



# Indian River County, Florida

Indian River County  
Administration Complex  
1801 27th Street  
Vero Beach, Florida 32960  
indianriver.gov

## Draft Meeting Minutes

### Board of County Commissioners

*Deryl Loar, District 4, Chairman*

*Laura Moss, District 5, Vice Chairman*

*Susan Adams, District 1*

*Joseph Flescher, District 2*

*Joseph H. Earman, District 3*

John A. Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator

Jennifer W. Shuler, County Attorney

Ryan L. Butler, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

Shauna James, Deputy Clerk

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Tuesday, January 13, 2026

9:00 AM

Commission Chambers

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

**Present:** 5 - Chairman Deryl Loar  
Vice Chairman Laura Moss  
Commissioner Susan Adams  
Commissioner Joseph Flescher  
Commissioner Joe Earman

#### 2.A. A MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION FOR FIRST RESPONDERS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

#### 2.B. INVOCATION

**Pastor Jeremy Rebman, First Methodist Church Vero Beach**

#### 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**Joseph H. Earman, Commissioner**

#### 4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA / EMERGENCY ITEMS

**A motion was made by Commissioner Flescher, seconded by Vice Chairman Moss, to approve the Agenda as amended, adding Item 12.A.1. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

#### 5. PROCLAMATIONS and PRESENTATIONS

**5.A.** Presentation of Proclamation Recognizing January 18-24, 2026 as National Certified Nurse Anesthetists Week

**Postponed/Continued**

#### 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**7. INFORMATION ITEMS FROM STAFF OR COMMISSIONERS NOT REQUIRING BOARD ACTION****7.A.** 2026 Committee Assignments by Commissioner

**Recommended Action:** Informational item, no action required.

**No Action Taken or Required**

**7.B.** 2026 Committees Vacancies and Appointments

**Recommended Action:** Currently, there are no qualified applicants for the County Attorney to recommend to the Board.

**No Action Taken or Required**

**7.C.** Indian River County Venue Event Calendar: January - February 2026

Commissioner Adams invited everyone to come out for a “Frogtastic” good time at the Annual Fellsmere Frog Leg Festival, with proceeds supporting youth recreation. She mentioned that the festival has contributed \$2 million back to the community since its inception over 35 years ago.

**No Action Taken or Required**

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT: AGENDA-RELATED MATTERS (EXCEPT FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS)****9. CONSENT AGENDA**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Flescher, seconded by Commissioner Adams, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

**9.A.** Approval of Checks and Electronic Payments November 22, 2025 to November 28, 2025

**Recommended Action:** Approve the list of checks and electronic payments issued for the time period of November 22, 2025 to November 28, 2025

**Approved**

**9.B.** Approval of Checks and Electronic Payments November 29, 2025 to December 5, 2025

**Recommended Action:** Approve the list of checks and electronic payments for the time period of November 29, 2025 to December 5, 2025

**Approved**

- 9.C. Approval of Checks and Electronic Payments December 6, 2025 to December 12, 2025

**Recommended Action:** Approve the list of checks and electronic payments for the time period of December 6, 2025 to December 12, 2025

**Approved**

- 9.D. Quarterly OPEB Trust Report for Quarter Ending 9/30/2025

**Recommended Action:** Accept the report

**Accepted**

- 9.E. Quarterly Investment Report for Quarter Ending 9/30/2025

**Recommended Action:** Accept the report

**Accepted**

- 9.F. Quarterly Tourist Development Tax Report for Quarter Ending 9/30/2025

**Recommended Action:** Accept the report

**Accepted**

- 9.G. Dori Slosberg Driver Education Safety Act - Driver Education Program Trust Fund Report - Cumulative Reporting Through 9/30/2025

**Recommended Action:** Accept the report

**Accepted**

- 9.H. Internal Audit Division Annual Report

**Recommended Action:** Accept the report

**Accepted**

- 9.I. 2026 Oblique Aerial Imagery Contract Extension

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners waive the requirement for competitive bids, and authorize the Chairman to execute the first amendment to the agreement with EagleView Pictometry International Corporation, after review and

approval by the County Attorney as to form and legal sufficiency.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

- 9.J.** Request Approval to Submit Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Derelict Vessel Grant Applications for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends the Board of County Commissioners authorize the Natural Resources Department Director or designee to submit Derelict Vessels Grant applications to FWC through the 2025-2026 fiscal year. If funding is awarded, staff further recommends the County Administrator be authorized to execute the grant documents, contingent upon review and approval by the County Attorney.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

- 9.K.** Resolution Cancelling Taxes on Property Purchased for Public Purpose – AC Veterinary Specialty Services, LLC- 6580 69th St. (Animal Control)

**Recommended Action:** Authorize the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners to execute the Resolution to cancel certain taxes upon the property purchased by Indian River County for a public purpose, and the Clerk to send a certified copy of the Resolution to the Tax Collector and the Property Appraiser so that any delinquent or current taxes can be cancelled.

**Approved staff's recommendation and Resolution 2026-001, cancelling certain taxes upon publicly owned lands, pursuant to Section 196.28, Florida Statutes**

- 9.L.** Updates to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Investment Policy

**Recommended Action:** Accept the policy change.

**Accepted**

- 9.M.** Second Amendment to Water, Wastewater, and Reclaimed Water Franchise Agreement Between the City of Fellsmere and Indian River County

**Recommended Action:** County staff recommends that the Board approve Second Amendment to the Franchise Agreement and authorize the Chair to execute the same.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

- 9.N.** Resolution Accepting Final Plat Dedications for Crossbridge PD Subdivision [PD-04-08-13 / 2003110064 -96944]

**Approved staff's recommendation and Resolution 2026-002, accepting dedications from Crossbridge PD by Plat pursuant to Florida Statute Section 177.081.**

**9.O.** UF/IFAS Extension 4-H Agent Recommendation for Hire and Future Staff Approvals

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Board approve the appointment of Sheri Trent as Extension Agent (4-H), as recommended by UF/IFAS. Staff also recommends that the Board authorize future appointments of UF/IFAS Extension Faculty, by the County Administrator or his or her designee.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

**9.P.** Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Locally Funded Agreement (LFA) and Three Party Escrow Agreement for CR510/85th Street to 58th Avenue FM Nos. 4056063-3-43-02 and 405606-3-45-02 (IRC-2504)

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners:

1. Approve the Locally Funded Agreement with FDOT in the amount of \$471,600.00;
2. Approve the associated Three-Party Escrow Agreement;
3. Adopt the Authorizing Resolution to ensure compliance with the Uniform Act for County-acquired properties within the CR 510 widening project limits; and
4. Authorize the Chairman to execute all related agreements and documents.

**Approved staff's recommendation and Resolution 2026-003, authorizing the Chairman to execute Locally Funded Agreements (LFA) FM NOS. 405606-3-43-02 and 405606-3-45-02 and a Three-Party Escrow Agreement for the CR 510 (85th Street to 58th Avenue) project for remediation services within the project right-of-way.**

**9.Q.** 2026 United Way Pickleball Tournament License Agreement

**Recommended Action:** Staff respectfully requests that the Board of County Commissioners approve the License Agreement with United Way of Indian River County Inc. and authorize the Chairman to execute the agreement after review and approval for legal sufficiency by the County Attorney.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

**9.R.** 2025 Surfing's Evolution & Preservation Foundation "SEPF" Award

**Recommended Action:** Staff respectfully requests that the Board of County Commissioners accept this grant from Surfing's Evolution & Preservation Foundation and allow staff to use the funds to purchase an ATV to be used for guarding County beaches.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

**9.S.** Change Order No. 1 and Final Pay Application - Release of Retainage - Victor Hart Restroom-Concession Building (IRC-2420 / CP-2529)

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends approval of Change Order No. 1 and payment of Contractor's

Final Application of Payment to Don Hinkle Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$78,632.06.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

**9.T. Request for Use of Holman Stadium for Annual Sawbones vs Jawbones Event to be held May 8, 2026**

**Recommended Action:** Staff respectfully requests that the Board of County Commission approve the Agreement, authorize the Chairman to sign and grant the User Group's request for waiver of the standard security deposit required by the Stadium Use Agreement.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

**9.U. Interlocal Agreement between Indian River County and the City of Fellsmere regarding the grading of roads within the City limits of Fellsmere and voluntary cooperation and operational assistance mutual aid agreement.**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends the Board of County Commissioners approve the Interlocal Agreement between Indian River County and the City of Fellsmere regarding the Grading of Roads within the City of Fellsmere and Voluntary Cooperation and Operational Assistance Mutual Aid Agreement and authorize the Chairman to execute the same.

**Approved staff's recommendation**

**10. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS and GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES**

**10.A. Tax Collectors Breakroom Work Renovations**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Tax Collector's breakroom renovation be included in the upcoming budget amendment

County Administrator John Titkanich requested the Board's approval to fund improvements to the Tax Collector's office to address both operational and infrastructure needs. He noted that the Tax Collector had submitted a request for renovations to the current breakroom, which was outdated and no longer adequately met staff requirements. The renovation was planned to ensure continuous office operations while minimizing disruption to daily functions. The budgetary impact was \$95,000, allocated through a budget amendment.

Chairman Loar expressed concerns about the high cost of relocating the breakroom, noting that it would require significant infrastructure changes, including plumbing upgrades. The Board emphasized the importance of providing staff with a comfortable space to unwind, but questioned whether relocating the breakroom was necessary.

Assistant County Administrator Nancy Bundt clarified that the relocation would indeed require structural modifications and provided a breakdown of the associated costs.

Further discussions took place between the Board and staff, noting that this was a mid-year budget amendment, and these expenses could have been planned for in the original budget. Therefore, staff were advised to exercise caution when making mid-year budget amendments for items that might not have been deemed urgent or critical. Staff were asked to explore more cost-effective options.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Adams, seconded by Commissioner Flescher, to proceed with the renovations, with the stipulation that efforts would be made to explore more cost-effective options. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

## 11. PUBLIC ITEMS

### A. PUBLIC HEARINGS

PROOF OF PUBLICATION FOR THESE HEARINGS ARE ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK TO THE BOARD.

#### 11.A.1. Final Adoption of the 2025 Indian River County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Based Amendments

**Recommended Action:**

County Staff recommends the Board approve the attached comprehensive plan EAR-based amendments and direct County staff to transmit the County's Comprehensive Plan EAR-based amendments to Florida Department of Commerce.

Patrick Murphy, Chief of Long-Range Planning, presented an overview of the Indian River County Comprehensive Plan (Plan) Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) based amendments. He presented slides covering community involvement, public hearings held, the EAR process timeline, and current status.

Vice Chairman Moss confirmed her position and voting record against transferring standards from the Plan to the Land Development Regulations (LDRs). She expressed concerns that moving these standards could limit public input, as LDRs were easier to change than the Plan. She emphasized the need for caution in this

process. Commissioner Moss also called for an updated Hydrologic Study to be conducted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Mr. Murphy, in response to Commissioner Flescher, stated that staff would have the opportunity to modify any element of the Plan if the Board wishes. The only requirement set by the State was that local governments must evaluate their Comprehensive Plans every 7 years to ensure consistency with any new State laws. However, any other Elements of the Plan could be reviewed at any time at the Board's discretion.

County Administrator John Titkanich pointed out that the intention was to bring back the Portable Water Sub-Element Policy 1.2 and the Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element Policy 1.6 once the legislature resolved the inconsistencies caused by last-minute provisions added to Senate Bill 180 in the last session. These policies were State mandates that staff were trying to amend in the Plan to ensure consistency with State requirements. However, the new Bill complicated the process. Therefore, staff adopted everything except those two policies, which staff would address at a later date.

Commissioner Earman thanked staff for their hard work on the Plan.

After the vote with Vice Chairman Moss dissenting, Chairman Loar stated that the record should reflect that Vice Chairman Moss voted Nay at the September 9, 2025, meeting.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Earman, seconded by Commissioner Flescher, to approve the EAR-based amendments as presented and direct staff to transmit the County's proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment Package to the Florida Department of Commerce, pursuant to State Statute. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 4 - Chairman Loar, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

**Nay:** 1 - Vice Chairman Moss

#### 11.A.2.

D.R. Horton, Inc.'s Request for a Conceptual Planned Development (PD) Plan Modification for Bluewater Bay PD [AA-24-08-69 / 2001080013-96692]

Chairman Loar introduced the parties to the proceeding as Indian River County and D.R. Horton, Inc. (Applicant). As requested by the Chairman, each Commissioner disclosed ex parte communications, site visits, or independent investigations. The Commissioners also affirmed that they have an open mind and can base their decisions on the evidence presented and the applicable law.

The Deputy Clerk administered the Oath to all persons who wished to speak at the hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Brandon Creagan, Chief of Current Development, presented a request to the Board to modify the Conceptual Plan Development for Bluewater Bay PD. BSE Consultants, representing D.R. Horton, sought to remove the proposed bridge connection to 90th Avenue due to a pending legal challenge. Instead, new public benefits were proposed, including pedestrian connections, intersection improvements, traffic signal enhancements, and turn-lane upgrades.

Mr. Creagan noted that on February 15, 2005, the Board of County Commissioners approved the development of 379 residential units on 141.97 acres, with a density of 2.67 units per acre. Although construction began, it was not completed, and the preliminary PD approval expired; however, the Conceptual Plan and Special Exception remain valid. The Applicant also sought to add a second driveway connection to 85th Street via an existing open space tract. If the Board approves the modifications, further approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission and staff-level approval will be needed.

Vice Chairman Moss expressed concerns about the project's validity, noting that many elements had changed since 2005. Mr. Creagan clarified that the Conceptual Plan and Special Exceptions remain valid indefinitely, while preliminary plan developments could expire. He emphasized that the current discussion centered on removing a significant public benefit from the project due to a lawsuit with a landowner that, in turn, had imposed development restrictions.

As a follow-up to Vice Chairman Moss's concern, Commissioner Adams requested Mr. Creagan clarify the distinction between a conceptual site plan and a final site plan. Mr. Creagan explained that the conceptual site plan provided an opportunity to negotiate all aspects up front. During the plan development phase, discussions focused on public benefits and negotiations over permissible setbacks and desired roadway characteristics. Additionally, elements like the design of stormwater ponds were considered. Essentially, the conceptual stage encompassed all design elements and was approved in principle; however, developers had to return for the final site plan or, in this case, a preliminary site plan.

Assistant Planning and Services Director Ryan Sweeney responded to Commissioner Earman, noting that the project south of County Road 510 had already begun. The Blue Water Bay project had been partially constructed for nearly 20 years. Removing

the bridge connecting the north and south portions of County Road 510 simplified operations for the Department of Transportation (DOT), eliminating one driveway and one bridge. Coordination on the signalization at 86th Avenue was already underway with the DOT. However, this proposal needed to be approved before the DOT could fully engage with the project. The installation of a new signal, which was not initially included in DOT's plans, was currently being coordinated to secure funding.

Commissioner Flescher and staff discussed the internal layout and confirmed it had not changed despite external modifications to buses and traffic. Commissioner Flescher asked whether any changes might affect roadway design or home placement, to which Mr. Sweeney affirmed that nothing external affected the development.

Project Engineer Ana Saunders from BSE stated that staff did an excellent job summarizing the project and had no further comments.

There being no further comment, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Earman, seconded by Commissioner Flescher, to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

### **11.A.3.**

#### **Consideration of Staff-Initiated Land Development Regulation (LDR) Amendments to Create Allowances and Regulations for Mobile Food Dispensing Vehicles (Food Trucks) (Legislative)**

Chief of Current Development Brandon Creagan presented the proposed amendments to the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) to govern the operation of mobile food-dispensing vehicles in unincorporated areas of Indian River County. The proposal aimed to align local regulations with State Statutes while allowing the County to manage food truck locations, hours of operation, and aesthetic standards. Key points of the proposal included placement restrictions to prevent obstruction, specific operating hours, and waste management protocols. Mr. Creagan also highlighted the potential economic benefits of food trucks and the need for flexible operating hours, especially compared with traditional brick-and-mortar establishments.

County Administrator John Titkanich provided an overview of the Board's assessment of proposed food truck regulations, focusing on key elements such as location, operational standards, hours of operation, and duration, which may be managed through zoning. He noted the Board's interest in exploring practices from other communities and acknowledged concerns about hours, the ban on tents and seating, and regulations for awnings. During his one-on-one discussions, some Board members suggested allowing vendors longer on-site setups. Administrator Titkanich

emphasized the importance of fairness to traditional businesses and the implications of strict operational constraints. He clarified that this meeting was for discussion only, with no immediate changes to the Ordinance or legislation, and that a proposed Ordinance would be revised based on the Board's feedback in collaboration with the County Attorney's Office.

Commissioner Flescher thanked staff and food truck vendors for their participation and recognized the positive evolution of perceptions around food trucks and their offerings. He noted the vendors' respectful conduct during the suspension of enforcement. Commissioner Flescher emphasized that food trucks offered affordable meals without negatively impacting the community.

Deputy County Attorney Susan Prado confirmed to Vice Chairman Moss that, according to Section 509.102 of the Florida Statutes, Subsection 1(a), a mobile food dispensing vehicle must be capable of movement.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Dane Jones, the operator-owner of the Griddle and Grind food truck, said the discussion addressed all his concerns. He expressed his gratitude to the Board for their time and support.

There being no further comment, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Earman agreed on the operational requirements of the proposed Ordinance, highlighting that activities on unpaved surfaces should have been limited to authorized special events. While unpaved areas were preferred, operations on grass with landowner consent may be needed. He raised concerns about enforcing operational hours in the absence of a specific agreement and felt that furniture displays and small items were acceptable as long as they did not create a carnival atmosphere or obstruct pathways.

Assistant Planning & Development Services Director Ryan Sweeney addressed three key items for which he sought firm direction to achieve a favorable outcome when the matter was brought back. First, regarding hours of operation, he suggested removing this requirement entirely while noting that a noise Ordinance remained in effect. Operations near residential or commercial areas would still need to comply with noise standards. Second, for tables and tents, Mr. Sweeney recommended keeping the regulations to a minimum. He noted that a 10x10 tent was exempt from fire code regulations, allowing a setup with a 10x10 tent and a picnic table, provided it did not obstruct sidewalks or handicap access. Lastly, concerning the Commercial General

(CG) zoning, he proposed requiring a minimum site size of three acres. This measure aimed to prevent the proliferation of small sites, such as convenience stores or fast-food outlets, which typically struggled with parking availability. He noted that larger sites, such as shopping centers or home improvement stores, typically offer ample parking. He also suggested that maps indicating allowable sites could be prepared. Mr. Sweeney concluded by asking whether to seek a consensus on each item individually or to proceed with the recommendations as a whole

Chairman Loar stated that following the discussion, staff would have the opportunity to review the points raised regarding food trucks, and anticipated that staff would return with these points for further consideration to establish legislation related to food trucks within the County. A vote was not required, and the Item was continued.

**Postponed/Continued**

The Chairman called for a recess at 10:24 A.M. and reconvened at 10:30 A.M. with all members present.

**11.A.4.**

Hiers Properties, L.L.C.'s Request to Rezone Approximately ±18.08 Acres from A-1, Agricultural District to RS-3, Single-Family Residential District

**Recommended Action:** Based on the analysis and conclusions outlined in this report, County Planning staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve the request to rezone the ± 18.08 acres of subject properties from A-1 to RS-3.

Chairman Loar introduced the parties to the proceeding as Indian River County and Hiers Properties, LLC (Applicant). As requested by the Chairman, each Commissioner disclosed ex parte communications, site visits, or independent investigations. The Commissioners also affirmed that they have an open mind and can base their decisions on the evidence presented and the applicable law.

The Deputy Clerk administered the Oath to all persons who wished to speak at the hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Patrick Murphy, Chief of Long-Range Planning, presented a request to rezone approximately ± 18.08 acres from A-1 (Agricultural District) to RS-3 (Single-Family Residential) near 8th Street and 58th Avenue. The area was currently designated for low-density residential use, allowing for up to 3 units per acre, and the proposed rezoning aligned with the Comprehensive Plan, which supported residential development. The change aimed to accommodate a low-density single-family

subdivision while maintaining the area's residential character. Staff concluded that the rezoning request was consistent with existing regulations and planning objectives.

Vice Chairman Moss emphasized the importance of community outreach, noting substantial concerns about traffic in the area, particularly along 8th Street near 58th Avenue. She expressed apprehension about the rezoning's theoretical nature, which could lead to unforeseen adverse outcomes. Commissioner Moss pointed out that resident complaints about specific developments underscored the need for careful consideration of zoning, as it risked overwhelming the community with unwanted developments.

Assistant Planning and Services Development Director Ryan Sweeney responded to Commissioner Moss's comments, clarifying that the property had been designated for 44 units at a density of 2.43 units per acre, which was below the maximum density of three units per acre. He mentioned that, due to land-use limitations and stormwater management regulations, the final development would include approximately 36 units. Mr. Sweeney acknowledged the traffic concerns raised and noted that a 36-unit subdivision would generate fewer than 400 trips, eliminating the need for a traffic study.

Dan Sorrow, the Director of Land Entitlement at Mills, Short & Associates, supported the staff's recommendation regarding a Planned Development (PD) project that had previously been denied. He praised the staff for their thorough analysis and highlighted the project's importance for the property owner's equity. The property was located within the USB and had zoning consistent with the surrounding areas (RS3). Mr. Sorrow presented an initial conceptual plan for approximately 32 RS3 lots, each measuring 80 by 150 feet, with a minimum size of 12,000 square feet, allowing for adequate setbacks. He expressed enthusiasm for future presentations of the plan and thanked everyone for their time.

With no public comment, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Adams, seconded by Chairman Loar, to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

## **B. PUBLIC NOTICE ITEMS**

### **12. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR MATTERS**

#### 12.A.1. Fellsmere Water Control District Legislation Update

Kathy Copeland, Legislative Affairs and Communications Manager, provided insights

on two key bills: HB 4093, concerning the Fellsmere Water Control District, and HB 4095, related to the Headwaters Water Control District. She emphasized the need for increased transparency in canal maintenance, which residents had requested. HB 4093 proposed transitioning the Fellsmere Water Control District from an Independent District to a Dependent District governed by the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners. This change aimed to enhance accountability by appointing County Commissioners to oversee canal maintenance and funding it through property owner assessments. HB 4095 also designated the Headwaters Water Control District as a Public Corporation under County oversight. Ms. Copeland stated that ongoing discussions and refinements for the HB 4093 were expected, with Committee reviews scheduled in the coming weeks. She highlighted the importance of community engagement and was committed to keeping residents informed throughout the legislative process.

Commissioner Flescher expressed appreciation for the progress made and acknowledged the journey to this point.

Ms. Copeland stated that the interim period posed challenges for staff in assessing the other obligations. The challenges included an existing equipment lease and a pending contract bid from November 2025.

Assistant Public Works Director Danny Ooley affirmed that the suggested contract improvements exceed those in previous agreements and expressed confidence that the October schedule could be met if HB 4093 was approved.

#### **No Action Taken or Required**

### **13. DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS**

#### **A. Building and Facilities Services**

#### **B. Community Services**

##### **13.B.1. Children Services 2024-2025 Annual Report**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommend the Board accept the Children Services Advisory Committee's Annual Report for FY 2024-2025, as submitted

Community Services Director Cindy Emerson, along with Human Services Administrator Megan Kendrick, Human Services Coordinator Robert Catapano, and Data Analyst Ashley Baker, presented a review of the Children's Services Advisory Committee (CSAC) annual report. The presentation highlighted strategic investments aimed at addressing critical needs. The report outlined

improvements in program performance outcomes, particularly in early learning and student achievement in math tutoring. The needs assessment identified key funding priorities, which include health and well-being, nurturing families, and promoting success in school and in life.

Ms. Kendrick thanked the Board for their support, and recognized the nonprofits dedicated to serving children and families for their commitment. Additionally, she praised her team for their dedication and acknowledged Ms. Emerson's strong leadership.

Ms. Kendrick concluded by playing a video highlighting that year's theme: "Every Child Deserves a Hero."

**A motion was made by Commissioner Adams, seconded by Commissioner Flescher, to accept the Children's Services Advisory Committee (CSAC) annual report. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

### **13.B.2. Children Services 2026 Needs Assessment Update**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommend the Board accept the Children Services 2026 Needs Assessment Update, as submitted.

Chairman Loar stated that the Board had reviewed the Needs Assessment Report. He noted that some key trends were concerning, indicating that significant work lay ahead. Many of these trends appeared to be universally applicable nationwide, suggesting there was still more work to be done.

There was no further discussion on this Item.

**Accepted**

The Chairman called for a recess at 11:22 A.M. and reconvened at 11:27 A.M. with all members present.

### **C. Emergency Services**

### **D. Human Resources**

#### **13.D.1. Group Health Insurance Update January 2026**

Human Resources Director Suzanne Boyll, along with representatives from

Lockton Companies, presented insights on the County's Group Health Insurance program for the plan year from October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026. She noted that the new Pharmacy Benefits Manager (PBM), Rightway Healthcare, would now require prior authorization for GLP-1 medications for weight loss, based on BMI and comorbidities.

Ms. Boyll stated that the previous plan year (October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025) ended with a \$2.5 million deficit, with medical claims up 19.2% and prescription drug claims up 32.2%. The total medical claims amounted to \$17.4 million, with 75 high-cost claimants responsible for \$8.6 million, compared to 62 claimants the previous year. Prescription drug claims totaled \$7.4 million, with GLP-1 medications contributing \$2.3 million (23% of total Rx claims). She noted that the Health Insurance Trust Fund balance was \$21,562,606 as of September 30, 2025.

Ms. Boyll responded to Chairman Loar, indicating that the affected members regarding the changes to the GLP-1 medication had been notified. She noted that staff would revisit this issue in March 2026.

Lockton Companies Pharmacy Specialist Tressa Chretien observed a decline in the number of utilizers in the October data. However, there was a steady increase noted in November and December. A significant factor to consider was the first quarter of 2026, when the new prior authorizations took effect.

The Board and staff discussed newly emerging medications, particularly the tablet version of GLP-1, which offered easier administration but had a similar price to its injectable form, ranging from \$149 to \$450. Despite many qualifying for these medications, the financial burden on employers and patients remained high. However, direct-to-consumer options were emerging, offering lower prices than insurance coverage. Mechanisms like HR cards were being developed to help subsidize employee costs, which may have encouraged employers to reconsider covering these expenses in health plans. Lockton was monitoring these trends to guide future funding decisions.

Ms. Boyll touched on the popularity of the Health Center that was approved a few years ago, but the return on investment was still 6 to 7 years away.

**No Action Taken or Required**

**E. Information Technology**

**F. Natural Resources**

**G. Office of Management and Budget****H. Parks, Recreation, and Conservation****I. Planning and Development Services****J. Public Works****13.J.1. Adoption of Indian River County Public Works Department Standard Details and Policies**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners approve the adoption of the Department of Public Works Standard Details and related Department Policies as presented, effective upon Board approval.

David Schryver, Acting Public Works Director, was accompanied by Right-of-Way Permitting Administrator Wendy Smith. Mr. Schryver highlighted Ms. Smith's leadership in developing the standards and policies that the staff requested the Board to adopt through the proposed Resolution.

Chairman Loar praised staff for their sensible approach, which aimed to reduce calls and concerns. Commissioner Earman supported the changes to eliminate guesswork and ensure clarity, commending Ms. Smith's contributions and acknowledging a decline in call volume.

County Administrator John Titkanich thanked staff for their contributions to the project. He emphasized that clear standards and expectations would improve submissions and speed up reviews. While acknowledging the challenges of implementing 10 new policies and 6 standards, he drew parallels to the Utilities Department's initiatives and expressed confidence that these changes would benefit customers.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Adams, seconded by Commissioner Flescher, to approve staff's recommendation and Resolution 2026-004, adopting Public Works Department ten (10) standard construction details and six (6) policies for work within rights-of-way to provide efficiency, accountability and improved outcomes to the public. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

**K. Sandridge Golf Club****L. Utilities Services****14. COUNTY ATTORNEY MATTERS**

**14.A. Value Adjustment Board Chair/Vice Chair Election**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends the Board elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Value Adjustment Board.

County Attorney Jennifer Shuler introduced the Item, noting that Florida Statutes required the County Commissioners to appoint two members from their Board to the Value Adjustment Board (VAB). This year's appointed Commissioners were Commissioner Flescher and Commissioner Earman.

Commissioner Earman remarked that the Value Adjustment Board stood out as one of the most efficient and responsible organizations in the County. He specifically acknowledged Terri Collins-Lister for her exceptional management of the program. Commissioner Earman also underscored the vital role that the Value Adjustment Board played within the County.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Earman, seconded by Commissioner Adams, to approve appointment of Commissioner Flescher to the position of Chairman to the Value Adjustment Board. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

**A motion was made by Commissioner Flescher, seconded by Commissioner Adams, to approve the appointment of Commissioner Earman as Vice Chairman of the Value Adjustment Board. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chairman Loar, Vice Chairman Moss, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Flescher, and Commissioner Earman

**15. COMMISSIONERS MATTERS**

- A. Commissioner Deryl Loar, Chairman**
- B. Commissioner Laura Moss, Vice Chairman**
- C. Commissioner Susan Adams**
- D. Commissioner Joseph E. Flescher**
- E. Commissioner Joseph H. Earman**

**16. SPECIAL DISTRICTS AND BOARDS**

- A. Emergency Services District**
- B. Solid Waste Disposal District**

**C. Environmental Control Board**

**17. PUBLIC COMMENT: NON-AGENDA-RELATED MATTERS**

Judy Greenberg, President of the Roseland Women's Club, invited the Commissioners and the public to the 3rd Annual Roseland Women's Club Celebration. The event was scheduled for February 7th from 9 AM to 2 PM.

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Lisa Snycerski addressed the Board about her concerns regarding the zoning of agricultural land and the ongoing loss of such land in the County and State. She reiterated her opposition to data centers, highlighting the Governor's proposed legislation to regulate data center sites and to protect natural resources and consumers. Ms. Snycerski urged support for the bill, noting that similar issues were emerging statewide and nationally.

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Mary Martinez addressed the Board regarding Handyman Scams, Medicaid, and the rights of the elderly.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:01 P.M.