A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 22, 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 Stephanie Cash, Deputy Clerk.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Commr. Campione welcomed everyone to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting.

Commissioner Parks gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Barker, County Manager, commented that a revised fee schedule was added to Tab 7, which included updates from the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and the Office of Solid Waste, and that the final budget book was added on Tab 25.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Commr. Campione remarked that the Board wanted to recognize Ms. Kristy Mullane, Chief Financial Officer for the Lake County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller's Office, who had served the County for many years and was retiring. She read a letter of recognition and presented it to Ms. Mullane along with a Lake County street sign that said "Mullane Ln." She mentioned that Ms. Mullane had been on the dais ensuring that everything was taken care of from the records standpoint and had filled in for Mr. Gary J. Cooney, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, at various times.

Ms. Mullane expressed appreciation for this honor and recognition, and stated that it had been a pleasure to serve alongside the BCC and Mr. Cooney at the BCC meetings and see the important role of local government up close. She relayed that she enjoyed working with the Board and the County staff and leadership, including Ms. Barker and Ms. Melanie Marsh, County Attorney, opining that it was good to work well with them between the BCC and the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller's Office. She commented that she was going to move into retirement and spend more time with family, and she wished everyone the best.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Cooney requested to pull the minutes for the meeting of August 11, 2026, and asked the Board to only approve the minutes for the meeting of August 4, 2026.

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the minutes for the BCC meeting of August 4, 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.

Ms. Jennifer Pryor, speaking on behalf of the Home Builders Association of Lake-Sumter (HBA-LS), stated that the HBA-LS began asking for more information about the proposed planning and zoning fee increases on September 9, 2026 when they requested the fee study, and that they were told at the time that the fee study was not yet complete. She mentioned that they received the proposed fee changes on September 14, 2026, and that on September 16, 2026, Mr. Shane Gerwig, with the HBA-LS, emailed the County about the HBA-LS's concerns and asked for information showing how the proposed fees were calculated. She commented that the HBA-LS's main concern was that they still did not have enough information on how several of these increases were determined or how they related to the actual cost of providing services, and that they had questions about the proposed $2,500 business expedited review fee, including the following: what additional cost that fee was meant to cover; how the $2,500 amount was determined; and how the County decided which businesses may receive an expedited review at no cost. She remarked that development related fees added to the overall cost of development, and that those costs ultimately became part of the cost of housing; therefore, the HBA-LS was asking that the proposed increases be postponed until the supporting information was available and there had been an opportunity to review and discuss it.

Mr. Arlie Farley, a business owner in the Town of Astatula, commented that there were about 340 school buses in Lake County that ran three routes twice a day, which was about 2,040 trips, and that since school started on August 10, 2026, his son's bus had been passed 101 times with the stop signs out, opining that something needed to happen.

Commr. Campione inquired how he obtained the data, and indicated her understanding that school buses had cameras.

Mr. Farley answered that the school bus driver told him, and mentioned that even though some buses had cameras, some stops were difficult to see because of the angle of the bus.

Commr. Sabatini remarked that the State had strict laws against this; however, they had to be enforced.

Commr. Campione asked Mr. Farley to leave his information, and said that the Lake County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) would be contacted, opining that this route could be watched.

Mr. Farley pointed out that this was just one route out of all the routes.

Commr. Smith wondered if it would help Mr. Farley to also go to the School Board and let them know about this issue.

Commr. Campione expressed appreciation to Mr. Farley for bringing this to the Board's attention, and said that the BCC would try to bring attention to it.

Mr. Rick Carlins, a resident of Lake County, related he had sent an email to the BCC regarding artificial intelligence (AI) data centers, and urged the BCC to review the land codes in order to place a permanent ban on AI data centers in Lake County. He opined that since there were environmental concerns, this situation should not be rushed into, and that it was currently unpredictable. He opined that since AI data centers were very powerful, bureaucracies in the country wanted to maintain control over them, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), and that these bureaucracies had lost the trust of the public currently. He opined that people did not want this power centralized, and that this seemed to be the course of action. He opined that with just a 90 day moratorium, Lake County would be vulnerable for this to happen, and that a majority of the constituents were not in favor of having these AI data centers in Lake County. He opined that the same sentiment existed with the license plate readers (LPRs) and surveillance cameras, as AI was a surveillance apparatus, and that the more data that went into these systems, the more they would be able to predict and manipulate behavior. He asked the Board to extend the moratorium at least a couple of years, opining that it could be changed in the future.

Ms. Cindy Newton, a resident of Commission District 4, requested an update on the Deep Woods Ranch administrative process. She also opined that the Department of Justice fiscal year (FY) 2026 Bridging Immigration-Related Deficits Experienced Nationwide ("BIDEN") program grant meant extra surveillance, and that the fact that incidents developed faster than ground units could safely reach and access them meant that Lake County had overgrown the infrastructure. She opined that if the County could not keep people safe, which was the top priority, then extra surveillance with drones would not help, and she asked if the answer was really more surveillance. She mentioned that some of the expenses would be covered for up to three years if the grant was large enough, and wondered who would be paying for the costs after the three years. She relayed her understanding that this would start with 25 percent of the qualified priority incidents being covered; however, by 2029 it would go to 90 percent, opining that this would be a large increase in costs. She stated that even though this item was just for the Lake County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) to apply for the grant, she wanted to bring this forward.

Ms. Jacqueline Arndt, a resident of the City of Mount Dora speaking via Zoom, indicated her understanding that an outside organization had asked the BCC to adopt a resolution declaring October 14, 2026 as the Charlie Kirk Day of Remembrance, and that even though this request was not on the current day's agenda, she was asking the Board to not consider this. She commented that in September 2025, the BCC unanimously dedicated a stretch of road to Mr. Charlie Kirk, which still stood, and opined that a recurring annual remembrance day would not fill a gap; rather, she opined that this would keep going further every year for a man who had no residence, office, or formal role in the Lake County government. She opined that the time spent considering a request to curate a permanent recurring civic calendar around a polarizing national figure was time not spent on the things Lake County residents actually needed, such as roads, water quality, road management, hurricane recovery, and public safety, and that this could also set a precedent for

other outside advocacy groups for partisan political figures to bring in their requests. She opined that Mr. Kirk was a political polarizing figure, and that even though any act of political violence deserved unequivocable condemnation, this was not the same as granting an outside organization's request to have a County government annually commemorate an individual's viewpoints. She opined that an official government remembrance day was not a private tribute that one group could request on everyone's behalf, and that it was an institutional endorsement funded and administrated by a Board that represented Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. She asked the Board to not place this item on a future agenda, and opined that if it did come forward, then the Board should vote no. She opined that official government recognition should bring this community together and not divide it, and that the Board had more pressing local work to do.

Ms. Susan Fetter, a resident of the City of Leesburg speaking via Zoom, requested that there be an addition to the August 11, 2026 BCC minutes regarding the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) Airport discussion, noting that when Commissioner Parks asked if the status of the site plan was on hold, Ms. Marsh clarified the status of the site plan. She stated that she would appreciate seeing that represented in the meeting minutes.

Commr. Parks pointed out that the August 11, 2026 minutes had been pulled until the following BCC meeting.

PROCLAMATION 2026-97 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Commr. Campione mentioned that there were three proclamations which needed to be approved.

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Smith and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Hispanic Heritage Month Proclamation 2026-97, National Public Lands Proclamation 2026-98, and Proclamation 2026-92 declaring October 4 through 10, 2026, as National 4-H Week in Lake County, Florida.

Commr. Parks indicated appreciation to the Hispanic and Latino residents who through the years provided many contributions, opining that they made Lake County a great place to live. He commented that the Hispanics of Lake County Association (HOLCA) worked with the Chambers of Commerce and the BCC to ensure that people who were in this area were familiar with what was going on locally and how great the community was, and opined that they provided a great service in this way. He then read Proclamation 2026-97 and presented it to Ms. Maritza Rivera, with HOLCA.

Ms. Rivera stated that she was honored to accept the proclamation on behalf of HOLCA recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month across Lake County, and remarked that they were proud to contribute to the economic vitality, cultural richness, and vibrant spirit of this region. She commented that at HOLCA, they strived to build bridges, support local families, and empower the community to thrive, which included filling a portion of it with café con leche and delicious food. She expressed appreciation to the BCC, staff, and members of the community for this recognition and for the ongoing partnership, and related that they shared this honor with all the individuals and families who made Lake County a wonderful place to live.

PROCLAMATION 2026-98 NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS

Commr. Parks mentioned that this was a proclamation for National Public Lands Day, and opined that he could not speak enough about what public lands meant to him, which included preservation and enjoyment of the outdoors. He read Proclamation 2026-98 and presented it to Ms. Eileen Tramontana, with the Trout Lake Nature Center.

Ms. Tramontana indicated appreciation to the BCC for recognizing National Public Lands Day, and stated that they were honored to accept this proclamation. She commented that public lands protected water, provided wildlife habitat, preserved the State of Florida's natural heritage, and gave people places to learn, explore, and connect with landscapes around them, noting that they reminded them that stewardship was a shared responsibility. She thanked the Board for recognizing not only the importance of public lands but their collective role in caring for generations to come. She added that their annual fundraiser, Jungle Fest, would be on October 8, 2026, and that people would have the opportunity to get close to many different animals and eat some bugs if desired, as they had edible insects. She pointed out that it would be educational, and noted that people could learn about how insects were important for producing protein in the world, opining that it would be a fun educational experience as well as a fundraiser. She specified that it would be from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., and that one could purchase tickets online at their website, www.troutlakenaturecenter.com, under news and events. She mentioned that they also had a silent auction ongoing currently, opining that there were some good experiences and events that one could have.

PROCLAMATION 2026-92 NATIONAL 4-H WEEK

Commr. Campione read and presented Proclamation 2026-92 to Ms. Dallas Meringolo, Director for the Office of Extension Services.

Ms. Meringolo expressed appreciation to the Board and the County for continually supporting 4-H, and hoped that people understood that none of this would be possible without volunteers. She commented that she had witnessed the power of 4-H by watching kids turn into public speakers, and noted that one youth would be going to a national event to give a speech in Denver, Colorado. She mentioned that the mission of 4-H was to turn youth into successful adults who could contribute back to their communities.

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER'S CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Commr. Parks, 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 through 13, 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.

County Road 33 Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the County Road 33 Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Hicks Ditch Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Hicks Ditch Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Lake Harris Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Lake Harris Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Lake Emma Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Lake Emma Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Dewey Robbins Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Dewey Robbins Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Grace Key Groves Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Grace Key Groves Community Development District Resolution 2026-12, identifying the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 meeting schedule, in accordance with Section 189.015(1), Florida Statutes.

Hammock Oaks Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Hammock Oaks Community Development District Resolution 2026-09, identifying the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 meeting schedule, in accordance with Section 189.015(1), Florida Statutes.

Deer Island Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Deer Island Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Avalon Groves Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Avalon Groves Community Development District Resolutions 2026-13 and 2026-11 adopting the FY 2027 Budget and setting the FY 2027 Meeting Schedule.

City of Tavares Annexation Ordinance

Notice is hereby provided of having received Annexation Ordinance 2026-04 from the City of Tavares.

Country Greens Community Development District Annual Meeting Schedule

Notice is hereby provided of having received the Country Greens Community Development District annual meeting schedule for FY 2027, in accordance with Chapter 189.015, Florida Statutes, for purposes of disclosure and information only.

Proof of Publication of Unclaimed Moneys and Payment

Proof of publication of unclaimed moneys and payment to the Board for those non-court related moneys advertised less claims and publication costs.

COUNTY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Commr. Smith, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the Consent Agenda, Tabs 6 through 21, as follows:

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Recommend approval for the County Attorney to file a Quiet Title, Declaratory and/or Injunctive Relief Action relating to County-owned property located at 31039 Lake Mack Road, in Deland (a/k/a Alternate Key 2540427) and naming adjacent property owners as needed.

The estimated fiscal impact at this time is $600 (expenditure) to file the litigation. Commission District 4.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Management and Budget

Recommend approval of Resolution 2026-112 adopting the fee schedules for Fiscal Year 2027. The fiscal impact (revenue) cannot be determined at this time.

Recommend approval:

1. To apply for the Department of Justice FY 2026 Bridging Immigration-Related Deficits Experienced Nationwide ("BIDEN") Program grant on behalf of the Lake County Sheriff's Office; and

2. To authorize the Chairman to sign any required grant documents.

The fiscal impact is estimated at $12,652,826 (revenue/expenditure).

Procurement Services

Recommend approval:

1. To declare the items listed on the attached inventory as surplus;

2. To authorize their removal from the County's fixed asset records; and

3. To authorize the Office of Procurement Services Director to execute all supporting documentation.

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

HUMAN RESOURCES AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Recommend approval of the pay ranges for Fiscal Year 2027. The pay ranges begin at a minimum of $17.00 per hour.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public Safety Support

Recommend approval of the Fourth Amendment to the Service Agreement with Motorola Solutions, Inc. (Chicago, IL), that provides support and maintenance to the Countywide 800MHz Public Safety Radio System for a six-year term beginning in Fiscal Year 2027.

The total fiscal impact over the six-year term is $16,780,000 (expenditure).

Recommend approval:

1. To terminate an Antenna Site Agreement with SBA Properties, Inc., for the tower site located at 19430 East 3rd Street, in Umatilla, and for the County Manager to send the termination letter; and

2. To authorize the County Manager to negotiate an early termination of the Antenna Site Agreement.

The fiscal impact will not exceed the current lease terms but cannot be fully determined at this time. Commission District 4.

Recommend approval:

1. To terminate a License Site Agreement with American Towers, L.P., for the Tower located at 8325 North Bradshaw Road in Clermont and for the County Manager to send the termination letter; and

2. To authorize the County Manager to negotiate an early termination of the License Agreement.

The fiscal impact will not exceed the current lease terms but cannot be fully determined at this time. Commission District 1.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Library Services

Recommend approval of a Fifth Amendment to the Interlocal Agreements for the Provision of Library Services between Lake County and each of the ten Member Libraries' municipal governing bodies to extend the term of the Interlocal Agreements for an additional 12-month period.

The fiscal impact is $1,207,294 (expenditure) and will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

Recommend approval:

1. To submit the Fiscal Year 2027 State Aid to Libraries Grant Application; Certification of Funds, Certification of Hours, Free Library Services, and Access to Materials; and Grant Agreement; and

2. To authorize the Chairperson to sign any necessary grant certifications or documents.

The estimated fiscal impact is $145,722 (revenue) and will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

Transit Services

Recommend approval:

1. To accept the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Public Transit Block Grant Agreement for Fiscal Year 2026-2027; and

2. To authorize the execution and administration of the FDOT Public Transit Block Grant Agreement by the Office of Transit Services Director.

The fiscal impact is $2,072,054 — $1,036,027 (revenue/expenditure – grant funded) and $1,036,027 (expenditure - county match) and is included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget request.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Public Works

Recommend approval to accept public Non-Exclusive Utility Easement Deeds that have been secured in conjunction with the Distributed Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWTS).

There is no fiscal impact.

Recommend approval:

1. Of Contract 26-712 for Construction, Engineering, and Inspection (CEI) Services for Hartwood Marsh from US27 to Majestic Isle Drive (AKA Regency Hills Drive); and

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

The estimated fiscal impact is $1,120,546.24 (expenditure) and is within, and will not exceed the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

Recommend approval to adopt Resolution 2026-113 to advertise a public hearing to vacate a portion of an unnamed platted right of way as shown on the plat of Lake Highlands Company recorded in Plat Book 3, Page 52 of the public records, lying north of Johns Lake Estates, east of Perimeter Park West, and west of Alternate Key 1783119, approximately 330.65 feet in length and 15 feet in width. The right of way to be vacated is located west of Hartle Road, south of SR 50 and east of Ray Goodgame Parkway, within Section 26, Township 22 South, Range 26 East, and in the Clermont area.

The fiscal impact is $2,295.00 (Revenue). Commissioner District 2.

PARKS AND WATER RESOURCES

Parks and Trails

Recommend approval of the Fiscal Year 2027 Annual Certified Budget for Arthropod Control for the Lake County Mosquito Control Program, pursuant to Section 388.201, Florida Statutes, and Rule 5E-13.022, Florida Administrative Code.

The fiscal impact is $69,587.50 (revenue/expenditure - grant funded), $992,952 (revenue/expenditure - local funded), and will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget request.

Recommend approval of Resolution 2026-114 in support of a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) grant application pledging to amend the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and provide matching funds, should grant funds be awarded for improvements to the Mount Plymouth Parks.

If awarded, the fiscal impact is $400,000 - $200,000 (revenue/expenditure - $200,000 grant funded) and $200,000 (expenditure - county match). Commission District 4.

PUBLIC HEARING: DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms. Marsh mentioned that Florida law required that the County go through all of its County owned property every three years to see if any of it was appropriate for affordable housing, and that since the Lake County Water Authority (LCWA) was a dependent district under the County, they had gone through theirs as well. She commented that those property inventories were attached to the agenda item, and that there were not any that would be appropriate for affordable housing at the current time; therefore, she asked that the Board would approve Resolution 2026-115.

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. Campione recalled that ordinarily, the County would have parcels from year to year, and that there were groups, such as Habitat for Humanity of Lake-Sumter, that would use the parcels for building infill and affordable housing units.

Ms. Marsh commented that they routinely went through the property lists, and that if they acquired properties that were appropriate, such as tax deeds, they reached out to their partners, noting that there were three partners under contract currently. She reiterated that at the current time, they did not have anything that those partners were interested in or that would be appropriate, as they were usually in the far reaches of the county with no transportation or services.

On a motion by Commr. Sabatini, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Resolution 2026-115 regarding Disposition of Property for Affordable Housing and inventory of all LCWA owned real property. This public hearing is required pursuant to Section 125.379, Florida Statutes.

PUBLIC HEARING: LIBRARY IMPACT FEE GRANT APPLICATIONS

Ms. Tammy Parrott, Director for the Office of Library Services, explained that the library impact fees were for growth related capital improvement, and that they were collected in all municipalities and unincorporated areas, noting that the Cities of Eustis and Mount Dora collected and retained their own impact fees. She relayed that they collected on residential construction, and that the rates were the same as the previous year, which included the following: for single family detached residences it was $208 for 800 square feet or less and $239 for 801 square feet

and above; for mobile homes it was $190 per dwelling unit; and for multifamily residences, such as apartments, condos, etc., it was $183 per dwelling unit and $239 per dwelling unit in the active adult communities. She mentioned that library impact fee grants were awarded based on County Policy LCC-63, which identified the application and review process and included the following: a March 1, 2027 annual application deadline, noting that applications could be submitted prior to that time; a public hearing requirement for awards; and eligibility, which included County and municipal libraries. She stated that as of September 1, 2026, they had $2.8 million dollars unaudited in that fund, and that eight applications were submitted for a total of $1,841,572.22, which was the total application package. She commented that the Eustis Memorial Library details included the following: they submitted a request for $500,000; the total funding eligible for this ended up being about $157,936; the purpose was for expansion, which would double their space; and there would be some internal reconfiguration, noting that this was what made the difference because impact fees only addressed new capacity as opposed to renovating old capacity. She related that the Fruitland Park Library funding request was for $500,000, and that this had been tabled at this time. She remarked that the Marianne Beck Memorial Library in the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills requested $500,000, which was found to be an appropriate request; however, the application was withdrawn. She stated that the W.T. Bland Public Library in the City of Mount Dora requested $50,000 for expansion associated with the Simpson Farmhouse, and that this covered engineering plans, parking, and access. She commented that they were expanding some shelving at one of the Lake County branches, and that they were asking for $28,224 to purchase more shelving to create more collection space. She mentioned that the Paisley Branch Library requested $13,348 for a makerspace workstation, and she showed an example of the one they had quoted, noting that they would have supporting print materials associated with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and makerspace activities. She relayed that they requested $50,000 for a Library of Things to create a collection of nontraditional library materials for use by the citizens of the county, which included literacy kits and other types of equipment that may not be practical for people to keep; additionally, they had an eBook grant request for $200,000 for additional eBook and audiobook expansion. She displayed a table showing the total grant requests, the requested action, and the tabled items, opining that it was an unusual year. She related that the requested action was to approve the funding levels for their internal impact fee grants and the impact fee grants for the Eustis Memorial Library meeting room expansion at about $157,000 and the W.T. Bland Public Library expansion at $50,000.

Commr. Campione questioned if the Eustis Memorial Library was moving into space that had been used by the City of Eustis for other purposes.

Ms. Parrott answered that part of it was, and that the part that would be new space for public use had never been used for the public before, noting that this proportional amount was what would be funded.

Commr. Campione indicated her understanding that it was associated with the library.

Ms. Parrott clarified that it was within the library, and that there was a City of Eustis footprint in there as well, noting that this portion was only for new public library service.

Commr. Campione relayed her understanding that the Cities of Mount Dora and Eustis collected their fees even though they went into the overall fund.

Ms. Parrott believed that they retained their fees.

Ms. Barker confirmed this, and stated that they would lose points on the scoring criteria. She elaborated that if there was a limited amount of funds available, they would lose 10 points because they retained their own fees; however, there was not a limited amount of funding available based on the applications submitted.

Ms. Parrott added that it was a negative 10 and then an additional 10.

Commr. Campione mentioned that the County was working on the library in the Sorrento area, and that funds were needed for that. She indicated her understanding that funding could come out of those fees as well as the ultimate permanent library space there, and that funds could be carried forward or built up for larger needs.

Ms. Barker confirmed this, and elaborated that the library impact fees were in a fund by themselves, noting that if they were not encumbered, then they would roll over within the fund.

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. Morris, seconded by Commr. Smith and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the following funding levels for Library Impact Fee Trust Fund Grant Applications: Lake County Library System eBook & eAudiobook Expansion at $200,000; Lake County Library System Library of Things Collection at $50,000; Lake County Library System Cagan Crossings Library Shelf Expansion at $28,224.01; Lake County Library System Paisley Branch Library Makerspace Workstation and Youth Book Collection at $13,348.21; Eustis Memorial Library Community Room Expansion at $157,936.63; and W.T. Bland Public Library Simpson Farmhouse Expansion at $50,000. The Board also approved associated Interlocal Agreements with the Cities of Eustis and Mount Dora.

REGULAR AGENDA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN BY LEAD

Ms. Meg Brew, Director for the Office of Tourism and Economic Development, indicated that Lake Economic Area Development (LEAD) had been the County's public/private partner for economic development for the last four years, and that they were charged with advancing business recruitment, retention, and expansion efforts throughout the county. She added that each year, per their agreement, LEAD provided the Board with an update on the County's economic development plan, outlining progress made and key performance metrics for jobs and capital investment, as well as priorities for the upcoming year.

Mr. Mike Kelly, Director for LEAD, relayed the following: 70 percent of the people in Lake County had a tie to a job outside the county; 82 percent of their taxes came from residential income, noting that they would like this to be closer to 60 percent; and their average wage was $20,000 less than Orange County. He said that LEAD tried to improve these three items, and that what the Board had done in the past with the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) and the strategic

corridors helped with the growth happening in Lake County. He remarked that the County put partnerships in place with people like LEAD, which he opined were key to making these things happen, and that LEAD had great relationships with the Florida Department of Commerce, Lake County staff, and other organizations. He relayed that LEAD believed in the three pillars of business creation, attraction, and retention, and he reviewed their project pipeline for business attraction. He indicated that there were over 30 projects currently, and that LEAD traveled throughout the country to talk to businesses and site selectors to promote Lake County. He commented that there must be infrastructure for sites to bring people to Lake County, and that businesses needed shovel ready acreage. He opined that they had great success with business creation, with 1 Million Cups, and many entrepreneurs, and said that their business retention specialist was constantly speaking to businesses to find out their needs, how they needed to grow, and how LEAD could help them. He mentioned that even though employment growth in the county had been good, it was slowing slightly, and that wages were also growing. He indicated that they had brought on a business intelligence department that could do research and gather information, and that this had created a way for them to communicate with their partners and the County. He added that they started a hub on their website where people could see some of the demographics and numbers, and that they were creating a portal where their partners could contact them for specific information. He relayed that they bought IMPLAN, which was software that did economic impact studies, and that they could assist businesses with numbers for what an impact would be and where their workforce may come from. He related that they had growth of over 7,000 jobs in their primary industries in the last four years, and that they announced over 460 jobs; additionally, their wages were moving in the right direction toward their goals. He opined that things were going well, and said that in the last year they had gained great momentum of people coming to them. He said that healthcare still led the growth, and that manufacturing and professional services were growing; however, a couple areas were showing a slight decrease, such as the information technology (IT) world, which was rapidly changing with technology, and financial services. He opined that much technology was going to the Orange County area, and that this gave Lake County an opportunity in knowing that they could recruit a business with workforce in the county which may be leaving the county.

Mr. Brad Weber, Board Chair for LEAD, stated that LEAD's Executive Committee was continuing to move forward, and that the next Chairman would be Mr. Lance Sewell, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for South Lake Hospital. He mentioned that they would be adding Ms. Pam Rivas, with Mega Properties, to the Executive Committee, along with Mr. Marc Hoenstein, with Duke Energy. He stated that their board's two seats for Lake County included Ms. Brew and Ms. Kathleen Dial, Executive Director of Development Services, and he thanked Commissioner Morris for his input and support. He related that LEAD was currently a Lake County organization, and that they were no longer sending funding to the Ocala Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP); additionally, their leadership was focused solely on Lake County.

Mr. Kelly commented that they wanted to work harder with business intelligence and providing data to the community, noting that they had already done several impact studies for

different businesses looking to build in Lake County. He stated that they had to continue with site readiness and work harder in getting their private side more robust, and that they would like to have more people involved with LEAD; furthermore, they would focus on ways to accelerate their process in the following year.

Ms. Brew read the requested action for approval of the third amendment to the Economic Development Partnership Agreement between Lake County and LEAD, which would provide for the fifth year of funding on LEAD's five year agreement and designate them as the economic development organization (EDO) for the County through FY 2027, noting that the fiscal impact was $500,000 and was included in the FY 2027 budget.

Commr. Campione asked if LEAD was looking strictly at who they had been working with versus the overall when they were tracking particular job growth in certain sectors and investments.

Mr. Kelly replied that it was the overall picture.

Commr. Campione inquired how they collected that kind of data.

Mr. Kelly relayed that JobsEQ software tracked this.

Commr. Campione commented that the public often asked about the role of the BCC in economic development and why public funding would be spent to promote this, and opined that since it enhanced the overall tax base on the commercial side, it was likely the best way to impact residents by taking pressure off the residential side of the tax burden; additionally, having a strong economy lowered the cost of living locally.

Mr. Kelly stated that businesses coming to LEAD wanted to know about the climate for doing business in Lake County, and that a significant item was how to make it a place that was good for doing business.

Commr. Parks opined that this was a long term item, and said that the 82 percent residential tax base used to be 90 percent. He opined that this was not healthy with the growth management issues, and that it needed to change. He then inquired about the importance of site readiness.

Mr. Kelly replied that if they did not have site ready land, then they basically did not have the ability to bring businesses to Lake County; therefore, this was at the top of their list. He said that as they developed Wellness Way and the Wolf Branch Innovation District (WBID) with the infrastructure and got these corridors ready, there were people who were willing to come, noting that it was not always the number of jobs, but the capital investment and the improvement on the land which helped tax diversification.

Commr. Parks asked about the relationship with SynFluence.

Mr. Kelly opined that it was great, and noted that SynFluence was an organization that the County contributed some funds to that helped develop some clusters. He stated that SynFluence had brought a software IT company lead to LEAD that they followed up with in the previous week.

Commr. Parks opined that it was important that LEAD was an all-Lake County organization, and said that sometimes LEAD was still able to do things when meeting people that was sometimes harder for the BCC to do, opining that businesses were looking at things like the political climate and the inside story.

Mr. Kelly added that there were also times when people did not want to talk to the BCC and wanted to ask LEAD questions.

Commr. Campione questioned how they divided what LEAD and the County did for outreach to existing businesses.

Mr. Kelly said that they worked closely, and that there was much communication, as they met regularly.

Commr. Campione expressed interest in letting existing businesses know that the County wanted them to stay, as well as expressing appreciation for them and learning what they could do to help them grow.

Mr. Kelly opined that it had to be a priority of ensuring that everyone was happy there.

Commr. Smith asked if LEAD went to people with vacant land and told them the industries they were trying to target and what kind of infrastructure was needed.

Mr. Kelly confirmed that they talked to some landowners, and that they did some studies on land to show the needs, how much of the land was usable, and what industries might be the best fit for the property.

Commr. Smith opined that the pay scale slide showed that they were not keeping up with inflation, and that the slide on employment showed a decrease, noting that there was a 5.8 percent increase in 2023 and only a 1.7 percent increase in 2026. He added that it was not showing what had been lost, and he asked if LEAD had met their metrics.

Mr. Kelly denied that they had met the five year metrics, and said that they still had a year to get to that to area.

Commr. Smith opined that their only saving grace for him currently was that they were solely in Lake County, and said that he was not supportive of the $500,000; however, he would be willing to support $250,000 to see how they did in the coming year.

Mr. Kelly relayed his understanding that the metrics were to be reached at the end of five years, and said that he would appreciate the Board giving them one more year to get there.

Commr. Smith opined that they would not reach their five year metrics in a year.

Commr. Morris opined that the County needed to fulfill the commitment they had for five years, opining that there were issues with site readiness. He opined that LEAD had laid a good foundation for furthering the County's mission to get people in, and said that he heard from businesses that they appreciated the help in growing their businesses and understanding what Lake County had to offer. He also opined that Wellness Way and the WBID would be great districts.

Commr. Smith opined that the goal was to get to 60 percent residential and 40 percent business.

Commr. Campione opined that it would be interesting if they looked at the locations in Wellness Way, which they knew were targeted for job creation, along with the targeted square footage in the WBID, and did some math on this to see how this would affect the 60/40 distribution if all of those areas developed the way they were targeted to be. She opined that there was possibly some movement in the right direction occurring in the WBID.

Mr. Kelly said that the number of businesses they would need to change this was large.

Commr. Campione requested a memo indicating what the numbers would have to be to meet that target, and wondered if they could reach the 60/40 number if everything in the inventory currently was built out, opining that 65/35 may be more realistic unless they were going to be changing residential land uses to commercial and industrial. She also questioned to what extent this affected the numbers they would need to meet their targets for the Live Local Act, and pointed out that properties, which were zoned commercial and industrial, were allowed to be turned into multifamily without any say by local governments. She opined that it was exciting that LEAD was Lake County only, and that they were on the right track.

Commr. Morris opined that people knew much more about Lake County than they had in the past, and that LEAD uncovered much needed information.

On a motion by Commr. Morris, seconded by Commr. Parks and carried by a vote of 4-1, the Board approved to fund LEAD the $500,000 for an additional year.

Commr. Smith voted no.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

COMMISSIONER PARKS – VICE CHAIRMAN AND DISTRICT 2

FAC LEGISLATION AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE

Commr. Parks commented that he and Commissioner Sabatini were in attendance at the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) Legislation and Innovation Conference, which was where they began the process of putting forth policies or requests to the State Legislature, opining that these were usually centered around the erosion of home rule. He opined that this conference had been a great opportunity to learn from other Counties, such as best practices and what was working or not, and that it was a great event.

FAC INNOVATION CONFERENCE AT MISSION RESORT + CLUB

Commr. Parks relayed that Lake County would host the following year's FAC innovation conference at Mission Resort + Club, and that many Commissioners and Legislators from around the state would come to Lake County. He opined that it would be a chance to showcase and highlight all that was great about Lake County, and that it was a great venue, noting that they had spent much funding fixing up Mission Resort + Club and making it nice. He opined that even though the bar had been high with the current year's conference, this next one would exceed it. He hoped that the Board would all be there to welcome the other Commissioners.

CITY OF TAVARES ISBA

Commr. Parks expressed appreciation to all the City of Tavares elected officials, including Mr. John Drury, Tavares City Administrator, and noted that they had amended their interlocal service boundary agreement (ISBA) to place a portion of the area into rural protection; furthermore, they would not annex that portion. He commented that the City of Tavares also agreed to a first response agreement, opining that this would end any disagreements about the different zones. He opined that this boosted moral with the firefighters, and that they appreciated it. He opined that the City of Tavares was on the forefront in good leadership, and mentioned that Commissioner Smith was a former Tavares City Council member.

COMMISSIONER SMITH – DISTRICT 3

APPRECIATION FOR THE CITY OF TAVARES

Commr. Smith indicated appreciation to the City of Tavares and all the hard work they had done, and opined that it was the leaders, the staff, and the community meetings that made all this happen. He related that he was proud to be part of the City of Tavares and a part of Lake County, opining that this could move them forward in the right direction.

OFFICE OF TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROMOTION

Commr. Smith commented that he traveled to the State of California to see the economic development team with the Office of Tourism and Economic Development promote Lake County at an event. He opined that they were well represented at the Hermosa Beach Open Volleyball Tournament, which included the following: there were about 10,000 to 15,000 spectators; there was national livestream coverage on television; Lake County had contributed some funding: Lake County had great signage; there was great media coverage; and it was mentioned by the Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) during their broadcast on the following weekend, opining that this was great national recognition. He related that he was receiving information from the hoteliers and restaurants to see what kind of impact a tournament like this had on their community, opining that Hermosa Beach, California was about the same size as the interior of Lake County.

DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Commr. Smith remarked that he was a supporter of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and that they were having a fundraiser coming up to get more books into children's hands from the ages of zero to five years old. He recommended looking up the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and noted that they would be having a "9 to 5" celebration on September 25, 2026.

TROUT LAKE NATURE CENTER FUNDRAISER

Commr. Smith mentioned that the Trout Lake Nature Center was having its annual Jungle Fest fundraiser in October 2026.

COMMISSIONER CAMPIONE – CHAIRMAN AND DISTRICT 4

9/11 CEREMONY

Commr. Campione opined that the 9/11 ceremony was great, that the venue was ideal, and that this could be built upon. She opined that the Tavares High School Chorus did an amazing job as well as the Mount Dora Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program and the youth from teen court, and she asked Ms. Jennifer Barker, County Manager, to send a thank you letter from the Board for their participation. She opined that it was a well-done event which was well attended, and that there would be more people in the future.

SOUTH LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FIRST RESPONDERS' RECOGNITION BREAKFAST

Commr. Campione said that she attended the South Lake Chamber of Commerce first responders' recognition breakfast, opining that they did a great job and had a large turnout. She opined that the Lake County Fire Rescue was well represented, and mentioned there was a story

about the lifesaving measures administered by a couple of honorees which had made a large difference in someone's life.

HICKORY POINT PARK CLEANUP

Commr. Campione related that she participated in the cleanup on the previous Saturday at Hickory Point Park and learned how dirty it got around the Lake Harris Bridge, opining that it was great that there were many volunteers that participated. She opined that there was less trash around Hickory Point Park than she had noticed previously, and that people were becoming more careful and conscientious.

PASTURE RESERVE VISIT

Commr. Campione stated that she went to the Pasture Reserve as part of her preparation for evaluating the public lands coming up, and that she wanted to visit all the County's existing public lands' locations and see where they were in proximity to other conservation and development areas. She commented that she learned more about the Pasture Reserve, and noted that they were trying to make space for more horse trailers so that this was an activity for people to do. She remarked that even though there was a limitation on class three electric bikes (e-bikes) because they damaged the nature trails, there were locations where bicycles were allowed, such as the Pasture Reserve.

HAND IN HAND FUNDRAISER

Commr. Campione relayed that she went to the Hand in Hand fundraiser in the City of Eustis, and said that Mr. David Douglas, the Hand in Hand founder, was retiring 11 years after starting the Hand in Hand Recovery. She remarked that they had a new CEO, and opined that it would be in great hands.

APPRECIATION FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Commr. Campione expressed appreciation to the coordinators and supervisors in the Public Works Department, including Mr. Mike Olka, Engineering and Operations Director for the Public Works Department, Mr. Seth Lynch, Engineering and Operations Director for the Public Works Department, Mr. Jeff Earhart, Engineering and Operations Director for the Public Works Department, and Mr. Bobby Bonilla, Assistant County Manager, opining that they were very busy and worked very hard on the County's many demands. She opined that the community appreciated seeing many things happening, and said that she looked forward to the day they opened Britt Road in October 2026. She asked that she be kept apprised on the progress they were making there and what the date would be, noting that there was some signage being worked on to encourage slower and safer traffic on Britt Road.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Commr. Campione remarked that she had been working on a future land use (FLU) map of the county by highlighting where the cities were in relation to the rural transition and rural lands were, and opined that it helped one get an idea of what was municipal, rural transition, and rural. She hoped that County staff could do a more professional version of the map, and pointed out that there were many municipal parcels surrounded by rural areas in south Lake County. She opined that the City of Umatilla was the model of good planning, as the municipal boundaries were very

compact, noting that most of the land uses around it were unincorporated rural transition areas that then went to rural. She then mentioned that she had seen misleading social media posts about the following: land use planning; what the County could approve or deny; what the County needed to approve; what the County should approve or try to curtail; confusion over what was under the County's purview; and what was in the city limits or under consideration for annexation. She stated that she wanted to continue the Joint Planning Agreement (JPA) focus as well as the agreements that were discussed with the Cities and to define those locations where the Cities would not annex further or recognize the County densities already in place, and opined that if the map clearly showed what there was to work with, it would help the public understand what the limitations already were instead of just allowing anything with no methodology. She opined that when one could see where the city boundaries were, which were well defined, and where the County's designated rural transition and rural areas were located, one could get a picture of what Lake County could ultimately be if growth was curtailed out into those areas, which she opined was where the focus needed to be directed. She opined that those rural areas could become even more valuable and desirable for homesites on lots that already existed, such as smaller lots or five to 10 acre tracts, and that the ideal scenario economically would be to have the rural areas, urbanized areas, industrialized areas, and commercial areas shown on the map as already in existence, vacant, and available to be developed. She opined that the more information the County could give the public about what was already on the map and how these decisions were made would help with some of the misinformation that was out there, and that the County needed to continue discussions with the Cities. She opined without those agreements with the Cities, all of those areas shown on the map as rural transition and rural areas could be the Cities' someday if there was not a layer of protection on them, and that the job the BCC had been doing was important and needed more attention focused on it, noting that once it was done, everybody would receive a copy of it.

Commr. Parks opined that this was a good thing to do, and he encouraged the Board to go out and do some ground truthing when the map was received and before approving a new Comp Plan.

BOARD SHORT ON THE GREEN SWAMP

Commr. Campione mentioned that she enjoyed the Board Short on the Green Swamp, opining that it was really good.

COMMISSIONER SMITH – DISTRICT 3

NATIONAL ICE CREAM CONE DAY

Commr. Smith remarked that it was National Ice Cream Cone Day, and that there were ice cream cones because when the ice cream vendors ran out of cups at the World's Fair in 1904, a waffle maker made dishes out of waffles for them.

RECESS AND REASSEMBLY

The Chairman called a recess at 10:43 a.m. until the 5:05 p.m. Budget Public Hearing.

5:05 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

WELCOME

Commr. Campione called the meeting back to order for the budget presentation and summary.

PRESENTATION OF FINAL BUDGET

Ms. Jaime Stewart, Director for the Office of Management and Budget, said that the purpose of this meeting was to hold the final public hearing to adopt the millage rates and the budget for FY 2027. She reminded everyone that this item was for the millage rate and budget overseen by the Lake County BCC, and that public hearing information for the Lake County School Board or any other taxing authorities in Lake County was available at the back of the room. 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 remarked that by the State's definition, the rollback millage rate was a rate that when applied to the next year's tax base, excluding new construction, would generate the same revenue as was raised in the previous year. She then 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 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 Fire Rescue MSTU millage was 0.4800 mills, which was equal to the FY 2026 rate and a 4.8 percent increase over the rollback rate of 0.4580 mills; the proposed FY 2027 Lake County Wellness Way MSTU millage was 0.1454 mills, which was less than the FY 2026 rate of 0.4585 mills and a 61.12 percent decrease over the rollback rate of 0.3740 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 the current year proposed aggregate rate of 6.2311 mills was 3.21 percent more than the aggregate rollback rate of 6.0371 mills. She remarked that the FY 2027 public lands voted debt service millage was 0.0719 mills, which was more than the FY 2026 rate of 0.04 mills and did not figure into the rollback rate calculation since it was approved by a referendum. She then stated that the proposed final budget, as presented, included the following: $9.8 million for road resurfacing; incorporated the approved project list for the Infrastructure Sales Tax; fully funded Judicial Support, the Constitutional Offices and County departments; included a $17 minimum wage and wage adjustments for compression; reflected a General Fund operating reserve total of $37.8 million, noting that operating reserves were currently 13.46 percent of the operating budget; and included a $4.1 million special reserve for roads and infrastructure, noting that the FY 2026 operating reserves were $28.7 million or 11.5 percent of the operating budget. She said that department position requests for FY 2027 included two new requests of an

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Battalion Chief and an EMS Coding and Quality Review Specialist, noting that this was an Office of Fire Rescue individual impact of about $221,000.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Ms. Elanah Coulson, a resident of Lake County, mentioned an item on the ballot in November 2026 regarding the Lake County School Board wanting more funds even though they had less students this year, and she wondered if this came out of the budget.

Commr. Campione clarified that the School District would have a public hearing and that this item would be covered in their budget.

Ms. Barker confirmed that the referendum regarding one mill would be on the November 2026 ballot, and said that the School Board had a separate budget which was not part of the County budget being adopted on the current day. She also indicated that the public would be forced to fund this for the School Board if it was approved. She added that it was currently 0.75 mills and that the School Board was requesting one mill.

Ms. Coulson said that she wanted to ensure that the fire and police departments received their fair share, opining that it seemed like the teachers always received more. She stated that she also wanted the Board to remember the taxpaying citizens when they made up this budget, and expressed concerns for things being more expensive. She indicated concerns for quicker approval for businesses and other items, opining that residents did not want LEAD taking over their county and that people who were already there should have more say.

Commr. Campione asked when the School District budget hearing was, and Ms. Barker replied that this could be provided.

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

MILLAGE RESOLUTIONS

Commr. Smith asked that for the Fire Rescue Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU), did this still include vacant land.

Ms. Barker believed that he was thinking of the fire assessment.

Commr. Parks made a motion to approve all of the millage resolutions as had been advertised and approved at the previous meeting.

Commr. Sabatini seconded the motion.

Commr. Morris relayed that they had $9.8 million in resurfacing funding, opining that it was important to take care of their infrastructure. He said that he worked with the County Manager, and that he thought he had found another $240,000 which would be $80,000 from the Office of Library Services, $80,000 from the Office of Transit Services, and $80,000 from the Office of Parks and Trails. He opined that for the LCWA, they needed to eliminate the LCWA Board members' pay of $76,000 and lower that MSTU. He indicated that this would take the the County's $9.8 million in resurfacing to $10 million, opining this would be fair for the LCWA to lower their millage rate.

Commr. Campione relayed her understanding that he was wanting to shift BCC funds to the road resurfacing fund, and Commissioner Morris confirmed this.

Commr. Parks said that he liked this idea, and he asked about the corresponding reduction in the LCWA.

Commr. Morris reiterated that it was $76,000.

Commr. Parks asked if this would be in the budget vote.

Commr. Campione related that the other items would be at the time of the budget discussion, and that the millage would stay the same except for if they wanted to change the LCWA millage.

Commr. Smith inquired if Commissioner Morris wanted to lower the LCWA's millage rate and then add that millage rate to the General Fund, and Commissioner Morris denied this.

Commr. Parks asked if Commissioner Morris wanted to take the LCWA Board members' pay and connect it to the road budget.

Commr. Morris indicated that they could not do this with the MSTU, and that the only three items which would affect the General Fund would be libraries, transit and parks, which would take them from $9.8 million to over $10 million in resurfacing funds. He opined that the LCWA should be a voluntary board and that they should either pay all the boards or no boards. He indicated that his appointee had already written a letter indicating that he did not think that he needed to be paid.

Commr. Sabatini opined that the most significant boards which had much funding to spend, much legal authority, and were quasi-judicial, should be compensated. He opined that the Planning and Zoning Board and the LCWA Board should be compensated, that $9,000 or $10,000 was a small amount of funding, and that it removed the burn from the amount of time and effort that one had to put into these boards; therefore, he would support a future motion to compensate the Planning and Zoning Board and their construction licensing individuals on those highly significant boards, noting that he would not support cutting the LCWA's bill.

Commr. Morris relayed that the BCC ultimately could decide what they did anyway, noting that it came to the BCC. He opined that they could find volunteers who would do this without being paid.

Commr. Sabatini opined that these people served at a loss, and that the $10,000 made it less difficult for a person to serve, opining that they received more talented people when this was done.

Commr. Morris clarified that it was $12,000 plus the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA), social security and the Florida Retirement System (FRS).

Commr. Sabatini opined that FRS was another question, and said that he felt different about whether one should receive retirement for being on an advisory board, though in terms of being compensated for the hours they put into each of the long meetings, he felt comfortable with this.

Commr. Campione indicated her understanding that it used to be that the language was "per diem" and that it was based on them attending meetings. She said that it started out as addressing this in the original legislation or a document that referenced this for the LCWA, and

that this was how the discussion came up to make it a certain amount and base it on an estimated amount of time. She stated that she would be more inclined to go with something per diem and based on the time that one was in a meeting because she did not see it was like time in the field.

Commr. Morris asked how many full-time employees (FTEs) the LCWA had, noting that there were many people doing the work.

Ms. Barker clarified that they were County employees and that the LCWA paid for their services. She added that the County provided a service to them, and that they paid for their services; however, they were County employees.

Commr. Parks relayed that he would like to talk to his LCWA appointee, and that they could possibly go to per diem.

Commr. Morris indicated that they still received travel.

Commr. Campione said that if they did per diem and it was based on a meeting, then they would not be employees and receive FRS.

Commr. Morris opined that people would volunteer not to get paid.

Commr. Campione stated that the three items brought up were budget related as opposed to the millage rate, and that it would not pertain to this requested action; rather, it would come up as they moved to the final budget.

Commr. Smith said that he wanted to ensure that Commissioner Morris was advocating for budget changes within the LCWA and not the millage rate.

Commr. Morris confirmed this. He then asked if it would lower the millage rate, relaying his understanding that it should lower it.

Ms. Barker indicated that it could, and that it would be a very minor decrease.

Commr. Morris opined that it would still show that the Board was trying to do something.

Commr. Campione clarified that the only way the Board would need to amend the motion was if the discussion under the LCWA was to take the $76,000 and reflect it in a lower millage rate as opposed to discussing it later with the LCWA Board and making a policy decision thereafter.

Commr. Sabatini opined that it made sense to discuss the millage and budget at once, and opined that one year prior, the Board discovered through due diligence and unanimous consent that the Property Appraiser's request for a 27 percent increase in his budget was unjustified. He opined that the Board had spent much time with respectable debate on this item and had hired a lobbyist to do it, and that the lobbyist had tried. He said that for various reasons, not only this request, but other budget amendment requests had been denied by the Florida Governor's Administration Committee. He opined that, knowing this was a political issue that the Board was faced with, and having already done the due diligence of deciding that this was an unjustified request, they should amend the Property Appraiser's budget by $1 million to claw back the same amount of funding and assign it to roads. He opined that the office was fully operational and that requesting an increase on top of what was already decided upon by the Board was an unjustified increase. He added that it would be the same millage rate.

Commr. Campione stated that with the way the process worked, the County's appeal was not taken up and was not acted upon; therefore, she was unsure from a legal standpoint if the Board could unilaterally take $1 million out of the Property Appraiser's budget.

Commr. Sabatini clarified that in reality, he was not requesting to take it out; rather, he was asking that the Board pass a budget reflecting $1 million less being allocated in the following year's budget.

Commr. Campione said that this would come out of BCC departments, and opined that Commissioner Sabatini would be taking the budget work done for the last six or more months and removing $1 million, noting that they worked hard to fine tune this to ensure that they had what they needed and were not requesting any more.

Commr. Sabatini relayed his understanding that this budget allocated funding for each Constitutional Office, and that it was not affecting other departments, employees or expenditures at the County level if they reduced that budget by $1 million.

Commr. Campione opined that when they were told by the powers that be in the City of Tallahassee that the County had to appeal the Property Appraiser's budget if they did not want to honor it, then this would come out of the BCC's department funding if they made that reduction.

Commr. Sabatini indicated his understanding that the Property Appraiser had requested it and the Board funded it in the previous year, and then the County had appealed this, though it was ignored. He relayed his understanding that if the Board allocated $1 million less than what the Property Appraiser had requested this year, then the Property Appraiser would have to appeal.

Ms. Marsh said that when looking at the statute, essentially the process was set up so that on or before June 1, the Property Appraiser submitted his budget to the Florida Department of Revenue (FDOR). She elaborated that FDOR then reviewed it and upon proper notice to the BCC, the Property Appraiser would amend or change the budget, which was supposed to happen on or before July 15. She said that once the County received this notification on July 15, they had on or before August 15 to submit information back to the State regarding that budget. She stated that at the point that FDOR makes its final budget amendments, the budget was final and shall be funded by the BCC.

Commr. Sabatini relayed his understanding that in the previous year, the County did those steps and appealed it timely.

Ms. Barker confirmed that they did this during the summer process.

Commr. Campione opined that this meant a clawback did not fit.

Commr. Parks indicated his understanding that they could not use this in the current year, and Ms. Barker confirmed this.

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Sabatini and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved the following items: the Lake County General Countywide Levy of 5.0254 mills (Resolution 2026-104), the Lake County MSTU for Ambulance and Emergency Services Levy of 0.4629 mills (Resolution 2026-105), the Lake County MSTU for Stormwater, Parks and Roads Levy of 0.4957 mills (Resolution 2026-106), the Lake County Fire Rescue MSTU Levy 0.4800 mills (Resolution 2026-107), the Lake County Wellness Way MSTU Levy 0.1454

mills (Resolution 2026-108), the Lake County Water Authority Levy of 0.2940 mills (Resolution 2026-109), and the Lake County Voter Approved Debt Levy of 0.0719 mills (Resolution 2026-110)

CHANGES TO FY 2027 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Ms. Stewart relayed that since the approval of the tentative budget on September 8, 2026, there had been various changes to include the following: the incorporated estimate for the LCWA management services agreement for about $640,000; re-budgets for capital projects at approximately $6.5 million; incorporated updated purchase order (PO) carryforward estimates; grant award adjustments; personal services adjustments; and other miscellaneous changes and adjustments. She requested approval to adopt changes to the FY 2027 tentative budget totaling $10,957,251.

Commr. Smith asked if they would discuss the management services agreement and capital projects.

Ms. Stewart said that the management services agreement was a $647,000 difference.

Ms. Barker added that this was the change, and relayed her understanding that the total agreement was $3.8 million. She remarked that the LCWA had updated personnel numbers, and that the entire agreement was for personnel costs related to the County employees that provided services to the LCWA. She believed that they had three new positions approved.

Commr. Smith questioned how they were off by $640,000 from two weeks prior.

Ms. Barker clarified that they just incorporated the changes, and that the changes were not updated two weeks prior; however, they had been finalized at this point. She added that staff knew that the changes were coming, though they had not been completed because the LCWA had not had their meeting.

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Morris and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved to adopt changes to the FY 2027 Tentative Budget totaling $10,957,251.

FINAL BUDGET

Ms. Stewart requested approval to adopt the Final Budget Resolution 2026-111 for FY 2027 totaling $1,120,272,322.

Commr. Morris reiterated his comment regarding $240,000 including $80,000 from the Office of Library Services, $80,000 from the Office of Transit Services, and $80,000 from the Office of Parks and Trails. He opined that it was challenging to do this, and said that it would take their resurfacing funding to slightly over $10 million.

Commr. Campione asked if he would consider the possibility of waiting until midyear, and said that if there was $240,000 collected above the projected amount on tax revenue, they could then make that adjustment and leave those departments intact.

Commr. Morris expressed support for doing this at the current time if they could, and for also using additional funding if it was received.

Commr. Campione stated that she would like to know more about what the $80,000 did to the departments' budget.

Commr. Morris mentioned that much of it was personnel.

Ms. Barker explained that there was currently a hiring freeze in place for several months since the talk of Amendment 3 had been occurring in the City of Tallahassee. She elaborated that a majority of that funding would come through position vacancies which had not been filled to date in each of those departments.

Commr. Parks said that he wanted to ensure that this would not affect a current employee's pay or benefits, and Ms. Barker denied that it would.

Commr. Campione relayed her understanding that it was primarily about whether someone else would be hired in that department, and that this would prevent that from happening.

Ms. Barker confirmed this, noting that the position was still there; however, with the uncertainty of Amendment 3, she had not approved many position postings as vacancies occurred. She mentioned that she did not want to have staff being hired when they were unsure of what would happen with the ballot initiative. She said that because of this, they had personnel savings due to those positions being budgeted for a full 12 months.

Commr. Smith asked if they could bring this up at the following meeting, noting that he was slightly uncomfortable not knowing exactly what the impact would be if these positions never came aboard. He inquired how much it would affect the library system if they did not hire the needed people, and how long the hiring freeze had been going on.

Ms. Barker replied that it was about three or four months.

Commr. Smith opined that they did not know the full impact of what this had created downstream because it had only been three months.

Ms. Barker opined that there had not currently been a substantial impact to services.

Commr. Campione asked if they could extend the hiring freeze a couple more months beyond the decision in November 2026, noting that from there they could review whether they wanted to take that $240,000 and move it to roads resurfacing versus moving forward with those positions as opposed to deciding on the current night. She said that she liked the sentiment of putting more funding toward road resurfacing.

Commr. Morris opined that it was spreading out the impact, and that it was not coming from one area; furthermore, these were unfilled positions. He relayed that he would not have an issue with possibly taking $240,000 and adding it to resurfacing three months later.

Commr. Smith indicated that this would also give them the opportunity to potentially say that the Office of Parks and Trails did not need the extra two people, but the Office of Library Services did. He stated that he liked the idea of keeping the hiring freeze up to six months after the budget process and reevaluating after that.

Commr. Parks asked when they would have a chance to move funding in their budget to reflect this more toward roads.

Ms. Barker explained that they could do a midyear adjustment in January 2027, which would be a public hearing where they could put additional funding into the road resurfacing line item. She added that the Board could do a budget adjustment at any time and direct staff to take funding from a specific line item and move it to another.

Commr. Campione recalled that they did this in prior years where they said that they wished they were spending more funding on road resurfacing and making it a priority, as well as revisiting this as they got into the subsequent year. She said that they could make this a priority to revisit. She stated that she would like to honor the work done so far to get the budgets were they were at and keep the hiring freeze intact, as well as revisit this after November 2026 and keep this as a priority to add more funding toward resurfacing.

Commr. Smith remarked that by the midyear adjustment, it would give five or six months of knowing where they were with those employees not being hired, noting that they should be able to see an impacted trend on the department.

Commr. Parks made a motion to approve this item with a note that in January 2027, they would have another agenda item to review a budget adjustment.

Ms. Barker said that it would be part of the midyear adjustment.

Commr. Smith asked if they could highlight the areas discussed on the current day, and Ms. Barker confirmed this.

On a motion by Commr. Parks, seconded by Commr. Morris and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the Board approved Final Budget Resolution 2026-111 for FY 2027 totaling $1,120,272,322.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Commr. Campione thanked everyone who worked hard over many months, noting that there was uncertainty of not knowing what would happen in November 2026 with Amendment 3. She said that regardless, the County would do hard work to ensure that the level of service was not affected and that they would do what was needed to keep things running. She added that their ultimate goal was to ensure that they could serve the residents and provide them with the level of service that everyone expected and was able to be provided thus far. She opined that staff did a great job and worked hard each day, and that it showed. She opined that despite what some might read on social media, the majority of the public appreciated the great work done by the County and their employees. She indicated that they were proud of the great work staff did and the way staff represented this organization.

Commr. Parks thanked staff, opining that they had been very professional.

Commr. Smith expressed appreciation to staff, opining that many people did not understand what all went into the presentation. He added that they would start on budget presentations in December 2026 for the midyear adjustment, and that there was much work they did that was greatly appreciated.

Ms. Barker said that the School Board final budget hearing had been on September 14, 2026, and that it had been adopted and passed for the new fiscal year. She then opined that the County had a great staff who were dedicated to the residents, and said that she was proud to serve with them. She thanked the Board for their support.

Commr. Smith mentioned that it was National Centurion Day, noting that he had given a letter to an individual who turned 100 years old a couple weeks prior. He added that it was also National Elephant Appreciation Day.

Commr. Sabatini mentioned that they had 15 days after this meeting to appeal any decision of the Constitutional Officers' budgets, and that it was a slightly different process than what was described earlier. He indicated that he would like to add this to the next agenda to discuss making an appeal regarding $1 million of the Property Appraiser's budget, recalling that they did not succeed before; however, he opined that this was not a reason to not try again.

Commr. Campione relayed that this would be added to the October 6, 2026 agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought to the attention of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

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LESLIE CAMPIONE, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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GARY J COONEY, CLERK