

July 7, 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 Lizanich
Vice President Bega
Councilwoman Hepfer
Councilman Craig
Councilman Davis
Mayor Plaisted

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

The Invocation was given by Councilwoman Hepfer 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 Hepfer. The motion carried.

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

5)a) Ordinance 2026-852 Medical Marijuana Dispensary – Final Reading* with City Manager Williams stating per consensus direction provided at the May 19 meeting of Council, an ordinance was presented to reinstate a ban on new Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTC) within City limits. The Public Hearing was opened. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2026-852 by Title only. Seconded by Councilman Davis. The motion carried.**

ORDINANCE 2026-852

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA, BANNING ADDITIONAL (as of the date of adoption of this ordinance) MEDICAL MARIJUANA TREATMENT DISPENSING CENTERS A/K/A MEDICAL CANNABIS DISPENSING FACILITIES AS DEFINED BY SECTION 381.986 FLORIDA STATUTES (2017) WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

For the Ordinance

The following members of the public spoke in support of the Ordinance: Renea Teaster with Anti-Drug Coalition, Ray Valentine Kalasusky, John Labriola, Robert Robinson II, Lala Sanders, April Wnok, and Debbie Wheatley.

Against the Ordinance

No member of the public spoke against the Ordinance.

Council comments

Councilwoman Bega read an email against the Ordinance that the Elected Officials had received from Mike Wright. President Lizanich supported the idea of using a special exception as the best approach. Questioned if a review period should be added and referenced the process that was used with the Entertainment District. City Manager Williams recommended the review as a separate item and not included with the Ordinance. City Attorney Hartley spoke of the last discussion of the subject, legislative bills, statutes, etc. Councilman Davis noted that Council has the ability to review this matter whenever it is needed. In no way should there be an impact on availability for those that need it. Suggested to revisit when it becomes a supply and demand issue. Councilwoman Hepfer stated she still stands by her opinion and spoke of medical marijuana vs. street drugs, as well as smoke shops & dispensaries. Mayor Plaisted noted there is availability within the City limits and spoke of the character of downtown. The public hearing was closed. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-852 by rollcall vote on final reading. Seconded by Councilman Davis. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, no; Councilman Davis, yes; Councilman Craig, yes; and President Lizanich, yes. The motion carried.**

5)b) Ordinance 2026-854 Land Use and Ordinance 2026-855 Zoning – 232 Trout Ave. – Final Reading* with Council President declaring the public hearing open. Interim Community Development Director Wells stated an application was submitted by Liberty Investments Citrus County LLC, owner of the property located within the historic LaBelle neighborhood. The applicant intends to split the existing 0.42-acre parcel into two equal new parcels of 0.21 acres and then construct a residential triplex on each new parcel. Three dwelling units on the resulting 0.21 acres is a gross density of 14.2 dwelling units per acre. The Future Land Use of the property is currently designated as Low Density which limits the density to 2.5 dwelling units per acre requiring a land use amendment from Low Density to High Density. Included was a request for rezoning from LD/R1 to PDP which will allow the applicant to craft product design that meets their needs and accomplishes the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Property Owner Matt Osborne stating his support of the Council and the City. It is a great place to live and his family is proud to be a part of the community. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2026-854 by Title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

ORDINANCE 2026-854

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ORDINANCE 2016-713 OF THE INVERNESS CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR A SMALL-SCALE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT BY REVISING THE GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE MAP ON APPROXIMATELY 0.42 ACRES FROM LOW DENSITY (LD) TO HIGH DENSITY (HD); PROPERTY AS FURTHER DESCRIBED HEREIN BELOW; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

No one spoke for or against the ordinance. The public hearing was closed. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-854 by rollcall vote on final reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, yes; Councilman Davis, yes; Councilman Craig, yes; and President Lizanich, yes. The motion carried.**

Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2026-855 by Title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.

ORDINANCE 2026-855

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP BY REZONING APPROXIMATELY 0.42 ACRES OF LAND FROM LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LD/R-1) TO PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (PDP) AS FURTHER DESCRIBED HEREIN; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

No one spoke for or against the ordinance. Councilman Davis commended the Osbornes for quality housing. Councilwoman Hepfer reference the tri-plex across from her residence and how impressive it is. The public hearing was closed. **Councilman Davis motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-855 by rollcall vote on final reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, yes; Councilman Davis, yes; Councilman Craig, yes; and President Lizanich, yes. The motion carried.**

5)c) CCSO Law Enforcement Enhanced Services Presentation with Captain Lee Carey providing a presentation noting the excellent working relationship with the Citrus County Sheriff's Office through the existing interlocal agreement for enhanced law enforcement services. This partnership has provided the City with professional, responsive, and community focused enhanced law enforcement services that support the safety and quality of life of Inverness residents, businesses, and visitors. At the May 5th Council meeting, a discussion ensued requesting additional information regarding the enhanced services provided and clarifying what services are provided over and above the general law enforcement services provided across the entirety of Citrus County funded by way of county general ad valorem property taxes. This additional information ensures continued transparency and understanding regarding the City's investment in enhanced public safety services. Councilman Davis questions the call for service with Cpt. Carey providing an explanation. Councilwoman Bega appreciated the good information and requested the presentations be included in the agenda packets for prior review. Councilman Craig was thankful for the information and feels safe in the City. President Lizanich questioned the budget amount referenced in the presentation with City Manager Williams confirming the amount is being included in the upcoming proposed budget. Spoke of rising costs associated with most uniformed positions. *No action required.*

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Lala Sanders thanked Council for the decision on the Ordinance regarding the dispensaries. Noted the Patriotic Evening event was wonderful.

Debbie Wheatley stated Patriotic Evening was great and Liberty Park is amazing. Loves living here and thanked everyone for all they do.

Karen Esty spoke of the time and energy staff put out for the Patriotic Evening on Friday, it was an amazing event, with a safe environment. This is the place to live. Park staff are incredible.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes* – 06/16/2026
 - Recommendation - Approval

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

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) Longwood Gardens Affordable Housing Finance Application* with City Manager Williams stating the much-anticipated Longwood Gardens project is approaching the final steps to funding and construction. As part of the competitive affordable housing process, local government financial participation is required to demonstrate meaningful local support for a project and to help close financing gaps that would otherwise make the project difficult to complete. Florida Housing's Local Government Area of Opportunity process allows a city to contribute funding in the form of a cash loan to support a qualifying development. The City previously adopted Resolution 2025-11 and its commitment to this much needed project. Council was asked to consider approving loan terms and enabling documents for a local government match loan in the amount of \$340,000. This amount is consistent with the required minimum local government contribution level identified for medium/small counties, including Citrus County, under Florida Housing's Local Government Area of Opportunity. Additionally, the proposed loan term is 15 years, being funded and commencing after construction of the development is completed. The loan will be amortized at an annual interest rate of 2 percent resulting in \$53,802 in total interest payments to the City over the term of the loan. The Longwood Gardens project supports the City's broader goal of encouraging quality housing opportunities for seniors and residents with limited or fixed incomes. The loan documents were reviewed by the City Attorney to protect the City's interest, establish repayment terms, and ensure that the public investment is tied directly to the development of affordable senior housing in Inverness. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve the Longwood Gardens loan terms and documents as presented and authorize the City Manager to execute the documents. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

10)b) Permit Fees – Florida House Bill 803* with City Manager Williams stating HB803 was signed into law on May 7, 2026, which makes changes to how local governments charge fees for building permits and inspections. The most significant change having an impact on the City requires an electronic registration system for private provider inspection companies and a mandatory reduction of commercial permit fees by 25% if the private provider is handling either plan review or both services. "Private providers" are independent companies which employ licensed professional building inspectors to review building plans and conduct structural and site inspections and are required to be certified by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. The City's current building permit fee schedule for residential and commercial permits calculates

the appropriate fees based on a percentage of the total cost of construction: 1.25% for residential and 1.5% for commercial. For example, if a project's total cost was \$1,000,000, the permit fee before the changes would be \$15,000. After the new law takes effect, the new permit fees would be \$11,250 (1.125%) for one of the services and \$7,500 (0.75%) if both services are provided by a private provider. ***No action required.***

10)c) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER)* with Chief Bessler stating the City has taken several important steps to improve its ISO rating for fire services over the past several years. The addition of a ladder truck further supports this effort by addressing a significant equipment which enhances response capabilities, improves protection for residents and businesses, and positions the City to continue working toward a lower ISO rating in the future. The Inverness Fire Department recently applied for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program, commonly known as the SAFER Grant. The purpose of the SAFER Grant Program is to assist fire departments with increasing or maintaining the number of trained firefighters available to respond to emergencies, improve operational readiness, and enhance the level of fire and emergency response protection provided to the City of Inverness. This application is for funding three firefighter positions. ***No action required.***

10)d) Project/Program Updates (*Verbal*)

- FDOT Florida Freedom Tour with Asst. City Manager Marshall stating the mobile history museum will be in Inverness on July 18.
- Master Lift Station Rehabilitation at Wallace Brooks Park is a Federal grant and includes an odor control system which should be completed in August.
- Wallace Brooks Park Improvements has 90% of the plans received from Kimley-Horn. The basketball court and skatepark will be approx. the same size.
- Manning's Bar Property Sale with City Manager Williams providing information regarding appraisals, letters of interest, consideration of listing the property on a real estate multi-listing site.
- Other even though the weather was very hot, there was a record attendance at Patriotic Evening, what a great event. Spoke of the participants that appeared on stage coming together, the volunteers, and the donation of food by Texas Roadhouse.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted spoke of opening prayer at the Council meetings. Stated the Osborne family is a great addition to the community. Spoke of partnerships being tremendous and the various dignitaries on stage at Patriotic Evening.

Councilman Craig noted the sponsors of the wonderful Patriotic Evening event and thanked the volunteers. Spoke of the event at the Caboose and of the history of the trail.

Councilwoman Hepfer agreed with the comments from both Mayor Plaisted and Councilman Craig.

Councilwoman Bega spoke of the wonderful Patriotic Evening event and how hot the weather was.

Councilman Davis thanked Parks Director Worley and staff for all they do to make the events successful. Spoke of the number of people in attendance of the event and happy vendors.

Council President Lizanich agreed with everything that had been stated by her colleagues and thanked staff, Citrus County Sheriff's Office, and the volunteers for a great event. State she has a CCCCCF meeting on July 9.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Debbie Wheatley spoke of the amazing ladder truck and flag at the event and was given a tour of the truck.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President