

MINUTES
TONKA BAY CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 14, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular semi-monthly meeting of the Tonka Bay City Council was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members present: Mayor Jennings, Council Members Anderson, Broas, Eckland, and Ottum.

Staff present: City Administrator Holl, City Engineer Bradford, and City Attorney Nason.

Others present: Chelsea McAlexander, Jeff McAlexander

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Council Member Eckland seconded the motion. Ayes: Anderson, Broas, Eckland, Ottum, and Jennings. The motion carried.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes from September 23, 2025 City Council Meeting
2. September 2025 Claims
3. Minutes from August 25, 2025 Parks and Docks Commission Meeting
4. Met Council – 2025 Statement 2050 Comp Plan
5. SLMPD Stat Report for September 2025

Council Member Anderson made a motion to approve the consent agenda with noted changes to 4.1. Council Member Eckland seconded the motion. Ayes: Anderson, Broas, Eckland, Ottum, and Jennings. The motion carried.

5. SPECIAL BUSINESS

None

6. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

None

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Short Term Rental License Revocation for 25 Waseca Avenue - City Attorney Nason explained that the matter before the Council is an appeal of a revoked short-term rental license for the property at 25 Waseca Avenue. The property owners had previously obtained a license; however, after receiving complaints and further review, City Staff determined the license was issued in error because the property is not the owners' primary residence, as required by city ordinance. The City Administrator then revoked the license, and the owners are appealing against that decision. The Council is now being asked to hold a public hearing, review the information provided, and decide whether to over-turn or uphold the revocation.

Mayor Jennings opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

Jeff and Chelsea McAlexander, residents of 20 Lakeview Avenue and owners of the property at 25 Waseca Avenue, addressed the Council to request reconsideration and asked to be allowed to retain their short-term rental license.

Mayor Jennings closed the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Council members discussed the appeal of a short-term rental license revocation for the property at 25 Waseca Avenue, concluding that the property does not meet the city's definition of a primary residence and is therefore ineligible for a short-term rental license under Tonka Bay's ordinance.

Key points included:

- The property is non-homesteaded and owned by an LLC, meaning it cannot qualify as a primary residence under both state statute and city code, which require the owner to live in the home and use it as their main residence.
- The short-term rental license was issued in error due to a clerical oversight when city staff initially approved the application based on outdated tax information. Once the mistake was discovered, staff properly revoked the license.
- Council Members expressed that while the owners' intentions were good, granting an exception would be arbitrary and capricious, setting a precedent that could undermine the ordinance and allow future misuse by others operating properties purely for commercial gain.
- The Council reaffirmed that policy changes, such as allowing non-homesteaded or secondary homes to operate as short-term rentals, would require a formal ordinance amendment.

Council agreed that the property does not meet the homestead and primary residence requirements and therefore upheld the revocation of the short-term rental license in accordance with city code.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-25 A Resolution Upholding and Ratifying Revocation of Short-Term Home Rental License for the Property Located at 25 Waseca Avenue was made by Council Member Anderson. Council Member Broas seconded the motion.

Roll call:	Anderson	Aye
	Broas	Aye
	Eckland	Aye
	Ottum	Abstained
	Jennings	Aye

The motion carried.

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Code Enforcement Update - City Administrator Holl provided an update on code enforcement activities, noting that 91% (20 of 22) cases this year have been successfully resolved. Most residents respond after the first notice, addressing issues such as blight, lawn maintenance, and trailer parking. Only a few cases have required escalation to a second or third notice or prosecution. Holl emphasized that the program's focus is on compliance and resolution, not punishment, and that residents have been cooperative and responsive.

During discussion, Council Member Ottum questioned whether a particular lawn would be mowed by the City. Holl explained that state and city procedures require property owners time to correct violations through a series of letters before the City can take direct action, unlike past practices where properties were mowed immediately and billed. Holl clarified that while this approach takes longer, it is the legally proper process and ensures residents have fair opportunity to comply.

Holl also reminded Council Members that citizen complaints are nonpublic data and must not be discussed publicly. In response to a question about the new citizen concern form, Holl stated that complaints are acknowledged and managed through the established enforcement process, but the City does not provide detailed updates to complainants on the status or outcomes of investigations.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approve Resolution 2025-24 Amending City Council Appointments – A motion to approve Resolution 2025-24 Amending City Council Appointments was made by Council Member Aderson. Council Member Ottum seconded the motion.

Roll call: Anderson Aye
 Broas Aye
 Eckland Aye
 Ottum Aye
 Jennings Aye

The motion carried.

B. Approve Resolution 2025-23 Approving the Transfer of Funds, Closing the Liquor Store Fund to Capital Improvement Fund - City Administrator Holl provided background on the liquor store fund, explaining that the funds have been inactive since around 2010. Based on recommendations from the city's new auditors, the City will formally close the liquor store fund. The remaining balance of \$164,097.92 will be transferred to the capital fund and used as previously designated for the purchase of a new public works truck and fire department equipment. This action streamlines accounting processes and reduces the number of funds that need to be audited each year.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-23 approving the transfer of funds in the amount of \$164,097.92, closing Liquor Store Fund 609 and transferring funds to Capital Improvement Fund 409 was made by Council Member Anderson. Council Member Broas seconded the motion.

Roll call: Anderson Aye
Broas Aye
Eckland Aye
Ottum Aye
Jennings Aye

The motion carried.

10. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR
None

11. REPORTS

A. City Administrator Holl reported that auditors from Abdo spent the past few days conducting pre-audit work with assistance from Annie, Janell, and Todd's staff. He thanked them for their extensive preparation. The audit should be completed within the next few weeks, with a presentation to the Council anticipated at the first November meeting. He noted that with the new auditors in place and prior backlogs resolved, the City is now positioned to return to a regular audit schedule, typically reviewed in the spring.

Additionally, Holl reminded Council that the City Council meetings in November will fall back-to-back on November 18 and November 25 due to November 11 being Veterans Day holiday. Lastly, the new public works truck arrived earlier than expected and will be picked up next week to be outfitted for winter use, aligning with the earlier discussion about transferring liquor fund monies to the capital fund.

B. City Engineer Bradford reported that the wear course (top pavement layer) will be installed Monday, October 30th, on Pleasant Avenue, completing the street surface work. However, paving on Lilah Lane is delayed pending the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) permit. Minor comments from OSA have been addressed, and the City has requested the process be expedited. Once the permit is received, Lilah Lane paving will proceed. After the pavement on Pleasant Avenue has cured, the contractor will return to install the speed humps. If the permit is approved by that time, Lilah Lane will also be paved concurrently.

The City has also requested quotes from a local paving company for the Crescent Beach parking lot and other small paving areas around town. These estimates will be reviewed once current projects are closed out to determine available street funds.

Bradford clarified some questions regarding the Lilah Lane trail, stating progress has been slow due to an unusually wet summer and subconsultant scheduling delays. The priority has been restoring residents' properties before completing the trail's final topdressing and restoration. The existing trail, upgraded from an old footpath and currently surfaced with rock and wood chips, will require MIAC consultation before final completion to ensure compliance with mound access requirements.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Council Member Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. Council Member Ottum seconded the motion. Ayes: Anderson, Broas, Eckland, Ottum, and Jennings. The motion carried.



Jennings, Mayor

Attest:



Gildemeister, City Clerk