

Highlands County Board of County Commissioners
Tuesday, December 16, 2025
9:00 AM
600 S. Commerce Ave. Sebring, FL 33870

- 1. Meeting Called to Order: Invitation to fill out "Comments by the Public" forms**
Please silence all cell phones and devices.

- 2. Invocation**

- 3. Pledge of Allegiance**

- 4. Announcements**

The Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District will hold a Regular Board Meeting, on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., in the HSWCD Conference Room, in the Bert J. Harris, Jr. Agricultural Center, 4505 George Blvd., Sebring

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee will hold a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 3:30 p.m., in the Engineering Conference Room, 505 S. Commerce Ave., Sebring

County offices will be closed Wednesday, December 24, 2025, Thursday, December 25, 2025, and Friday, December 26, 2025, in observance of the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after Christmas holidays

County offices will be closed Thursday, January 1, 2026, in observance of the New Year's Day holiday

- 5. Constitutional Officers - Announcements**

- 6. Recognitions, Presentations and Proclamations**

- A. Employee of the Quarter for the 3rd quarter 2025

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact.

- B. Presentation of Years of Service Awards

Leah Sauls, Development Services Director, Laura Borgesi, Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director, Laurie Hurner, County Administrator, Brandon Gunn, Parks & Facilities Director, James Duppenhaler, Fire Chief

No fiscal impact.

- 7. Public Comment**

- 8. Consent Agenda**

- A. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-065 for Budget Amendment 25-26-031 to properly reclass or clean up current project balances in FY25/26 due to

negative balances in FY 24/25.

- B. Request approval of Agreement between Highlands County and MuchPR for the Tourist Development Council's (TDC) Public Relations services.
- C. Request adoption of resolution 25-26-070 for budget amendment 25-26-036 to make necessary adjustments and corrections.

Kimberly Wean, Housing Program Manager

The fiscal impact to Fund 166 (SHIP) is a decrease of \$698.00 to Project 23366 (SHIP PH 32), cost center 5366 (SHIP Administration), account 54000Z (Proj. Travel & Per Diem) and transferring these funds for an increase of \$698.00 to Project 21366 (SHIP PH 30), cost center 5667 (SHIP Program), account 54948Z (Proj. Disaster Assistance) for a net fiscal impact of \$0.00.

- D. Request to waive the Landfill Tipping Fees for Placid Lakes Homeowner Association Community Cleanup on January 17, 2026.

Mark Lawrence Solid Waste Director

Landfill staff estimates that the Placid Lakes Homeowner Association Cleanup will collect an estimated two (2) tons of Class 1 waste to be hauled to the landfill at a cost of \$55.00 per ton for a total of \$110.00 to be waived. The figures are based upon the Placid Lakes Homeowners Association's estimate of one (1) roll-off bin for this event.

- E. Request approval of Amendment 1 to Prescribe Burn Agreement.

Dawn Ritter, Natural Resources Manager

No Fiscal Impact.

- F. Request approval of Budget Amendment 25-26-029 to adjust the Supervisor of Elections budgeted funding for FY 25/26.

Karen Healy, Supervisor of Elections

There is no fiscal impact to Fund 005 (General) or the overall budget as this budget amendment is transferring \$16,709.00 from cost center 9990 (Budgetary Expenditures 005), account 59900 (Reserve for Contingency) to cost center 2442 (Supervisor of Elections), account 51001 (Personal Services Elected Official) in the amount of \$16,709.00.

- G. Request approval of the Human Resources Director job description and the department name "Human Resources & Information Department"

James Langford, Assistant County Administrator

Annual fiscal impact to the General Fund is estimated to be \$113,700, including salary and benefits.

- H. Agreement between Highlands County and The Legis Group

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

The total fiscal impact for FY 2025/26 is \$90,000. This figure reflects an additional allocation of \$55,000 to General Fund, supplementing the \$35,000 previously authorized in the adopted FY 2025/26 budget.

- I. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-068 for Budget Amendment 25-26-034 to appropriate funds for the Catfish Creek Road Sidewalk, Project Number 25023.

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) in the amount of \$50,000.00 and will be appropriated in cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects) and Project 25023 (Catfish Creek Road Sidewalk).

FDOT is willing to reimburse the County up to the amount of \$50,000.00 for design of the Catfish Creek Road Sidewalk. Funding for this project is not included in the FY 25/26 Adopted budget and CFS, therefore the fiscal impact would be an increase to the budget in the amount of \$50,000.

- J. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-067 for Budget Amendment 25-26-033 to appropriate funds for the DeSoto Road Sidewalk, Project Number 25022.

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) in the amount of \$51,750.00 and will be appropriated in cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects) and Project 25022 (DeSoto Road Sidewalk).

FDOT is willing to reimburse the County up to the amount of \$51,750.00 for design, construction, and construction engineering and inspection (CEI) for the DeSoto Road Sidewalk.

- K. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-066 for Budget Amendment 25-26-032 to appropriate funds for the Cemetery Road Sidewalk, Project Number 25021.

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) in the amount of \$86,250.00 and will be appropriated in cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects) and Project 25021 (Cemetery Road Sidewalk).

FDOT is willing to reimburse the County up to the amount of \$86,250.00 for design, construction, and construction engineering and inspection (CEI) for the Cemetery Road Sidewalk.

- L. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-069 for Budget Amendment 25-26-035 to appropriate funds for the School Street Sidewalk, Project Number 25024.

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) in the amount of \$77,430.00 and will be appropriated in cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects) and Project 25024 (School Street Sidewalk).

FDOT is willing to reimburse the County up to the amount of \$77,340.00 for design, construction, and construction engineering and inspection (CEI) for the School Street Sidewalk.

- M. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-071 for Budget Amendment 25-26-037 to reverse budget amendment 25-26-013 that was approved by the Board on

12-2-25 in error.

David Nitz, OMB Manager

The fiscal impact is a decrease to Fund 005 (General), cost center 3995 (Children's Advocacy Center), Project 24058 (DCF Trust Fd_CATF FY25-26) in the amount of \$4,903.21.

- N. Request for adoption of Resolution # 25-26-049 to approve a County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP) Agreement "Supplemental Agreement" for additional funds for Sebring Parkway (US 27 North to Scenic Highway) Project # 23060.

Laura A. Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), Cost Center 4102A (Transportation Projects) in the amount of \$1,235,000.00 with \$615,000.00 coming from the FDOT and the balance (\$615,000.00) being the county match and will be appropriated in Project 23060 Sebring Parkway (US 27 North to Scenic Highway).

- O. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-051 to approve a County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP) "Supplemental Agreement" for additional funds for West College Drive Phase I, Project # 24033.

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), Cost Center 4102A (Transportation Projects) in the amount of \$290,000.00 and will be appropriated in Project 24033 West College Drive Phase I (Memorial Dr. to SFSC Entrances).

- P. Request for approval of Resolution # 25-26-050 for a supplement to the County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP) Agreement ("Supplemental Agreement") between the State of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Highlands County for Project 24034 - W College Dr. Phase II Widening.

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), Cost Center 4102A (Transportation Projects) in the amount of \$660,000.00 (Six Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars) and will be appropriated in Project 24034 - W College Dr. Phase II Widening.

- Q. Request approval for acceptance into the record the County Administrator's annual report for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact.

- R. Request approval of the minutes from the November 4, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Board and the Workshop.

Pamela Gamez, Official Records Manager

No fiscal impact.

9. Committee Assignments

- A. Request reappointment of two (2) regular voting members to the Highlands County Hospital District Board.

Ingrashere Gardner, Community Programs Director

There is no fiscal impact.

- B. Request approval of Commissioner appointments to the Small County Coalition, 10-County Coalition for Lake Okeechobee, CareerSource Heartland Executive Board, the Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership, and the Value Adjustment Board for 2026.

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact.

10. Public Hearing

- A. Public Hearing to consider approval of Aloha Medical Services, Inc. application for a Class 1, Class 2 and 3 Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN).

Dustin Fitch, Deputy Chief

There is no fiscal impact

- B. Public hearing to consider adoption of Ordinance 25-26-04 for CPA-25-648SS, amending the Future Land Use Map for an approximate 5.12-acre parcel from Existing (E) to Agriculture (AG).

Hailey Collinsworth, Planner I

The future land use amendment will have no fiscal impact; however, future development may result in impacts on county services.

- C. Public hearing to consider adoption of Resolution 25-26-059 for P&Z 2184, amending the Official Zoning Atlas for an approximate 5.12-acre parcel from M-2 Mobile Home Park District to AU Agricultural District.

Hailey Collinsworth, Planner I

The zoning change will have no fiscal impact; however, future development may result in impacts to county services.

- D. Public hearing to consider adoption of Ordinance 25-26-05 for CPA-25-649SS, amending the Future Land Use Map for an approximate 2.75-acre parcel from Agriculture (AG) to Industrial (I).

Rachael Navarrete, Planner I

The future land use amendment will have no fiscal impact; however, future development will result in impacts to county services.

- E. Public hearing to consider adoption of Resolution 25-26-060 for P&Z 2185, amending the Official Zoning Atlas for two (2) parcels totaling approximately 6.06 acres, from AU Agricultural District and I-1 CU Industrial District with a Conditional Use, to I-2 CU Industrial District with a Conditional Use

Rachael Navarrete, Planner I

The zoning change will have no fiscal impact; however, future development may result in impacts to county services.

- F. Public Hearing to consider approval of Resolution 25-26-061 for P&Z 2186, amending the Official Zoning Atlas for two (2) parcels totaling an approximate 0.46 acres, from R-1 Residential District to R-2 Two-Family Dwelling District

Rachael Navarrete, Planner I

The zoning change will have no fiscal impact; however, future development may result in impacts to county services.

11. Action Agenda

- A. Request approval of the holidays to be observed by the Board in 2026

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact.

- B. Request approval of the 2026 Board meeting schedule

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact

12. County Attorney and County Administrator

- A. County Attorney Status Report

- B. County Administrator Status Report

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact.

13. Commissioners

14. Informational

- A. The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) plans to submit an application to the Florida Housing Coalition to receive in-depth support on local affordable housing initiatives through the State's Affordable Housing Catalyst Program.

Ingrashereese Gardner, Community Programs Director

There is no fiscal impact.

- B. Reconstruction of Longwood Road and Shortwood Road

Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director

The Fiscal Impact of \$440,000.00 is currently budgeted in Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects), Project

25012 (Road Reconstruction) for a net fiscal impact of \$0.00.

C. Board payables from December 16, 2025, to January 5, 2026

15. Adjourn

Any person who decides to appeal any decision made by this Board of County Commissioners of Highlands County, Florida, in public hearing or meeting is hereby advised that he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record will include the testimony and evidence upon which such appeal is to be based.

The Board of County Commissioners of Highlands County, Florida, does not discriminate upon the basis of any individual's disability status. This non-discrimination policy involves every aspect of the Board's functions, including one's access to, participation, employment or treatment in its programs or activities. "Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation as provided for in the Americans With Disabilities Act or Section 286.26 Florida Statutes should contact Human Resources, ADA Coordinator at: 863-402-6509 (voice), or via Florida Relay Service 711, or by e-mail: hrmanager@highlandsfl.gov." Requests for CART or interpreter services should be made as soon as possible but no less than 48 hours in advance to permit coordination of the service.

Any invocation that may be offered before the official start of the Commission meeting is a voluntary offering by a private citizen. The views or beliefs expressed by the invocation speaker have not been reviewed or approved by the Commission, and the Commission is not allowed by law to endorse the religious beliefs or views of this, or any other speaker.

A person desiring to provide public comment related to an item on the Consent Agenda of this meeting, must fill out a Speaker Card and submit the same to the County Administrator or Chairperson by 8:50 a.m. All Speaker Cards received after 8:50am, will be called during the regular Public Comment.