

**TOWN OF INTERLACHEN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY JULY 14, 2026 - 6:00 P.M.
INTERLACHEN TOWN HALL**

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Council Members present were Chairperson Joni Conner, Vice-Chairperson, Carolyn Bennett, Beverly Bakker, Anna Rose Larsen, and Carolyn Meadows. Mayor Hanes and Attorney Donald Holmes were present also.

COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON – JONI CONNER

Chairperson Conner commended Jason Matchett, Town staff, and volunteers for their work in making the Independence Day event successful. She also recognized Anthony Flowers for his efforts in maintaining the cemetery grounds.

Mayor Hanes swore in Interim Police Chief Dominic Piscitello and Officer Ethan Sharp.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Discussion and Consideration of the Proposed Patrol Car Decals, Police Facebook/Web Page, and Administrator Privileges.

Interim Police Chief Dominic Piscitello stated that his comments are not to diminish Chief Willburn's contributions or accomplishments over his career. He stated that he has the utmost respect for Chief Wilburn and his dedication to the town over the years. However, there is a need to move forward and align with the expectations of the 21st century and strengthen community trust.

The Police Department requires compressive reinventing and rebranding. This will modernize our service model, prioritize transparency, redefine our core values, integrity, and active community engagement.

Rebranding will bring a deeper community trust, provide clear lines of communication, and enhance recruitment and retention.

New mission statement: To serve and Protect the Town of Interlachen with unwavering professionalism, integrity, and respect. We are dedicated to building a safer community through proactive engagement, transparent communication, and trusting cooperation with the citizens that we serve.

Vision Statement: Upholding a higher standard of integrity continuous training and ethical conduct to retain the public trust.

Council Member Meadows moved to proceed with the itinerary. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion.

The Clerk asked Council Member Meadows if her motion included the proposed patrol car decals, Police Facebook/web page, and administrator privileges as stated on the agenda.

Council Member Meadows amended her motion to include proposed patrol car decals, Police Facebook/web page, and administrator privileges. Council Member Larsen seconded the amended motion.

The mended motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of the Proposed Salary for Interim Police Chief, Dominic Piscitello.

The Clerk stated that the agreement outlines Dominic Piscitello's pay terms while serving as Interim Police Chief. Under the agreement, he would receive 22 hours of paid time and accrue comp time for the remaining 18 hours within a 40-hour benefit period. The agreement specifies how the accrued time would be used or paid out upon separation, or how it would be handled if he is appointed as the permanent Police Chief.

Council Member Bakker moved to approve the proposed salary for Interim Police Chief, Dominic Piscitello. Council Member Bennett seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council

Discussion and Consideration of the Proposed Salary for Interim Maintenance Supervisor, Mike Cemer.

The Clerk stated that approval of Mr. Cemer's contract would increase his current salary by 13.4% and outlines procedures that would apply if he were promoted to the permanent Maintenance Supervisor position or returns to his current position.

Council Member Bennett moved to approve the proposed salary for Interim Maintenance Supervisor, Mike Cemer. Council Member Meadows seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and CPH Contract for the Resurfacing of Jenkins Park.

Council Member Meadows moved to approve CPH's contract for \$17,750.00 for the repaving of Jenkins Park. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council

Discussion and Consideration of Update on Cemetery Deeds From Chairperson Conner.

Attorney Holmes stated that any proposed restrictions added to cemetery deeds would not apply to current deed holders. He further recommended that the Council compile a clear set of cemetery rules and regulations and provide notice of those requirements to deed owners.

Staff will provide a draft set of rules at the August meeting.

Discussion and Consideration of Setting the Proposed Millage Rate.

Council Member Bakker moved to set the proposed millage rate at 6.9018 mills for FY 2026/2027. Council Member Bennett seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council

Discussion and Consideration of Setting a Date for Budget Public Hearings.

The Tentative Budget Public Hearing was set for 5:05pm on Thursday, September 3, 2026. The Final Budget Public Hearing was set for 5:05pm on September 17, 2026.

ORDINANCES :

Ordinance 2026-2; Election Ordinance. - 2nd Reading

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

Council Member Meadows moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-2 on second reading. Council Member Bakker seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of the Council.

Ordinance 2026-3; Charter Questions for the 2026 Election Ballot. – 2nd Reading

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

Council Member Bakker moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-3 on second reading. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion.

Attorney Holmes had questions regarding Section 1 of the Charter that states “enacted by the Florida Legislature in Chapter 61-2280 Laws of Florida.”

Upon the advice of Attorney Holmes, this ordinance was tabled until the August meeting so that he can conduct some research.

CONSENT AGENDA :

The consent agenda was approved by unanimous general consent.

MAYOR COMMENTS:

Mayor Hanes congratulated Interim Police Chief Piscitello and Officer Ethan Sharp.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Carolyn Meadows congratulated Jason Matchett and the volunteers for their work on a successful July 4th event. She also stated that the fireworks were wonderful.

Council Member Carolyn Bennett agreed with Council Member Meadows.

Council Member Annarose Larsen congratulated the Police Department on the new positions.

Council Member Beverly Bakker stated that the atmosphere at the July 4th event was electric.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS:

Interim Police Chief Dominic Piscitello gave an overview of future monthly presentations that will include; an accountability report, calls for service, year-to-date calls, traffic citations/warnings, and hot spot crime abatement. He will also recognize an officer each month for doing their job well and for their dedication to the town.

Town Clerk Joni Payne commented on the following:

- (1) Presented the Council with three dates for the CPR class for staff and elected officials and a date was set for 5:05pm, on July 30, 2026.
- (2) The review committee has completed step one of the review process and they have received five (5) applications for Police Chief and six (6) for Maintenance Supervisor. They are meeting tomorrow for step two and she will provide the council with updates each month.
- (3) Chamber event to be held at DLP Bank this Thursday at 5:30.
- (4) July 1st brought a lot of new laws and changes that affect zoning regulations. She has asked JBPro to review the draft LDR's as they are close to being adopted, to determine if any changes need to be made in accordance with the new laws.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Irene Koenig, from the American Legion Auxiliary, and Chairperson for “Wreaths Across America” stated that she has been asked why she is fundraising when the Town has paid for the wreaths for this year. She wanted to clarify that she’s fundraising for December 2027. Last year “Wreaths Across America” offered BOGO’s. She is fundraising in case they don’t offer BOGO’s this year. Any overage collected will go into a designated fund for the following year.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06pm.