

City of Delray Beach

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Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

3:30 PM

Workshop Meeting

Delray Beach City Hall or Watch on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@cityofdelraybeachfl/streams>

City Commission

Mayor Thomas F. Carney, Jr.

Vice Mayor Angela Burns

Deputy Vice Mayor Tom Markert

Commissioner Judy Mollica

Commissioner Juli Casale

Pursuant to Section 3.12 of the Charter of the City of Delray Beach, the Mayor has instructed me to announce a Workshop Meeting of the City Commission to be held for the following purposes:

The March 9, 2026 Workshop Meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. Alexis Givings, City Clerk, called the roll and the following were present:

Present: 4 - Mayor Thomas F. Carney, Jr., Vice Mayor Angela Burns, Deputy Vice Mayor Tom Markert, Commissioner Juli Casale and Commissioner Judy Mollica.

Others present were:
Terrence Moore, City Manager
Kelly Brandon, Assistant City Attorney
Alexis Givings, City Clerk

WS.1. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Carney opened the floor to anyone who wished to provide public comments.

Christina Morrison, 33483

Stated she had been working with City staff in efforts to attract tech-related employers to Delray Beach, and noted there are a list of vacant spaces available.

Seeing no one else present, Mayor Carney closed public comment.

WS.2. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SYNERGY.

Sponsors: City Manager Department

Attachments: [Agenda Cover Report](#)
[Delray Beach ED Targeting Plan Scope of Services](#)
[DelrayBeach_ED Marketing Scope of Work](#)

Mr. Moore stated that following discussions on economic development synergy and recommendations for external consultancy services, representatives from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, and Downtown Development Authority (DDA), joined together to support planning and marketing efforts. He asked Assistant City Manager, Jeff Oris, to introduce the consultancy teams.

Mr. Oris introduced Craig Agranoff from Grip LLC and Kevin Crowder from

BusinessFlare, explaining their roles in economic development.

Mr. Agranoff proposed that Grip LLC would focus on data-driven, highly targeted economic development strategy for Delray Beach, targeting specific businesses identified by BusinessFlare's analysis. Efforts include aligning stakeholders on ideal businesses, preparing clear information on sites and opportunities, and crafting a tailored "Why Delray" message for executives and investors. He added the goal is to attract the right businesses, create jobs, and drive long-term economic growth.

Mr. Crowder highlighted the importance of understanding local assets, amenities, capacity, the need for competitive advantages, uncovering hidden local strengths, and combining data with intuition. He explained the importance of generational talent and the evolving economic landscape; focusing on quality of life and future-proofing economic development strategies. He stated that the outcome would be a concise, targeted implementation strategy aligned with the City's realities and growth potential.

Commissioner Casale raised concerns about space availability and stressed close collaboration with the Chamber, DDA, and CRA. Mr. Crowder explained his experience includes work with Miami DDA and CRAs with strong collaboration across chambers and partner organizations.

The Commission thanked Mr. Crowder and stated they are looking forward to the findings.

Mr. Agranoff added insights on the types of companies that could benefit from Delray Beach's unique environment, including private equity, professional services, and remote-first companies. He noted an indirect growth from data center industries, with executives and related firms (family offices, boutique investment) choosing Delray for lifestyle. He highlighted the rise of remote-first tech and AI companies, attracted to a strong lifestyle and unique identity over traditional headquarters needs.

The costs related to the consultants were addressed. Mr. Moore indicated that the costs would include two contracts; one with BusinessFlare, nearly \$60,000 and the other for the marketing aspect with Grip at about \$64,000. Both agreements will be fully financed and supported via the City's economic development fund.

Commissioner Casale also questioned the solicitation process. Mr. Oris advised the City stayed close to the procurement rules and reached out to about ten firms for each category. The City received three responses for marketing and two for the plan; others did not respond or declined.

WS.3. POLICY ALIGNMENT AND EVALUATION TO SUPPORT FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 PROPOSED ZERO BASED BUDGETING CONSIDERATIONS.

Sponsors: City Manager Department

Mr. Moore introduced the zero-based budgeting process and timeline for FY 2026-2027, noting it applies mainly to larger, general fund dependent departments. He advised that the purpose of the workshop was to update the Commission on expected steps as the process moves forward.

Sabra Avery, Budget Manager, explained the zero-based budgeting exercise, breaking down the city by division and collecting data from department heads. She stated this approach builds budgets from zero and requires justification of all expenditures to ensure alignment with strategic goals, cost-effectiveness, and core mission priorities. Departments were asked, using their expertise, to define current operations and propose minimum, improved, and alternative service levels, primarily focused on general fund programs, but also including other funds. She highlighted the importance of determining the appropriate levels of service needed to support citizens and the shift from incremental budgeting to zero-based budgeting, and that the process is designed to be collaborative and bottom-up, encouraging efficiency, innovation, and clearer allocation of resources across city services..

Commissioner Casale discussed the importance of providing accurate and transparent information, even if it is not what the Commission wants to hear.

Mayor Carney stated this is supposed to give the Commission a true picture of all expenditures, adding that he had hoped it would create a good "baseline" to measure future years against 2026.

CFO, Henry Dachowitz, explained that the budgeting approach goes below traditional department-level analysis into programs and functions to identify duplication and inefficiency. He stated the process challenges long-standing assumptions about staffing, asking whether existing roles are still necessary or could be improved with technology, automation, or fewer errors. He added that since 60-70% of expenses are personnel, real savings require addressing headcount and benefits costs, not just incremental adjustments. Without reallocating or reducing duplicative roles, meaningful cost savings are unlikely to be achieved.

Ms. Avery continued with her presentation, explaining the different aspects of the zero-based budget template filled out by each city department.

Mayor Carney noted that if there was a “wish list of items,” the Commission ought to be helping fulfill them, and if there are ways to improve the “level of service within the budgetary constraints,” the Commission should focus on that.

Vice Mayor Markert asked Mr. Dachowitz what guidance he would give to staff as it relates to inflation. Mr. Dachowitz stated department heads are “subject matter experts” with vendor relationships and closer to costs, but was warned inflation could drive some “budget line items” to 10% or 12%. Some departments are still fighting to get back to the minimum. He added that while zero-based budgeting aims to define the minimum service levels, there’s a limit and we may not get those substantial savings first go around; however, we will better information and save where possible.

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Carney adjourned the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

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