



HARBOUR COMMISSION MINUTES

**Thursday, October 23, 2025
Meeting Room B-8
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648**

CHRIS NIELSEN, Chair
VAN VU, Vice Chair
WILLIAM LARKIN, Board Member
KIMBERLEY MILLIGAN, Board Member
CRAIG SCHAUPPNER, Board Member
MEL WILLIAMS, Board Member
DIANE WOOD, Board Member

COUNCIL LIAISONS

PAT BURNS, Councilmember Liaison
GRACEY VAN DER MARK, Councilwoman Liaison

STAFF

ERIC MCCOY, Fire Chief
ERIC DIETERMAN, Marine Safety Division Chief
KEVIN JUSTEN, Senior Management Analyst

CALLED TO ORDER

Nielsen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Nielsen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Larkin, Milligan, Nielsen, Schauppner, Vu, Williams

Commissioner Absent: Wood

Staff Present: Justen, McCoy, McDonald, Villa

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was one public comment: Amory Hanson reiterated his support for the Harbour Commission's proposed revisions to *Municipal Code Chapters 13.32, 13.36, 13.40, 13.44* as currently written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 25, 2025

MOTION: A motion was made by Vu, seconded by Schauppner, to approve the September 25, 2025, meeting minutes.

The motion carried by the following vote, 6-0:

AYES: Larkin, Milligan, Nielsen, Schauppner, Vu, Williams

NOES: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. *Infrastructure Ad Hoc Committee*

Williams provided a report and handout on Harbour seawall construction, repair, governance and related issues.

2. *Vessels and Watercraft Ad Hoc Committee*

Williams said that this ad hoc committee has not met.

3. *Water Quality Ad Hoc Committee*

Schauppner highlighted the oyster restoration project in Huntington Harbour and provided a handout and recommendation for Kaysha Kenney to receive the Mayor's Spotlight Award for her work on the project.

MOTION: A motion was made by Schauppner, seconded by Nielsen, to recommend Kaysha Kenney for the Mayor's Spotlight Award.

The motion carried by the following vote, 6-0:

AYES: Larkin, Milligan, Nielsen, Schauppner, Vu, Williams, Wood

NOES: None

Justen said that he would provide the recommendation to the City Manager's Office and inform Commissioners of the date, time and place of the award presentation, if approved.

Nielsen asked about the Harbour Commission recommendation to the Public Works Department for a cutout basin for trash diversion in the Harbour. Justen said that the recommendation and report was provided to Public Works Engineering staff and they will evaluate the recommendation and report back to the Commission. Larkin asked about the flood channel clean out trap clean-up schedule and Justen said that he would follow-up and report back.

STAFF COMMENTS

Justen announced that he is arranging a boat tour of Harbour infrastructure for Harbour Commissioners in late 2025 or early 2026. He also said that the Public Works Department would like to do a presentation on Harbour bridges for the Commission. Division Chief McDonald said that he provided the statistics for Harbour rescues and other Marine Safety responses in the Harbour for Commissioners. Some Commissioners said that they did not receive it and Justen said that he would check and resend it, if necessary. Justen also reported that the Harbour Commission recommendations for revisions to Municipal Code Chapter 13 have been reviewed by the Director of Library and Community Services and are now with the Fire Chief for final review. After that the City Attorney's Office will prepare the ordinance for City Council consideration. He said that he would inform the Commissioners when it is on the agenda.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Vu said that the Mayor's Ball will be held on November 21, 2025 and Justen asked him to forward the flyer to him for distribution to the Commission. Nielsen said that he is arranging for Jacquelyn Chung of CPS Consulting to provide a presentation on Harbour construction permitting to the Commission at a future meeting. He also highlighted potential future presentations to the Commission, including:

- Coastal Permit Specialists
- Public Works presentation on Harbour bridge projects
- Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Captain Caldwell
- City drone use presentation by the Police Department

Schauppner asked when Sergeant West would be retiring and Villa said it would be in February 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Nielsen proposed cancelling the November 27, 2025 and December 25, 2025 meetings and instead meeting on December 4, 2025.

MOTION: A motion was made by Larkin, seconded by Williams, at 5:37 p.m. to cancel the November 27, 2025 and December 25, 2025 meetings and adjourn to a special meeting on December 4, 2025.

The motion carried by the following vote, 6-0:

AYES: Larkin, Milligan Nielsen, Schauppner, Vu, Williams

NOES: None

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Harbour Commission will be on December 4, 2025, at a time and location to be announced.

Infrastructure Ad Hoc Committee Briefing

Year of Bulkhead/Seawall Construction

- Balboa Island (Newport Beach) – 1929-1939
- Naples Island (Long Beach) – Late 1930s
- Huntington Harbour (Huntington Beach) – 1960s

Balboa Island (Newport Beach)

- **Elevation & Flood Risk:**
 - Built on dredged sand
 - Several areas sit below high tide
- **Protection Measures:**
 - Newport Beach added a stop gap 9" seawall topper (~1.5 miles) offering roughly 10–15 years of additional protection. Completed July 24, 2018 with cost of \$1.6 million.
- **Building & Infrastructure Response:**
 - Code section 20.30.060 requires finished floor elevations to be 9 ft NAVD88 which is about 3 ft above current street level.
 - NAVD88 is a fixed, land-based reference point and not tied to the ocean's tides.
 - California Coastal Commission shows a permit application for seawall/bulkhead reinforcement that raises the wall to 10.9 ft NAVD88 with construction targeted for 2028–2033. Which is about 5 ft above current street level.
 - The City is also considering raising the streets within 30–40 years. See City's 2024 General Plan.

Naples Island (Long Beach)

- **Seawall Condition & Repairs:**
 - The 1930s-era seawalls were deemed in serious disrepair.
 - 2,148 ft of new steel seawall finished in 2020 at about \$18 million
 - Completing the remainder will require roughly \$125 million.
- **Funding & Policy Direction:**
 - There are 2,000 homes in Naples. Only 450 of them are waterfront.
 - A proposed 30-year bond is being considered to share the cost with either all Naples residents (~2,000 homes) or only waterfront homes (~ 450 homes) which Councilmember Kristina Duggan called *unsustainable*, particularly for seniors on fixed incomes.
 - Duggan stressed that seawalls are public infrastructure, historically built and maintained by the City of Long Beach, much like sidewalks—not a private homeowner duty.
 - She urged seeking federal disaster assistance and Boating & Waterways funds, emphasizing that repairs must be done comprehensively, since **piecemeal work undermines overall protection**.

Huntington Harbour (Huntington Beach)

- **Elevation and Sea-Level Rise Projections:**

- HB Public Works Grading Plan Check List (Item 60) states SFR development in HH requires finished floor elevation 10 ft NAVD88.
- HB Zoning Code 230.70 Measurement of Height
 - Datum is set at the highest point of the curb along the front of the property
 - The differential between top of subfloor and datum shall be max 2 ft. Any more will be deducted from maximum allowable ridgeline height (35 ft).
 - Exception to height limits are parapet walls not more than four feet high.
- 2016 Sea Level Rise study by Streamline West Engineering projects:
 - 11" sea level rise by 2050
 - 37" sea level rise by 2100
- UC Irvine researchers projects:
 - 6" sea level rise by 2035
 - 16" sea level rise by 2050

- **Infrastructure Context:**

- Huntington Harbour seawalls were constructed in the 1960s, about 20+ years newer than those on Naples Island (Late 1930s).
- This generational gap provides a critical planning window to develop and fund a coordinated repair and adaptation strategy before major structural degradation occurs.

- **Governance & Coordination:**

- Leaving future bulkhead maintenance as a private responsibility will lead to fragmented and delayed repairs.
- Seawalls function as a single interconnected protection system—repairs must be planned and executed Harbour-wide to ensure effectiveness.
- Waterfront Homes (695):
 - Admiralty Island: 90
 - Davenport Island: 113
 - Gilbert Island: 67
 - Humboldt Island: 225
 - Trinidad Island: 200

Next Steps

- The Infrastructure Ad Hoc committee will continue gathering information from various sources and report back to the Commission with the recommendations on taking advantage of today's planning window to avoid costly emergency work later.

**Huntington Beach Mayor's Spotlight Award Nomination
for
Ms. Kaysha Kenney**

The Huntington Beach Harbour Commission takes pleasure in recommending Ms. Kaysha Kenney, Orange County Coastkeeper Marine Restoration Director, for the Huntington Beach Mayor's Spotlight Award. Through her selfless dedication and tireless efforts, Ms. Kenney implemented an extremely successful, inaugural native oyster restoration project in Huntington Harbour. Her expertise and unrelenting determination led to the deployment of over 250 shell strings by nearly 90 Huntington Beach residents in an effort to cultivate native Olympia Oysters. In coordination with the Huntington Harbour Yacht Club and the Coalition for Clean Waters, Ms. Kenney expertly instructed Huntington Harbour residents on the purpose and proper procedures for recruiting oysters; efficiently distributed the shell strings to eager participants; and effectively collected the residents' recruited oysters and pertinent data. After a six-month deployment period, from April to September of 2025, Ms. Kenney and her team collected 137 shell strings yielding 852 oysters. An unequivocal success for the first ever shell string project in Huntington Beach, the oysters cultivated under Ms. Kenney's leadership were used to create a living shoreline to abate tidal erosion and enhance the marine ecosystem through improved water quality in Huntington Harbour, Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge and Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. Additionally, Ms. Kenney's public outreach led to national recognition for Huntington Beach as a City that supports integral ecology and embraces innovative solutions to address complex environmental issues. Her efforts set the standards for community involvement in a holistic approach to restoration projects. Through her nonpareil enthusiasm and professional acumen, Ms. Kenney brought great credit upon herself, Orange County Coastkeeper, the residents of Huntington Harbour and the City of Huntington Beach.

