiencies, but challenges remain due to aging infrastructure and infill development complexities.

5.G Discussion of Joint Meeting Dates with Wharves Board, Park Board and Planning Commission (C Brown - 10 min)

The Council discussed plans to hold joint meetings with the Wharves Board, Park Board, and Planning Commission twice a year, likely in January and May/June or July, to align with budget cycles. The Council may consider holding all three meetings on the same day in two-hour blocks to save time.

5.H Discussion of Council Workshop Break Procedures (C. Brown - 10 min)

The Council clarified that lunch breaks will only be taken if the agenda runs long or includes an executive session; otherwise, meetings end without a long lunch. A new agenda note will state that breaks or lunch are optional based on workload.

6 EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council convened into Executive Session at 3:12 p.m. to discuss Agenda Items 6A, 6B, and 6D, and reconvened into Open Session at 4:55 p.m. No action was taken during Executive Session.

6.A Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074, "Personnel Matters" to deliberate the appointment, evaluation, reassignment, or duties of a Public Officer or Employee:

1. City Manager Brian Maxwell
2. City Attorney Donald Glywasky
3. City Auditor Glenn Bulgherini
4. City Secretary Janelle Williams

6.B Pursuant to Texas Gov't Code § 551.074.related to Personnel Matters, the Council will convene in executive session to discuss the possible appointment, employment, and/or reassignment of one the following city employees to fill the position and perform the duties of the City Attorney at the time the position becomes vacant for a period of time to be set by Council:

1. Donna Fairweather
2. Trevor Fanning

6.C Section 551. 071 - Consultation with Attorney Pursuant to Texas Gov't Code 551.071- Consultation with attorney, an executive session will be conducted to discuss and receive legal advice concerning pending litigation and/or a settlement offer, or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with this chapter, related to the following:

- 1 NO. 25-CV-0913; In the 405th Judicial District of Galveston County Texas; City of Galveston and Brian Maxwell v. Park Board of Trustees of the City of Galveston and Jason Hardcastle in his official capacity

The City Council convened into Executive Session at 1:01 p.m. to discuss Agenda Item 6C and reconvened into Open Session at 1:30 p.m. No action was taken during Executive Session.

6.D Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §551.087 and §551.071

1. to discuss or deliberate regarding commercial or financial information that the governmental body has received from a business prospect that the governmental body seeks to have locate, stay, or expand in or near the territory of the governmental body and with which the governmental body is conducting economic development negotiations; or
2. to deliberate the offer of a financial or other incentive to a business prospect described by Subdivision (1).

Related to the Project Bounty development in the City of Galveston.

7 ADJOURNMENT

The workshop was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.



Janelle Williams, City Secretary

Date Approved: September 18, 2025