



# City of Rockaway Beach

## Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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**Date:** Thursday, November 21, 2024  
**Location:** Rockaway Beach City Hall, 276 HWY 101 - Civic Facility

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Planning Commission President Hassell called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 3. ROLL CALL

**President:** Bill Hassell

**Commissioners:** Sandra Johnson, Nancy Lanyon, Pat Olson, Zandra Umholtz, Stephanie Winchester, and Georgeanne Zedrick

**Council Members:** Charles McNeilly, Mayor; and Mary McGinnis, Planning Commission Liaison

**Staff Present:** Luke Shepard, City Manager; Dan Emerson, Public Works Superintendent; and Melissa Thompson, City Recorder

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Start time: [05:01:38 PM \(00:01:27\)](#)

#### a. October 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Umholtz made a **motion**, seconded by Johnson, to approve the October 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 6 (Johnson, Lanyon, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 (Zedrick)

### 5. PRESENTATIONS, GUESTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS – None Scheduled

### 6. STAFF REPORTS

Start time: [05:03:07 PM \(00:02:56\)](#)

City Manager Shepard relayed the following updates from City Planner Johnson:

- Johnson notified the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the City's selection to adopt the model ordinance as the pre-implementation compliance measure (PICM) to comply with the FEMA Biological Opinion. Notice will be sent to affected property owners by February, and the Planning Commission will begin reviewing the proposed ordinance in March. Adoption and implementation are required by June 2025.
- Consultants Cascadia Partners are planning a community town hall in January to share ideas for the housing code updates required by Senate Bill 406. They will have something for the Commission to review in February.
- The Commission will have two land use applications to consider in December.

## 7. PUBLIC HEARING – None Scheduled

## 8. CITIZEN INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Victor Troxel advocated for making an exception for ADA-compliant Short-Term Rental (STR) properties on the STR-license waiting list.

Leslie Vipond requested an immediate exemption for ADA-compliant STRs from the cap on licenses to improve accessibility for visitors, particularly those with mobility challenges, who are looking to enjoy local amenities. Vipond submitted written testimony from a homeowner with an ADA-accessible property who is currently on the STR license waiting list.

## 9. OLD BUSINESS – None Scheduled

## 10. NEW BUSINESS

Start time: [05:13:24 PM \(00:13:13\)](#)

### a. Discussion Regarding City Reader Board Sign Operation – Dan Emerson, Public Works Superintendent

Emerson provided details on a new electronic message center (EMC) sign planned for installation at City Hall. Emerson presented a design layout along with recommendations for nighttime operation of the EMC. Emerson explained the sign is equipped with a sensor that automatically detects ambient light levels, allowing it to adjust brightness to remain compliant with local illumination standards, and that a light meter would be used to measure and verify those illumination levels. Emerson noted that the sign is capable of receiving Amber Alerts and other critical notifications through the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS).

The Commission reviewed the design drawings and product specifications for the sign, as well as *Night-time Brightness Level Recommendations for On-Premise Electronic Message Centers*, produced by the International Sign Association. Emerson answered clarifying questions,

confirming that the sign will be wired to the generator, and the City Council could request that the brightness be adjusted. McNeilly noted that the desire for the sign came from the community, and one important use of messaging would be notice of the warming center openings during emergencies. Shepard asked the Commission to advise staff if the sign was too bright. Emerson explained that the sign could be installed after City Council approval of proposed amendments to the City's sign regulations.

## **11. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS & CONCERNS**

Start time: [05:27:32 PM \(00:27:20\)](#)

Shepard noted that Zedrick had submitted her resignation from the Planning Commission. Shepard thanked Zedrick for her service on behalf of the City. Zedrick thanked staff, the City Council and Commissioners. Zedrick explained that she had enjoyed the experience but wouldn't be able to dedicate the time required.

Lanyon thanked Zedrick for her service. Lanyon thanked Public Works for their work during bad weather. Lanyon advocated for purchasing a commercial property available for sale to be used for community events. She encouraged taking actions to encourage ADA accessibility. Lanyon advocated for contacting Senators to request repairs on Highway 6.

Olson shared that he attended the City Council meeting, commented on all of the activities in Rockaway Beach, and thanked the Mayor, Council and all involved.

Johnson thanked the City for their work on improvements at the Wayside. Johnson thanked Public Works for their work preparing for the tree lighting, and thanked the Mayor for volunteering to help. Johnson reported on the Sourcewater Protection Plan Advisory Committee meeting, noting that the City is working hard to get grants to protect the Watershed and it is a big step forward for Rockaway Beach. Johnson thanked Umholtz for her big part in the holiday celebration.

Umholtz commented that many amazing things were happening in the City and it was great to be a part of it.

Winchester thanked Zedrick for her service on the Commission. Winchester appreciated Emerson's sign presentation.

Umholtz announced that she was resigning from the Planning Commission after the December 2024 meeting. She shared that it had been a great experience.

McGinnis thanked Zedrick and Umholtz for their service on the Planning Commission. McGinnis shared that the City Council had not yet made a decision on the land use appeal, and it would be on the agenda for the December 11th meeting.

McGinnis commented that she concurred with public comments regarding the need for ADA-complaint vacation rentals. She noted that there was currently no provision for requesting a variance, and it would require further discussion and Council action. Shepard noted that the City Council had directed the Planning Commission to review the issue, and his impression was that the Council wanted the Commission to begin reviewing the issue before October. Brief discussion ensued regarding various aspects of ADA-compliance, inspection and certification.

Hassell acknowledged and thanked Zedrick for her contribution to the Planning Commission. Hassell advocated for exploring ways to encourage ADA-compliant development. Emerson shared that he was reviewing information provided by Hassell about benches for the Old Cedar Trail and advised he would wait until closer to the end of the budget cycle to ensure funds were available to acquire them.

McNeilly commented that he appreciated the work of the Planning Commission. McNeilly appreciated Zedrick's gracious concern for the time required to serve on the Planning Commission.

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

Olson made a **motion**, seconded by Zedrick, to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 7 (Johnson, Lanyon, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Zedrick, Hassell)

Nay: 0

MINUTES APPROVED THE  
19<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF DECEMBER 2024



William Hassell, President

ATTEST



Melissa Thompson, City Recorder