Polk County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Draft

July 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 Becky Troutman Commissioner Rick Wilson Commissioner Bill Braswell Commissioner Martha Santiago Commissioner Michael Scott

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 Kimberley Lawson with Human Resources, Amy Parkins with Human Resources, Ryan Kordek with Transportation Planning Organization, Erik Philips with Utilities, Thomas Coulter with Emergency Management and William Beasley with the County Manager's office for their years of service with the county.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

B.1. Comments.

Minutes: There was no one from the public who requested to speak on agenda items.

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

C.1. Disbursements.

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

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

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

D. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

D.1. Approve Consent Agenda.

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

G. COUNTY MANAGER (BILL BEASLEY)

G.1. Approve construction contract with Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC for the Country Club Road at Buckeye Loop Road Intersection Improvements project ($2,774,976.16 one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the construction contract with Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC, for the Country Club Road at Buckeye Loop Road intersection improvements project. He recommended approval.

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

G.2. Approve construction contract with Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC for the Kathleen Road at Deeson Road signal project ($2,150,875.08 one-time expense).

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the construction contract with Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC, for the Kathleen Road at Deeson Road signal project. He recommended approval.

Commissioner Scott said a lot in the community were waiting on this project and it was delayed and a lot of coordination had to happen with CSX. He said we as a county understand the importance of this intersection improvement. He said safety wise, it is well received in that community. He said he appreciates the Board's support on this.

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

G.3. Approve construction contract with Cathcart Construction Company - Florida LLC for the Peace Creek Canal stormwater infrastructure project ($1,657,037.69 one-time expense).

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the construction contract with Cathcart Construction Company - Florida LLC, for the Peace Creek Canal stormwater infrastructure project. He recommended approval.

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

G.4. Approve the contract with Central Florida Health Care, Inc., for the purchase of equipment for their Lakeland site. (Total amount not to exceed $1,512,116.53)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the contract with Central Florida Health Care, Inc., for the purchase of equipment for their Lakeland site. He recommended approval.

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

H. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1 (BECKY TROUTMAN)

H.1. Commissioner Troutman Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Troutman said beginning on Monday there will be a closure on Highway 60 for at least two weeks. She said it will be an inconvenience for a lot of people and we need to make sure that the word is getting out. She said this was initiated by CSX which we do not have any control over.

I. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2 (RICK WILSON)

I.1. Commissioner Wilson Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Wilson followed up on Commissioner Troutman's comments. He said people do not realize what this may cause. He said truck traffic and car traffic will not be diverted in the same way. He said it is going to be a major undertaking on Highway 60. He said it is CSX and not us.

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 on July 30th he will have a tour of the Sumter County Animal Control. He said this will complete his tour of Hillsborough, Pasco, and Sumter counties. He said he looks forward to bringing back information to Polk but overall we are doing a great job. He stated he wants to keep supporting Animal Control and the advocates for animal rights.

L. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4 (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

L.1. Chair Santiago Comments.

Minutes: Chair Santiago had no comments.

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

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

N.1. Public Hearing (LDCPAS-2025-24 Shimmering Dr CAC) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the Future Land Use Map change from Residential Low (RL) to Community Activity Center (CAC) on +/- 3.87 acres in the Transit Supportive Development Area (TSDA). Related to a LDCT-2026-5 (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal reviewed the proposed map change. He said that staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

N.2. Public Hearing (LDCT-2026-5 Shimmering Dr LDC Text Amendment) (Adoption

Public Hearing) to consider LDC Text Amendment text amendment to Appendix E adding for an activity center plan. Related to a LDCPAS-2025-24 (No Fiscal Impact)

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

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

N.3. Public Hearing (LDCPAS-2026-10 GrayLineX CPA) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of a Small-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the Future Land Use designation from Residential-Suburban (RS) to Industrial (IND) in the Suburban Development Area (SDA) on 3.81 acres. The request is to also change the text of Section 2.135 of the Comprehensive Plan to limit the intensity of the IND activity on the site. This case is related to LDCT-2026-7, an LDC text amendment for the same property. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal reviewed the proposed land use change. He said that staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

N.4. Public Hearing (LDCT-2026-7 GrayLineX LDC Text Amendment) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending the Land Development Code to Appendix E, Section E105, Parcel Specific Comprehensive Plan Amendments with Conditions, to limit the intensity of the proposed Industrial (IND) activity on the site. This case is related to LDCPAS-2026-10. (No Fiscal Impact)

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

Commissioner Troutman thanked staff for working with the applicant. She said the more transparency they can provide when they are willing to narrow that down it gives residents a better understanding of what is coming.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

RESULT:	**APPROVED**
MOVER:	Bill Braswell

SECONDER:	Rick Wilson
AYE:	Troutman, Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott

N.5. Public Hearing (LDCPAL 2026-2 Main Street Corridor Text) (Adoption Hearing) to consider the adoption of a Large-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment text amendment to establish a new Section, to be called the Main Street Corridor (MSC), in the Future Land Use Element. (No Fiscal Impact)

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

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

N.6. Public Hearing (LDCD-2026-3 Goldenrod Ln RL-4 Sub-District) (Adoption Public Hearing) to consider the adoption of a Sub-District Map change from Residential Low-1X (RL-1X) to Residential Low-4X (RL-4X) on approximately 17.1± acres. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal reviewed the proposed map change. He said that staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

O. PUBLIC HEARINGS

O.1. Public Hearing **(WITHDRAWN/NO PUBLIC HEARING TO OCCUR)** (LDPD-2026-2 Pulte Crews Lake PD) (DeNovo Hearing) This is a request appealing the decision of the Planning Commission to approve a Planned Development for 400 single-family homes. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal said that this has been withdrawn.

Mr. Mink said they received a letter of withdrawal from the individual who requested the De Novo.

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

O.2. Request the Board, by its own motion, consider adoption of a resolution to vacate a portion of deeded right-of-way lying easterly of Crystal Beach Road in the Winter Haven area. Also request Board authorize the conveyance of the County's interest via County Deed, accept a Drainage Easement and accept a Quit Claim Deed for additional right-of-way for Crystal Beach Road. (No fiscal impact)

Minutes: Scott Lowery, Real Estate Services, reviewed the proposed vacation for a portion of a deeded right-of-way lying easterly of Crystal Beach Road in the Winter Haven area. He said there are no objections to the request. He recommended approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

O.3. Public Hearing to consider an ordinance amending Section 4 of the Polk County Indigent Health Care Plan Extension Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2015-076) which changes the process for amending the County's plan for providing health care services to qualified residents, and adopt a Resolution which approves a revised and restated version of that plan.

Minutes: County Attorney Randy Mink reviewed the ordinance amending Section 4 of the Polk County Indigent Health Care Plan Extension Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2015-076) which changes the process for amending the County's plan for providing health care services to qualified residents, and adopts a Resolution which approves a revised and restated version of that plan. He recommended approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

Commissioner Scott said this is another way the county looks forward on how to best serve our residents especially those that are most vulnerable and in need. He said this helps those that really need it and he is proud that as a county we are able to identify that and have this ordinance to help other people.

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

O.4. Public Hearing to consider the adoption of a Resolution approving proposed revisions to the Utilities Division Schedule of Rates, Charges, and Fees (No fiscal impact).

Minutes: Utilities Director Tamara Richardson reviewed the resolution approving proposed revisions to the Utilities Division schedule of rates, charges, and fees. She said this increases our connection fees, makes our reclaimed irrigation rates similar to potable rates, establishes the rate for septage receiving at 15 cents a gallon, and indexes rates that came in 2024 for two more years. She recommended approval.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

Upon question, Ms. Richardson said the reclaimed water used to be a disposal issue. She said reclaimed water is water after it has gone through the wastewater plant and has been treated. She said it is used for irrigation and that offsets the need of pumping out of the aquifer for irrigation. She said it is just as valuable as potable water. She said some of our areas run out of reclaimed water for irrigation and we have to supplement with potable water. She said it is more expensive to produce reclaimed water than potable water. She said there is a proposed project taking the reclaimed water to Haines City. She said it is not funded at this time because there are other projects with a higher priority. She said they got federal funding for the design of the project. She said they will do the design and they will wait until they have the money to fund that project.

County Manager Bill Beasley stated that is a large project and they may have to do that project in phases.

Commissioner Wilson said we have had discussions on this and he has shown his disinterest in this. He said we spend an awful lot of money on water and we have to take care of our water. He said they did not raise rates and tried to keep the costs down and then we had to raise rates because we are not in the business to lose money. He said there is a lot of discussion that can be done here and he is not for raising the rates. He said we need to look at more options.

Upon question, Ms. Richardson said the septage receiving facility completion date is in September. She said in August/September they will start receiving the trucks to seed the plant. She confirmed there are no impact fees just connection fees for utilities.

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

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

P.1. Comments.

Minutes: Dr. Robert Weedon said he has been here before educating on humane and effective methods of Trap, Neuter, Vacinate, Return (TNVR). He discussed five people and a puppy being attacked by a rabid cat and said that represents the lack of effective management for community cats. He discussed statistics for cats taken in, euthanized, killed and the live outcome rate. He said TNVR costs less than impounding, housing, and euthanizing. He said to adopt a TNVR ordinance, fund low-cost spay and neuter, and partner with rescues and volunteers.

Upon question, Dr. Weedon said programs will re-trap cats and vaccinate them. He said an advantage of microchipping the cats is that they have a record of vaccines. He said he was lead author on a study on response to rabies vaccines and kittens less than 12 weeks of age and they all had protective titers after vaccination. He said they know the immunity lasts longer, colony caretakers will retract the cats, and they will be boostered.

Kay Bourque said we are here to provide a better outcome for the animals. She thanked them for hearing them, listening and beginning to make a difference. She said Animal Control is overwhelmed. She discussed a pet owner who escaped an abusive relationship and was unable to keep their pet. She discussed a stray dog that was found and puppies needing to be rescued. She said we need to focus on the source of the problem, prevent unwanted litters, and expand affordable spay and neuter.

Aleatha Pugh speaking on behalf of Jose Antonio Palacios. She gave the Board a packet and she said that an email has been sent to Jay Jarvis regarding this property. She said Mr. Jarvis has spoken to the Town of Dundee. She requested emergency measures to address ongoing stormwater flooding affecting the Weiberg Road stormwater system since the 2020-2021 replacement of a blocked drainage pipe. She said that stormwater has continued to discharge onto private property during rain events. She discussed the impacts of the water and said measures are necessary to reduce continued impacts. She requested that Polk County and Dundee immediately evaluate and implement mitigation options. She said for both government entities to work together. She said this is within the city limits of Dundee and is off of a county owned road. She confirmed that the stormwater is handled by the county.

Commissioner Braswell said to make an appointment to come in and discuss with the commissioners.

Ms. Pugh said the family has made many attempts to speak to Mr. Jarvis. She said there was no response.

Dean Meuendez said he is the founder of Dlb Cat Rescue. He said the concerns spoken do matter. He said Polk is one of the fastest growing counties and our approach to animal welfare should grow with it. He said to create partnerships with Animal Control, rescues, veterinarians, schools, businesses, and volunteers. He said together we can accomplish far more. He discussed a vision for a rescue camp. He said he is willing to work alongside and they can build something together than can serve the community and animals for generations.

Kevin Noble said any motorcycle without a license plate on a rural road is illegal. He discussed motorcycles with no license plates. He said that ATV's are not allowed on rural roads and he said it is a safety issue. He said if they lost control the parents would be responsible for them. He said he rides his bike on the road every day. He asked them to reach out to the Sheriff's office to address this.

County Manager Bill Beasley will discuss with the chief of staff at the Sheriff's office.

Debbie Hicks discussed families that rescued animals. She said the public and the rescues are doing so much. She said the Sheriff's website only shows 19 dogs available and she asked why do we have so few when the kennels are full. She said they need Animal Control, a good solid facility and a committee.

Kelly Quinn said she is asking the Board to treat animal welfare as a core county service. She said the Animal Control budget is $5.8 million while the shelter handles thousands of animals each year. She asked for a public comparison of services against other counties, investing in prevention, and evaluating whether sheltering and services should be managed through a modern civilian department while law enforcement remains coordinated with the sheriff. She said they must modernize and become more prevention focused.

Jhoanna Allende discussed Animal Control and said we are still known as the highest kill shelter. She said we need spay and neuter vouchers, TNVR, and restricting and enforcing backyard breeders. She discussed stories of families facing difficult times with their pets. She said we need more options for people and their pets. She said the animal crisis is a huge problem and said there are too many animals entering the shelter and too many not leaving. She said all these ideas can be discussed by an animal welfare committee.

James Abercrombie said he was here two weeks ago talking about public records. He said he cannot get straight answers or anything in writing. He discussed going to Mr. Mink's office. He said that he was told to go to the fifth floor for the records request. He said he was accused of being a liar. He said he could not have a meeting because he wanted to record it. He said he does not know what you people are trying to hide. He said we need to get a handle on this. He said has been through this for 26 years and he still cannot get it today.

Commissioner Scott said the reason he provided hard copies was because Mr. Abercrombie said he did not receive the requests.

Jenn Hardeman said it is disappointing to watch the Commissioners and the Sheriff's office spend time denying concerns instead of addressing them. She said the budget speaks of integrity. She said ordinance 18-68 is inconsistent and needs clarity. She said compassion is not a code violation. She said returning the cats back is not abandonment and she compared it to returning fish to a lake. She said to remember the organizational chart

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.