

Highlands County Board of County Commissioners
Tuesday, September 1, 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

Highlands County will hold a Budget Public Hearing Meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 3, 2026, in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Government Center, 600 South Commerce Avenue, Sebring, FL 33870.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment (BOA) will meet at 3:00 p.m. followed at 3:15 p.m. by the Planning and Zoning Commission/Local Planning Agency (P&Z) on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Government Center, 600 South Commerce Avenue, Sebring, FL, 33870.

The Highlands County Board of County Commissioners will hold a Final Budget Hearing Meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 15, 2026, in the Commissioners' Board Room at the Government Center, 600 South Commerce Avenue, Sebring, FL, 33870.

The Highlands Soil & Water Conservation District will hold a Board of Supervisors Meeting at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 15, 2026, in the HSWCD Conference Room at the Bert Harris Agricultural Center, 4505 George Blvd, Sebring, FL, 33870.

The Children's Advocacy Center, along with the State Attorney's Office, will hold a Protect Your Children from Sex Offenders free community training from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Saturday, September 26, 2026, in the Children's Advocacy Center Large Conference Room, 1968 Sebring Pkwy, Sebring, FL 33870.

5. Public Comment

6. Consent Agenda

- A. Request approval of Service Agreement renewal to continue Period of Purple Crying services for Healthy Families. (\$2,500)

Cynthia Acevedo, Healthy Families Program Manager

The fiscal impact is an increase of \$2,500 to the General Fund (005), Cost Center 5229.

- B. Request approval of the Insertion Order agreement with VISIT FLORIDA. (\$28,000)

Casey Hartt, Lead Marketing Consultant

There is no fiscal impact in FY2026. The fiscal impact in FY2027 is \$28,000 from Fund 152 (Tourist Development Tax). The advertising campaign will run between March and June 2027, with VISIT FLORIDA billing after each campaign flight. Funding for the County's share of the campaign has been included in the tourism department's submitted FY2027 budget, in Cost Center 5305 (Tourist Dev - Marketing & Promotion). There would be no fiscal impact to Fund 005 (General Fund).

- C. Request acceptance of DMS-P3-26-07-04 for the E911 Maintenance Agreement with the Highlands County Sheriff's Office

Paul Blackman, Sheriff

There is no Fiscal Impact at this time.

- D. Request approval for waiver of facility rental fees for the Sebring Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (\$1,550.00)

Brandon Gunn, Parks & Facilities Director

This fiscal impact would be a loss of \$1,555.00 in revenues to Fund 005 (General), Account 3475100 (Sports Complex).

- E. Request approval of an agreement between Highlands County and Black Dog Designs for the new Economic Development website. (\$47,879)

Sarah Beth Murphy

The fiscal impact of \$47,879 to Fund 005 (General), Cost Center 2810 (Office of Economic Development) is being funded from Project 24054 (Duke Energy Grant), Account 53100Z (Proj. Professional Services) in the amount of \$38,000 and non-project funding from Cost Center 2810, Account 53100 (Professional Svcs) in the amount of \$9,879.

- F. Request approval for Budget Amendment 25-26-120 to realign funds for the Water Tank replacement on George Blvd. (\$110,000.00)

Brandon Gunn, Parks & Facilities Director

The fiscal impact in Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) of \$110,000 is transferring funds from Project 21032 (County Facility Improvements) to Project 25056 (George Blvd Water Tank).

- G. Request approval for Budget Amendment 25-26-119 to reallocate funds for Courthouse Generator. (\$124,746.00)

Brandon Gunn, Parks & Facilities Director

The fiscal impact in Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) of \$124,746 is transferring funds from cost center 2672A (Facilities Management) to 1031A (Courthouse Facilities) within Project 22008 (Courthouse Generator).

- H. Request approval of Budget Amendment 25-26-118 to realign funds for the State COOP Aquatic Plant Program (\$11,000.00).

Chris Prudzinski, Road & Bridge Operations Supervisor

Fiscal Impact of \$11,000.00 in Fund 005 (General Fund) is a transfer of funds from cost center 9990 (Budgetary Expenditures AC/005), account 59900 (Reserve for Contingency) to cost center 6304 (Coop Aquatic Plant Program), account 54600 (Repair & Maintenance) in the amount of \$10,000.00. In addition, funds are being realigned within Project 24005 (State Aquatic Plant Program 24-25) from account 55203Z (Project Chemicals) to account 54400Z (Proj Rentals & Leases) in the amount of \$1,000.00.

- I. Request approval of Budget Amendment 25-26-121 for HVAC replacement for the Public Defender building (\$27,500.00).

Brandon Gunn, Parks & Facilities Director

The fiscal impact is to move \$27,500 from account 54300 (Utility Services) to 56400 (Machinery and Equipment account within the Gen Ops Courthouse Facilities Cost Center 1031.

- J. Request approval of Task Authorization #1 25-015 with Chastain Skillman, LLC (\$90,597.00)

Robert Diefendorf, Project Engineer

The fiscal impact related to the Task Authorization of \$90,597.00 to Fund 401(Solid Waste) has available funds in the amount of \$3,396,500.00 currently budgeted in Project 20045 in cost center 4210 (Refuse Disposal System), account 56300Z (Project Improvements).

- K. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-185 for Budget Amendment 25-26-124 to realign/provide additional funding for negative cost centers (\$265,757.00).

Valerie Fleeger, Senior Budget Analyst

The fiscal impact is an increase to Fund 005 (General) in the amount of \$265,757 by appropriating additional Fund Balance to twelve cost centers that have, or will have budget shortfalls by yearend. In addition, this budget amendment is transferring available funding in Fund 110 (Transportation Trust) in the amount of \$272,700 from three (3) cost centers to seven (7) cost centers that need additional funding. Also, this budget amendment is transferring funding in Fund 176 (State Court Facility Trust) and Fund 401 (Solid Waste) in the amounts of \$15,000 and \$110,500, respectively.

7. Public Hearing

- A. Public Hearing to consider the adoption of Ordinance 25-26-20 amending certain sections of Chapter 9, Article V, related to the Sun 'N Lake Improvement District

Sherry Sutphen, County Attorney

No fiscal impact.

8. Action Agenda

- A. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-184 for Budget Amendment 25-26-122 to appropriate Sheriff's Miscellaneous revenue.

Paul Blackman, Sheriff

The fiscal impact is an increase to Fund 005 (General) and the overall budget in the amount of \$625,050.56.

- B. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-165 for Budget Amendment 25-26-116 to reallocate funds within Project #24033 (\$490,973.80)

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer, PhD, PE, PSM, MPA

The fiscal impact of \$490,973.80 to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax) is merely a realignment of revenue funds within Project #24033 (W. College Dr. Phase I) and Project #24034 (W. College Dr. Phase II) in the amounts of \$244,293.04 and \$246,680.76, respectively.

- C. Request adoption of Resolution 25-26-164 for Budget Amendment 25-26-115 to transfer funds between projects (\$258,853.41)

Laura Borgesi, County Engineer, PhD, PE, PSM, MPA

The fiscal impact of \$258,853.41 to Fund 151 (Infrastructure Surtax Fund) is merely a transfer of funds from Project #23003 (ADA Transition Plan FY 23-24) in the amount of \$98,849.41 to Project #22010 (ADA Multi-Use Path) to complete the Hammock Rd. Multi-Use Path, and a transfer of \$160,004.00 from Project #24003 (TOSIP FY24-25) to Project 25057 (Hammock Rd Drainage) for safety upgrades.

- D. Request approval of Agreement with Clifton Larson Allen LLP for external auditing services (\$1,037,500)

Tanya Cannady, Business Services Director

The fiscal impact for auditing services is \$195,500 for FY 26/27 and is included in the General fund budget, cost center 2105, account 53200.

9. County Attorney and County Administrator

- A. County Attorney Status Report

Sherry Sutphen

No Fiscal Impact.

- B. County Administrator Status Report

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No Fiscal Impact.

10. Commissioners

11. Informational

- A. Board payables from August 18, 2026, through August 31, 2026.

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

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- B. Certificate of Approval Fish and Wildlife Service

Laurie Hurner, County Administrator

No fiscal impact

12. Adjourn

PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTES, CHAPTER 286, ANY PERSON WHO DECIDES TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THIS COMMITTEE/GROUP, 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.

HIGHLAND'S COUNTY, FLORIDA, DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE UPON THE BASIS OF ANY INDIVIDUAL'S DISABILITY STATUS. THIS NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INVOLVES EVERY ASPECT OF THE COUNTY'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: HRBCC@highlandsfl.gov REQUESTS FOR CART OR INTERPRETER SERVICES SHOULD BE MADE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT NO LATER THAN 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE TO PERMIT COORDINATION OF THE SERVICE.

ANY INVOCATION THAT MAY BE OFFERED BEFORE THE OFFICIAL START OF THE 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 HIGHLANDS COUNTY, AND THE COUNTY 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 8:50 A.M. WILL BE CALLED DURING THE REGULAR PUBLIC COMMENT.