

**TOWN OF INTERLACHEN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026 – 6:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Joni Conner called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Council Members present were Chairperson Joni Conner, Vice-Chairperson, Carolyn Bennett, Beverly Bakker, and Carolyn Meadows. Anna Rose Larsen was present via zoom. Mayor Hanes and Attorney George Young were present also.

COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON – JONI CONNER

A) Announce election Date.

The caucus will be Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

Qualifying begins at 12:00 PM (Noon) on August 3, 2026 and ends at 12:00 PM (Noon) on Friday, August 7, 2026.

Resigns to run deadline is Friday, July 24, 2026.

Petitions must be filed by 12:00 PM (Noon) on Monday, July 27, 2026.

Voter registration books close at 11:59 PM (Midnight) on Monday, October 5, 2026.

The election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

The voting precinct is at the Interlachen Community Center located at 135 S. County Road 315 and the polls will be open from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM.

The council seats for re-election are Mayor Rick Hanes, Joni Conner, and Anna Rose Larsen

The council members eligible to chair the caucus are Beverly Bakker, Carolyn Bennett, and Carolyn Meadows.

Vice-Chairperson Carolyn Bennett volunteered to chair the caucus.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Discussion and Consideration of THE Appointment of an Interim Police Chief.

Chairperson Joni Conner opened the floor for public comments regarding the appointment of an Interim Police Chief.

Mr. David Harrison addressed the Council and stated that he wished to be considered for the Interim Chief position. He advised that he has served with the Police Department for sixteen and one-half (16.5) years resides within the Town limits at 400 Prospect Street, and has also submitted an application for the permanent Chief of Police position.

Mayor Hanes presented and read his recommendation letter appointing Officer Dominic Piscitello as Interim Chief of Police. Each Council Member was given the opportunity to provide input regarding the Mayor's recommendation, and all expressed their support for the appointment.

Vice-Chairperson Carolyn Bennett moved to appoint Officer Dominic Piscitello as Interim Chief of Police, effective July 15, 2026. The motion was seconded by Council Member Beverly Bakker. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of the Appointment of an Interim Maintenance Supervisor.

Council Member Carolyn Meadows invited each candidate to the podium and was asked to clarify their qualifications.

Michael Cemer stated he has been employed with the Town for 17 years and is highly knowledgeable in the water line operations and cemetery department. He has also had leadership roles with several companies and the Interlachen Fire

Department.

Jason Smith has been employed with the Town for 19 years. He has experience in maintenance operations and various companies as a foreman and crew leader. He also has experience in electricity and maintenance.

Nick Staszczuk is employed with the Town. He has leadership experience in construction, maintenance and in the military. He retired from the military as an E5 and was in the military for five (5) years.

Ms. Mary Brant, 108 E. Boyleston Street, spoke in support of Nick Staszczuk, noting how personable he is and his veteran status, which she encouraged the Council to strongly consider.

Following candidate presentations, Council Members provided recommendations:

Chairperson Joni Conner recommended Nick Staszczuk.

Council Vice-Chairperson Carolyn Bennett and Council Member Carolyn Meadows recommended Michael Cemer.

Council Member Anna Rose Larsen and Council Member Beverly Bakker recommended Jason Smith.

Council Member Beverly Bakker moved to appoint Jason Smith as Interim Maintenance Supervisor, effective July 30, 2026. The motion did not receive a second and therefore died.

Council Member Carolyn Meadows moved to appoint Michael Cemer as Interim Maintenance Supervisor, effective July 30, 2026. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairperson Carolyn Bennett. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed by the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of Setting Criteria for the Application Review.

Council Member Bakker moved to approve the criteria for application review committee. Vice-Chairperson Carolyn Bennett seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimous voice vote by the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of Approval of the revised Mayor/Council Guidelines.

Council Member Beverly Bakker stated that she believed the new guidelines contain the corrected language as discussed during the workshop regarding the three-absence policy for Council workshops.

Chairperson Joni Conner discussed Section 7.0, Item A, which states that Council members appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term. She expressed that this section should be consistent with Section 4.0, which outlines the process for filling a vacancy. Discussion was held regarding Section 6.0, Item A, with consensus that it should mirror 7.0, Item A for consistency.

Council Member Carolyn Meadows moved to approve the Revised Guidelines for Mayor/Council as discussed including the amended areas covering Section 4.0, 6.0, and 7.0. Council Member Anna Rose Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of Meeting with the Palatka Daily News Publisher.

Chairperson Joni Conner stated that she would like Mayor Hanes and Ms. Judi Costanzo, a member of the events Committee and the Town's event photographer to meet with the representatives of The Palatka Daily News to discuss ways to improve the timely publication of Town-related items.

Attorney George Young advised that no formal decisions should be made during such a meeting and noted that if more than one member of the Council is present, the meeting would need to be properly noticed as a "published meeting". He recommended that only one Council member attend, while allowing the inclusion of a non-Council member if desired.

Following discussion, Chairperson Joni Conner agreed that she and Ms. Costanzo would meet with the publisher of the Palatka Daily News and report their findings back to the Council.

Council Member Carolyn Meadows moved that Chairperson Joni Conner and Ms. Judi Costanzo to meet with the publisher of the Palatka Daily News at an undetermined date. Council Member Anna Rose Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of Replacing the Septic System at Town Hall.

The Clerk stated that she had received three (3) bids in accordance with the Purchasing Policy and could have made a selection, however, the item was brought before the Council for transparency. She further stated that due to increased usage, the matter was reviewed by Maintenance Supervisor Richard Glover, who recommended awarding the project to Crown Construction in the amount of \$9,986.00.

Council Member Carolyn Bennett moved to accept Mr. Glover's recommendation and award the contract to Crown Construction in the amount of \$9,986.00 for the replacement of the septic system at town Hall. Council Member Anna Rose Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the council.

Discussion and Consideration of Approval of Emergency Management Workshops for Council & Staff.

Mayor Hanes stated that he would like to schedule a lunch and learn workshop in July for Council and staff focusing on Emergency Management information, including departmental roles and responsibilities during hurricane season and other emergency events to ensure coordination and preparedness.

Mayor Hanes requested to invite Mr. Steffen Turnipseed or Ms. Danelle Rich from the Putnam County Department of Emergency Services as guest speakers. Ms. Angie Glisson will also provide information on required forms, documentation and pre-emergency preparation tasks.

Mayor Hanes stated he would like this to become an annual training held each April.

The workshop was scheduled for July 8, 2026, at 12:00 P.M. and is expected to last approximately one and one-half (1.5) hours.

The Clerk requested Council to approve closing the front office during the workshop for staff participation.

Discussion and Consideration of Approval of First Aide Training and Supplies.

Chairperson Conner requested consideration of purchasing first aid supplies, including an AED, a complete first aid kit, and oxygen, and suggested that Council members and staff receive training in their use.

The Clerk reported, based on information from FMIT, that an AED is recommended if staff are trained and the device is checked regularly (monthly), along with maintaining a first aid kit; however, oxygen is not typically included in standard first aid supplies, and CPR training would be voluntary. She further stated that AED units generally cost approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000 each and may be eligible for reimbursement through a safety grant. The Clerk noted the need to designate an individual responsible for monthly AED inspections and stated she would research funding options and report back to the Council.

Following discussion, the item was tabled for future consideration.

Discussion and Consideration of Rescheduling the August 18th Budget Workshop..

The Budget Workshop was rescheduled for August 19, 2026 at 10:00 AM..

ORDINANCES:

Ordinance 2026-2: Election Ordinance

By unanimous general consent Ordinance 2026-2 was read by title only..

Council Member Bakker moved to approve Ordinance 2026-2 on first reading. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of the council.

Ordinance 2026-3: Charter Questions

By unanimous general consent Ordinance 2026-3 was read by title only..

Vice-Chairperson Bennett moved to approve Ordinance 2026-2 on first reading. Council Member Meadows seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of the council.

CONSENT AGENDA :

The consent agenda was approved by unanimous general consent.

MAYOR COMMENTS:

Mayor Hanes stated he was thankful for the Council and staff. He congratulated Mike Cemer and Dominic on their upcoming Interim positions.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Meadows said she enjoyed the Memorial Day flag placement at Pineview Cemetery to honor our veterans.

Council Member Bennet and Beverly Bakker had no comments.

Council Member Rose Larsen congratulated Mike Cemer and Dominic Piscitello on their Interim positions.

Chairperson Joni Conner said how great the cemetery looked and that the maintenance department was doing a great job.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS:

Maintenance Supervisor, Richard Glover reported that the elevated water tank at the Tremont Water Plant is experiencing pressure issues. He advised that the Council may need to consider an increase in tank capacity. Mr. Glover stated he is currently coordinating with Two-Fold and the Town Engineer to obtain additional information and will provide further details to Clerk Payne to be added on to the future agenda.

Police Department Officer Dominic Piscitello advised that a new incident alert system has been installed for the Council, Mayor and department heads as of today so that they will receive pertinent information on major events that occur in the Town. He would like to arrange a time to meet with them individually to discuss what information can be released and how to utilize the alert system within the next day or two.

Ms. Payne stated that the Town's Facebook page is now active and has 360 followers. She further stated that online water bill payment services are performing well, with approximately 27% of customers utilizing the system. Ms. Payne also reminded the Council of the budget workshop scheduled for 10:00 AM the following day and noted the capital improvement considerations related to the water tower previously discussed by Maintenance Supervisor Mr. Glover.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

There were no citizen comments.

ATTORNEY COMMENTS:

Attorney George Young announced that this would be his final Town Council meeting as Town Attorney. As he has been appointed by the Governor to fill a judicial vacancy effective July 13, 2026. He stated that he will be closing his legal practice in the coming weeks and will coordinate with Ms. Payne to wrap up outstanding matters and ensure continued legal coverage for the Town. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Town and staff.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.