

**TOWN OF INTERLACHEN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 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 had no comments.

Mayor Hanes read a Missing Children Proclamation on behalf of Chief Piscitello.

Acting Police Chief Dwayne Foreman recognized Officer Ethen McKellar as the August Police Employee of the Month for his professionalism, dedication to public safety and a strong example for peers. He was presented with a Certificate and a gift card. Officer McKellar accepted the recognition with his family present.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Discussion and Consideration of Setting the Interlachen Jr/Sr High School Homecoming Parade as an Annual Event.

Leslie Smith, executive secretary and student council sponsor, requested that the Interlochen Junior/Senior High School Homecoming Parade be made an annual event. This year's parade will be at 5:00pm on October 7, 2026.

Council Member Meadows moved to approve setting the Interlachen Jr/Sr High School Homecoming Parade as an Annual Event. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of the Fire Watch. ~ Ian Keane

Mr. Keane stated that their organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to address veteran suicide in Florida. The organization offers free 1-hour classes and noted that September is Suicide Prevention Month. There has been a 3.5% increase in veteran suicides from 2024 to 2025.

He emphasized that suicide affects small communities more directly and proposed partnering with town leadership, first responders, and local businesses. The training would focus on recognizing warning signs, understanding available resources, and improving support for veterans who may feel isolated or unsupported.

He requested the opportunity to train the council and possible the community.

The Council agreed the idea was positive and discussed scheduling a future training.

The Clerk will coordinate a date for the training.

Discussion and Consideration of School Board Representative Appointee to the Planning Commission.

Council Member Bennett moved to remove Tanya Whitehurst from the Planning Commission and approve the appointment of JD Thompson as a non-voting member of the Planning Commission. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

Discussion and Consideration of Contract Renewal for Special Magistrate Ron Brown.

Council Member Bakker moved to approve the contract renewal for Special Magistrate Ron Brown for FY 2026/2027. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council

Discussion and Consideration of Contract Renewal for Attorney Donald Holmes.

Council Member Meadows moved to approve the contract renewal for Attorney Donald Holmes 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 Contract Renewal for Two-Fold Water Engineering.

Council Member Bakker moved to approve the contract renewal for Two-Fold Water Engineering for FY 2026/2027. Council Member Larsen seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council

Discussion and Consideration of Increasing the Purchasing Card Amount.

The Clerk stated that the credit card had been useful for town operations, but the town sometimes reached the current limit. She noted that the balance is paid off monthly and no interest or late fees are incurred. She requested to increase the town's purchasing card limit from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Council Member Bennett moved to approve increasing the credit card amount to \$15,000.00. Council Member Bakker seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the Council

Discussion and Consideration of an Employee Appreciation Luncheon. ~ Mayor Hanes

Mayor Hanes stated that he would like to use his available funds before the end of September for an employee appreciation luncheon.

The luncheon was set for noon on Friday, September 25, 2026.

ORDINANCES :

Ordinance 2026-4; Chang to the Zoning Map. - 2nd Reading

By unanimous general consent Ordinance 2026-4 was read by title only.

Council Member Larsen moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-4 on second reading. Council Member Bakker seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of the Council.

Ordinance 2026-5; Pineview Cemetery Deed Restrictions, Rules & Regulations. – 1st Reading

By unanimous general consent Ordinance 2026-5 was read by title only.

Attorney Holmes stated that deed restrictions are permanent for issued deeds and cannot easily be changed later. However, rules and regulations are more easily changed.

He recommended that the deed restrictions include an additional provision, effectively a new Paragraph “E,” stating that grantees are also subject to future rules and regulations adopted by the town, so long as they do not conflict with the existing deed restrictions.

The repeated “A” will be changed to “D.”

“Persons entering the cemetery between sunset and sunrise do so at their own risk” will be deleted from “Exhibit “A.”

Council Member Bakker moved to approve Ordinance 2026-5 as amended per attorney Holmes. Council Member Bennett 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 voiced his appreciation to the office staff for their participation in hosting the Chamber Leadership Luncheon and tour. He asked that the council and public remember 9/11, with prayers for first responders and families affected by the 2001 attacks.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Anna Rose Larsen thanked the Police Department for managing the school traffic.

Council Member Carolyn Meadows stated that she is looking forward to the restart of honoring students once a month at the elementary school. She expressed sympathy to Paula Adams after the unexpected death of her husband, Chris.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS:

Town Clerk, Joni Payne reminded the Council of the Final Budget Public Hearing on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 5:05pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.