



Polk County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Draft

March 18, 2025 Regular BoCC meeting

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Any invocation that may be offered before the official start of the Commission meeting shall be the voluntary offering of a private citizen, to and for the benefit of the Commission. The views or beliefs expressed by the invocation speaker have not been previously 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.

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. (RICK WILSON, CHAIR)

INVOCATION

Murphy Hanley, Polk County Fire Rescue Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (RICK WILSON, CHAIR)

A. PRESENTATIONS and RECOGNITIONS

A.1. Employee Recognition

Minutes: The Board recognized Jeffrey Coburn with Fire Rescue and Perry Hill with Information Technology for their years of service to the county.

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

C.1. Comments.

Minutes: Diane Borders said she is here to address the roads and drainage issues in Highland Park Manor. She said they were assured that they would get help and that was last year. She asked when are they going to get some help. She said they need speed humps and a three-way stop sign on Tangelo and Freidlander Road. She said cars are speeding through. She said seniors are walking and there are children out there.

Chair Wilson said they have looked at it and it is not a simple fix. He said when we

move the water it goes to somebody else. He said we are working on it. He said they changed the road designation to get the speed bumps.

Kassandra Richards said she echoes what Ms. Borders said. She said it is a community problem. She said the dump trucks come through there and the children play. She discussed concerns with school busses and children crossing the road.

D. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

D.1. Approve Consent Agenda.

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

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

E.1. Disbursements.

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

E.2. Minutes of Regular Board meeting held on March 4, 2025.

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

H. COUNTY MANAGER (BILL BEASLEY)

H.1. Approve the Local Agency Program (LAP) Agreement between Polk County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the Maine Avenue Sidewalk Project, associated resolutions, CIP Budget Amendment and budget resolution (\$3,228,442.00 one-time unanticipated revenue).

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the Local Agency Program Agreement between Polk County and the Florida Department of Transportation for the Maine Avenue Sidewalk Project. He recommended approval.

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

H.2. Approve the first amendment to the contract with Tri-County Human Services, Inc. (TCHS) to provide staffing in support for the HATCH Program. (not to exceed \$1,020,132 for the duration of the contract, and not to exceed \$365,965.18 for FY 24/25).

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the first amendment to the contract with Tri-County Human Services, Inc., providing staffing in support for the HATCH Program. He recommended approval.

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

H.3. Approve Consultant Services Agreement (CSA) No. 2022-063-02 with Inwood Consulting Engineers, Inc. to provide professional engineering services for Daughtery Road Park Phase I development. (\$736,759.10 one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed Consultant Services Agreement No. 2022-063-02 with Inwood Consulting Engineers, Inc., providing professional engineering services for Daughtery Road Park Phase I development. He recommended approval.

Upon question, Mr. Beasley said there is a school between the two parks.

Commissioner Scott said it is not a continuous sidewalk going to the south.

Commissioner Braswell said on Saturdays there is going to be a ton of kids going back and forth between the parks.

Parks and Natural Resources Director Gaye Sharpe said they will take that into account.

Commissioner Scott said down by Walmart by the new apartments, the new townhomes, and apartments to the north they want to look at sidewalks coming from the east side of Daughtery.

Mr. Beasley said that Mr. Bohde will bring this sidewalk extension to the sidewalk committee.

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

H.4. Approve Standard Grant Agreement #P5028 between the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Polk County for the Circle B Bar Reserve Pond Project. (one-time \$200,000 grant revenue and \$200,000 county match)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the Standard Grant Agreement #P5028 between the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Polk County for the Circle B Bar Reserve Pond Project. He recommended approval.

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

I. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1 (BECKY TROUTMAN)

I.1. Commissioner Troutman Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Troutman had no comments.

J. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3 (BILL BRASWELL)

J.1. Commissioner Braswell Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Braswell said the trip to Tallahassee was worthwhile and they got a lot accomplished. He said he liked how they changed it to hey you help us we help you. He said everybody appreciates it and makes it a lot more enjoyable. He said he thinks our representatives appreciate that we come in with what we want from the state. He stated we look at it from a viewpoint of it will enhance something from the state as well as do something good for Polk County. He said we have heard there is no money and there is much less money. He said Ben Albritton laid it out that it has been Covid money and that is all gone. He said things are going to be tighter around here going forward. He thanked Amber Smith and her team and he said they did a great job. He said he liked that small place where they had lunch and he thought it was well put together. He said there is an article in the paper about Pipkin Road. He said he wants them to look at change orders to these contracts. He said we award these big contracts for roads and then there is \$400,000 here and \$300,000 here every week or every meeting. He said going forward after these projects we need to review why there were so many change orders, what did they accomplish and did we miss the boat on the initial bid.

K. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4 (MARTHA SANTIAGO)

K.1. Commissioner Santiago Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Santiago said she wants to echo Commissioner Braswell's comments about visiting Tallahassee. She said she liked the format and would like them to continue using that format. She said our legislators received it quite well and she thanked Amber Smith and her team for everything they have done.

L. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 5 (MICHAEL SCOTT)

L.1. Commissioner Scott Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Scott said it was his first time visiting the Capital. He said it

was very enlightening how much weight Polk County carries. He said we are one of many counties and we are top to a lot of the representatives and senators. He thanked the Sheriff's office and said he did a ride-a-long in the helicopter. He said he got to see a lot of the county and some of the challenges we are faced with. He said he appreciates all the assets we have and he thinks it is insurmountable and glad to have that.

M. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2 (RICK WILSON, CHAIR)

M.1. Chair Wilson Comments.

Minutes: Chair Wilson said he thought Polk County Day was really good and he said all the changes were great. He stated they got to talk to Secretary Perdue over the State of Florida Transportation. He said he gave them good insight on what they are up against and we all got the same problem he understands. He said he understands that our area is a very important area. He said it was a good meeting and hopefully we do have a rapport with him, can move on, and try to help things out. He said it was a great trip.

N. LAY BOARD APPOINTMENTS

N.1. Approve two new appointments and six reappointments to the Contractor Licensing Board

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

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

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

O.1. Public Hearing (LDCT-2024-21 Accessory Structures LDC Text Amendment) (Adoption Hearing) to amend Chapter 2, Section 206.A, Accessory Dwelling Units; Section 208.F, Accessory Structure Setbacks; Section 209.D, Accessory Structure Location and Chapter 9, Section 930, to add Accessory Dwelling Units. (No Fiscal Impact).

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal reviewed the proposed text amendment regarding accessory structures. He said that the Planning Commission recommends approval with 50 % of the size of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). He said based on feedback from the Board, the ordinance has been revised for a 1,000 square foot cap which is in line with our single-family residential impact fees.

Upon question, Mr. Ziskal said part of this ordinance is to limit square footage because we do have cases where a second home is built and went through the Property Appraiser's process and the property is subdivided. He said tying them to the 1,000 square feet keeps them at a reasonable size

County Attorney Randy Mink said if they subdivide without our approval there is a code violation and we would seek that code violation. He said they would be able to get it rectified through the code or the Land Development process. He said if they went to the Land Development process they would be able to subdivide. He said they would do a change of use and they should be able to collect the impact fees.

Commissioner Troutman said very last minute discussion on this. She said she got the impression that this probably has happened and as we continue to face more and more challenges with affordable housing this becomes more likely a scenario we will face. She said they are finding a loophole but it is not fair to the other residents in the county.

Mr. Ziskal said they have to come to us for the platting. He said the issue is when they do not have to plat, they do a one-time split, and the lots no longer conform with our minimum lot size requirements.

Mr. Mink said we can look closer if we are having an issue and there is something we need to change.

Commissioner Troutman said part of the challenge is the communication between us and the Property Appraiser.

Planning and Development Director Ben Dunn discussed a property that was split that ended up having to go through the permitting process and paying impact fees.

Commissioner Troutman said we need to think about our process and procedure so that it is clear.

Mr. Ziskal said the text of the ordinance limits it to one ADU.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

P. PUBLIC HEARINGS

P.1. Public Hearing to consider adoption of an ordinance amending and restating Polk County Ordinance 2024-062, the Polk County Amended and Restated Comprehensive Impact Fee Ordinance, for the purpose of adopting the 2025 Warehouse Transportation Impact Fee Study, and the related Extraordinary Circumstances Study Supplement, and imposing updated rates for Warehouse and Industrial Transportation Impact Fees.

Minutes: Deputy County Manager John Bohde showed the table of the proposed options for the industrial and warehouse impact fees. He said that they are limited on the 90%, 95% and 100% phasing-in. He stated that the top row is the current rate and

if they do not do anything that is where it will stay. He said that coincides with all the other increases for transportation. He said the remaining five rows are their options. He said what you see is District A which is the highest rate and he said they are seeing the higher number. He said there is a District B and C and those numbers are lower. He discussed the different rates in the districts. He showed the districts on a map.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

Commissioner Scott said doing nothing as a Board sends a message that we go out spending money on a study confirms that there are issues we have to address through transportation impact fees. He said we are under charging right now. He said doing nothing is an ill will of the Board. He said he would encourage the economic development departments within the county to leverage the value of quality of life. He said we afford as the biggest asset to bringing businesses and current and future employees to those businesses. He said to think that we can optimize the attraction of new businesses by being the low cost provider is a disservice to the county and to residents. He discussed Publix and said they have been very successful at maximizing profits when they are not the low cost provider. He said their success has not been aided by selling a bag of potato chips for a dollar less than the next nearest grocer and he asked so why should we do that as a county. He discussed the warehouses on County Line Road and said in 2024, Plant City approved a 227% increase on the general warehousing. He said when we compare to our neighbors we are a low cost option, which is attractive, but is not the only thing that attracts businesses. He said Lakeland is also higher than our current fee. He said the current level and the 1.71 with the blockage factor is not adequate either. He said he would rather have something higher.

Commissioner Braswell said we are doing a disservice to the citizens of our county by low balling this. He discussed Amazon and said when you add it all up it is well over \$3 a square foot and here we are charging 56 cents a square foot looking at going to 83 cents. He said he does not see how you could justify this is about jobs. He said if you get out of Plant City that is \$1,600. He said there are about 9,000 warehouse jobs in Hillsborough and 13,000 in Polk and that has nothing to do with impact fees. He said if these impact fees were important to the builders they would be here. He said the reason there are more jobs in Polk is because there is more land and more cheaper land. He said whatever we do here it is insignificant that it does not matter. He said he sat through lights because of the semis. He said they have such an impact on our roads and we are not charging an impact fee.

Motion of 1.71 with the blockage factor.

RESULT:	DENIED
MOVER:	Michael Scott
SECONDER:	Martha Santiago
AYE:	Wilson, Santiago, and Scott
NAY:	Troutman, and Braswell

Minutes: Motion fails due to lack of super majority.

Commissioner Scott said we are even lower than Plant City. He said we are the bargain bin of counties and are not going to improve roadways for our residents. He said it is a slap in the face to residents to say we would do nothing.

Commissioner Wilson said we have heard of a lot of different things and reports. He said we have talked to numerous people. He said sometimes doing nothing is not always bad because there is a better way to get where you are wanting to get. He said he has heard a lot of different stuff of what we can and cannot do. He said we got a report but it is still up to us. He said doing nothing is not always bad as you keep trying to do the right thing.

Commissioner Santiago said she wants to express her concerns with going with the 198 down to the 225. She said if we settle for the 1.71 that is still a 45% increase and is generating more money. She said she can live with staying current or going to the 1.74 with blockage.

Commissioner Scott said Plant City in 2024 went up 227%. He said if we do not add more revenue to the transportation you cannot get anything out of nothing. He said the 1.98 with the blended is a little higher than the 1.74 with the current blockage factor applied and we are in the mix with all of them. He said it puts us in the sweet spot versus being the lowest cost option. He said we would still be cheaper two years from now than what Plant City currently is.

Commissioner Braswell said they will come back wanting tax breaks and how could we justify that. He said the one remedy is to not approve them, then we do not have to worry about fixing the mess that they make.

Commissioner Troutman said she looks forward to doing an in-depth study that is appropriate, true and fair assessment of the situation. She said we have gotten this started out with asking for an increase of over 300% using this new term blockage factor. She said that would lead people to believe that heavy vehicles cause more problems than cars. She said on its face that make sense. She said if this were a way to do impact fees she does not believe it would be a system being brought forward just now. She said she wants to ensure that we are about jobs and economic growth and that we do not become stagnant and victims of fees that are unjust and not reasonable.

Motion for 1.98 blended ITE and local study.

RESULT:	DENIED
MOVER:	Bill Braswell
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Wilson, Braswell, and Scott
NAY:	Troutman, and Santiago

Minutes

Minutes: Motion fails due to lack of super majority.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minutes: Meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.