

Highlands County Board of County Commissioners

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

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 meet on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., in the HSWCD Conference Room of the Bert J. Harris, Jr. Agricultural Center, 4505 George Blvd., Sebring, FL

The Natural Resources Advisory Commission , will hold a regular meeting on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Road & Bridge Conference Room 1, 4344 George Blvd. Sebring

The Tourist Development Council will hold a Regular Meeting on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 8:15 a.m., in the Board Room, 600 S. Commerce Ave., Sebring

5. Constitutional Officers - Announcements

6. Recognitions, Presentations and Proclamations

A. Request approval of Proclamation recognizing May 2026 as "ALS Awareness Month"

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

There is no fiscal impact.

B. Request approval of a Proclamation to observe May 2026, as "Older American's Act Month".

Nu-Hope Elder Care Services, Inc. Board President Kim Heintz and Interim Executive Director Brad Stoll

No fiscal impact.

C. Request approval of a Proclamation recognizing May 2026 as "Florida Orange Juice Month"

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact

7. Public Comment

8. Consent Agenda

- A. Request approval to apply for a Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) Grant. (\$0)

Casey Hartt, Lead Marketing Consultant, Leah Sauls, Development Services Director

There is no fiscal impact on applying for the grant. If awarded, the grant would reimburse up to \$50,000 for the strategic planning study. Expenditures may initially be paid from Fund 152 and reimbursed through the grant, resulting in a potential temporary increase in expenditures with corresponding grant revenue.

- B. Request approval of ITB 25-028-CLD with Excavation Point for Asphalt Milling (\$192,000)

Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director

Fiscal impact is \$192,000.00 from Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects), and account 55303 (Resurface Asphalt).

- C. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-104 for Budget Amendment 25-26-065 to appropriate funds from Fund 152 (Tourist Development Trust) for facility development and enhancement projects. (\$3,223,736.00)

Leah Sauls, Development Services Director, Casey Hartt, Lead Marketing Consultant

The fiscal impact includes an increase of \$372,00.00 in grant funding, plus bringing forward \$2,851,736.00 from Fund 152 (Tourist Development Trust) fund balance, of which the TDC has been collecting for the purpose of facility enhancement, resulting in a revised active budget of \$3,081,736.00 for Account 56200Z (Project Building) in Cost Center 5309 (Tourist Dev - Asset Development/enhancement).

- D. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-092 granting the Authority of the County Administrator to Execute applications, permits etc. required by a Government Agency.

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

There is no fiscal impact.

- E. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-112 for Budget Amendment 25-26-076 to realign funds between projects. (\$44,717.87)

Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director

Fiscal Impact of \$44,717.87 consists of Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) funds in the amount of \$43,717.87. Insurance proceeds of \$40,751.00 are being appropriated along with \$2,708.90 being transferred from cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects), account 56300 (Improvements Other Than) to Project 25006 (R&B Equipment 2025), account 56400Z (Project Equipment) in the amount of \$28,053.15 and \$15,406.75 to Project 22030 (R&B Main Bldg Expansion) to resolve a funding shortfall. In addition, \$257.97 is being transferred from Project 25012 (R&B Reconstruct 2025) to Project 24016 (R&B Reconstruct 2024) to correct a project shortfall.

The balance of the fiscal impact (\$1,000.00) is in Fund 005 (General) which is to realign funding in Project 24005 (State Aquatic Plant Control) within cost center 6304 (Cooperative Aquatic Plant Prog.) from account 55203Z (Project Chemicals) to account 55200Z (Project Operating Supplies).

- F. Request approval of the Tower Removal Agreement between Highlands County; Duke Energy Florida, LLC, property owner; and PeakNet, LLC, tower owner/operator

Melony Culpepper, Planning & Zoning Supervisor

No fiscal impact.

- G. Request to approve nine (9) agreements from Professional Services Library of Consultants Category 2, Professional Engineering. (\$0)

Stacy Prevatte, Procurement Manager

No fiscal impact.

- H. Request approval of Amendment 2 for the Shell Pit Occupancy Agreement. (\$0.00)

Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director

Fiscal impact is \$0.00

- I. Request approval of BA 25-26-074 Project 25043 Station 41 Renovations (\$70,000)

James Duppenhaler, Fire Chief

The fiscal impact of \$70,000 is a transfer of \$35,000 within Fund 181 (Fire Assessment), cost center 3217 (Fire Assessment) from account 56400 (Machinery & Equipment) to Project 25043 (Station 41 Renovations) and a transfer of \$35,000 within Fund 005 (General), cost center 5105 (Ambulance Service) to Project 25043 (Station 41 Renovations).

- J. Request approval of waiver of fees for Highlands County YMCA at Multi-Sports Complex. (\$1,050.00)

Brandon Gunn, Parks & Facilities Director

The fiscal impact would be a loss in revenues of \$1,050.00 to Multi-Sports Complex, account 3475100.

- K. Request consideration of the Reclamation Surety Bond for Mining Reclamation Between Highlands County Hickey Mining, Inc.

Laura Borges, County Engineer, PE, PSM, MPA

No fiscal impact, the Irrevocable Letter of Credit shall remain in force until released from liability by the County.

- L. Request approval of Resolution 25-26-117, authorizing Highlands County to participate in a new National Opioid Settlement with Six Remnant Defendants.

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

.The positive fiscal impact to the County is unknown at this time.

9. Public Hearing

- A. Public hearing to request the approval of Wheelchair Transport Service application for a Class 1 Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN).

Dustin Fitch, Deputy Chief

There is no fiscal impact.

- B. Public hearing to consider adoption of Ordinance 25-26-10, for CPA-26-650LS, amending Paragraph 48 of the Site-Specific Development Conditions of the Future Land Use Element of the Highlands County 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

Cynthia Carman Kramer, Planning & Zoning Manager

There is no fiscal impact.

- C. Public hearing to consider adoption of Resolution 25-26-106 for P&Z 2187, amending the Official Zoning Atlas for an approximate 10.09 acres from AU Agricultural District to AU CU Agricultural District with a Conditional Use, the conditional use being a slaughterhouse and meat processing facility, with accessory uses directly supporting the operation.

Hailey Collinsworth, Planner I

No fiscal impact.

- D. Public Hearing to consider Ordinance No. 25-26-11 to amend Istokpoga Marsh Watershed Improvement District.

Sherry Sutphen

The Fiscal Impact would impact Fund 109 (Istokpoga Marsh Watershed Improvement District) and vary based on the collection of Non-Ad Valorem Assessments and the Ad Valorem Taxes.

10. Action Agenda

- A. Request for approval of the Medical Director Agreement

James Duppenthaler, Fire Chief

The Medical director was budgeted for FY25–26 in the amount of \$60,000. The funds were budgeted in Fund 005 (General) in Cost Center 5105 (Ambulance Service 005) in Account 53100 Professional Services.

- B. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-073R for Budget Amendment 25-26-073 for Lake Placid Fire Station construction (\$500,000.00).

Tiffany Gunn, Capital Projects Manager

Fiscal impact is an increase to Fund 181 (Fire Assessment) in the amount of \$500,000.00 and being appropriated in cost center 3217 (Fire Assessment), account number 56200Z (Project Buildings), project 23091 (Lake Placid Fire

Station 36).

- C. Adoption of Resolutions 25-26-098 and 25-26-111 for Budget Amendment 25-26-075 to appropriate funds for SCOP Agreement. (\$2,330,311.00)

Kenya Anderson, Senior Project Manager, Laura Borges, County Engineer, PE, PSM, MPA

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects) in the amount of \$2,330,311.00 and will be appropriated in Project 25038 (CR 29 Widening and Resurfacing).

FDOT is willing to reimburse the County up to the amount of \$2,330,311.00 for design, construction, and construction engineering and inspection (CEI) for the CR 29 Widening and Resurfacing. The funding for this project is included in the FY 25/26 Adopted budget and CFS; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

- D. Consideration of Statement of Legislative Intent for amendments to the Sun 'n Lake Sebring Improvement District Code related to governing body elections.

Sherry Sutphen, County Attorney

The fiscal impact is anticipated to be minimal and limited to staff time required for ordinance preparation, legal review, and required advertising/publication costs.

- E. Request Adoption of Resolution 25-26-115 for Budget Amendment 25-26-081 to appropriate additional funding for Sheriff projects (\$619,854.70).

Paul Blackman, Sheriff

The fiscal impact is an increase to Fund 005 (General) and the overall budget in the amount of \$619,854.70. Additional funds are being appropriated in cost center 3101 (Sheriff – 005), Project 25030 (ICE Transportation & Tactical Equipment Stipend); Project 25026 (Guardian Program); and Project 25045 (Bullet Proof Vests 25-26), in the amounts of \$600,000.00, \$9,854.70, and \$10,000.00, respectively.

- F. Request approval of the Real Property Purchase Agreement for property located at 1127 E. Winthrop Street, Avon Park, Florida.(\$338,000.00)

Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director

Fiscal impact is \$338,000.00 which will be funded by Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) funds.

- G. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-114 for Budget Amendment 25-26 078 for the property purchase on E. Winthrop St., Avon Park (\$0.00)

Jonathan Harrison, Road & Bridge Director

Fiscal impact of \$338,000.00 in Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) is merely a transfer from Project 21038 Property Acquisition (set-a-side) to Project 25044 E. Wintrop Land Purchase with a net fiscal impact of \$0.00.

- H. Request approval of agreement between Synergy Sports Charlotte, LLC and Highlands County. (\$475,000)

Casey Hartt, Lead Marketing Consultant, Leah Sauls, Development Services Director

The fiscal impact is an amount not to exceed \$475,000 from Fund 152 (Tourist Development Trust), with expenditures anticipated to occur over multiple fiscal years and incorporated into future budgets as services are performed.

- I. Adoption of Resolutions 25-26-096 and 25-26-113 for Budget Amendment 25-26-077 to appropriate funds for SCOP Agreement. (\$1,904,154.00)

Kenya Anderson, Senior Project Manager, Laura Borgesi, County Engineer, PE, PSM, MPA

The fiscal impact will be an increase to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax), cost center 4102A (Transportation Projects) in the amount of \$1,904,154.00 and will be appropriated in Project 25039 (CR 731 Widening and Resurfacing).

FDOT is willing to reimburse the County up to the amount of \$1,904,154.00 for design, construction, and construction engineering and inspection (CEI) for the CR 731 Widening and Resurfacing. The funding for this project is included in the FY 25/26 Adopted budget and CFS, therefore there is no fiscal impact.

- J. Request approval of a letter of support for Gentiva Hospice's Certificate of Need Application (\$0)

County Administrator Laurie Hurner

No fiscal impact

11. County Attorney and County Administrator

- A. County Attorney Status Report

- B. County Administrator Status Report
Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

There is no fiscal impact.

12. Commissioners

13. Informational

- A. Board payables from April 21, 2026–May 4, 2026

14. 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.