A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 2026 at 9:00 a.m., in the County Commission Chambers, Lake County Administration Building, Tavares, Florida. Commissioners present at the meeting were: Leslie Campione, Chairman; Sean Parks, Vice Chairman; Anthony Sabatini; Kirby Smith; and Timothy Morris. Others present were: Jennifer Barker, County Manager; Melanie Marsh, County Attorney; Misty Spahn, Executive Office Manager, County Manager's Office; Gary J. Cooney, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller; Mary Burns, Accounting Director; and Josh Pearson, Deputy Clerk.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commr. Campione welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that it was being streamed on the County website; furthermore, they were also broadcasting the meeting via Zoom.

Lake County Fire Chaplain Rick Spence stated that the following Friday would mark 25 years since the horrific attacks on their nation on September 11, 2001, and he provided comments about this. He then gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commr. Campione relayed that there would be a ceremony on the following Friday at 9:00 a.m. in the County Administration Building rotunda, and that anyone in the community who was looking for a place to commemorate, remember and contemplate on this anniversary of 9/11 could join them.

AGENDA UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Barker, County Manager, stated that the transportation construction program document was added for Tab 20, and that the tentative budget book was added for Tab 27.

MINUTES APPROVAL

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the minutes for the BCC meeting of July 28, 2026 (Regular Meeting) as presented.

CITIZEN QUESTION AND COMMENT PERIOD

Commr. Campione remarked that anyone who had joined the meeting through Zoom using their phone may press *9 to virtually raise their hand, and that anyone participating on Zoom could click the raise hand button to identify that they wished to speak. She added that everyone would have three minutes to speak, and that after three minutes, an alarm would sound to let them know that their time was up.

Mr. Pat Kelley, a resident of the City of Minneola, asked for consideration for a future agenda item to adopt Florida Statute 193.703, Assessment Reduction Ordinance. He explained that the ordinance allowed one to receive an assessment reduction of 20 percent of the value increase of the property while a grandparent lived there, opining that it would help people who did not need the additional tax burden and those who lost portability.

Commr. Sabatini asked if this was the first time that this had been brought to the Board's attention.

Commr. Campione did not think they ever had anyone explain how it was affecting them directly.

Commr. Sabatini relayed that he would be in favor of staff bringing this up as a formally presented item, and then the Board could discuss the numbers and properties they thought it would affect.

Commr. Campione related that they could add it to an agenda and have a discussion about it.

Mr. Kelley relayed his understanding that once they adopted it, it was not retroactive.

Commr. Parks recalled that the Board had been supportive of generational housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Commr. Campione opined that this would go hand in hand with the County's ADU policy, particularly for reinforcing the family unit.

Commr. Morris asked how difficult it would be to get the numbers.

Ms. Barker relayed that they would work with staff and that it should not be difficult.

Ms. Melanie Marsh, County Attorney, asked if the Board wanted to bring this back before or after November 2026, noting that if Amendment 3 passed, they would see substantial decreases in their homestead property tax.

Commr. Smith expressed support for bringing it up once they had all the information, which he assumed would be after November 2026.

Commr. Sabatini indicated support for having it done as soon as they could, and opined that they could make a decision post-November 2026.

Ms. Lucina Alvarado, an owner of property near Florida's Turnpike in the Town of Montverde area, indicated that they owned a radio station and were facing issues since the construction of the Hills of Montverde. She opined that Hills of Montverde had been blocking the easement access to her property with trees, signs and a fence. She asked the Board to review this case, recalling that the case had previously been reviewed and that they came to the conclusion that prior to this issue, they gave her easement access which was on public record. She clarified that she had no access to her property.

Ms. Marsh commented that the Public Works Department was there in the previous week, and that they did a survey of the easement and overlaid it where one could see the landscape buffer for the subdivision. She relayed her understanding that the trees had been removed and that there was a sign in the easement; therefore, they had been cited by the Office of Code Enforcement, and it was being handled through the code enforcement process.

Ms. Alvarado inquired about the fence.

Mr. Mike Olka, Engineering and Operations Director for the Public Works Department, indicated that he was not aware of a fence, and that if the survey showed a fence, then it would be removed from that right of way. He recalled that there had been prior discussions with the resident regarding access, and that they were supposed to be accessing through the platted right of way and then using that to access their ingress and egress.

Mr. Banks Helfrich, a candidate for State House District 25 and a farmer in the Clay Road District, said that a farm tip of the day was that earthworms ate everything organic and that this was one way of keeping the landfill smaller. He then questioned if political discourse could coexist with kindness, compassion and decency, and he discussed this, opining that it could. He also mentioned that property taxes funded police, fire service, emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics, and he expressed support for tax cuts, though not at the expense of their first responders; furthermore, he opposed Amendment 3.

Mr. John Labriola, with the Christian Family Coalition, mentioned that the current week was the one-year anniversary of the assassination of Mr. Charlie Kirk, and he thanked Commissioner Sabatini for sponsoring a resolution to name a road after Mr. Kirk. He mentioned that several County Commissions had agreed to do a Charlie Kirk Day of Remembrance, and he asked if the Board could pass a resolution to declare October 14, Mr. Kirk's birthday, as the Charlie Kirk Day of Remembrance. He also expressed support for asking if there could be a library display showing Mr. Kirk's books as a historical figure during his birthday week.

Ms. Susan Collins, with Salt and Light Ministry at Church of the Lakes in the City of Leesburg, indicated their primary focus was civic engagement and faithful citizenship. She requested that the Board name October 14 as a day of remembrance for Mr. Kirk, and said that Mr. Kirk had been an inspiration to their ministry. She opined that by officially recognizing October 14 as a day of remembrance and partnering with the community by featuring Mr. Kirk's books in the library, they could take a meaningful step toward bridging divides and fostering unity.

Mr. Jonathan Walker, a resident of Lake County, requested the remembrance of Mr. Kirk's birthday, and he discussed Mr. Kirk, opining that Mr. Kirk encouraged them to speak and think.

Ms. Kristin Nelson, a resident of Lake County, asked the Board to declare October 14 as a Charlie Kirk Day of Remembrance in honor of Mr. Kirk's birthday as Sumter, Marion, Gilcrest, Jefferson and Flagler Counties had decided to do, and to instruct library staff to set up a week-long display of the eight books Mr. Kirk wrote.

Ms. Molly Coletti, a resident of Lake County, agreed with previous speakers.

Commr. Sabatini made a motion to recognize the following Thursday as a day of remembrance for Mr. Kirk.

Commr. Campione clarified that they would need to put this item on the agenda.

Commr. Sabatini said that this was fine, and that it would be in retrospect.

Commr. Parks seconded the motion.

Commr. Campione mentioned that the County could ask libraries to include books and do a display, though it was not something they could require.

A resident indicated that October 14 was the day they were looking for.

Commr. Smith stated that there would be a Board meeting on October 13, 2026.

Commr. Sabatini amended his motion to include this date.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved to place an item on an agenda to create October 14 as a day of remembrance in honor of Mr. Kirk's life.

Mr. Suhail Chhabra, representing the hospitals, expressed gratitude for the Local Provider Participation Fund amendment.

Mr. Egor Emery, a resident of Commission District 4, thanked the Board for the educational opportunities that these meetings provided, and opined that there seemed to be a significant weakness in the conditional use permit (CUP) process, as a single word could render it useless. He recalled discussion about hyperscale data centers, and said that the Board had indicated that they were considering using the CUP process to protect everyone from the dangers these installations presented; however, he no longer had any confidence in the CUP process. He opined that the industrial part of the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) possibly did not protect them since a hyperscale data center would immediately be approved or not need to be approved, and he expressed concerns for any installation which used the quantities of water which seemed to be used by hyperscale data centers. He also expressed concerns for land use and air quality, opining that the County needed to look at the planning process to allow the Board to protect them from undesirable uses.

ORLANDO CAT CAFÉ PROCLAMATION 2026-78

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Orlando Cat Café Proclamation 2026-78 and Workforce Development Proclamation 2026-84.

Commr. Parks opined that the way a community treated their animals would tell one much about it, and said that it was something that the current and past Boards had taken seriously. He said that the Orlando Cat Café had mixed a business idea which had drawn many people from Central Florida and around the state to Lake County to adopt 3,700 sheltered cats and kittens, and he read and presented Proclamation 2026-78 to individuals with the Orlando Cat Café.

Ms. Sandra Cagan, with the Orlando Cat Café, thanked the Board, and said that this recognition was especially meaningful because it came as they were celebrating their 10th anniversary on the current day. She recalled that when the Orlando Cat Café first opened a decade prior, they had a simple dream to create a place where people could enjoy a cup of coffee while giving homeless cats a second chance at finding loving families, noting that the dream had grown beyond anything she imagined. She commented that over the past 10 years, 3,700 cats and kittens had found their forever home through Orlando Cat Café, and that each adoption represented a life saved, a family made whole, and another reminder that businesses could succeed while making a lasting impact on their communities. She indicated that they would not be supporting this milestone without the help of the County, and that the County had helped them grow into a destination which attracted visitors from around the world while making a meaningful difference at home. She opined that this proclamation also belonged to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Florida, their dedicated staff and volunteers, their loyal guests, their community partners, and each family who opened their hearts to an adopted cat. She thanked the Board for believing in their mission and recognizing that compassion, entrepreneurship and community service could go hand in hand, noting that they were proud to call Lake County home.

She said that they looked forward to continuing their work of saving lives, strengthening their community, and proving that sometimes the smallest paws left the largest footprints.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROCLAMATION 2026-84

Commr. Campione read and presented Proclamation 2026-84 to Ms. Pam Nabors, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for CareerSource Central Florida. She mentioned that CareerSource was able to help those who had lost their jobs due to the Kroger situation and offer a path to training and finding other employment, and she thanked them for this.

Ms. Nabors thanked the Board for recognizing and proclaiming September 2026 as Workforce Development Month in Lake County, and relayed that they were grateful for the County's partnership and were proud to stand with them in their shared commitment to strengthening businesses, supporting residents and enhancing quality of life across the community. She also mentioned that her organization had a special recognition for the County because their leadership had provided a steady hand following the news of the Kroger closing, noting that this had impacted hundreds of workers and families in the community. She explained that they were able to help through the Future Ready Lake program, and that they were still helping many impacted workers prepare for new careers, access support and overcome barriers during a time of transition. She relayed that the County's investment helped create a pathway to new opportunities at a critical moment, and she presented Lake County with CareerSource's Community Impact Award which recognized the County for making a meaningful difference through community partnership, advocacy and action. She looked forward to honoring the County alongside their other award winners at their Rise and Thrive Event on September 30, 2026, honoring their 30th anniversary, in front of the Central Florida business and leadership community.

Commr. Morris thanked Ms. Meg Brew, Director for the Office of Tourism and Economic Development, and Ms. Kathleen Dial, Executive Director of Development Services, for working on the Kroger item.

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER'S CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Smith and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller's Consent Agenda, Items 1 and 2, as follows:

List of Warrants

Notice is hereby provided of warrants paid prior to this meeting, pursuant to Chapter 136.06 (1) of the Florida Statutes, which shall be incorporated into the Minutes as attached Exhibit A and filed in the Board Support Division of the Clerk's Office.

Lake County's Semi-Annual Investment Report

Lake County's Semi-Annual Investment Report of June 30, 2026 is hereby provided.

COUNTY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Morris and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the Consent Agenda, Tabs 5 through 14, as follows:

PROCLAMATIONS

Recommend approval and adoption of Constitution Week Proclamation 2026-22, per Commissioner Sean Parks.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Recommend approval for the County Manager, or designee to execute on behalf of Lake County, as one of five equal remaindermen of a 1/3 remainder interest, all documents necessary to facilitate the sale of 2619 Gables Drive, Eustis, Florida, including but not limited to the listing agreement, and, upon sale, the deed, closing documents, and any other necessary documentation.

The fiscal impact cannot be determined at this time. (Revenue).

Recommend approval to authorize the retention of outside counsel, Roper Townsend Sutphen, to represent Lake County in Florida Action Committee, Inc. v. Mark Glass, et al.

The fiscal impact cannot be determined at this time.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Recommend approval:

1. Of the County's annual loss control insurance policies with Princeton and other insurance companies; and

2. Of the annual brokerage fee for professional services; and 3. To authorize the Office of Procurement Services to execute all supporting documentation.

The estimated fiscal impact is $3,369,728 (expenditure) and will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Emergency Management

Recommend approval:

1. To accept the Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance (EMPA) Trust Fund Base Grant; and

2. To execute the EMPA Trust Fund Base Grant Agreement for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 in the amount of $105,806; and

3. To authorize the County Manager to execute future amendments/modifications that do not involve a financial impact; and

4. To authorize the Director of the Office of Emergency Management to execute Exhibit 2 — Single Audits, Audit Compliance Certification (page 17); and

5. To authorize the Director of the Office of Emergency Management to execute Exhibit 3 — EM Director Certification (page 18).

The fiscal impact is $105,806 (revenue/expenditure - grant funded) and will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

Fire Rescue

Recommend approval:

1. Of Contracts 26-305 for EMS Medical Supplies and Equipment as needed with the following pool of vendors: Bound Tree Medical, LLC (Dublin, OH); Henry Schein, Inc. (Melville, NY); Life-Assist, Inc. (Rancho Cordova, CA); Medline Industries, LP (Northfield, IL); Physio-Control, Inc. (Redmond, WA); and

2. To authorize the Office of Procurement Services to execute the agreements and all supporting documentation.

The estimated fiscal impact is $1,555,000 (expenditure) and is included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget. Future annual expenditures shall at no time exceed the available Fiscal Year Budgeted funds.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Housing and Community Services

Recommend approval of a Subrecipient Agreement with LovExtension, Inc. for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to support county-wide food delivery services to elderly and disabled Lake County citizens.

The fiscal impact is estimated at $222,561 (expenditure - grant funded) and is within, and will not exceed, the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Fleet Management

Recommend approval:

1. Of Contracts 27-904A, 27-904B, and 27-904C with Beard Equipment Company (Ocala, FL), Dobbs Equipment, LLC (Riverview, FL) and Kraken Hydraulics, LLC (Eustis, FL) to furnish repairs to John Deere branded Construction Equipment on an as-needed basis; and

2. To authorize the Office of Procurement Services to execute the agreements and all supporting documentation.

The estimated annual fiscal impact is $100,000 (expenditure) and is included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget request.

Recommend approval:

1. Of Contracts 27-903A and 27-903B with Great Southern Equipment (Orlando, FL) and Kraken Hydraulics, LLC (Eustis, FL) to furnish repairs to County-owned Gradall manufactured operating equipment on an as-needed basis; and

2. To authorize the Office of Procurement Services to execute the agreements and all supporting documentation.

The estimated annual fiscal impact is $80,000 (expenditure) and will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget request.

PARKS AND WATER RESOURCES

Parks and Trails

Recommend approval of a First Amendment to the Maintenance Agreement with John Mixon, Deborah Mixon, and Christine Sloan relating to the Woods-Boyd Cemetery and Memorial Gardens located between Villa City Road and Stratton Avenue, in Groveland (a/k/a Alternate Key 1009413).

There is no fiscal impact from this action. Commission District 1.

PRESENTATION BY OPIOID TASK FORCE

Deputy Chief John Simpson, with the Office of Fire Rescue and representing the Lake County Opioid Task Force as the Vice Chair, discussed the Lake County Drug Treatment Court budget for fiscal year (FY) 2027. He explained that the opioid settlement funding was divided among the Counties, and that Lake County was going to receive just over $12.9 million over the next 18 years. He said that when this funding was assigned to Lake County, an opioid abatement plan was established which included the following three parts: establishing and implementing a Drug Treatment Court; expanding medical and direct services, which included but were not limited to warm hand-off programs, treatment, recovery, and support services; and public information. He then relayed the following historical information: the Lake County Opioid Abatement Plan to include Drug Treatment Court was approved by the Board on December 13, 2021, noting that the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and other issues delayed the work of the task force, which was reconstituted and reconvened in November 2024; year one funding for the Drug Treatment Court was approved by the Board in July 2025; Administrative Order L-2025-33 established Drug Treatment Court in Lake County, noting that this was allowed by Chapter 397.334, Florida Statutes; funding agreements were approved by the Board on April 28, 2026; and the Drug Treatment Court was currently operational. He displayed the court administration budget, noting

that all line items except for one were the same as in the last fiscal year, specifying that the increase of 5.6 percent for administrative staff recognized the County wage increase and the benefit cost for that position. He related that the FY 2027 budget request was $444,462, which was an increase of $3,912 or 0.89 percent, and that all expenses in the budget were approved for use under Schedule A and/or Schedule B and would be fully funded out of the opioid settlement funding. He stated that the Opioid Task Force recommended continuation of the Lake County Drug Treatment Court under operation of the Office of Court Administration and the direction of the Judiciary, and that if approved, this proposed budget would be included in the FY 2027 budget.

Commr. Campione expressed appreciation for the work and the thought that went into this.

Commr. Smith said that much work had been put into this.

On a motion by Commr. Smith, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the Fiscal Year 2027 recommended Drug Treatment Court budget.

PUBLIC HEARING: RESOLUTION FOR SOLID WASTE ASSESSMENTS

Ms. Jaime Stewart, Director for the Office of Management and Budget, provided the following information: the solid waste assessment was used to fund the collection, management and disposal of residential solid waste and recovered materials in unincorporated Lake County; assessment rates must be set annually and were included in the truth in millage (TRIM) notice; vacant lots were not assessed; the assessment could not be used to fund countywide services such as landfill operations, convenience centers and hazardous waste disposal; and rates reflected the adjustment to match increasing contract costs for hauling and disposal. She displayed the rates for the FY 2027 proposed budget, noting that they were a $37 increase from the current rate.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Smith mentioned that this was an enterprise fund, and that the cost was what it was.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Smith and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Resolution 2026-100 for Solid Waste Assessments for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2026, and the rates of assessment and the assessment roll.

PUBLIC HEARING: RESOLUTION FOR FIRE ASSESSMENTS

Ms. Stewart provided the following information: the fire assessment was used to fund fire protection services such as fire suppression, fire prevention, fire building inspections, and basic life support (BLS) services; it could not fund advanced life support (ALS) services; the assessment rates were calculated based on call data and the distribution of incidents, the allocation of resources and budget, and the proportionate share of each land use; and the total estimated revenue for FY 2027 was about $54.5 million. She showed a breakdown of the most recent fire assessment study, which had been presented in May 2026, and said that staff was recommending to implement a tiered residential category for the fire assessment based on the most recent study with no further changes to the current assessment rates.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Smith stated that he did not agree with the assessment of vacant land.

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried by a vote of 4-1, the Board approved Resolution 2026-99 for Fire Assessments for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2026, and the rates of assessment and the assessment roll.

Commr. Smith voted no.

PUBLIC HEARING: RESOLUTION FOR MSBU FOR INTERNAL SUBDIVISION ROADS

Ms. Stewart explained that the internal roads municipal services benefit unit (MSBU) was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in September 2023, and that its purpose was to create a process to impose an MSBU for internal residential subdivision road maintenance and a method by which to assess the maintenance costs to the residents of that subdivision; additionally, this MSBU ensured a good state of repair for roads, sidewalks and associated infrastructure. She said that it was the third year of the MSBU, and that one additional subdivision had come online, noting that this was Trailside at about $272. She showed the MSBU rates calculated for each subdivision, and remarked that it was calculated individually based on the length of the roads, sidewalks, and the number of lots.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Parks said that there was a benefit in these neighborhoods to having roads resurfaced in a timely manner with the funds being derived from those using it instead of the rest of the county.

Commr. Smith reminded everyone that these were yearly numbers, rather than monthly.

Commr. Campione recalled that this was put into place to ensure that people who lived in the neighborhoods would essentially be contributing to maintaining their roads going forward as opposed to putting that burden on the Public Works Department budget and the General Fund. She opined that this was a much improved way going forward to create a more sustainable way to maintain those roads.

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Smith and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Resolution 2026-101 for Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) for Internal Subdivision Roads for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2026, and the rate of assessment and the assessment roll.

PUBLIC HEARING: RESOLUTION FOR MSBU FOR DISTRIBUTED WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

Ms. Stewart provided the following information: the Distributed Wastewater Treatment System (DWTS) MSBU was adopted by the BCC in July 2023; this MSBU was for the residents who adopted into the program; it covered the annual fee for the cost associated with the installation and operation of their system; the annual assessment amount was increased by three percent from

the previous year, which was the maximum amount the contractor was allowed to increase the rate per the contract; and it was currently at $700.19, up from $679 in the previous year.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Morris indicated that he would be voting no because he did not believe that the County should be collecting funding on this. He relayed that he believed in the process of DWTS, though he did not think that the County should be the one responsible for collecting and paying.

Commr. Parks opined that the benefit of this was that they had a basin management action plan (BMAP) that the County and the Cities were responsible for, and that it would be costly to meet those goals. He relayed that this was another tool being voluntarily put on new developments as opposed to having the cost spread across the entire county.

Commr. Smith stated that he was still on the fence about this because the State approved these septic tank permits and was the one who came up with the BMAP; therefore, he opined that the State needed to fund this instead of giving the County an unfunded mandate. He added that he would be voting for it in the current year to see where the assessment went in the following year.

Commr. Parks mentioned that the County was starting to receive grant funding for voluntary DWTS users.

Commr. Campione opined that they were moving in the right direction as long as the grant funding was there to help people make that transition off old septic tanks, opining that it needed to be backed up with ongoing assistance. She indicated her understanding that the County had a waitlist and that people wanted to be part of the solution, and that having this financial assistance was the difference between continuing to do something which was not necessarily great for the environment and helping them make that change to assist with water quality.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried by a vote of 4-1, the Board approved Resolution 2026-102 for Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) for Distributed Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWTS) for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2026, and the rates of assessment and the assessment roll.

Commr. Morris voted no.

PUBLIC HEARING: FY 2027-2031 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Bobby Bonilla, Assistant County Manager, indicated that some of the main transportation construction funding sources included the following: legislative appropriations and grants; road impact fees; funding partnerships, sales tax capital projects; and the County Transportation Trust Fund, along with some General Fund and municipal service taxing unit (MSTU) funding as needed. He stated that there had been five new emergency projects, and that four of them had been completed in 2026 with Britt Road being from 2025. He displayed the current layout for the Public Works Department, noting that they mirrored the Commission Districts with the road impact fee districts to maximize their efficiencies and stay focused. He mentioned that the north part of the county was led by Mr. Seth Lynch, Engineering and Operations

Director for the Public Works Department, that the central district was led by Mr. Jeff Earhart, Engineering and Operations Director for the Public Works Department, and that the south district was led by Mr. Olka.

Mr. Olka said that the south district completed projects in 2026 included the Green Mountain Connector and Citrus Grove Road phase five. He indicated that there were 29 bridges in South Lake, along with four bridge culverts and two tunnels, and that the Wellness Way area had the following construction activities: the signal at United States (U.S.) Highway 27 and Wellness Way; the future four-laning of Wellness Way from U.S. Highway 27 to Hancock Road; and the Hartwood Marsh Road project. He said that for County Road (CR) 455, phases one and two were complete, and phase 3A from Lost Lake Road to Johns Lake Road had acquisition completed. He commented that the CR 455 extension from Hartwood Marsh Road to Schofield Road had a project development and environment (PD&E) study completed in 2021, and that it was roughly 5.5 miles; additionally, they had some right of way across Conserv II property, and they were looking for funding to continue this project. He related that the Hartwood Marsh Road project was widening to four lanes from U.S. Highway 27 to just past Hancock Road, and that the construction cost estimate was $29.3 million, noting that they were working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to secure the approval to bid in fall 2026. He mentioned that Hooks Street at U.S. Highway 27 would extend the eastbound left turn lane to provide additional capacity and do some access management with Minnehaha Avenue. He said that they completed intersection design in house at Hancock Road at Sunburst Lane, and that they were looking for construction funding. He commented that for the Hammock Ridge Road and Lakeshore Drive roundabout, the consultant was selected with final approval pending from FDOT and construction costs being estimated at $4 million with some right of way construction funding. He stated that the CR 561/Lakeshore Drive roundabout had been designed in 2025, that all right of way had been acquired, and that there was a possible construction agreement with the developer. He relayed that for the CR 561 at Jalarmy Road intersection, a roundabout was determined to be infeasible, and that they were going forward with a signalized intersection with turn lanes, noting that the estimated construction cost was about $1.5 million with potential cost sharing with FDOT. He mentioned that the construction safety project for Villa City Road had three possible phases or three alternative bids, and that it was out for bid currently with staff hoping to be able to do all three phases including turn lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements. He said that Citrus Grove Road phases one, three, four and five had been completed, and that phase two was currently under construction. He also reviewed lists of completed and proposed signals and sidewalks in the south district.

Mr. Earhart reviewed the following accomplishments in the central district: pedestrian improvements at East Orange Avenue and SR 44; added signals, such as at CR 44 and Bridges Road; some stormwater work at Sun Eden; and the Eudora Road roundabout which was under construction. He relayed that there were 11 bridges in the central district, and he discussed the following projects: the Eudora Road roundabout, which had an estimated cost of about $9 million and was expected to be complete by the end of FY 2027; the CR 466A widening project with an

estimated cost of around $14 million, noting that it was scheduled to be bid in November 2026 with a cost share of around $6 million or $7 million from FDOT, the Federal Government and Orange County; CR 452 shoulders and turn lanes for about $3 million funded by FDOT and $1.3 million from the County; the intersection improvement at CR 33 and CR 470/48, which was developer driven at about $2 million for impact fee credits, noting that construction would start at the beginning of 2027; and the Haynes Creek bridge at CR 44, noting that the long term solution would be a complete deck replacement at between $10 million and $15 million and that this section should be complete within the next 30 to 45 days. He reviewed completed/in-progress and proposed traffic signals, as well as sidewalks, noting that the main sidewalk they were looking at was on CR 473.

Mr. Lynch said that completed projects in the north district included the Round Lake Road east flood compensating storage pond, the Wolf Branch Road repair, and swale and ditch conveyance in Astor. He remarked that there were four bridges and five box culverts in the north district, and he reviewed the following north district projects: Round Lake Road extension, which was fully designed and in the right of way phase; the CR 437 realignment around Sorrento, noting that they were in the right of way phase; the roundabout at Sorrento Avenue and Orange Street, which was finishing up the design, though the right of way and construction were unfunded; the Sorrento Avenue sidewalks community redevelopment area (CRA) request, noting that the County was designing the sidewalks in-house from Orange Street to where the Wekiva Trail came across, and that they also had a sidewalk on the Mt. Plymouth side from the old fire station to Deal Drive; and the CR 439 culvert and wetland crossing, which was not funded, though they had done a pavement subsidence report regarding settling of the road due to some muck and other unsuitable material beneath it. He reviewed completed/in-progress and proposed traffic signals in the north district, as well as sidewalks, noting that the main sidewalk they were looking at was on CR 473.

Mr. Earhart mentioned that there was also a variety of road resurfacing projects, and that over the past seven years they resurfaced about 190 miles for around $44 million; furthermore, in the following year they were looking to resurface over 30 miles at a cost of about $8 million from a variety of funding sources. He mentioned an unmet need which would cost about $169 million to resurface the roads rated four and five, and said that they were looking to ensure that bridges stayed maintained. He summarized that the transportation program encompassed most modes of transportation, and that they received much funding through impact fees to fund as they went. He remarked that there were many funds in the south district at about $30 million, and that they had about $8 million in the central northeast/Wekiva districts; additionally, there was about $5 million in the north central district for a total of approximately $50 million in the bank currently with around $8 million being collected per year. He related that in FY 2027, they were looking at spending about $120 million, and that much of this was carryover from the previous year with grants and sales tax funds. He believed that many projects would be completed in the current year, and that they would be spending around $25 million for the next couple years; additionally, FDOT grants had decreased significantly, and other funding sources were also lowering.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Smith asked if the traffic signal at U.S. Highway 27 and Wellness Way was FDOT.

Mr. Olka confirmed this, though indicated that the County maintained and constructed it.

Commr. Smith inquired if the County paid $800,000 for something that FDOT was responsible for.

Mr. Olka relayed that it was part of their connection permit to connect Wellness Way to U.S. Highway 27, as well as their need to have the signal.

Commr. Smith asked if the sidewalks would be pulled up when they did work on CR 46.

Mr. Lynch replied that they were trying to put the sidewalks in the right place, and that there was a vision or plan by the Mt. Plymouth-Sorrento CRA for complete streets curb and gutter, though this was unfunded, noting that they had been on the Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) list of priority projects (LOPP) to try and receive grant funding. He added that they were putting this at the outside edge of the right of way, and that it could service the people currently; furthermore, they would do their best not to remove it.

Commr. Smith hoped that they would consider the work they would be doing on Sorrento Avenue in combination with spending over $250,000 on sidewalks, and opined that it would be beneficial if there was a way they could ensure that the sidewalks would not be destroyed while they were doing the road construction.

Mr. Lynch replied that staff would do their best.

Commr. Campione relayed that this construction may possibly never happen.

Commr. Smith said that he did not want to see $250,000 thrown away.

Commr. Campione hoped that when they started the process with the roundabout at Orange Avenue, this would be the beginning of a few other things occurring with complete streets. She said that if and when Hillcrest went in, which was where the CR 437 realignment was, they were also doing a large segment of road improvement. She asked if this part affected these sidewalks.

Mr. Lynch clarified that the realignment did not affect these sidewalks.

Commr. Campione inquired if this would be in the commercial district of Hillcrest.

Mr. Lynch said that it would be between these two. He elaborated that it would be from the roundabout to the east and Wekiva Trail Segment 2B, which would cross Sorrento Avenue where this would be tied in, noting that the sidewalk would be in place first.

Commr. Campione opined that they did not want to put something in and tear it out, though they were discussing many years out. She said that with the trail coming in and some of the improvements if and when Hillcrest happened, they would be piecing together some walkability.

Commr. Smith stated that he requested it to be reviewed to ensure that they did not waste $250,000 if they did not have to.

Commr. Campione mentioned a request from a mother whose son was killed in an accident at Picciola Cutoff, and she asked to ensure that they were reviewing this to see what could be done.

Commr. Morris opined that it could possibly be put on the Lake-Sumter MPO list, or be a joint project with the City of Fruitland Park. He remarked that the County could try to move this up in priority, but opined that it was not as high a priority as other items.

Commr. Campione opined that there could be certain things able to be changed.

Mr. Earhart confirmed that staff would be reviewing Picciola Cutoff and could coordinate with the City of Fruitland Park, along with talking to the Lake-Sumter MPO and getting it on the list, noting that it could potentially be in conflict with the 20 year plan.

Commr. Campione relayed that the CR 452 shoulders were mainly for the curves where there had been multiple accidents, and that the City of Eustis had approved a neighborhood in that area. She indicated that there were concerns for speeding on CR 452, and that in the past the County had put up some signs that let everyone know their speed, along with flashing lights; however, she opined that they needed to do a safety study of this stretch and formulate some traffic calming to prevent accidents.

Mr. Earhart relayed that many of the improvements were based on a safety study done about five years prior, and that it was also adding turn lanes at Goose Prairie Road and fixing a turn; furthermore, staff could consider radar signs and speeding.

Commr. Campione opined that these improvements would hopefully help people not be as impatient. She then asked about what Marion County was doing with FDOT at the intersection with CR 42.

Mr. Earhart replied that they were going to be adding a signal or roundabout.

Commr. Campione recalled that the intersection of Thrill Hill Road and CR 44A was under review.

Mr. Lynch said that they were going to consider the possibility of signalizing it with some additional signage.

Commr. Campione opined that it was a dangerous location, and she expressed concerns for a signal from the standpoint of T-bone accidents.

Mr. Lynch remarked that they were going to put light emitting diodes (LEDs) up around the stop sign, and that shaving down the hill to the west on CR 44A could possibly give a better sightline to the intersection.

Commr. Smith said that he would be more in favor of a roundabout.

Commr. Campione agreed that it would be an improvement.

Mr. Lynch mentioned that a roundabout would require much more right of way.

Commr. Campione asked if they could study the concept of the right of way and make inquiries to the property owners.

Mr. Lynch confirmed that they could look at this and talk to all four property owners.

Commr. Campione mentioned that there was another deadly accident on CR 439 and CR 42, and that there was not anything planned for CR 439 to be widened or changed; however, she opined that phones would take people on that route to the Round Lake Road extension when this happened, and that CR 439 would only become more dangerous with the more traffic that was on it. She opined that they had to review ways to slow traffic and make CR 439 safer, and that the

accidents were linked to high speeds. She opined that it needed to be done at the current time, and that the Round Lake Road extension would make it worse. She then asked if staff would be looking at ways to alleviate issues with the intersection of CR 452 and CR 44.

Mr. Earhart confirmed this.

Commr. Campione remarked that the Lake-Sumter MPO had put the SR 44 widening as a study on the list, and she assumed that part of this was looking at things that could be done incrementally if a project of this magnitude was outside of their reach.

Mr. Earhart said that staff was commencing that study to look at the whole stretch of SR 44 and receive recommendations on safety improvements.

Commr. Campione asked if this could be scheduled on an agenda for a presentation, and Mr. Earhart confirmed this.

Commr. Parks relayed his understanding that the County just got the right of way for CR 455 phase 3A, and asked if the Palisades item would come soon.

Mr. Olka said that it was under design currently.

Commr. Parks related that CR 455 phase 3A was a pinch point and that $2.5 million was much funding, opining that much traffic would go through it instead of being back on Hancock Road. He said that they could continue to look for how they could make funding work on this.

Mr. Earhart relayed that the intention was that once Hartwood Marsh Road was bid, they could see what funding that road did not use, noting that CR 455 phase 3A would likely be one of the top projects that any unused funds would go toward.

Commr. Parks recalled that there were significant savings with Hancock Road south because they used the builder.

Mr. Earhart said that there was a public/private partnership on the south portion of Hancock Road and the section near the hospital.

Commr. Parks inquired how much General Fund funding the County spent on transportation in the last couple of years, as well as how much was proposed in FY 2027, noting that they were trying to get up to a goal of eight percent of General Fund allocation for road projects.

Ms. Barker believed that in the current year, they transferred about $4 million from the General Fund to bring the total up to $8 million for resurfacing projects. She relayed her understanding that it was about the same amount for FY 2027 at around $3.5 million to $4 million transferred from the General Fund for road resurfacing projects.

Commr. Parks inquired if this could be affected if Amendment 3 passed.

Ms. Barker replied that if Amendment 3 passed, and based on current estimates provided by the Property Appraiser, in year one it would have a $47 million decrease to General Fund revenue, and in year two when the threshold increased to a $250,000 homestead exemption, it would be an additional $30 million; therefore, over two years it would be a decrease of $77 million to the General Fund. She specified that what was affected by this included anything that was not a mandated service they had to provide, such as Medicaid costs. She clarified that parks, roads, libraries, and any transfer they provided to the Office of Fire Rescue and the Constitutional Offices

would be affected; furthermore, the County would work with the Constitutional Office partners to look for reductions in their budgets as well.

Commr. Parks said that the property tax question weighed significantly in his mind versus the roads and the issues there, as well as trying to keep up with this. He also asked about their percentage of increase in cost to build roads over the last five years.

Mr. Earhart stated that it had doubled over the last five years, and that it generally stabilized at the higher numbers in the last couple of years.

Ms. Barker added that costs had not decreased.

Commr. Parks recalled points being made about growth and budgets increasing, and he inquired if this had been able to support the increase in the cost of building roads.

Mr. Earhart said that gas tax and funding had remained relatively the same amount, though costs had doubled; therefore, they could only address about half the roads that they were able to address previously.

Ms. Barker indicated her understanding that the FDOT estimated cost to widen a two-lane road to four lanes was $5.6 million per mile.

Mr. Earhart added that this was the lowest number, and opined that it could go up to $8 million to $10 million per mile.

Commr. Morris remarked that they had a report from the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller's Office which indicated that they had budgeted $1.6 million of interest income and had a great year at $7.6 million; therefore, he had asked the County Manager if they could find a couple million dollars to use for roads. He relayed that Ms. Barker was going to use much of it for reserves, noting that this would take them to 13 percent of operating expenses, though if they took $2 million, they would still be at 12.5 percent of operating expenses; additionally, they would have Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds coming in. He asked why they could not take a couple million dollars out of a good year and spend it to better the road system.

Ms. Barker summarized that they received an additional $6 million in revenue from interest earrings that was unbudgeted and which was for all funds throughout the County. She commented that the only ones which were available for road resurfacing or road construction projects would be the penny sales tax and the General Fund, and that between those funds there was $2 million of unrealized revenue which they could allocate toward road projects in the General Fund. She added that if they took $2 million from the reserve that they currently recognized for the upcoming fiscal year, it would reduce the reserve from 13.25 percent of operating expenses to about 12.5 percent of operating expenses. She said that currently, the policy of the Board was to have between seven and 12 percent of operating expenses in reserves for the General Fund, and that the recommendation by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) was 16.5 percent, which would be two months of operating funds.

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the Fiscal Year 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program.

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE 2026-41 LOCAL PROVIDER PARTICIPATION FUND

Ms. Marsh placed the proposed ordinance on the floor for reading by title only as follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA; AMENDING CHAPTER 13, ARTICLE IV, LAKE COUNTY CODE, ENTITLED LOCAL PROVIDER PARTICIPATION FUND, TO COMPLY WITH THE ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT (PUBLIC LAW 119-21); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Ms. Marsh said that this was making minor changes to their existing code to comply with Federal law.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Ordinance 2026-41 amending Chapter 13, Article IV, Lake County Code, entitled Local Provider Participation Fund. Required per the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Public Law 119-21 (2025).

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE 2026-42 ADMINISTRATIVE FEES

Ms. Marsh placed the proposed ordinance on the floor for reading by title only as follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA; REPEALING AND REPLACING SECTION 22-17, LAKE COUNTY CODE, ENTITLED ADMINISTRATIVE FEES; PROVIDING FOR FEES TO BE ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE ANNUAL FEE RESOLUTION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Ms. Marsh relayed that this was cleaning up some outdated language in the code.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

There being no one who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Morris asked if this would possibly turn into an enterprise fund if Amendment 3 passed.

Ms. Barker confirmed this in theory.

On a motion by Commr. Smith, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Ordinance 2026-42 repealing and replacing Chapter 22, Article I, Section 22-17, entitled Administrative Fees.

REGULAR AGENDA

UCF BUSINESS INCUBATION PROGRAM

Ms. Brew recalled that Lake County partnered with the City of Eustis in 2023 to bring the University of Central Florida's (UCF) business incubation program to Lake County, and that the City managed the agreement with UCF; furthermore, the County provided 75 percent of the funding for the program through an interlocal agreement with the City. She said that per this agreement, the business incubator was housed in the City of Eustis but served the entirety of Lake

County through in-person and virtual services. She stated that the agreement also called for an annual update from the business incubator to the BCC.

Ms. Miranda Burrows, Deputy City Manager for the City of Eustis, mentioned that many great things were occurring with Lake County and the City of Eustis, and that although the reach of the business incubator extended far beyond the City of Eustis boundaries, they were proud to serve as the home of one of the county's most significant economic development assets. She thanked County staff for their collaboration and support, and she thanked Mr. Brian Bedrick, with the UCF Business Incubator, for UCF's leadership, programming and hands on support of entrepreneurs and small businesses in the City of Eustis and Lake County. She thanked Commissioner George Asbate, with the City of Eustis, noting that MEGA Workplace was a great private partner for the downtown Eustis location. She also encouraged everyone to attend 1 Million Cups, noting that they were getting about 70 people there. She commented that the UCF business incubator was a vital driver of entrepreneurship, business growth and long term economic development for the City of Eustis and Lake County, and that entrepreneurship would be a central pillar for the city. She introduced Mr. Mike Bishop, the new Economic Development Director for the City of Eustis, who would serve as the City's primary point of contact working closely with UCF, Lake County and the local business community.

Mr. Bedrick recalled that his update from a year prior was focused on building a foundation and bringing this program to Lake County. He indicated that thanks to their funding and support, 2026 had been focused on helping businesses grow and refining the program. He relayed that they focused on the areas of helping business move forward, deepening their roots there, having boots on the ground, and continuous improvement and innovation. He discussed the business SmartTracker, noting that it was a software program for health and human service departments; furthermore, the UCF business incubator had helped them to survive, grow and get them to a point where they could leave the nest and graduate from the program. He specified that through July 2026, they were over $700,000 in revenue, and that they were on the way to continuing to grow and succeed. He mentioned that the next phase of their plan would be to raise outside funding to scale the business, and that UCF had advised them to work through their $7 million pipeline to win some new business and negotiate an outside investment from a position of strength, at which point UCF could help them with scaling up. He also spotlighted the business Gardent Global Spotlight, which was about to scale up, and stated that this company's attention had been diluted. He said that UCF offered an accountability partner to help them focus on what was important, which led to them winning a large number of government contracts that took them to over $1 million in revenue in the first half of 2026. He added that Gardent Global increased their team to 13 employees, and that they had hired from Lake Technical College (Lake Tech) and Lake-Sumter State College (LSSC), noting that their plans were to hire up to 20 more people. He said that UCF was bringing the businesses in, growing them, graduating them, and refilling the pipeline with new businesses, and that in 2026 they had four businesses graduate including SmartTracker. He reiterated that Gardant Global was entering into the scale up phase, and that this left them with four clients in the program, noting that they wanted between six and 10 throughout the year;

therefore, they were in the refill the pipeline phase. He commented that they had 10 active businesses in evaluation, and that some of them should be coming onboard over time. He added that they were also making changes to improve and increase that pipeline, and that he had met with 170 local businesses throughout the year which resulted in about 160 hours of coaching. He commented that he spoke at 27 events regarding the available businesses support services, and that they held 15 events which were attended by over 300 entrepreneurs throughout the county. He recalled an event they held in the previous year called Excellence in Entrepreneurship, noting that it worked well and that they would be doing this again starting on October 7, 2026. He showed the revenue from this portfolio of businesses in the program, noting that it was an upward trajectory. He pointed out that for the idea of the cycle and some businesses graduating when they reached a point where the numbers started escalating, this was the time when UCF moved them out of the nest and replaced them with new businesses; therefore, the numbers would fluctuate over time. He said that the number of jobs was currently holding between 30 and 35 throughout those companies, opining that this was a good base to build upon with the program. He remarked that *TIME Magazine* ranked UCF as the top incubator in the State of Florida, and that they were doing a shift to ensure that the businesses in their program had readiness. He stated that he had launched a new part of their soft landing program, which was primarily geared for companies outside the State of Florida who wanted to establish operations there, and that he had also launched a new discovery and validation program which helped businesses learn about the area, noting that he was able to introduce these companies to Lake County. He commented that they had streamlined the application process to be more productive with the same headcount. He showed visual representations of this technology, and said that he hoped to continue this proven cycle and refill the pipeline, noting that there were some upcoming events. He asked the Board to continue to share ideas for what Lake County needed.

Commr. Smith thanked UCF, opining that it was a great program. He mentioned that they were requesting $382,500 over three years, and he asked if they had gone to any other Cities and made the same presentation to request help for funding. He opined that they were not just helping Lake County residents, but also each individual municipality.

Mr. Bedrick denied this, remarking that they had discussed this and decided to leave the arrangement as it was.

Commr. Smith suggested for them to ask the other Cities to help, and he then questioned if the City of Eustis was putting in the same $382,500.

Mr. Bedrick replied that they were not, and he believed that it was a 75/25 split.

Ms. Brew said that the County had traditionally funded it at 75 percent, and that the original amount was $200,000 per year with the County paying $150,000 and the City of Eustis paying $50,000; however, over the first three years, UCF did not expend all of their funds and were able to carry this forward, which was why the amount decreased. She specified that the request for the County went from $150,000 per year to $127,500.

Commr. Smith opined that the County helped prop UCF up when this was started and they could become self-sufficient, or UCF could show the benefit to the other municipalities and say

they needed to start participating in this because it was good for everyone. He opined that with the lack of UCF not trying to go to other municipalities and to have the County be responsible for $127,500 per year for a three-year commitment with Amendment 3 pending, he was not comfortable; rather, he would be comfortable matching what the City of Eustis did.

Ms. Brew commented that the agreement was between the City of Eustis and UCF, and that the County had an interlocal agreement with the City.

Commr. Smith stated that he would be happy to approve what the City would fund, and that for any shortfalls, it would be up to the UCF business incubator to go to the other municipalities. He opined that the other municipalities would like to participate because it helped everyone in the community.

Ms. Brew indicated that staff could discuss this with UCF and the City of Eustis.

Commr. Parks made a motion to approve this item.

Commr. Sabatini opined that Commissioner Smith had raised some important concerns, and said that he was leaning toward supporting it. He asked if the Board needed to do something on this item quickly.

Ms. Brew responded that October 1, 2026 was when their interlocal agreement would expire and need to be renewed.

Commr. Sabatini agreed with Commissioner Smith on the fiscal conservatism and UCF looking at other Cities, though he opined that if the City of Eustis had gone all in on this and was using it to showcase their city, then he was slightly skeptical toward pushing back on the agreement considering that it was not much funding for something they took seriously. He inquired how this started with the City and why it was so important that the City of Eustis was running it rather than other Cities.

Commr. Asbate recalled that about four years prior, this idea was a vision that he and his wife had to bring UCF and have a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem in Lake County. He opined that the chambers of commerce looked at their boundaries, though small business economic development and entrepreneurship knew no boundaries. He said that they met with UCF and showed them a building which was a hub for economic development, and opined that no one else wanted to do anything. He related that he had reached out to quite a few municipalities, though this was a public/private initiative. He stated that he took $1 million and bought and renovated the building to the specs that UCF wanted to have a successful incubator program and to house at least 15 offices for incubators, along with having remote access. He added that they brought in the UCF Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and that Lake Economic Area Development (LEAD) joined with them. He relayed that due to the location of the UCF incubator, the UCF SBDC won the 2026 National Small Business Award out of 1,000 SBDCs, opining that Lake County was the reason, rather than the City of Eustis.

Commr. Sabatini asked that regarding making the deal contingent on this project achieving funding from a different municipality, would Commissioner Asbate not really want this because the City of Eustis was using it to create a better brand for itself.

Commr. Asbate denied this.

Commr. Sabatini inquired if there could be an amendment to the contract to say that the County would fund it contingent on another municipality participating for the extra 25 percent and removing the burden from the County.

Commr. Asbate opined that doing this would derail the entire system, and that it would be like all the other UCF incubators that came into Lake County which did not make it across the finish line. He clarified that this was the first one that was growing significantly and affecting many lives, along with changing business. He stated that the outcome of the UCF incubator as a foundation was now part of South Lake, noting that the SBDC and 1 Million Cups had a record amount of participation and that individuals in South Lake were attending 1 Million Cups and being directed to the incubator and the other resources. He opined that the City of Eustis likely could not force other municipalities to do anything, and that this was a Lake County initiative which was helping the county and some people outside of it; furthermore, he recalled that the five County Commissioners at that time, as well as himself, had brought it to be where it was. He agreed with Commissioner Smith, but said that they were not stopping.

Commr. Smith recalled that he was a large supporter of this, and that they agreed for the first funding to help it get off the ground. He said that it was off the ground and showing success, and opined that now that they had a track record, it could possibly be a good time for the UCF business incubator program to go back and show what it did. He related that he was fine with the $127,500 in FY 2027, though he was not agreeable with the commitment due to them not knowing what would happen with Amendment 3; therefore, he expressed concerns for putting the county citizens on something that could degrade police, fire, transportation or something else to fund this item past that level. He also opined that the City of Eustis should at least contribute more than a quarter if the County was contributing three-quarters. He asked that the UCF business incubator go to the other municipalities to show them the great things that the program had done and would continue to do. He stated that he would not commit to a three-year agreement, and that he would only commit to a one-year agreement.

Commr. Asbate clarified that he had spoken to other municipalities about this, and that there were the traditional stresses. He recalled that he was able to spend many hours convincing the City of Eustis to be a leader, along with the County and the BCC. He opined that the County had been the leader with the largest contribution, and if they factored in population, the City of Eustis contributed a significant amount; however, the impact was countywide. He mentioned that if they divided the number of people they had affected by the County's contribution, it was $28 per company. He said that he would be happy to meet with each of the County Commissioners and sit with individuals, and that their end goal was for UCF to become a larger part of Lake County. He opined that it would be devastating if they did not go past three years, and that the program could not be year to year.

Commr. Campione stated that the SBDC served anyone in the county who was trying to get a business off the ground or who was struggling, and that they used to pay an annual lease for commercial lease space. She opined that it would be interesting to see where the people who had come through the SBDC were from in the county, and she did not think it was just a City of Eustis

group who had received resources, opining that UCF's involvement had taken this to another level. She recalled that the County historically wanted to have an incubator, and opined that Lake County needed to lead on economic development. She expressed support for seeing if they could get Cities to be more involved and to make the case, though she indicated concerns for losing something that was working due to the narrative of the Cities not participating.

Commr. Smith relayed that he would personally go with Commissioner Asbate to the municipalities in his district to help support the UCF business incubator. He opined that it was a great program, and that it was a shame that UCF had not gone out to the other municipalities now that they had a track record of success. He relayed that he also liked Commissioner Campione's request to show how many businesses in each municipality had participated. He said that he knew someone in the City of Tavares who had gone to the incubator, and that he did not see why the City of Tavares would not be willing to contribute some funding to help their citizens.

Commr. Asbate opined that it would be beneficial to the City of Eustis because he believed it would lower the City's budget contribution. He stated that he was committed to ensuring that the City did not take its foot off the gas pedal regardless of what anyone else did. He agreed that it would be nice to bring other municipalities in, and opined that he and the BCC could possibly try to encourage someone to participate. He also relayed that the City of Eustis likely had the largest amount of county enclaves within their city, opining that this was a factor in the formula.

Commr. Parks mentioned that this had been in the County's plan for 10 years or more, and opined that it was working because the County was taking leadership, along with Commissioner Asbate's financial commitment to the business community, which would separate this from a City doing it by themselves, opining that this had not worked previously. He expressed support for this item, and did not think that there was any harm in asking other Cities to participate. He opined that they would have to review this agreement if Amendment 3 passed, along with other items, and that they could address it at that point.

Commr. Asbate opined that there had to be a three year minimum.

Commr. Morris expressed concerns for the three year commitment, and he asked what would happen if Amendment 3 passed and they started looking at all of this, along with what options the County had.

Ms. Marsh clarified that this agreement essentially had a 150 day notice of termination for any reason.

Commr. Campione said that she liked the idea of this being part of Lake County's overall economic development plan, as well as being a leader and having an incubator. She remarked that it was the Lake County UCF incubator, and that it was great that the City of Eustis had been a partner, along with Commissioner Asbate stepping up to be a significant part of this in the private sector. She opined that they needed to do a better job trying to get Cities involved so that they could feel like it was also their incubator, and that with this could potentially come the financial contribution. She opined that the County should use this discussion as a positive launch to try to get Cities more involved so that it was the incubator of 14 Cities and the County.

Commr. Asbate expressed support for this.

Commr. Sabatini seconded the motion and opined that Commissioner Smith's comments were well taken. He opined that they had to be careful with Amendment 3, and he applauded the City of Eustis for taking the lead.

Commr. Smith stated that since they had a 150 day termination clause, they would have another opportunity if Amendment 3 passed. He opined that they had to get the other Cities involved so that they could feel part of this movement. He expressed support for the program, and relayed his understanding that his monetary concerns would be answered; additionally, he was expecting a call from Commissioner Asbate to go to the Cities in his district to get them onboard.

Commr. Asbate indicated that he looked forward to this from all five of the Commissioners.

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Eustis regarding ongoing support of a business incubator housed in downtown Eustis and serving the entire county.

OTHER BUSINESS

APPOINTMENT TO THE SALES SURTAX OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Commr. Morris asked if they could table this item, noting that he would like a list of everything they had open. He indicated that he would like the opportunity to find someone to do this.

Commr. Parks agreed, and said that he would not support this candidate.

On a motion by Commr Smith, seconded by Commr. Morris and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved to table this item and for information to be provided to the Board regarding what positions were open on the boards.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

COMMISSIONER SABATINI – DISTRICT 1

VOTING REMOTELY

Commr. Sabatini requested the Board's permission for him to vote remotely on the current night, noting that he had to leave early on the following morning.

On a motion by Commr Smith, seconded by Commr. Morris and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved to add an emergency item to the agenda to authorize Commissioner Sabatini to vote remotely on the current night, and to approve this item.

NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

Commr. Sabatini relayed that he had visited the Norman Rockwell Museum in the State of Massachusetts, and he discussed an illustration of an individual standing up at a meeting.

COMMISSIONER CAMPIONE – CHAIRMAN AND DISTRICT 4

EUSTIS FIRE CHIEF RETIREMENT

Commr. Campione related that she had attended the retirement for Fire Chief Michael Swanson, with the City of Eustis. She opined that it was a wonderful recognition from the City.

VISIT TO PONCEANNAH CEMETERY

Commr. Campione said that on the previous Sunday, she visited Ponceannah Cemetery to see the cemetery and the easement road, noting that this was a Florida Forest Service road which went into the forest and bifurcated the cemetery property. She commented that the part it

bifurcated was undeveloped property, and that the existing cemetery was on one side. She explained that people pulled in to visit the forest and left vehicles parked there, and that they were pulling into areas where the tombstones were, opining that this was an issue. She commented that staff had done a great job helping clean trash up and working with the Florida Forest Service to get a dumpster there, opining that they had to continue working on the road and easement issue. She opined that there could be fencing along the road, noting that there were other places to enter the forest, and that it did not need to be at this cemetery. She requested that the Board adopt a formal resolution asking the Florida Forest Service to either vacate that road or relocate it so that it was not impacting the cemetery.

Commr. Smith said that he would be fine with putting this on the next agenda.

CLOSED SESSIONS

Ms. Marsh relayed that the first closed session was a time certain at 1:00 p.m., and that the Board could break for lunch and then reconvene and go into the closed session at 1:00 p.m., or they could address their collective bargaining closed session at the current time and then come back at 1:00 p.m.

Commr. Sabatini said that he preferred to go into bargaining.

COMMISSIONER SMITH – DISTRICT 3

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

Commr. Smith mentioned the passing of Ms. Dolly Parton, noting that she started the Imagination Library which was a wonderful program to have kids from zero to five years old receive books in the mail. He expressed support for this, and also said that it was International Literacy Day.

RECESS AND REASSEMBLY

The Chairman called a recess at 11:48 a.m. for 10 minutes, noting that they would then go into a closed session regarding collective bargaining.

At 1:05 p.m. the Chairman announced that the closed session had ended and that the Board Meeting was reconvened.

CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Marsh relayed that she had previously requested a closed session on August 25, 2026, as authorized by Section 286.011, Florida Statutes, to discuss pending litigation against the County, noting that this was the case of Mark Dickinson and Florida Carry, Inc. vs. Lake County Fair Association Inc., Lake Agriculture and Youth Fair Association, Inc., Lake County, Florida, Peyton C. Grinnell, in his official capacity as Sheriff of Lake County, Florida, and Peyton C. Grinnell, individually. She elaborated that once the closed session started, it would be confined to settlement negotiations or strategy sessions related to litigation and its expenditures. She commented that once they started, the court reporter would record the entire session from when they began to when they ended, and would include all discussions in those proceedings, including the names of all persons present at any time and whoever spoke. She added that none of the session could be off the record, and that the court reporter's notes would be transcribed and made public once the litigation was concluded. She noted that at the beginning of this session, the entity was

required to give notice of who was going to be present, and that the County was required to do an advertisement, of which she had a copy in her possession. She said that the advertisement ran on August 28, 2026 in the *Daily Commercial*, and that persons who would be attending the meeting included the following: the BCC; the County Manager, Ms. Jennifer Barker; Ms. Rachel Bartolowits, Senior Assistant County Attorney; and herself. She anticipated that they would spend no more than one hour in this closed session, and she asked for the recording equipment to be shut down.

RECESS AND REASSEMBLY

At 1:39 p.m. the Chairman announced that the Closed Session had ended and that the Board Meeting was reconvened.

RECESS AND REASSEMBLY

The Chairman called a recess at 1:40 p.m. until the 5:05 p.m. Budget Public Hearing.

5:05 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

INTRODUCTION

Ms. Barker stated that this was the first of two required public hearings prior to the adoption of the FY 2027 budget, and that she would like to highlight a few key points reflected in the proposed tentative budget. She commented that the millage rates remained generally unchanged from the current year with two exceptions including the Wellness Way MSTU being reduced by 61 percent below the rollback rate, reflecting the 50 percent increase in property values within the Wellness Way MSTU boundaries. She mentioned that the public lands voted debt MSTU millage rate had increased by 0.03 mills, which was necessary to fund the debt service associated with the $50 million public lands acquisition bond approved by the voters in 2024. She said that the millage rate in the current year was lower because it reflected the final payment on the voter approved debt originally established in 2007, which also funded the acquisition of public lands. She related that the budget, as presented, funded all County departments and the Constitutional Offices, and that the minimum wage for County employees had increased by $1 per hour; therefore, all non-bargaining employees would be receiving either a $1 per hour increase or a four percent increase, whichever was greater, to avoid compression. She commented that a total of $8.8 million had been allocated for road resurfacing projects in FY 2027, and that this included $3.6 million allocated directly from the General Fund. She remarked that the General Fund operating reserves were budgeted at 13.25 percent of the operating budget, and that by comparison, the FY 2026 adopted budget included reserves of 11 percent of the operating budget. She said that while they had not received a significant amount of reimbursements from FEMA for their hurricane relief efforts to date, they had realized higher interest earnings than anticipated; additionally, they had also identified operational savings which increased the reserve level from the prior year. She thanked the Board for their support, along with staff for their efforts in serving the residents and doing hard work to prepare the budget.

PRESENTATION OF TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATES AND TENTATIVE BUDGET

Ms. Stewart reminded everyone that this item was for the millages and budget overseen by the Lake County BCC, and that information for the public hearings for the Lake County School

Board or any other taxing authority in Lake County was available at the back of the room. She commented the purpose of the current meeting was to present the proposed millage rates and their change from the rollback millage rates, as well as the tentative budget for FY 2027. She added that by the State's definition, the rollback millage rate was a rate that when applied to next year's tax base, excluding new construction, would generate the same revenue as was raised in the previous year. She displayed the certified taxable property values for July 1, 2026 as provided by the Property Appraiser, and said that the countywide millages, which included the General Fund, the ambulance MSTU, the Lake County Water Authority (LCWA), and the public lands voted debt, increased 8.78 percent over the current year values. She stated that the stormwater, roads and parks MSTU increased 7.48 percent, and that the Lake County Fire Rescue MSTU increased by 8.58 percent, noting that the largest increase in property value came from the Wellness Way MSTU at 56.58 percent. She remarked that the final property values for FY 2027 would be available on October 1, 2027. She related that Chapters 129 and 200, Florida Statutes, outlined the procedures for the annual adoption of the tax rates and budgets, and required that she identify the proposed millage rates for FY 2027 as well as any adjustments that the Board would consider. She listed the following information: the proposed FY 2027 Lake County General Fund operating millage rate was 5.0254 mills, which was equal to the FY 2026 rate and a 4.19 percent increase over the rollback rate of 4.8235 mills; the proposed FY 2027 Lake County Ambulance MSTU millage was 0.4629 mills, which was equal to the FY 2026 rate and a 4.21 percent increase over the rollback rate of 0.4442 mills; the proposed FY 2027 Lake County Fire Rescue MSTU millage was 0.48 mills, which was equal to the FY 2026 rate and a 4.8 percent increase over the rollback rate of 0.458 mills; the proposed FY 2027 Lake County Stormwater, Parks, and Roads MSTU millage was 0.4957 mills, which was equal to the FY 2026 rate and a 5.18 percent increase over the rollback rate of 0.4713 mills; the proposed FY 2027 Lake County Wellness Way MSTU millage was 0.1454 mills, which was less than the FY 2026 rate and a 61.2 percent decrease over the rollback rate of 0.374 mills; and the proposed FY 2027 LCWA millage was 0.2940 mills, which was equal to the FY 2026 rate and a 4.55 percent increase over the rollback rate of 0.2812 mills. She relayed that based on calculations by the Florida Department of Revenue (FDOR) DR-420 Certification of Taxable Value form, the current year proposed aggregate rate was 6.2311 mills, which was a 3.21 percent increase over the aggregate rollback rate of 6.0371 mills. She remarked that the public lands voted debt millage did not figure into the rollback calculations as it was approved by a referendum, and that the proposed FY 2027 public lands voted debt service millage was 0.0719 mills, which was a 79.75 percent increase from the FY 2026 adopted rate of 0.04 mills. She stated that the proposed tentative budget, as presented, included the following: a General Fund millage of 5.0254 mills for estimated ad valorem revenue of about $37.1 million; the approved project list for the Infrastructure Sales Tax; fully funded Judicial Support, Constitutional Offices and County departments; a $17 minimum wage and wage adjustments for compression; a General Fund operating reserve total of $37.1 million, up from $28.2 million in the previous year; and operating reserves were 13.25 percent of the operating budget. She commented that the department position requests included two new requests of an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Battalion

Chief and an EMS Coding and Quality Review Specialist, noting that both were for the Office of Fire Rescue with a total impact of $221,263; furthermore, these were fully loaded positions.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Mr. Carl Yauk, a resident of the City of Fruitland Park, relayed his understanding that the City of Fruitland Park had a consent agreement effective until July 12, 2026. He indicated that the City was unaware of a renewal, and he asked if this agreement ending meant that he should not be charged the ambulance MSTU tax by the City of Fruitland Park.

Ms. Barker said that staff could reach out to him.

Ms. Connie Hurlburt, a resident of Lake County, recalled that impact fees were increased in 2023, though indicated her understanding that more than half of this was delayed to October 1, 2026; therefore, from 2008 when they had the recession, the builders did not have to pay back taxes that the public funded. She relayed her understanding that a study showed that the fees were substantially below the calculated need, and she opined that they would have a financial crisis again. She mentioned that she would like to see that people's homes were not taxed more, and she expressed support for figuring out how they were going to make things work over the next 20 years. She opined that even if Amendment 3 did not pass, they still had an issue with an economic crash.

Mr. Austin Air, a resident who owned rental properties in Lake County and speaking via Zoom, indicated that with the proposed increase, his taxes would increase an additional $2,000 per year. He relayed that the millage rate was not increasing, though Florida Statute 200.065 did not measure a tax increase against the previous year's tax rate; rather, it measured against the rollback rate. He stated that the rollback rate for the General Fund was 4.825 mills, and that the County was proposing 5.0254 mills, which was a 4.19 percent tax increase, noting that State law required them to advertise it as one. He recalled the slide which showed the total millage rate dropping 0.313 mills, pointing out that all of this was the Wellness Way MSTU going from 0.45 mills to 0.145 mills. He remarked that Wellness Way was $928 million out of a $48.7 billion tax roll, and that there was no countywide millage decrease in the budget. He opined that the County knew that rising values should reduce the rate, which was applied to Wellness Way, and that everyone else's values rose 8.7 percent, though the County was holding flat. He mentioned that the County's slide said that the General Fund roll grew from $44.8 billion to $48.7 billion, and that the rollback rate only backed out 4.19 points of this with the rest being new construction of about $2 billion. He opined that the County kept each dollar of this at the rollback rate, which was $9.9 million in new General Fund revenue. He opined that rolling the General Fund back to 4.8235 mills would cost $9.8 million, and that new construction more than paid for the entire rollback. He opined that they could adopt the rollback rate and still have more funding than they had in the previous year, and commented that they raised reserves from 11 percent to 13.25 percent on interest earnings they did not expect and savings they found; however, they were still asking him for four percent more. He opined that FEMA reimbursements were a receivable rather than a loss, and that a cashflow timing issue did not justify a permanent increase. He recalled that in the

previous year, the North Lake County Hospital District (NLCHD) proposed a rate of 16.6 percent over the rollback rate and then adopted the rollback rate at its hearing. He clarified that he was not contesting the voted debt, and he encouraged the Board to adopt the rollback rate for the General Fund at 4.8235 mills.

There being no one else who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATES

Commr. Smith recalled that the operating reserves said that they had 13.25 percent of the operating costs, and he asked if this included the $3.6 million road infrastructure reserves.

Ms. Stewart confirmed this.

Ms. Barker clarified that the actual reserve amount was $37.1 million, which included the $3.6 million.

Commr. Parks asked how much funding they had not received from FEMA.

Ms. Barker replied that they spent $18 million on the hurricanes since 2022, and that they only received approximately $4 million total.

Commr. Parks said that he wanted to grow the reserves but also put more funding into road projects. He asked if they would have chances to allocate more funding to roads.

Ms. Barker responded that they would have the first midyear adjustment in January 2027, and that at that point, the Board was able to allocate funds in any way they deemed necessary.

Commr. Parks commented that he looked forward to any opportunity in the coming year to allocate more funding toward road projects as they received funding from FEMA or other items. He noted that there was a significant gap in trying to make up for the funding of roads.

Commr. Morris asked if they had a percentage of FEMA funding going to roads.

Ms. Barker recalled that this was discussed, and that staff was told that when it came in, to bring it back to the Board to have it allocated as the Board saw fit.

Commr. Smith inquired what the County needed to do get the funding back.

Ms. Barker replied that they had been in contact with FEMA and the State weekly, and that they could reach out to their lobbyists in Washington D.C. to set up meetings with FEMA directly.

Commr. Smith stated that this would be a direction he would like to see, and opined that instead of having a weekly call, they could call twice per week or every day.

Commr. Morris asked if they were calling on specific projects.

Ms. Barker clarified that they went over the specific project documentation needed.

Ms. Stewart added that for anything pending, they had a review with their representative from FEMA and Florida Public Assistance, and that there was $11.8 million outstanding currently. She remarked that they had $1.3 million which had already been reviewed and validated by the State, and that they should hopefully have this soon.

Commr. Smith asked if she saw where the County was lacking in anything.

Ms. Stewart denied this, and said that she could ask their grants department if they could go further, noting that they responded quickly anytime there was a question or a need for receipts to validate a project.

Commr. Campione inquired how many jurisdictions in the State of Florida were going through the same thing.

Ms. Barker assumed that it was many, if not all of them. She also related that the Federal Government shutdown for many months slowed down the entire process.

Commr. Campione recalled the impact fees in 2008 when the recession occurred, noting that there were few permits being issued; therefore, she had always made the argument that they were not losing out on revenue from impact fees because they did not have permits being issued for impact fees to be paid on. She commented that the County was at the highest impact fee rate they could be at currently, and that staff would let them know when it was time to revisit this and whether they needed to do a new study for the percentages they could increase to ensure they were charging the amount that State law allowed them to.

Ms. Barker confirmed this, and stated that they would have to do the new study during FY 2027.

Commr. Smith recalled that extraordinary circumstances allowed the County to go as high as they possibly could, and that they were currently stuck for four years; however, they could go back into calculation in the following year.

Commr. Campione said that she was wanting to have a short synopsis of all the different funding sources on an annual basis which went into transportation needs, noting that there were projects occurring constantly and that it was helpful to have this information to point to. She added that the Public Works Department had indicated that they would be doing more regular updates to let the Board know what was happening, noting that she would like to see this on the Lake County website. She said that at the Board retreat in the coming months, they could discuss strategies for trying to put pressure on the State to help them with new funding formulas or different ways to get funding back to local governments to address roads.

Commr. Parks encouraged them to have all of the funding sources they received for transportation that they could allocate on a graph, as well as the cost required to meet those needs. He indicated that one would see a growing gap, opining that residents needed to see that it was currently a math problem.

Commr. Campione opined that it had to be addressed at a State level.

Commr. Parks opined that there were issues with previous gaps and unfunded mandates.

Commr. Campione thanked staff for the presentation, noting that the concern was that they wanted taxes to decrease; however, the costs kept increasing for the things they had to fund. She added that the County was also funding the Constitutional Officers, and that it came back to the cost of providing the service; furthermore, she opined that the County was trying hard to be lean, and that keeping up with the increases in cost was the challenge.

Commr. Sabatini, speaking via Zoom, indicated that he agreed with the comments.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Morris and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the following tentative millage rates: the Lake County General Countywide Levy at 5.0254 mills; the Lake County Voter Approved Debt Levy at 0.0719 mills; the Lake County Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) for Ambulance and Emergency Services Levy at 0.4629 mills; the Lake County MSTU for Stormwater, Parks and Roads Levy at 0.4957 mills; the Lake County Fire Rescue MSTU Levy at 0.4800 mills; the Lake County Wellness Way MSTU levy at 0.1454 mills; and the Lake County Water Authority levy at 0.2940 mills.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE FY 2027 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Ms. Stewart relayed that since the approval of the recommended budget in July 2026, there had been various changes including the following for the County Departments and Offices: the updated fund balance and revenue projections; the Infrastructure Sales Tax approved project list; the updated Tax Collector budget request; the updated capital project re-budgets at about $35.7 million; incorporated purchase order (PO) carryforward estimates at around $85.6 million; grant award adjustments at approximately $21.4 million; and other miscellaneous changes and adjustments for about $213,000. She requested approval to adopt changes to the FY 2027 recommended budget totaling $150,080,143.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved changes to the FY 2027 recommended budget totaling $150,080,143.

FY 2027 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Ms. Stewart requested approval to adopt the FY 2027 tentative budget totaling $1,109,315,071.

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved an FY 2027 tentative budget totaling $1,109,315,071.

FINAL BUDGET HEARING DATE

Ms. Stewart requested approval of the dates to hold a public hearing for final adoption of the FY 2027 millage rates and budget on September 22, 2026, at 5:05 p.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in the Board of County Commissioners' Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved to hold a public hearing for final adoption of the FY 2027 millage rates and budget on September 22, 2026, at 5:05 p.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in the Board of County Commissioners' Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

SECOND PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE 2026-43 SUSPENDING ACCEPTANCE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS FOR DATA CENTERS

Ms. Marsh placed the proposed ordinance on the floor for reading by title only as follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA; SUSPENDING THE ACCEPTANCE OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS FOR DATA CENTERS, DATA CENTER FACILITIES, AND DATA CENTER UTILITIES WITHIN UNINCORPORATED LAKE COUNTY; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Ms. Marsh recalled that the motion at the first reading was to reduce this from a one year suspension to a 90 day suspension and to direct staff to bring back an ordinance to create a CUP process within that 90 day timeframe.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Ms. Hurlburt relayed her understanding that there were companies that the State of Florida allowed full access to the driver's license database, including LexisNexis whose parent company was in London, England. She expressed concerns for artificial intelligence (AI), and she encouraged the Board to say no.

There being no one else who wished to address the Board regarding this matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commr. Campione said that this item put a pause on processing or accepting any applications for data centers while the County worked on a CUP process or other application process where they would define parameters.

Commr. Smith stated that the document indicated that the purpose of this ordinance was to allow Lake County sufficient time to review, study and hold public hearings to prepare and adopt an amendment to the Land Development Regulations (LDR) and code of ordinances related to data center, data center facilities and data center utilities. He indicated that this would be the only reason why he was going to approve this item, noting that it would give them time to gather all the facts. He opined that there still had not been a delineation of what was a data center, and he hoped that they could come up with the definition of a data center, relaying his understanding that most people were concerned about water and power usage. He said that to him, a data center was three or four servers or higher, and that he was fine with this ordinance as long as they could get this done in 90 days with a solid answer of what their cutoff was.

Commr. Parks thanked staff, noting that he had provided some suggestions.

Commr. Morris agreed, and opined that they needed to ensure that they had all of this done within 90 days, along with knowing where they were headed. He opined that moratoriums or suspensions were bad business, though 90 days should give them enough time to do research on this.

Commr. Campione remarked that with the Florida Statute, there was a requirement for a CUP for what they defined as large load data centers, and she anticipated that the County could come back with different thresholds which were tied to electricity usage. She said that based on what she had seen and read, it was challenging to fathom a scenario in Lake County where they could accommodate a large load data center and still be able to protect water, electricity and quality of life. She added that she was in favor of this suspension while the County gathered more information.

Commr. Parks remarked that a CUP process would say upfront that a data center was not a guaranteed right, and that one would have to prove that it would be right for them; furthermore, it would give the Board the ability to turn it down.

Commr. Campione opined that the most important part of this was the concern that a zoning or land use which already existed would create a right, and that by creating a process, they were

saying that the land use or zoning did not create a right, noting that this was why they had to come up with criteria. She added that the key would be if one could prove that they met the criteria needed to protect the quality of life, water, and other items which could negatively impact the surrounding community.

Commr. Smith opined that the most significant point was that any of these data centers would have to come in front of the Board and the public.

Commr. Morris added that the Board would be more knowledgeable in how to ask the questions, along with having standards to consider and understand if it would be a benefit or detriment to the community.

Commr. Parks commented that something smaller within a business may not use water at all, and that technology was changing, noting that there was some flexibility in the sense that they were not going to discourage someone who would do the right thing and who needed it for their business.

Commr. Sabatini agreed with the Board.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Ordinance 2026-43 suspending acceptance of development applications for data centers within the unincorporated areas of Lake County. (Previously advertised as a moratorium).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought to the attention of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:49 p.m.

_____

LESLIE CAMPIONE, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

_____

GARY J COONEY, CLERK