

February 17, 2026
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street with the following members present:

President Davis
Vice President Lizanich
Councilwoman Bega
Councilwoman Hepfer
Councilman Craig
Mayor Plaisted

Also present were City Manager Williams, City Attorney Hartley, Staff Members, and City Clerk Jackson.

The Invocation was given by Mayor Plaisted and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilwoman Bega motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

5)a) Ordinance 2026-852 Medical Marijuana Dispensary – First Reading* with Community Development Director Shoemaker stating staff followed Council’s consensus to draft an ordinance regarding a ban on new Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTC) within the City limits. A report on law enforcement activity at these centers was also requested. Ordinance 2026-852 amends Sec. 2.6 of the City of Inverness Land Development Code (LDC). The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) reviewed and recommended approval of the amendment to City Council following the February 4, 2026 P & Z meeting. This ordinance amends Section 2.6. with the addition of a new subsection and states that no MMTC facilities shall be permitted to be located within the corporate boundaries of the City of Inverness. The Public Hearing was opened.

Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2026-852 by Title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.

ORDINANCE 2026-852

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION 2.6 OF THE CITY'S LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE BY ADDING SUBSECTION KK, REGULATING MEDICAL MARIJUANA TREATMENT CENTER FACILITIES WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, CONFLICTS, AND SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

For the Ordinance

April Wnok of Hernando questioned clarification regarding city limits and outside city limits. Noted medical marijuana is medically beneficial, but a gateway drug.

LaLa Sanders spoke of facilities in Citrus County and is not against medical marijuana.

Renea Teaster from the Anti-Drug Coalition spoke of changes over time and that balance is necessary. Spoke of more education.

Karen Esty spoke of a Senate bill from a few years back and read the language regarding facilities.

Mike O'Connell of Floral City spoke of public safety, etc.

Against the Ordinance

Nicholas Kurz of Inverness is a doctor who recently moved back from Colorado. Spoke of both medical and recreational marijuana. Medical marijuana is a safe alternative, with no side effects, as pharmaceuticals. Explained the difference due to public confusion.

Ashley Turner of Inverness wants to keep an open mind. Medical marijuana is safer. Spoke of known citizens and their ailments, comparing medical marijuana and prescription medications. Still does not want too many dispensaries.

Council comments

Councilwoman Lizanich questioned another option to regulate and not ban with City Manager stating the Land Development Code and process.

City Attorney Hartley spoke of the state statute and that dispensaries are to be treated the same as a pharmacy.

Councilwoman Bega compared the local pharmacies and dispensaries. More people use regular pharmacies compared to medical marijuana dispensaries.

City Manager Williams spoke of past actions by the City when this first was introduced in Florida. With concerns on both sides, he suggested to consider LDC special exception process. Spoke of various uses that are by this process.

President Davis questioned if there was increased crime regarding the dispensaries with City Manager noting the backup material provided by CCSO. Since 2023, 3 calls for service with 1 as an individual trying to buy illegally and 2 parking lot issues. Stated this is an economic matter as people will go wherever it is available and convenient.

Councilwoman Hepfer noted the line is blurred between illegal and prescribed marijuana. Spoke of users for pain, anxiety, etc.

Mayor Plaisted questioned in the City limits and just outside the limits. Spoke of the image of the City and certain topics of past Council considerations.

Councilman Craig comparing a dispensary as the same as a pharmacy with City Manager Williams explaining the Senate bill and special exception process. Councilman Craig does not want too many dispensaries. Either ban or not.

City Attorney Hartley explained the Planning and Zoning board and the Comp Plan.

The public hearing was closed.

Council consensus was for staff to bring back guidelines for special exceptions at a future Council meeting.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

LaLa Sanders questioned what a solution would be regarding medical marijuana dispensaries ban.

Michael Puzino asked what the plans are for the 4th of July with City Manager Williams noting the City's celebration will be the Patriotic Evening on July 3 with many plans in progress.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 02/03/2026*
 - Recommendation – Approval

Councilwoman Bega motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

9)a) Declaration of Surplus Equipment – Parks & Recreation* with City Clerk Jackson stating the equipment listed has been determined to no longer be useful for the operation of the City of Inverness. Once it is declared surplus, items will be directed through the disposal process. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to declare the listed item as surplus property and authorize to proceed with disposal. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) Code Compliance Program - Update* with Code Enforcement Official Ethan McCulloch stating the Community Development Department has been focused on increasing efficiencies and leveraging technology in various functional areas, including City's Code Compliance program. A presentation/update was provided noting a properly structured Code Compliance Program is designed to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the community by ensuring adherence to the City's adopted codes and Ordinances. Compliance cases are initiated through citizen complaints and proactive, and routine inspections for potential violation. The process for a case is initiated and followed. If the violation remains after the compliance deadline, the case is presented to the Code Compliance Special Magistrate. The Special Magistrate determines whether a violation exists and, if so, establishes a new compliance deadline and sets potential fines for noncompliance. However, if the violation continues beyond the date ordered by the Special Magistrate, fines begin to accrue and become a lien against the property until compliance is achieved. This structured process ensures that all property owners are treated fairly while maintaining the overall quality and integrity of the community. Councilwoman Bega questioned how a violation is found and was answered that both by citizens and by staff. Councilwoman Hepfer complimented the concise format of the presentation of the process.

Councilwoman Lizanich thanked the department for making the presentation understandable. President Davis spoke of professionalism, anonymity of who makes a complaint, rights – of – ways, etc. Mayor Plaisted spoke of being a member of the Code Enforcement Board many years ago. *No action required, information only.*

10)b) Fire Station Bay Door Replacement Project - Update* with City Manager Williams stating on September 16, 2025, Council approved the award of a contract for the replacement of the fire station bay doors to American Roll-Up Door Company, for the amount of \$48,756. Subsequently, both the contractor and the City were not able to proceed as anticipated, and it was mutually agreed that it was in both parties' best interest to terminate the contract. No monies were paid by the City for any efforts or work to date under the terminated contract. A new request for proposals will be issued and resulting responses will be brought to Council for review and award. *No action required, information only.*

10)c) March Events* with Parks & Rec Director Worley providing a presentation of the many events for March. Details were added for the events of the Senior Games Closing ceremony, Market at the Depot, Health Expo, Bike Fest, Big Bass-Bluegrass-BBQ event, St. Patrick's Day Parade and Celebration, and many more throughout the month. Discover March in a Small Town Done Right.

10)d) Project/Program Updates (Verbal)

- IGC Lease with City Manager noting the lease has been executed and work will begin soon.
- IGC Parking Lot Resurfacing with Public Works Director Pell noting road paving has been completed and resurfacing IGC parking lot will be the weekend from February 27 to March 1, 2026.
- Whispering Pines Park Lease with City Manager Williams stating we continue to work with the State and it is moving forward.
- Assistant City Manager Transition has Frank Calascione relocating near Orlando and that Aiden Marshall has accepted the Assistant City Manager's position. Frank, Aiden, and CRO Bob Greatrex addressed Council.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted thought the Senior Games opening ceremony and events were successful.

Councilwoman Bega stated that Frank Calascione will be missed. Noted rehearsals are ongoing for "Tootsie" at the Valerie Theatre.

Councilwoman Hepfer stated it has been an honor to know Frank Calascione for so many years and it was a joy to have him here. Welcomed Aiden Marshall as the new Assistant City Manager and welcomed the new Community Resource Officer Bob Greatrex.

Councilwoman Lizanich thanked Frank for all he has done for the City and welcomed Aiden Marshall. Stated she recently attended the Library Advisory meeting.

Councilman Craig thanked Frank for his service to the City and welcomed Aiden Marshall and Bob Greatrex.

President Davis noted Frank will be missed. Looks forward to working with Aiden. Senior games opening was great as well as the ROCCS regatta.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

None

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President