

**City of South Daytona
City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 6:00pm**

City Council Chambers, 1672 South Ridgewood Avenue, South Daytona, Florida
and Facebook Live (www.facebook.com/CityOfSouthDaytona)

A. OPENING. Call to Order: Mayor William C. Hall called the City of South Daytona Regular City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call:

Present:

Mayor William C. Hall
Vice-Mayor Doug Quartier
Councilman Eric Sander
Councilwoman Lisa O'Neal

Councilman Brandon Young
City Manager James L. Gillis, Jr.
City Attorney Wade Vose

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor William C. Hall followed by the **Invocation** led by Councilman Brandon Young.

Item 5: City Manager Report:

City Manager Gillis provided an update on stormwater improvements completed since the previous Council Meeting.

The City was prepared for the tropical system that went through this area last Tuesday. All ponds were lowered in advance of the heavy rains, and City crews kept the pumps running throughout the event. It was a good test and warm-up for the upcoming months of hurricane season.

Public Works crews replaced a stormwater main on Biscayne Avenue, which was over 50 years old and made of corrugated metal. As you can imagine, corrugated metal does not do well in a saltwater environment. The pipe was riddled with holes and on the verge of collapse. The replacement of this pipe segment will help with drainage in the area.

We are systematically cleaning all inlets throughout the City. Recently, we cleaned an inlet on Bishop Court, which was located in the backyard of a residence. If you have an inlet in your backyard and you see that it needs cleaning, please contact our Public Works Department at 322-3080 to make arrangements for us to enter your backyard to clean it.

The City was successful in securing a legislative appropriation in the amount of \$1.75 million to construct a stormwater pond in the Brian Avenue and Green Street area. Creating storage for stormwater is a critical step in keeping water out of homes, which is why you are seeing us excavating new and existing ponds throughout the City. Many thanks to our State Representatives Chase Tramont and Bill Partington, Senators Tom Wright and Tom Leek, and Governor Ron DeSantis for approving our budget request. It is important to note that we were one of the few cities in Volusia County to get funding and survive the veto process. Grant funds will not be available until later this year for this project but, once received, we will begin design and permitting immediately. Construction can begin once all permits from the State are secured.

The Public Works Department cleared out the roadside ditches along New York Avenue and Magnolia Avenue to help the Country Club Gardens subdivision drain better.

City crews cleaned out the wet well and associated stormwater pipes on Pike Court which will ensure drainage of the Pike Court / Bishop Court cul-de-sacs.

City staff met with the design engineers who are moving towards the completion of our stormwater model. The model has successfully recreated the flooding experienced by our residents during Hurricanes Ian and Milton. Deficiencies are now being identified, and solutions are being developed to ensure our drainage system performs better in future storms. The combination of large amounts of rain over our lower lying areas are proving a challenge but we are fully committed to improving our system.

Our stormwater crew went through the Big Tree Shores subdivision and cleared the inlets and mains to ensure proper drainage there.

The newly installed stormwater pump inside the giant lake located in Reed Canal Park is fully operational and is better suited to control the lake level there than the portable pump we have been using for years.

The vast pond expansion at our Reed Canal Stormwater Control Facility is nearing completion. This pond expansion will provide a huge amount of additional stormwater storage during a severe weather event and greatly enhance the stormwater capabilities of the entire central portion of our City. Soon, the contractor will mobilize on Windle Lane to greatly expand the stormwater pond there and bring drainage relief to the Coventry Forest subdivision.

City staff met with Volusia County to further discuss drainage improvements planned for the Lantern Park subdivision. The County is investigating a site that would be ideal for the construction of a large-scale stormwater pond which would hold water during a storm and keep it out of the homes within the subdivision. The County has conducted a survey of the site and completed the soil borings necessary to begin the design.

Discussions were held with County staff to move towards the start of the Sherwood Forest Stormwater Pond and the Stevens Canal Improvement projects. City staff will begin making contact with homeowners located in the lowest lying area on Sherwood Drive which is near the existing pump station about the County acquiring their homes for the pond's construction.

Today, we met with the engineers to discuss the Aspen Stormwater Pond Expansion project. The preliminary design includes the addition of a second pump station to enhance pumping capacity and provide system redundancy.

Mr. Gillis shared that Scooters Coffee is now open at the corner of Big Tree and US 1. The City's goal for US 1 is to add some national restaurant brands to the corridor so our residents have access to menu choices which are currently only available on International Speedway Boulevard or Dunlawton Avenue. Please visit Scooters Coffee and let them know we're happy they decided to make South Daytona their new home.

He announced that National Night Out Against Crime is Tuesday August 5th and the event will feature a parade of first responders along with our partner organizations that will begin at 7:00 pm behind the Sunshine Park Mall to support our Police Department in their fight against crime.

A Budget Workshop will be held on August 12th at 5:00 pm in the City Council Chambers at City Hall followed by our regular City Council meeting at 6:00 pm.

Fall baseball registration is now open, City Manager Gillis announced. Tryouts will be on Saturday August 23rd with the season set to begin on September 14th. You can register online, over the phone at 322-3070 or in person at the Piggotte Community Center. Don't wait, the season usually fills up quickly.

Item 6: City Attorney Report:

City Attorney Wade Vose provided a heads-up regarding a forthcoming amendment to the City's Land Development Regulations. This amendment is necessary to comply with Senate Bill 784, enacted during the recent legislative session. The new law mandates that subdivision plats be approved administratively rather than through the public hearing approval process.

The City Attorney noted that their office is coordinating similar updates across all the municipalities they represent, working diligently to preserve as much local authority as possible, particularly over design controls while remaining compliant with state law.

While the impact in South Daytona is expected to be limited, since subdivision platting is not a typical development method in the city, the amendment will be brought forward in the coming months. The goal is to ensure compliance while maintaining the City's design and planning standards to the greatest extent possible.

B. PRESENTATION: Swearing in Ceremony for Police Chief Joseph P. LaSata by City Manager Gillis.

Police Chief LaSata expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as South Daytona's Chief of Police. He thanked the City Council for their support and acknowledged the foundational work of his predecessors, stating his personal goal is to leave the department better than he found it.

He extended specific thanks to Mayor Hall and Vice Mayor Quartier for taking time to meet with him and provide valuable historical context. He noted that he looks forward to building strong relationships with Councilmembers Young, O'Neil, and Sander, and learning about their priorities to help move the city forward.

Chief LaSata recognized City Manager Gillis, emphasizing the weight of the hiring decision and pledging to uphold, protect, and enhance the image of the South Daytona Police Department. He reaffirmed his commitment to the officers and civilian staff, emphasizing his role in supporting their safety and professionalism.

To the community, Chief LaSata promised to prioritize public safety in every decision, and to lead with professionalism, accountability, accessibility, transparency, and responsiveness. He emphasized a hands-on, personal approach, stating that he believes in face-to-face communication over emails or phone calls, and encouraged residents to reach out to him directly, especially on Fridays, when he plans to visit neighborhoods in person.

He closed by stating, "This is a great city. It's our city. We will work together to make it better, safer, vibrant, and welcoming."

C. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Mayor Hall said that this is an opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on any topic, whether it pertains to community concerns, personal perspectives, or general topics like the weather. When invited to approach the podium, please clearly state your name and address for the official record.

He asked that while speaking, direct your comments to the City Council as a whole and not towards any of the audience members or cameras. As the established standard, each person will be given approximately three minutes to speak. Although there is no formal clock, be concise enough without repetition to ensure everyone has had an opportunity to participate. Please note that the City Council will not respond to any viewpoint or question during this time as it is your opportunity to be heard.

CJ Allen, 2929 Gaslight Drive, welcomed the new Chief of Police and expressed concern over the recent loss of local control due to state legislation, while thanking city leadership for efforts to preserve local authority. Now retired, she shared her appreciation for the city's visible improvements, including tree trimming, gutter cleaning, cement repairs, and pump maintenance. She noted two homes in her neighborhood had recently sold, offering a sign of hope. She also expressed optimism despite ongoing concerns about infrastructure along Reed Canal and the impacts of weather, and thanked staff for their continued work to address longstanding issues.

Red Sullivan, 523 Ridge Blvd, expressed safety concerns about electric bikes (e-bikes) use in his neighborhood, particularly with juveniles operating them at high speeds without regard for traffic laws. He described a recent near-accident in which a rider, texting while traveling at an estimated 25 mph, nearly collided with his wife's vehicle at a stop sign. Mr. Sullivan noted that the quiet nature of e-bikes makes them difficult to detect, especially while performing yard work, and he raised a key question about liability in the event of a collision. He also reported frequent incidents of riders ignoring signage and riding against the flow of traffic, leading to dangerous encounters with vehicles. He urged the city to clarify legal responsibility and address enforcement to prevent a likely future accident.

Susan Allen, 35 Cherrywood Court, welcomed the new Police Chief and commended the City for recent sidewalk improvements, enhanced code enforcement, and increased patrols in Big Tree Shores, noting significant improvements in neighborhood conditions. She praised the successful cleanup of a property previously used for junk collection, calling it a major step forward. However, she expressed concern regarding the property at 17 Cherrywood Court, which she reported has accumulated over \$400,000 in fines despite being valued at around \$150,000. Ms. Allen raised questions about the legal options available to address this situation and its impact on surrounding homes. She closed by thanking the City for its ongoing service and dedication.

D. CONSENT AGENDA (Items 7-10):

Mayor Hall introduced the Consent Agenda and said the matters included under the consent agenda are self-explanatory and not expected to require discussion for approval. Items will be enacted by

one motion. If discussion is desired by any member of the City Council, that item must be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately.

Item 7: Approval of minutes: June 10, 2025, City Council Meeting.

Item 8: Resolution No. 2025-17. A Resolution of the City of South Daytona, Florida, approving a FY 2025-2026 Funding Agreement with the Volusia-Flagler Transportation Planning Organization and authorizing the City Manager to execute said agreement; providing for repeal of Resolutions in conflict herewith; providing for severability; providing an effective date. **First and only reading.**

Item 9: Consideration of approving an Interlocal Agreement for Shared Use of Emergency Response Reserve Apparatus.

Item 10: Resolution No. 2025-18. A Resolution of the City of South Daytona, Florida, authorizing the City Manager to enter into agreements with Volusia County for the acceptance of properties acquired through the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funded Single Family Homeowner Repair and Replacement Program and Homeowner Recovery Program Buyout Pathway; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date. **First and only reading.**

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented by Councilman Eric Sander. Second by Councilwoman Lisa O’Neal. Motion carried unanimously.

D. REGULAR AGENDA:

Item 11: Resolution No. 2025-19. A Resolution of the City of South Daytona, Florida, establishing a proposed millage rate for the 2025-2026 fiscal year; determining the rolled-back rate; establishing a date, time, and place at which a public hearing will be held to consider the proposed millage rate and the tentative budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year; providing an effective date. Public Hearing. **First and only reading.**

City Attorney Vose read the title of Resolution No. 2025-19.

City Manager Gillis explained that the Council is setting the preliminary millage rate at 7.75 mills, the same rate the City has maintained for a number of years. Although the rate remains unchanged, a 4.81% increase in property values means this will result in a tax increase. Key highlights of the proposed budget include reallocating 0.4 mills, previously used for debt relief, to street resurfacing, with \$291,519 budgeted for this purpose. Personnel changes include raising the minimum wage to \$17/hour and providing employee raises of 3.5% or \$ 1 per hour, whichever is greater, alongside contractual increases for police and firefighters. Operating highlights include continued police vehicle replacements, fire station renovations, new extrication tools, and an annual \$50,000 contribution toward the next fire truck replacement. Additionally, the City is budgeting for a grapple/brush truck for Public Works to improve disaster recovery and cleanup operations. Final adoption steps for the budget include a budget workshop on August 12, followed by budget hearings on September 8th and September 23rd. He concluded with a staff recommendation to approve Resolution No. 2025-10 establishing the proposed 7.75 millage rate.

Mayor Hall opened the Public Hearing.

Ryan Knight, 2517 Pope Avenue, inquired about where to access additional budget information, and Mayor Hall responded that it is available on the City's website.

Mayor Hall closed the Public Hearing.

Councilman Brandon Young commended staff for conducting a thorough budget review and maintaining a clear and transparent hearing process.

Mayor Hall reflected on the City's financial progress, noting the improvement compared to a decade ago.

Motion by Councilman Eric Sander. Second by Vice-Mayor Doug Quartier. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 12: Ordinance No. 2025-11. An Ordinance of the City of South Daytona, Florida, amending the City of South Daytona Land Development Regulations, Section 3.8 (Zoning Permits), Section 3.13 (Non-Conforming Provisions), Section 5.7 (Special Exceptions), Section 5.8 (Special Uses), and the City of South Daytona Code of Ordinances Section 5-218 (Retrofit of Existing Properties) to modify the timeframe for abandonment and initiation to ninety (90) days; and providing for conflicts, severability, applicability, and an effective date. Recommended by the Planning Advisory Board on June 4, 2025. First reading was held on June 10, 2025. **Second and final reading. Public Hearing.**

City Attorney Vose read the title of Ordinance No. 2025-11.

City Manager James L. Gillis, Jr. presented a proposed Code amendment aimed at reducing vacancy periods for nonconforming commercial properties. Under the current code, if a Business Tax Receipt (BTR) is no longer in use, the City waits 180 days (six months) of non-use before the property's prior use designation is lost. This often results in extended vacancies, as realtors attempt to secure a similar tenant within that timeframe.

The proposed change would reduce the vacancy threshold to 90 days, allowing properties to be repurposed and reoccupied more quickly. The goal is to help fill vacant buildings sooner and support business activity throughout the city.

Mr. Gillis said that the Planning Advisory Board recommended approval on June 4, 2025, and concluded with a staff recommendation to approve. This item was presented for first reading as a public hearing.

Mayor Hall opened the Public Hearing. No comments were received. Mayor Hall closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Vice-Mayor Doug Quartier. Second by Councilman Eric Sander. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 13: Ordinance No. 2025-12. An Ordinance of the City of South Daytona, Florida, amending the City of South Daytona Code of Ordinances, Chapter 5 - Buildings, Housing and Structural Regulations, Article XI. - Maintenance of Commercial Properties, Section 5-215 (Unsafe Structures), Section 5-216 (Conditions Constituting a Public Nuisance), and Section 5-217 (Minimum Standards), to revise the title of the article, apply specified standards to all properties within the city, and prohibit vehicles with visible debris or other specified materials in public or private property; and

providing for conflicts, severability, applicability, and an effective date. First reading was held on June 10, 2025. **Second and final reading. Public Hearing.**

City Attorney Vose read the title of Ordinance No. 2025-12.

City Manager James L. Gillis, Jr. presented Ordinance No. 2025-12, a proposed Code of Ordinances amendment to assist with code enforcement efforts related to recurring property violations. He explained that the City is dealing specifically with three properties where individuals routinely collect scrap metal and appliances, transport them in trailers or trucks, and then unload and spread the items in their yards, generating ongoing complaints from neighbors.

Despite repeated enforcement actions, he explained, the cycle continues, with items temporarily removed and then reappearing. The proposed ordinance would make it a code violation to store excessive materials and items in open trailers or trucks, allowing enforcement before the materials are unloaded onto the property.

Mr. Gillis clarified that the proposed Ordinance targets repeat offenders, not residents transporting individual items (i.e., appliances from a store). The Ordinance would serve as a new tool to support our Code Compliance officers.

City Manager Gillis concluded with a staff recommendation, noting that this item was presented for first reading and would be followed by a public hearing.

Mayor Hall opened the Public Hearing.

No comments were received.

Mayor Hall closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Vice-Mayor Doug Quartier. Second by Councilwoman Lisa O'Neal. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 14: Ordinance No. 2025-13. An ordinance of the City of South Daytona, Florida, making a small-scale amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the City's Comprehensive Plan by changing the land use designation of 2309 South Ridgewood Avenue, parcel 5344-13-00-0460, from Residential Density 3 to Commercial; and providing for conflicts, severability, applicability, and an effective date. Recommended by the Planning Advisory Board on July 9, 2025. **First reading. Public Hearing.**

City Attorney Vose read the title of Ordinance No. 2025-13.

City Manager Gillis introduced the agenda item by explaining that it is closely related to the following item. The property at 2309 South Ridgewood Avenue, formerly home to the Songkran Thai Restaurant, is currently the subject of a rezoning request initiated by the property owner. As part of this process, the City must first amend its Future Land Use Map (FLUM) before considering any zoning changes. The parcel in question currently has a split land use designation: the front portion along South Ridgewood Avenue is designated Commercial, while the rear portion along Palmetto Avenue is designated High-Density Residential (Residential Density 3). City staff is proposing to consolidate these designations by reclassifying the entire parcel as Commercial, thereby creating a consistent land use designation for the property and avoiding future planning complications. The

Planning and Advisory Board recommended approval of this change on July 9, and staff also recommends approval of Ordinance No. 2025-13.

Mayor Hall opened the Public Hearing.

No comments were received.

Mayor Hall closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilman Eric Sander. Second by Councilwoman Lisa O'Neal. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 15: Ordinance No. 2025-14. An Ordinance of the City of South Daytona, Florida, amending the official zoning map by changing the zoning of 2323 South Ridgewood Avenue, parcel 5344-12-00-0400 from Business General Commercial (BGC) to Planned Commercial Development (PCD) and 2309 South Ridgewood Avenue, parcel 5344-13-00-0460 from Business General Commercial (BGC) and Multiple-family Residential (R3) to Planned Commercial Development (PCD); and providing for conflicts, severability, applicability, and an effective date. Recommended by the Planning Advisory Board on July 9, 2025. **First reading. Public Hearing.**

City Attorney Vose read the title of Ordinance No. 2025-14.

Before introducing the next item, City Manager Gillis addressed the public, noting that the efficient pace of the meeting may give the impression that these items are being rushed. He clarified that this is not the case; rather, council members meet with him individually in advance of the meeting to review each agenda item in detail. As a result, the discussion flows more smoothly during the public session.

Mr. Gillis then introduced Ordinance No. 2025-14, the item related to the previous agenda item, which involves both the 2309 South Ridgewood Avenue parcel discussed previously and the adjacent property to the south at 2323 South Ridgewood Avenue, formerly a Texaco gas station located at the corner of Ridgewood Avenue and US-1. The current property owner has requested a rezoning of both parcels from Business General Commercial (BGC) and Multi-Family Residential (R3) to a consolidated Planned Commercial Development (PCD) designation. City Manager Gillis emphasized that this zoning designation allows for more detailed oversight by the City Council over the site's future development, thereby ensuring a higher quality of development in one of South Daytona's most important commercial corridors (US-1). He also noted that this aligns with the City's broader investment in infrastructure improvements along the corridor, including undergrounding utility lines and implementing a comprehensive streetscape plan. The Planning and Advisory Board recommended approval of this item on July 9, and staff recommends approval of Ordinance No. 2025-14.

Mayor Hall opened the Public Hearing.

No comments were received.

Mayor Hall closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilman Eric Sander. Second by Vice-Mayor Doug Quartier. Motion carried unanimously.

F. COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Brandon Young welcomed the new Police Chief and thanked City staff for their continued dedication, especially as the City enters budget season. He emphasized the importance of achieving balance in the budget, between infrastructure investment and avoiding undue burden on taxpayers, now that the City is free of long-term debt. He also expressed appreciation for staff efforts in preparing for storm season and maintaining city operations in the heat.

Vice Mayor Doug Quartier welcomed the Chief and recognized the collaborative spirit among city departments. He highlighted ongoing work by the Stormwater Division and encouraged residents to report issues. He also noted responsiveness from staff to recent service requests and expressed appreciation for the ordinance enforcement which was a long time coming. He noted soccer season was ending and said he looks forward to upcoming end-of-summer activities.

Councilwoman Lisa O'Neal echoed the previous sentiments and welcomed Police Chief LaSata.

Councilman Eric Sander thanked the City Manager and extended a warm welcome to the new Chief. He expressed his enthusiasm about working together and getting to know the Chief better in the months ahead. As a lifelong resident who was born and raised in South Daytona, Councilman Sander noted that he looks forward to showing the Chief a different perspective of the city, one shaped by his unique background and the particular neighborhood he calls home. He also took a moment to recognize Mr. Thornton for his leadership and the dedication of his crews, acknowledging the challenging work they're accomplishing, especially under intense summer heat. Councilman Sander commended their visible progress and noted how well everything is coming together across the city. Looking ahead, he expressed interest in the upcoming budget season and a desire to continue the city's positive momentum. He concluded by thanking everyone who attended the meeting and those who came out to support and welcome the new Chief.

Mayor Hall noted that, for the first time in decades, he received no calls or emails regarding fireworks on July 4. He was in Georgia at the time and had his phone on but received no reports. He also shared a conversation with Red Sullivan about an e-bike that passed him at 33 mph and expressed curiosity about what, if anything, can be done to address such concerns.

Mayor Hall remarked on the City's financial progress, noting that while the budget had once been burdened with \$21 million in debt, that is no longer the case. He welcomed Chief LaSata, stating that he has joined the City at a pivotal and promising time. Mayor Hall also extended gratitude to the Chief's wife for sharing him with the community. Drawing from personal experience, he shared that he took the same oath 20 years ago and understands the responsibility it carries. He

commended Chief LaSata for navigating his first few weeks effectively despite early challenges and expressed confidence in his leadership.

The Mayor encouraged the Chief to make his mark on the department, saying he should "place his fingerprints all over the building," a sentiment echoed by both himself and Vice Mayor Quartier, who have prior experience in the department. He said he looks forward to upcoming community events, particularly the Night Out Against Crime parade, and expressed enthusiasm about riding through the city in his Jeep alongside the CERT team.

Mayor Hall also addressed CJ Allen and the scale of ongoing operations, noting that efforts have grown significantly and that this summer will be a particularly hot one. He closed his remarks with a moment of reflection, acknowledging the recent tragedies in Texas and North Carolina. "We didn't lose anyone. It's horrible. Pray every day," he said, urging the community to keep those affected in their thoughts.

F. ADJOURNMENT: Mayor William C. Hall adjourned the City of South Daytona Regular Meeting of the City Council at 6:54 pm.

Deputy City Clerk, Becky Witte

Mayor William C. Hall