

MINUTES TONKA BAY  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
FEBRUARY 26, 2025

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The work session was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Members present: Mayor Jennings and Council Members Anderson, Eckland, and Ottum. Also present were City Administrator Holl and City Planner Johnson.

**3. ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW**

City Planner Johnson provided an overview of the zoning ordinance review process, explaining that discussions will be structured chapter by chapter to keep meetings manageable. The process was delayed due to staffing changes and elections but is now back on track.

Key points include:

- The first meeting covers four chapters, including rules and definitions, which establish measurement and zoning terms.
- Future discussions will focus on residential zoning first, followed by commercial areas.
- A proposed change includes renaming the C1 chapter to better reflect its focus on marinas.
- Instead of a Planned Unit Development (PUD), Johnson suggests using Development Flex Zoning, which simplifies the approval process through a conditional use permit.
- The next meeting will cover the shoreland overlay and floodplain district, which require DNR approval before public release.

The discussion continued with a focus on engaging the DNR and revisiting the hard cover calculation. The planner aims to integrate this topic into the next meeting, as it has been set aside for some time.

Key points:

- Hard cover limits (currently 25%) vary across cities, with some allowing 30-40%. The city originally had a 40% limit but shifted to 25% based on state guidelines and DNR model ordinances.
- The change to 25% coverage created unintended challenges, leading to more variance applications and confusion for residents.
- A significant portion of existing lots (about two-thirds) do not conform to the 25% rule, making it difficult for homeowners to build without exceeding the limit.
- The goal is to develop a clearer, more predictable formula to help applicants and decision-makers navigate the process more easily, reducing frustration and costs.

- With a new DNR representative yet to be appointed, this presents an opportune moment to revisit and push for adjustments.

The discussion continued with an outline of the upcoming chapters to be reviewed emphasizing Chapter 15: Performance Standards, which will be a significant topic covering development regulations for both commercial and residential areas, including height, setbacks, parking, and equipment. This may require an entire session to review thoroughly.

Other key topics include: *Lighting and signs* – Expected to be a quick review. *Subdivision standards* – Will be updated with assistance from City Engineer Bradford, to ensure compliance. *Illicit discharge and connection (Chapter 18)* – A necessary update to align with MS-4 permit requirements.

City Planner Johnson emphasized focusing on content rather than grammar or formatting, as legal counsel will oversee final codification and proofreading. A paralegal from Counsel's team will assist with this at no cost to the City. Johnson noted changes as she reviewed each chapter for Council consideration.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Attest:   
Gildemeister, City Clerk

  
Jennings, Mayor