

Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition (CNC)

Meeting Minutes — September 14, 2026

Location: Clearwater Fire Training Facility

Meeting Called to Order: 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:45 p.m.

Call to Order & Leadership Update

Patrick Raftery called the meeting to order at **7:00 p.m.** and introduced CNC Treasurer **Cheryl Acton** and Secretary **Chelsea Gird**.

Patrick reported that the CNC Board met on August 27 and provided an update regarding CNC President **Jared Leone**, following his election to the Clearwater City Council. Based on guidance concerning potential conflicts for an elected official, Jared will remain CNC President until he is sworn into office but will serve in a consultant capacity during the transition. Patrick will handle presidential duties during this period. Jared will resign the CNC presidency upon being sworn into office.

Patrick also reported that CNC added **six memberships during August** and welcomed new members attending the meeting.

Jared Leone — Council Member-Elect

Patrick introduced **Jared Leone**, CNC President and newly elected Clearwater City Council member. Jared thanked CNC members and others who supported his campaign. He stated that he looks forward to representing Clearwater residents, working with neighborhoods and community stakeholders, and continuing the City's momentum.

Community Development Board — Michael Boutzoukas

Michael Boutzoukas, Clearwater Community Development Board (CDB), provided an overview of Clearwater's flexible development code and the CDB's role in reviewing development applications.

He discussed quasi-judicial hearings, party status, evidence and appeal rights. He emphasized the importance of presenting **competent, substantial evidence** when challenging development applications, particularly when technical matters such as traffic, drainage, engineering or site design are involved.

Neighborhood associations were encouraged to become involved early, obtain information from City staff, communicate directly with developers when appropriate and consider professional or expert assistance when necessary.

PSTA — Caryn Nesmith

Caryn Nesmith, Deputy Director of Government & Community Affairs for PSTA, provided an overview of public transportation services available in Clearwater.

The presentation included fixed-route buses, trolley and ferry services, as well as PSTA's newer on-demand **Snapper and Grouper** programs. PSTA recently elected to continue the Snapper service and is working to increase public awareness and ridership.

Additional information was provided regarding the planned replacement of the Park Street transit facility, Direct Connect, PSTA Access/ADA paratransit services, fares, senior and veteran programs, and other transportation assistance.

Clearwater Police Department Report

Lt. Justin Howard, District 3, provided the Clearwater Police Department report.

Lt. Howard reported that burglaries and auto thefts remain down year-to-date and reviewed other recent crime statistics. CPD continues to emphasize traffic enforcement throughout Clearwater, including school-zone and school-bus enforcement following the beginning of the school year.

Members asked questions regarding e-bike enforcement and other neighborhood concerns. Lt. Howard encouraged neighborhood representatives to contact him regarding ongoing issues and emphasized CPD's commitment to community policing and communication with residents.

City & Neighborhood Update — Kyree Sellman

Kyree Sellman provided City and neighborhood updates, including:

- The **Adopt-a-Drain program** and an upcoming volunteer recruitment and recognition event.
- **Drew Street construction** and related road and intersection closures.
- Upcoming City budget meetings.
- The City's **Request-a-Speaker program** for neighborhood associations and community organizations.
- FEMA's updated flood insurance rate mapping for the **Alligator Creek watershed** and upcoming community information sessions.

CNC Membership Business

A motion was made to approve the **August 3, 2026 CNC meeting minutes**. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved.

Treasurer **Cheryl Acton** provided the Treasurer and Membership Report. The CNC Foundation balance was reported as **\$6,578.18** and the CNC reported \$2166.99. We had 7 new CNC members; those present were introduced.

Cheryl Acton will assume responsibility for **CNC membership outreach and the membership initiative previously handled by Jared Leone**.

New Business

Candidate Endorsement Process: Patrick reported on the Board's discussion regarding CNC's candidate endorsement process. CNC does not plan to make an endorsement in the current November election. Future City Council endorsements, if considered, will involve CNC membership in the decision-making process.

A member proposed establishing a formal endorsement process that could include an independent endorsement committee, standardized candidate questionnaires, candidate interviews, background review, Board consideration and final membership approval. The proposal will be retained for future consideration.

Membership & Guest Procedures: CNC discussed reviewing procedures for verifying membership and developing appropriate guidelines for guests attending CNC meetings. The discussion included individuals attending to learn about CNC as prospective members and candidates or campaign-related guests. No new rules were adopted at this meeting.

Website: Secretary **Chelsea Gird** will chair an initiative to review the CNC website, identify current issues and recommend improvements. Members were encouraged to provide feedback regarding problems or suggested changes.

Holiday Party: Planning will begin for the annual CNC holiday party, including securing a venue and considering member recognition or awards.

2027 Officers: Members discussed conducting the CNC officer elections in November rather than during the holiday party. CNC bylaws and officer eligibility requirements were reviewed. The goal is to establish a nominating committee by the October meeting and conduct elections in accordance with CNC bylaws, allowing the holiday party to remain primarily a social event.

Old Business & Committee Reports

Level the Playing Field Committee: The committee reported on its initial meeting and discussed ways CNC and neighborhood organizations could obtain additional professional assistance when addressing development matters.

The committee is exploring a potential relationship involving supervised law students and attorneys who may be able to provide legal research or assistance relating to development matters. Potential funding requirements, structure and feasibility remain under review.

Members also discussed the possibility of a future **candidate forum involving the League of Women Voters**. Additional information will be sought regarding whether a forum can be arranged and what resources or assistance would be necessary.

Next Meeting

The next regular CNC meeting is scheduled for:

Monday, October 5, 2026

Clearwater Fire Training Facility

Adjournment

The meeting was **adjourned at 8:45 p.m.**