

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2026
9:00 a.m.**

Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Dondero called the April 24, 2026, Town Council Workshop to order at 9:01 a.m.

Attendance and Absences

In attendance were Mayor Edie Dondero and Councilmembers Randy Bartholomew, Bob Biciocchi, Mark Giler, Chris Keefe, Bob Shields, and Cindy Van Horn; Town Solicitor Elio Battista, and Town Manager Maureen Hartman. Public attendees: 6; virtual attendees: 5.

Public Comment

Fred Reitzel, 135 Elizabeth Way, chair of the Planning Commission, suggested inviting a state representative to discuss the upcoming review of the comprehensive plan.

Discussion and possible action to approve CRC grant request for additional recreation equipment

Per a request from Community Relations Committee (CRC) chair Chris Keefe, this item was tabled.

Introduction from potential candidates for the council vacancy

Russ Beland, 108 Elizabeth Way, Carolyn Bell, 307 West 7th Street, and Sarah Long, 205 Carlisle Drive, presented their backgrounds and perspectives on Town issues, with Mr. Beland and Ms. Bell emphasizing the importance of long-term planning, particularly regarding flooding, canals, and beach erosion. Mr. Beland has been on the Town's Budget & Finance Committee since 2024. Ms. Bell discussed her ideas for improving community involvement and communication. Ms. Bell stated she has been on the Town Communications & Public Relations Committee as well as served as the president of the South Bethany Property Owners Association (SBPOA) and is vice president of the South Bethany Historical Society. Ms. Long emphasized the importance of a comprehensive plan, particularly in addressing resiliency and climate change, and discussed potential funding sources for Town projects, including grants and federal funds, while acknowledging the challenge of securing funding without increasing taxes. Ms. Long stated her interest in focusing on strategic planning, governance, and financial aspects. Council did not make an appointment during the meeting but will take a vote on appointing a candidate at the May Council meeting.

Discussion of proposed changes to Town Code Chapter 20, Planning Commission

Council discussed amendments to Chapter 20 of the Town Code, including reducing the commission size from a maximum of 9 to 5 members to improve meeting attendance and quorum, addressing term staggering issues, and clarifying residency requirements for members. Council also discussed codifying the role of liaison and removing duplicative language in the Code that references State statutes. With regard to the role of the Planning Commission in comprehensive plan development, a suggestion was made to include relevant State Code extracts for reference. Council preferred to change the maximum membership from 5 to 7. A first reading of the proposed amendments will be presented at the next meeting.

Discussion of proposed changes to Town Charter §5, Town Council and §7 Organization of Town Council

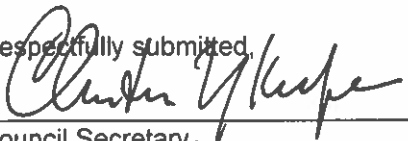
Town Manager Maureen Hartman reviewed proposed changes to the Town Charter, including potentially reducing the size of the Council from 7 to 5 members due to difficulties finding candidates

during elections, as well as clarifying language around the Mayor's term limits and the process for removing and filling committee member seats. After a lengthy discussion, Council agreed to clean up the proposed changes and bring them back for vote at a subsequent meeting.

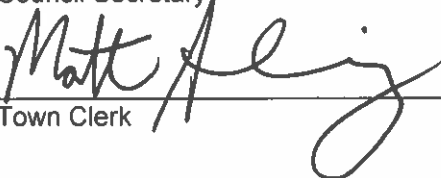
Adjournment

Motion by Councilman Bob Biciocchi, seconded by Councilwoman Chris Keefe to adjourn the April 24, 2026, Town Council Workshop meeting at 10:46 a.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Council Secretary



Town Clerk



Date of Approval