



Polk County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Final

April 21, 2026 Regular BoCC meeting

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If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, 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 includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

CALL TO ORDER - 9:00 a.m. (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

Rollcall

Present:	Commissioner Rick Wilson Commissioner Bill Braswell Commissioner Martha Santiago Commissioner Michael Scott
Absent:	Commissioner Becky Troutman

INVOCATION

Murphy Hanley, Polk County Fire Rescue Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

A. PRESENTATIONS and RECOGNITIONS

A.1. Employee Recognition

Minutes: The Board recognized Neal Duncan with Tourism and Sports Marketing, Daniel Weible with Information Technology, Henry Bass with Roads and Drainage, Dean Hrobar with Fire Rescue, Tommy Peuschell, Jr., with Fire Rescue, and Mary Isabel Valdez Gonzalez with Solid Waste for their years of service with the county.

A.2. Lance Schmidt, Principal and Chris Kessler, Principal with CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, will present the Annual Comprehensive Financial Audit for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2025.

Minutes: Lance Schmidt, Principal with CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, showed slides and reviewed the professional services performed and he discussed the financial audits, compliance audits, examination and the Florida Management Letter.

Chris Kessler, Principal with CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, said all the audits were clean and all the opinions were unmodified. He said there are a number of audit reports that they prepare and provide that includes the results of their testing. He stated that the unmodified opinion is the highest level of opinion which means the financial statements are free of material mistakement. He said there was a finding in the single audit related to grant reporting that has already been addressed with the Finance Committee. He said management has put corrective action in place and moved forward from there. He said there were no recommendations or comments in the Management Letter. He said it was a successful audit. He thanked everybody at the county that worked so hard to help get the audit out.

Clerk and County Comptroller Stacy Butterfield thanked the county and the management team. She said this is a big county that has a lot of financial transactions. She said with respect to the grants and the one finding that the county had 116 active grants last year. She said that is a lot of grants with over \$143 million in expenditures and in light if the complexity of this county that is great. She thanked the team for already taking the corrective action plan. She thanked the team in the Comptroller's office with Tanra-Lee Milson, the Budget and Management office with Christia Johnson and the auditor's team.

County Manager Bill Beasley said it is the men and women who are doing the work day in and day out. He said they are making this happen and he cannot say enough about how we function in Polk County government. He said that the audit is a testament to how well we work and meet the expectations of the citizens we serve.

Chair Santiago thanked Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Kessler for their presentation. She thanked them for the great job they have done this year and all the years they have worked with us.

Commissioner Scott said the audit process takes months and there is a lot of financial activity that goes on in the county. He said the professionalism and the continuing relationship we have speaks for both sides. He said it takes tons of hours and we are very diligent to meet the regulatory requirements to make sure we are doing right by the taxpayers.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

B.1. Comments.

Minutes: Tom Palmer said it is a great idea to have the Northeast Landfill Convenience Center. He said there is illegal dumping in Poinciana and anything they can do with that would be a great thing. He said they used to have transfer stations back in the day and with it being staffed it will prevent them from creating a new dump somewhere. He said he hopes it works well. He said they will be happy to help get the word out to publicize it.

C. COUNTY COMPTROLLER (STACY M. BUTTERFIELD, CPA)

C.1. Disbursements.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rick Wilson
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

C.2. Minutes of Regular Board meeting held on April 7, 2026.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rick Wilson
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

D. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

D.1. Approve Consent Agenda.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Bill Braswell
SECONDER:	Rick Wilson
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

G. COUNTY MANAGER (BILL BEASLEY)

G.1. Approve construction contract with Rogar Management & Consulting of Florida, LLC for the Maine Avenue Sidewalk project (\$2,418,685.50 one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the construction contract with Rogar Management and Consulting of Florida, LLC, for the Maine Avenue sidewalk project. He recommended approval.

Commissioner Braswell said this is a drainage project that lines up as a sidewalk.

Mr. Beasley said on the eastern end of this sidewalk is where the drainage swales exist.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rick Wilson
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

G.2. Approve agreement with Carollo Engineers, Inc. to provide Part 2 engineering services (Conceptual Design) for the East Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (ERWWTF). (\$976,382.54 one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the agreement with Carollo Engineers, Inc., providing Part 2 engineering services for the East Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. He recommended approval.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rick Wilson
SECONDER:	Bill Braswell
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

G.3. Approve Northeast Landfill Customer Convenience Center (NELF-CCC) Pilot Project and adopt a Resolution establishing the NELF-CCC disposal rates

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the Northeast Landfill Customer Convenience Center (NELF-CCC) pilot project and Resolution establishing the NELF-CCC disposal rates. He said that payments will be debit or credit card with no cash payments. He stated no commercial entities will be allowed to utilize this facility. He said the hours of operation will be open Monday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. He recommended approval.

Upon question, Waste and Resources Director Brian Cogswell said the pilot is going to be for the customer to empty it into a 40 yard rolloff can. He said the material cannot stay on site and has to go back to the landfill. He said they will have customer service staff or scale staff accepting payments, a spotter to make sure there is no prohibited wastes being disposed of, and an equipment operator that can push the material into the can. He said the reoccurring expenses is the rolloff truck, the skid steer, and the staff expenses. He confirmed that will be the reoccurring cost after the first year. He said this is temporary and if they were to do this long term they would need permitting and a permanent structure. He reviewed what the costs increases would be per vehicle type if they were to break even for the cost.

Commissioner Scott said we are encouraging use of this service instead of illegal dumping. He said sending out Code Enforcement and other resources to pick up illegally dumped loads we are subsidizing this to make this a pilot and when you look at the assets we have to deploy for debris it is likely more than what we are subsidizing. He said this is a net benefit and for the residents to take advantage of this.

Chair Santiago said this is good news and we have had lots of illegal dumping. She said it has taken months to get to this point and she has heard many complaints. She said this is a one-year pilot program and she hopes people will utilize this. She asked for data on how this is utilized. She said for this to be successful we need good publicity.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rick Wilson

SECONDER:	Bill Braswell
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

H. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1 (BECKY TROUTMAN)

H.1. Commissioner Troutman Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Troutman was not present.

I. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2 (RICK WILSON)

I.1. Commissioner Wilson Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Wilson had no comments.

J. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3 (BILL BRASWELL)

J.1. Commissioner Braswell Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Braswell had no comments.

K. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 5 (MICHAEL SCOTT)

K.1. Commissioner Scott Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Scott said following up on Animal Control, the Ledger published an article today and he approaches things with a solutions mind, what are the problems, what are the solutions, and is it all facts. He stated for the Ledger to publish that they called and texted him and he did not contact them back; he said Paul called two hours before he tried to publish and he was in the middle of an important meeting. He said he appreciates communication and what our team does but for a reporter to falsely state stuff about him is disappointing. He said we are trying to do the best we can for the county to be forthcoming with information and to do our job and you have a reporter that wants to get clicks and likes stating false stuff not only about him but there is also stuff in that article that is factually incorrect. He said it is a disservice and we all have different ways to solving problems.

L. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4 (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

L.1. Chair Santiago Comments.

Minutes: Chair Santiago said we completed Sun 'n Fun this week and it lasted six and seven days. She said thousands and thousands of people were there.

Commissioner Braswell said it was 200,000 people. He said the night air show was the best he has ever seen and he has been to 100 air shows.

Chair Santiago said it was very enjoyable.

N. EXPEDITED HEARINGS PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION NO. 2022-089

Minutes: County Attorney Randy Mink reminded the audience for the procedures for public hearings and expedited public hearings. He swore in those who plan to speak.

N.1 PUBLIC HEARING (LDCPAL 2026-1 OC Text) (Transmittal Hearing) to consider the adoption of a Large-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment text amendment to modify the characteristics, location criteria and development criteria for the Office Center (OC) Future Land Use designation. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed text amendment. He said that this is a transmittal hearing. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommends approval.

Upon question, Mr. Ziskal said all of the buffering requirements would still apply. He said this would allow us to consider any land use change when it is adjacent to another commercial district.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Bill Braswell
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

N.2. PUBLIC HEARING (LDCT-2026-2 Office Center Consistency) (First Reading) to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending the Land Development Code to clarify development parameters of the Office Center (OC) district to implement policies in the Comprehensive Plan. No Fiscal Impact.

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed text amendment. He said that this is a first reading. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommends approval.

Upon question, Mr. Ziskal said this amendment is looking at the allowable uses and not the development standards. He said that we do address parking standards in another section of the Land Development Code. He said if they do not have the correct ratio they can research and identify where changes could be made to parking requirements.

Commissioner Scott said allowing these to be near residential he would fear that happens and people are parking in other peoples' yards. He said to make sure that is adequate.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

N.3. PUBLIC HEARING (LDCPAS-2025-37 Hwy 17 92 LCC CPA) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of a Small-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the Future Land Use designation on ±1.32 acres from Leisure/Recreation (LR) to Linear Commercial Corridor in the Urban Growth

Area (UGA). (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed land use amendment. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommends approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Bill Braswell
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

N.4. PUBLIC HEARING (LDCPAS-2025-38 Toho Marigold INST/NAC CPA) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of a Small-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the Future Land Use designation on ±12.5 acres from Development of Regional Impact (DRI) to Institutional (INST), and Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) in the Utility Enclave Area (UEA). (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed land use amendment. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommends approval.

Upon question, Mr. Ziskal said they could look at areas that are in the DRI that have no land use assigned. He said we can be proactive and figure out what we want it to be and go through that process. He said we could lead that discussion and efforts.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Bill Braswell
SECONDER:	Rick Wilson
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

N.5. PUBLIC HEARING (LDCT-2025-28 Flex Space & Retail Plazas) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending the Land Development Code to add standards for Flex Space and Retail Plazas. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed text amendment. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommends approval.

Upon question, Mr. Ziskal said any applications submitted prior to today's adoption would follow the code as it was when they applied.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Michael Scott
SECONDER:	Rick Wilson

AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

N.6. PUBLIC HEARING (LDCT-2025-29 Storage Yards) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending the Land Development Code to add storage yards as a new land use activity in the Industrial (IND) districts. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed text amendment. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommend approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Rick Wilson
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

N.7. PUBLIC HEARING (LDCT-2025-30 Administrative Plat Approval) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending the Land Development Code to change the procedure of approving subdivision plats from the Board of County Commissioners to the Land Development Director in accordance changes to the Florida Statutes. No Fiscal Impact.

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal discussed the proposed text amendment. He said this is implementing the requirement that the legislature passed that plat approvals must be handled through an administrative approval process and not through a public hearing and not through an elected body. He said the Board adopted a resolution and we have been practicing that but it has not been codified until this point. He said this will provide that the Land Development Director is the signature authority for plats and in the absence of the Land Development Director the Office of Planning and Development Director, or and Assistant or Deputy County Manager would have the signature authority. He said they are recommending to increase the minimum construction costs for a performance bond or performance surety for roads and drainage projects. He recommended increasing the threshold from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for performance items and to \$100,000 for maintenance items. He said that the Planning Commission and staff recommends approval.

Upon question, Mr. Ziskal said the last legislative session said that plats are no longer required to come before an elected body for approval and it must be an administrative process. He said the final signature authority was the Chairman and state law says we are no longer allowed to do that. He said it must be an entirely administrative process and elected officials are no longer the signature authority. He said plats are no longer on the consent agenda, they are in the Accela system, staff reviews based on criteria and provides a letter back to the applicant.

The Chair opened a public hearing.

James Abercrombie said it is unconstitutional for all this garbage with the three minute

crap. He said the state is delegating the authority to upstairs. He said they are making the rules and taking them out of the equation. He we should be suing the state and we should be handling the day to day stuff. He said this is a charter government. He said the attorneys should be out of the building and not be involved in any decision.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Bill Braswell
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott
Absent:	Troutman

P. REQUEST FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC/AUDIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD

Comments.

Minutes: Kay Borque said she is sharing a packet on the kennel stats and some educational materials. She thanked the Animal Control team and the animal rescue organizations for their work. She said there are opportunities to partner with community members and a volunteer program is one of those areas. She said there is a meeting on animal shelter reform at Southeastern University tomorrow at 4:30 p.m. and people can Zoom in if they want. She said they are willing and able to partner with them for a positive change.

Tom Palmer said he wants to talk about data centers. He said there is nothing in our Land Development Code that addresses these. He said for transparency to include data centers to decide the land use matrix or whether it should be a PD, Level 3 or Level 4. He said to address some of the issues that have come up about who the client will be, water use and power use. He said it is something we need to get ahead of and you cannot do something after the fact.

County Attorney Randy Mink said he looked into the issue that was brought up with Animal Control. He said Section 433 is applied to unaltered cats. He stated that other sections of the code, such as 430, allows Animal Control to impound any animal that is at large. He said that section allows them to impound cats that are a public health and safety concern or a nuisance. He said there are times when Animal Control does not realize if it is altered or unaltered. He said there are other sections of the code that allows them to impound cats. He said the question was raised about what a citizen should do if they are closed and they should call the non-emergency line at the Sheriff's office and they will arrange for the animal to be picked up. He said under the ordinance it does say it has to be done humanely. He said if they believe an animal has been treated unhumanely it should be turned over to Animal Control and let them investigate.

Commissioner Braswell said he was expecting a group here today. He said this is especially for the lady from Seminole County who keeps coming in and talking about \$50,000. He said several years ago the Bully Project came to us, they came to each

individual commissioner, and we sat down and we listened. He said they had suggested solutions and good ideas. He said he had several meetings with them and eventually TLC Petsnips came up with the idea for a \$50,000 a year voucher program for animal sterilization. He said the idea behind it was the people who could not afford sterilization they would be able to afford it. He said TLC Petsnips was doing discounted sterilizations for the county and they could use the voucher towards the bill. He said he heard rumors of the scandal that was going on where all the staff quit. He said it was probably money being stolen and someone was recently arrested for what was happening back then. He said this Board is never going to touch anything TLC Petsnips brings forward. He said we are not going to put taxpayer money into an organization that cannot control the money it gets. He said the \$20 million came about when the director of the Human Society or the SPCA in Duval County claimed she could bring a big check to redo our animal control. He said they did a couple of video conference calls with the Icahn family. He said he knows who Carl Icahn is and he is a piece of crap. He discussed how Carl Icahn bought stock, controlled, bankrupted, and stole employee pension funds. He said basically what would happen is they would give the county \$20 million and take control of the county employees, the assets, everything related to animal control would be run by them and paid for by us. He said he wanted to put those two issues in context. He said your group comes every meeting and there is \$20 million someone is offering why not pursue that. He said that does not seem to be what is in the cards here it is about being on TV. He said anytime Vicky Quintanilla or Maria Barrero have a opportunity to notify the press and be on TV or file ethics complaints. He said Ms. Quintanilla's allegation is he led a conspiracy to protect Grady Judd's career. He said anyone that knows Grady Judd probably does not know him and he does not need to protect Grady Judd's career. He said when he blocks them on FaceBook it drives them crazy and he has to block them because he cannot put pictures of his grandkids on FaceBook anymore because their group puts such vulgar profane nonsense. He said they are FaceBook warriors running their mouths. He asked why would you sterilize an animal with something wrong with it and PETA agrees with the ethical treatment and that TNR is not an ethical way of dealing with animals. He said you would need 80-90% participation with the animals. He discussed state statutes and animals being released needs to be authorized by the FWC. He said technically you are breaking the law. He said he is here for two and a half years and he cannot be elected again and he will do anything he can to make sure they do not get anything and not a dime of county money. He said they have gone about this the wrong way, they are looking for show and getting on PGTV. He will advocate that his fellow commissioners do the same.

Meeting adjourned 10:16 a.m.