Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition (CNC)

Meeting Minutes — October 5, 2026

Location: Clearwater Fire Training Facility
Social Half Hour: 6:30 p.m.
Meeting: 7:00 p.m. – 8:46 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Patrick Raftery called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests. Attendees were asked to hold questions until the conclusion of presentations when possible.

2. Clearwater Police Department Community Update

Lt. Shante Dean provided the Clearwater Police Department update on behalf of Lt. Howard.

Lt. Dean reviewed recent activity statistics, including approximately 19,000 calls for service, 2,770 reports, and 4,394 traffic stops. Additional statistics included five grand theft auto reports, 37 burglaries, two robberies, 110 ordinance-related incidents, and 324 field interview reports.

Upcoming events highlighted included National Night Out at Countryside Mall, the Clearwater Beach Trunk-or-Treat, the Clearwater Jazz Festival, and Turkey Trot.

During questions, Lt. Dean discussed traffic and pedestrian safety, enforcement involving e-bikes and other motorized devices, speeding and traffic enforcement, Pier 60 construction, crime trends and police visibility. She noted that traffic enforcement and officer visibility are important components of CPD's crime-deterrence efforts.

3. Forward Pinellas Update

Nousheen Rahman, Principal Planner, Forward Pinellas, provided an overview of Forward Pinellas and its role in countywide transportation and land-use planning.

Forward Pinellas combines the functions of the **Pinellas Planning Council** and the **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** and serves Pinellas County's incorporated municipalities and unincorporated areas.

Rahman discussed transportation project prioritization and Forward Pinellas grant opportunities. Approximately **$150,000 is available for planning grants**, with minimum awards of approximately $35,000, and approximately **$3 million is available for capital/construction**

grants. Skinner Boulevard in Dunedin was provided as an example of a project that progressed from planning through construction with assistance from Forward Pinellas funding.

Rahman also discussed Forward Pinellas' countywide land-use role, corridor planning, zoning assistance to local governments, economic analysis, and 3D development visualization.

An update was provided regarding the legislatively directed exploration of combining the Pinellas, Hillsborough and Pasco MPOs. Th**e board** is under consideration as a 25-member regional board, with eight seats proposed for Pinellas County, including one Clearwater representative. The proposal has not been finalized or approved.

During questions, Rahman reported that Forward Pinellas has approximately 18 staff members. Discussion included the Drew Street project, roadway safety improvements, congestion, mass transit, the 25-year Long Range Transportation Plan and the Pinellas Trail.

4. Clearwater Tree Code Update

Marcie Stenmark, Long-Range Planning Manager, City of Clearwater, presented proposed updates to Clearwater's tree regulations. City Planning and Development staff members Lauren Mathews, Scott Perlman, and Mike Quincy were also introduced.

The City is reviewing Clearwater's regulations alongside Pinellas County's recently updated tree ordinance. Goals include protecting Clearwater's urban forest, simplifying and reorganizing the tree code, improving readability, and making the permitting process easier to understand.

Potential changes discussed included:

- Consolidating Clearwater's seven tree-rating classifications into a simpler four-grade system similar to Pinellas County's.
- Establishing clearer tree-replacement requirements based on tree size and condition.
- Credits for removal of nuisance/invasive species.
- Possible no-fee permits for hazardous-tree removal and removals associated with declared emergencies.
- Credits for trees exceeding minimum requirements.
- Clarification of right-of-way tree replacement and tree relocation provisions.
- Potential use of trees obtained through City tree giveaways toward replacement requirements.
- Review of existing tree-related fees and fines.
- Updates to artificial-turf language to comply with state requirements.

The amendments will address both standalone residential tree-removal permits and tree removal associated with construction/building permits.

Staff reported that Public Works has also received grant funding for a **tree-canopy assessment and urban forestry management plan**, which is expected to evaluate Clearwater's existing canopy, storm-related losses, and areas with lower tree-canopy coverage.

The City announced upcoming opportunities and tentative review dates, including a community meeting at St. Petersburg College; a **virtual meeting on October 20 at 5:30 p.m.**; a Development Review Committee review on **November 5; a** Community Development Board review on **December 15;** and tentative City Council readings on **January 14 and February 4, 2027**.

5. Keep P3 Green / Landings Update

Melissa Davis and Beth Davis, founding members of Keep P3 Green, provided an update regarding proposals for the Landings property.

The group discussed two proposals: a large sports and entertainment complex and a proposal from **Golf Associates**, the property's current operator.

Melissa Davis summarized issues raised during the City's Evaluation Committee review. Regarding the sports/entertainment proposal, issues discussed included financing and financial projections, project risk, requested lease terms and rent abatement, requested tourism-tax funding, developer/team experience, airport proximity, pond relocation and traffic-mitigation costs.

The Golf Associates proposal was described as continuing and improving the existing golf-course operation. The presenters noted that the Evaluation Committee viewed the existing operator's experience positively while also questioning the extent of new amenities or significant changes proposed.

Keep P3 Green requested that the City slow or pause the process and hold **two widely advertised public meetings** to increase public awareness and participation. The presenters encouraged members to review available information and share their views with City Council.

Patrick Raftery discussed the proposal timeline and encouraged residents to review the information presented at the upcoming City Council work session and participate in the public process.

The dates discussed were an **October 12 City Council work session** and an **October 14 Council meeting**, with a possible subsequent Council action on November 5.

6. CNC Membership Business

Approval of September Minutes

The minutes of the **September 14, 2026 CNC meeting** had previously been posted to the CNC website.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as posted.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Cheryl Acton reported that the CNC Foundation balance remained **$6,578.18**, with no activity.

CNC received **$190 in deposits**, consisting of one $40 group membership and six individual memberships. The **committee** reported a $14 expense for snacks from the previous meeting.

Acton reported that implementing **Zelle** has simplified membership payments, while checks and cash continue to be accepted.

New members were recognized.

7. New Business

Holiday Party

Nancy Diaz, Holiday Party Committee Chair, reported that the CNC Holiday Party is planned for:

Monday, December 7, 2026
5:00–7:30 p.m.

The committee is seeking confirmation to again hold the event in the VIP/View area at The Sound. An alternate location will be identified if necessary.

The event will be a social gathering for CNC members and spouses, with City Council members and other guests invited. Light refreshments will be provided.

Nominating Committee

Nancy Diaz reported that applications for the 2027 CNC Board closed October 4.

Qualified candidates reported were:

- **President:** Patrick Raftery
- **Vice President:** Chelsea Gird
- **Treasurer:** Cheryl Acton
- **Secretary:** No qualified applicant at the close of the original application period

Members discussed eligibility requirements under the CNC bylaws, including membership requirements for Board candidates. Members expressed differing views on whether to reconsider the requirements for the Secretary position; however, they agreed that the existing bylaws should govern the current election process.

After discussion, the committee reopened the Secretary application period for one additional week. Applicants must meet the existing qualifications established by the bylaws.

The other Board positions were unopposed.

8. Old Business / Committee Reports

Level the Playing Field

The committee met September 15 and will meet again **October 17 at 10:00 a.m.**

The committee continues to explore options for providing neighborhoods/CNC with greater resources when participating in significant land-use matters, including potential access to legal counsel and expert assistance.

The committee emphasized that this remains a work in progress. Any substantive proposal or decision will be brought back to the CNC membership before action is taken.

City Council Oversight

Patrick Raftery reported that he continues to prepare summaries of City Council meetings highlighting matters relevant to CNC members and Clearwater neighborhoods.

The September 17 report was distributed, and a report covering the October 1 Council meeting will be provided for distribution.

Code Compliance

An update was provided regarding a property in the Woodgate 1 & 2 neighborhood. The homeowner has reportedly been approved for assistance through **Pinellas Recovery** to rehabilitate/rebuild the property.

Further action will be held while that assistance proceeds and may be revisited if circumstances change.

Dashboard Committee

It was reported that implementation of City performance dashboards remains incomplete.

Dashboards were reported as still unavailable for several major City functions, including Police, Fire, Parks & Recreation, Economic Development, roads and sidewalks, stormwater and engineering.

The City did not complete dashboard implementation in 2026, and a similar implementation goal has been carried forward into the City's 2027 goals.

Transportation

The committee referenced the recent PSTA presentation and continuing communication with PSTA representatives regarding transportation matters.

9. Community Announcements

Members were advised of electronic public-comment options related to the October 14 Council meeting.

Clearwater Sister Cities is seeking an additional host family for a **male high-school exchange student from Nagano, Japan**, visiting **October 21–30, 2026**.

The City's **Adopt-a-Drain recognition event** will be held **October 21 from 5:30–7:00 p.m.** on the rooftop of the Clearwater Main Library.

10. November Annual Meeting

Following discussion regarding the CNC bylaws and the timing of Board elections, **Chelsea Gird made a motion to move/designate the Annual Meeting to November 16, 2026, to align with the bylaws regarding Board voting. Cheryl Acton seconded the motion.**

Vote: All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

The **CNC Annual Meeting will be held Monday, November 16, 2026.**

The Secretary position will remain open to qualified applicants for one additional week, and the Nominating Committee will provide an update.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately **8:46 p.m.**