



Sheriff Grady Judd

Polk County

1891 Jim Keene Blvd. • Winter Haven, FL 33880-8010 • Phone: 863.298.6200 • www.polksheriff.org

October 31, 2025

The Honorable Rick Wilson
Chairman, Polk County Commission
330 West Church Street
Bartow, Florida 33830

Dear Chairman Wilson,

I am pleased to inform you, your colleagues, and County Manager Bill Beasley that we are returning **\$11.7 million** to the Board of County Commissioners from the 24/25 Fiscal Year. This return includes \$2.2 million in earnings from interest revenue as well as \$2.25 million in revenue for inmate phone commissions. This return also includes \$620,000 in FEMA/FDEM reimbursement from costs incurred during the Hurricane Helene deployment.

On September 29, we received \$1.96 million in Department of Homeland Security revenue that had been strategically allocated to fund county facility upgrades and safety initiatives, to include safety equipment for our deputies. However, due to the timing of this award, these projects could not be completed within the current fiscal year. Therefore, I respectfully request that these funds be transferred to our FY 2025–2026 budget to ensure the completion of these important safety improvements. This request does **not** involve any new tax dollars—in fact, this **saves** local tax dollars.

To promote better governance of taxpayer dollars, the Board and the Sheriff's Office have partnered to designate savings from our annual budget to important future projects that are necessary but would be difficult to pay for if there were not a disciplined reserve savings plan in place. In furtherance of this concept, we have multi-year projects that require our continued partnership. By saving funds from our current budget, we fund necessary equipment without asking for additional taxpayer funds.

In addition, we are currently in the architectural design phase on the Joint Use Sheriff's Warehouse and County Facilities building. To achieve full consolidation of our warehouse operations on a single campus, it will be necessary to expand the facility's footprint and include a separate, contained structure for hazardous materials. As we have previously discussed, investing in the appropriate size and configuration at this stage will be significantly more cost-effective than deferring the expansion to a later date. Therefore, I am requesting that \$6.5 million of this return be designated to supplement the existing budget for this project.

Even after this request for the warehouse construction, I am pleased that we are sending an additional \$3.2 million back to the County to fund other functions in county government. All county governments should run the same way as our Polk County government. Through your leadership, along with that of the other county commissioners, county departments and constitutionals are encouraged to save and reserve money for large-scale projects, so no additional taxpayer money is needed. By working together in harmony, partnership, and teamwork, we are exceeding the expectations of the citizens we take an oath to serve. I look forward to our continued partnership to provide the most effective law enforcement and detention services possible to the citizens of Polk County. I am grateful for the professional and cooperative relationship that we have developed over the years, and I thank you for the Board's support. Because of your efforts, lives are saved, people are safe, and crime is at a 53-year low.

Sincerely,



Grady Judd
Sheriff

GJ/am

xc:

Commissioner Martha Santiago, Ed.D., Vice Chair
Commissioner Bill Braswell
Commissioner Becky Troutman
Commissioner Michael Scott
Bill Beasley, County Manager