



Polk County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Draft

August 04, 2026 Regular BoCC meeting

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact the Communications Office not later than 48 hours prior to the proceeding. Their office is located in the County Administration Building, 330 West Church Street in Bartow. Telephone (863) 534-6090 or TTY (863) 534-7777. If hearing impaired dial 7-1-1 for Florida Relay services or call (800) 955-8771 (TTY); dial (800) 955-1339 if you are using a computer.

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. (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

Rollcall

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

INVOCATION

Bill Dehart, Polk County Fire Rescue Chaplain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

A. PRESENTATIONS and RECOGNITIONS

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

B.1. Comments.

Minutes: There was no one from the public wishing to speak concerning 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 21, 2026.

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

G. COUNTY MANAGER (BILL BEASLEY)

G.1. Confirm Appointment of Mr. Ryan Neal Duncan to serve as the Director of the Tourism and Sports Marketing Division.

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley recommended that the Board confirm the appointment of Mr. Ryan Neal Duncan to serve as the Director of the Tourism and Sports Marketing Division. He said this is effective Monday, August 17, 2026. He reviewed his qualifications.

Neal Duncan thanked the Board and Mr. Beasley. He said he is humbled and excited for this opportunity. He said for the last two decades he has proudly served this organization. He said it has been a privilege to be a part of the county that delivers exceptional results for residents, businesses and visitors. He said that Sports Marketing has enjoyed tremendous support from this Board, previous Boards, and the County Manager's office. He said with the leadership of Mark Jackson it has helped to build one of the premier marketing organization in the country. He said the management team of Mark, Chris and Justin has positioned us for continued success. He said he looks forward to leading by example, maintaining partnerships and supporting their team. He said he is grateful for his family. He thanked them for their support.

Commissioner Braswell said Mark Jackson built a deep bench at Lake Myrtle. He said there is a lot of talent there and said he has a lot of great people to work with. He said there are some good things to come out of there and people do not realize how much activity and economic impact they generate. He said we need restaurants and a hotel in Auburndale.

Chair Santiago congratulated Mr. Duncan. She said they expect wonderful things coming from him. She said he has big shoes to fill and she is glad to see the team here supporting him. He said they have created a strong organization.

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

G.2. Approve construction contract with Kamminga & Roodvoets, Inc. for the CR 540 Cypress Gardens Road at Lake Ned Road intersection improvements project (\$1,931,532.85 one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the construction contract with Kamminga & Roodvoets, Inc., for the CR 540 Cypress Gardens Road at Lake Ned Road intersection improvements project. He recommended approval.

Chair Santiago said she is glad to see this project moving forward.

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

G.3. Approve agreement with PCL Civil Constructors, Inc to provide Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) pre-construction services for the Northwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility improvements projects. (\$989,597.52 pre-construction services one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the agreement with PCL Civil Constructors, Inc., providing Construction Manager at Risk pre-construction services for the Northwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility improvements projects. He recommended approval.

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

G.4. Approve agreement with Vogel Bros. Building Co. to provide Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) pre-construction services for the Southwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility improvements projects. (\$897,566.00 pre-construction services one-time expense)

Minutes: County Manager Bill Beasley discussed the agreement with Vogel Bros. Building Co., providing Construction Manager at Risk pre-construction services for the Southwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility improvements projects. He recommended approval.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

MOVER:	Becky Troutman
SECONDER:	Michael Scott
AYE:	Troutman, Wilson, Braswell, Santiago, and Scott

H. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1 (BECKY TROUTMAN)

H.1. Commissioner Troutman Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Troutman had no comments.

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 said on August 14th they will be discussing the potential impacts of Amendment 3 and the budget.

County Manager Bill Beasley said they will be discussing the seven funding sources that are ad valorem based and what they fund today. He said they will give the Board an overview and will start prepping the Board for where cuts may be necessary if and when that occurs.

Commissioner Braswell said he wanted to bring it up so the public is aware. He said if they want to find out what the future holds it may be a good thing to watch.

Mr. Beasley recommended to hold the meeting in the Board room.

K. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 5 (MICHAEL SCOTT)

K.1. Commissioner Scott Comments.

Minutes: Commissioner Scott said there will be an upcoming work session with CareerSource Polk. He said it is one of the organizations that the county is on the board as a participant. He said we are looking into CareerSource Polk, it is a great organization, but with speaking with the state there are some deficiencies. He said we are in the lower quarter of ranking and have been in last place. He said we are mindful of anything county related and if you have an issue please bring it to their attention. He said it has done great for the community but could do a lot better. He is looking forward to the work session.

L. COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4 (MARTHA SANTIAGO, CHAIR)

L.1. Chair Santiago Comments.

Minutes: Chair Santiago had no comments.

M. LAY BOARD APPOINTMENTS

- M.1. Appoint Angelic Sims to Housing and Neighborhood Development's (HND) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for a three-year term August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2029. (No Fiscal Impact).

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

- M.2. Reappoint Bianca Brooks to Housing and Neighborhood Development's (HND) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for a three-year term August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2029. (No Fiscal Impact).

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

- M.3. Reappoint Bridgett Lattimore to Housing and Neighborhood Development's (HND) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for a three-year term August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2029. (No Fiscal Impact).

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

- M.4. Reappoint Danielle Bouloute to Housing and Neighborhood Development's (HND) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for a three-year term August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2029. (No Fiscal Impact).

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

- M.5. Reappoint Susan Hurlburt to Housing and Neighborhood Development's (HND) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for a three-year term August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2029. (No Fiscal Impact).

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Becky Troutman
SECONDER:	Bill Braswell

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

- M.6. Reappoint YuFonda Kinsler to Housing and Neighborhood Development's (HND) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for a three-year term August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2029. (No Fiscal Impact).

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

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

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

- N.1. Public Hearing (LDCPAL 2026-4 Organic Matters CPA) (Transmittal Hearing) to consider a Large-Scale Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment to change 71.26 acres from Business-Park Center (BPC) to Industrial (IND) on the Future Land Use Map. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: Land Development Director Ben Ziskal requested that this be continued to August 18th at 9:00 a.m.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

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

- N.2. Public Hearing (LDCT-2026-15 Vehicle Service in RACX) (First Reading) to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending the Land Development Code to add "Vehicle Service, Mechanical" into the Regional Activity Center (RACX) land use district within the U.S. 27 Selected Area Plan (SAP). (No Fiscal Impact)

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

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

O. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- O.1. Public Hearing (LDCU-2025-35 Crossed Paws CU) (De Novo Hearing) to consider an appeal to the Planning Commission's decision to approve (3:2) this case on June 3, 2026. (No Fiscal Impact)

Minutes: County Attorney Randy Mink reminded the audience of the DeNovo hearing procedures.

Commissioner Troutman said she had ex parte communications with the applicant.

Commissioner Wilson said he had ex parte communications with the applicant.

Chair Santiago said she met with the applicants.

Commissioner Braswell said he had ex parte communications with the applicant and the neighbors.

Commissioner Scott said he met with the applicant and drove by the site.

Ian Nance, Land Development, reviewed the request for the DeNovo hearing. He said that staff is recommending denial of the Crossed Paws Rescue Conditional Use (CU). He showed aerial photos of the site and said a codes complaint was filed stating that a dog rescue business was at this location. He stated the accessory structures were used for boarding dogs and it was found in violation of the Land Development Code (LDC). He said Residential Suburban (RS) and Agricultural Residential (AR) are the only residential uses that allows kennels. He reviewed the LDC requirements and showed properties with similar kennel uses. He discussed the site plan and said the existing kennels do not meet setback requirements. He said that the applicant has proposed that this is not open to the public for grooming and boarding services and said they will maintain records and receipts of off-site solid waste disposal. He showed photos of the site visit. He said the applicant has added fencing to help with buffers. He said the Planning Commission recommended approval 3:2 with these conditions: the kennel areas shall be fenced to ensure containment of dogs, the site is not open to the public, and a caretaker residence shall be established onsite. He said staff recommending denial stands for this hearing. He said noise is the primary issue here and there are no noise level standards applicable in RS.

Sarah Case, applicant, showed slides and said there is a clear distinction between the ownership of the property and the Crossed Paws' operations. She said they were cited with Code Enforcement (CE) and this stemmed from a non-residential name in a residential land use. She discussed the operations, application process, and the fostering of animals.

Erin Golotko, Vice President, Crossed Paws Pet Rescue, Inc, said the board members facilitated the funding of this property from a local non-profit because of the 501c3 and IRS compliance rules. She said they chose a property not in a dense subdivision on almost five acres that will allow for Stefanie to live onsite. She said that these are not dogs waiting to be adopted and it is their forever home. She stated no rescue operations or events will occur at this property. She discussed all the animal shelters that are helped. She said they have gone through the proper channels to come into compliance. She said this is a limited low impact use that allows a non-profit. She said this is not about expanding operations or increasing activities it is about allowing the dogs to remain in the home. She asked for the approval of this CU permit.

Stefanie Badillo, President, Crossed Paws Pet Rescue, Inc, said she started this rescue in 2018 and has dedicated her life to rescuing dogs. She said they are not

asking for county resources and they are independently funded by private donors. She said she is asking for the opportunity to continue caring for the animals by living on her property. She said their intent was to never avoid county regulations. She said the dogs on the property are chipped and registered to her. She said the dogs bark when entering the property and do not bark continuously. She said when cited by CE they started the process of bringing this into compliance. She said her idea was to live on the property with the dogs. She asked for their support and thanked them for their service.

Ms. Case said even though the property is owned by Crossed Paws Pet Rescue, Inc, the rescue operations are held off-site. She said the dogs are owned by her and registered to her. She reviewed the land uses in the LDC regarding kennels, boarding, and breeding. She said they have to comply with the conditions listed in Chapter 303. She said focus has been on this not being a permitted use and she said this is an allowable use. She reviewed the applicant's proposed conditions of approval. She discussed similar land uses and showed maps of the proximities to residential areas for those properties. She said they are 700 feet from where the existing permitted buildings are and those will be vacated and become personal self storage. She said new kennel buildings will be moved 700 feet back. She showed the proposed site plan. She said with the conditions they can be compatible and can coexist with the neighbors. She said before them today is a land use issue.

Upon question, Ms. Case said the structure on the SPCA site is 210 feet from a residential property line.

Upon question, Ms. Golotko said there was a real estate professional used to purchase this property.

Commissioner Troutman said this goes to understanding the use of the property. She said it is concerning that we are looking at a real estate professional suggesting that this property can be used for this.

Ms. Case said that is where the confusion lies. She said if the property was purchased in Stefanie Badillo's name there may be complaints from the neighbors. She said Stefanie is going to live there per the conditions they have agreed to. She said they are not asking for a residential land use they are asking to allow her to keep her dogs on site and move the dogs in the three buildings 700 feet back. She said people do not come on site to visit or adopt and there are not any events on site.

Ms. Golotko stated there is a large community of fosters and the dogs do not come onto the property. She said she finds a foster and calls them after they leave the vet. She said she does not bring them to this property.

Upon question, Mr. Nance said there is no limit within the LDC for the number of dogs they can keep on site. He said it is the accessory structures being used for housing the dogs that is the factor. He said to construct a building for personal dogs you would not have to come in as an individual and apply for kennel operations.

Commissioner Scott asked how is this a kennel operation when there is no use of

commercial operations and the dogs are registered in her name.

Mr. Nance responded and said he does not believe the owner lives there at this time. He said there are vaccination records that would lead staff to believe it is a non-residential use. He said there are receipts of dumping waste and it is not normal for pet ownership to take large amounts of waste to be dumped.

Ms. Golotko said they keep the records if Animal Control were to show up. She said they get fined if they do not have all the information. She said for the waste they do it as a courtesy to the neighbors and they do not want all the waste on the property.

Commissioner Troutman said with that statement she is extremely confused because they are saying that these dogs are her personal dogs, but now they are telling them they keep the records should they be turned over to somebody else.

Ms. Golotko said Animal Control has been called multiple times to the property and they have it ready to show if they have questions. She said the dogs are not being turned over it is for the authorities if they have questions.

Ms. Badillo said Animal Control requires them to have the tags and the rabies certificates. She said they want to make sure the animals are taken care of and they want a picture of every rabies tag. She said all the dogs on the property are hers and she has not brought any new dogs to the property.

Ms. Case said CE was called for 50 kennels onsite and dogs barking. She said staff replied with an email that there has already been a case opened for this. She said they were reported for noise and CE reported that there were no dogs on site and saw there were buildings under construction. She said CE got a call four months before the dogs were moved on site.

Mr. Mink said this is not for the CE case. He reminded the Board that this is a land use case involving whether or not a kennel is a consistent and compatible use for this location. He said they can confirm whether they heard noise.

Tonya Long, Codes Investigation Supervisor, said the complaint was for an advertisement of fundraiser activities. She said they did not find that the dogs had come in until July and that was when the noise complaint started. She stated that was when they started meeting with neighbors and they were cited after the July date. She said in March they did meet with them to let them know that this would be a requirement before moving the dogs on site and they still did it without the approvals.

Commissioner Braswell said there is no limit of dogs on an individuals property. He said that is something this Board needs to remedy in the near future. He said with looking at other counties we have the ability to regulate that and we probably should.

Upon question, Ms. Long said dogs barking is handled under the Animal Control Ordinance.

Mr. Mink said it can also be enforced through the Noise Control Ordinance through the

Sheriff's office.

Upon question, Ms. Case said they are not disputing a CE active case and CE said the proper channel would be to get a Level 3 CU for a kennel. She said the owners are refuting that they are a kennel because they are so different from the SPCA and the Bully Project. She said they are trying to come in compliance and are trying to be good neighbors. She confirmed that there are no adoptions and the family feeds the dogs and that is the coming and going. She said there are private donors providing funds. She discussed what the owner does so the dogs are not euthanized.

Upon question, Ms. Golotko discussed the board that oversees this. She said there is open communication with the members and said she oversees the financial aspects. She said only dogs that are owned by the property owner are on the property. She said there is another property where the adoptions take place.

Upon question, Ms. Badillo said all dogs would be registered to her. She said she does not bring new dogs onto the property.

Upon question, Ms. Golotko said it is a requirement for a board through the IRS because it is a 501c3. She said they stopped construction on the house and the house was not able to be lived in at the time of purchase.

Commissioner Braswell said boards are for commercial operations where people make decisions.

Ms. Golotko said they do adoptions that are off site and that is what the board is for.

Commissioner Scott discussed how you cannot funnel money out of a non-profit into a personal name to take care of personal business. He said a simpler path is an individual name without the 501c3.

Ms. Golotko said they spoke to an attorney and that was not an option because of the code violation and the neighbors. She said the problem would not go away had they changed the name.

Ms. Case reiterated that these are her personal dogs that are all registered to her. She said they are asking for permission for their personal dogs. She said they want to build a new building 700 feet away and Sefanie wants to live there with her dogs. She said no rescue operations are on site and this will be the homestead once built. She said they are here for a land use matter.

Garry Bozeman, appellant, said he lives next to the property. He said their website says it is a rehabilitation center and this is a pit stop until they are adopted. He said the barking is constant and the smell is horrendous. He said he does not know what they are doing with the animal waste and whether it is being washed out. He said what they are doing is good but not in a residential neighborhood. He said there is barking six to eight hours a day seven days a week. He said dogs are brought there to rehabilitate and they have an office off site. He said it states it is a pit stop for the dogs.

The Chair opened a public hearing.

Angel Sims said years ago she was looking for a mom and pop rescue and she came across Crossed Paws. She said the site visits and drop-offs are no more than the average family. She said she has honked her horn and has not heard dogs barking. She said something needs to be looked at on how rescues are handled in the county. She said to vote in favor. She said this is a place with the animals indoors and the animals are taken out in shifts. She said it is a wide open area and is a decent fit for a project like this.

Steve Everett said he is a lifelong resident of Auburndale. He said he needs more than three minutes and he asked if they can get in trouble for lying up here. He said the rally filled up the whole place trying to get donations. He said he saw dogs going in and out. He said it is still right next to his property. He discussed the smell of dog feces. He asked if they would like to listen to this 24/7. He said this is a business she makes money off of and they have lied. He asked if any of them would like to put up with this for the rest of their life. He said it is a weed and it should not be there. He said she picked the wrong place. He said all the questions they answered they lied.

Marian Bozeman said she has built her life there. She said she has never experienced as much stress since Crossed Paws arrived. She said she has a koi pond and garden and she cannot tend to it without noise. She said she walks in fear that a dog could escape and confront her. She said after she filed a complaint cameras were installed and were pointed to her property. She said she was approached in her yard alone and she said this is bullying and harassing. She asked how can the county allow this to continue. She said this is a safety concern and this operation will only grow larger. She said at her age she should be able to live peacefully.

Ruth Krischick said she is speaking on behalf of Crossed Paws. She said she has been a volunteer and adopter. She said the team is professional and is committed to the animals. She discussed the operations of the rescue and thanked them for doing a good job with the animals.

Linda Bayko said she is in support of Crossed Paws. She said it has been a meaningful difference with rescuing over 200 dogs each year. She said it provides a temporary shelter and provides food. She asked for the approval to be upheld and for them to continue their work. She discussed a music machine to help keep the dogs from barking and said she has a hard time believing there is any barking going on.

Mary Lou Hammond said she is a huge animal lover and has known Stefanie for three years. She said the dogs on the property are her dogs. She said nobody else wanted the dogs and she takes care of her dogs. She said that she is exceptional.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Scott said he went on the Crossed Paws website and watched the YouTube video posted. He said it talks about how this is just a pit stop for dogs. He said the title is Crossed Paws Rescue Rehabilitation Center in Auburndale. He said he would like to know why this is portrayed as the dogs trying to find their forever home.

He said he expects clarity on what information they are being provided and for this video to portray that these dogs are at the facility in Auburndale waiting for their forever home contradicts the testimony given today.

Ms. Badillo said the video was put up and they had not been cited by the county. She said she thought they were doing everything by the book and after they were cited she did not bring any new dogs. She said she is taking the video down and did not know it was still up. She said everything that has been spoken is the truth.

Commissioner Scott said it directly contradicts everything that has been given today. He said he can tell by the structural photos with dogs they are talking from July 2025.

Ms. Badillo confirmed that she is on the Board of Directors, they report to the IRS as a 501c3, and the board is active.

Ms. Case said they did show her that the video was active and she was hoping that it was not active. She said the intent was to find property and have an active rescue. She said they know they cannot do anything she is advertising on the website. She said with the substantial evidence they heard from her today regarding the land use issue and the conditions of approval that would be the pathway to enforce this. She said the compatibility was mitigated with the distance and the extra measures proposed with the new buildings. She asked for the appeal to be denied and to uphold the Planning Commission's recommendation of approval.

Commissioner Braswell said he is not in favor of this operation from a land use standpoint, noise and odor.

Commissioner Troutman said this case has been challenging as she considered the facts. She said the decision is based on land use and regulations. She read the definition of compatibility. She said often times they are looking at density, activity, and lot sizes. She stated with this case they look at and consider the negative impacts. She said this case does not stop anyway what Crossed Paws does because this has nothing to do with the rescue and they were told these are personal animals. She said we are not here to talk about compassion or animal welfare we are here to talk about land use. She said when she looks at the definition of compatibility she does believe there is harm. She said she does not believe this will be a stable situation overtime. She said as much as she would love to see a pet rescue place she does not believe this is the place for a kennel. She said if this is her personal home and she lives there that is another route the parties will have to decide. She said when we look at the land use a kennel run by anyone is not the appropriate place.

Chair Santiago said she is looking at this as a land use case also. She said if they meet the conditions set by the Planning Commission then she is in favor of this. She said she is looking at if the conditions have been met. She said we need to do something for the animals in Polk County. She said if these animals were not in the kennels they would be roaming and they would have another issue. She said if someone does not do it, who will. She said this is a project that is helping the people and she likes to see there are donors helping and that is her personal opinion.

Motion to deny application.

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

O.2. Public Hearing to consider adoption of an ordinance granting an Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption to a new business, Amaya Solutions, Inc., and approval of a Performance Agreement with the company.

Minutes: Tabitha Alpers, Budget and Management Services, discussed the ordinance granting an Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption to a new business, Amaya Solutions, Inc., and approval of a Performance Agreement with the company.

Upon question, Ms. Alpers confirmed the current property tax is \$107 and she said it is vacant land.

Commissioner Scott said with the ad valorem tax exemptions it is not as though they are exempting the property from taxes. He said we are getting less revenue and they are attracting the business, increasing the tax revenue generated by the property and there is a long-term gain once the exemption expires. He said we are not giving away the land we are developing a great relationship with a good community partner. He said he appreciates that.

Chair Santiago said they are also looking at the amount of jobs created and there are a lot of benefits.

The Chair opened a public hearing; no one spoke.

Commissioner Scott welcomed the new property owners. He said he is appreciative of what they are bringing to the county and he said that we appreciate them transferring from another county.

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

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

P.1. Comments.

Minutes: Debbie Hicks said she appreciates all that they do. She said when they rescue dogs they do a lot of things. She said she stopped by Animal Control because their website said there were 18-19 dogs and 18 cats. She said the website is inaccurate. She said it is clean but it is old. She stated we need a vision for the animals. She said the volunteers are coming in and they need to look at helping these

individuals and rescues financially. She said she appreciates what they do. She said we need a division for the animals and this is a county problem.

Commissioner Scott said for Ms. Hicks to visit Hillsborough, Pasco, Sumter counties and he would like to hear Ms. Hicks' input.

Commissioner Troutman spoke to Ms. Hicks and said she hopes the message that she carries is that they made a land use decision today. She said there is no doubt that Crossed Paws is doing wonderful things and according to them it happens off site. She said their rescue operations should not be impacted. She said the land use is separate from the rescue and she hopes that she helps it being conveyed correctly.

David Butler said we watch movies about influential people throwing parties for politicians to raise money or provide positive exposure for candidates. He said he is sure that only happens in the movies. He said when he was working at the Sheriff's office a decree came on that if you wanted to advance your career you would attend a party for a particular candidate and donate. He said he did not go to that party because that does not sit well with him. He said in 2026 the sheriff threw another campaign party and deputies were encouraged to attend. He said is it a possible connection to why he gets to buy a plane. He asked why it took so long to get meaningful changes at Animal Control. He said Commissioner Wilson is up for election and asked him to list eight things he has initiated for the county.

James Abercrombie said there is a contract for the fence. He said in the paperwork they were supposed to get rid of the fence. He said they called it trash and there is a difference between trash and recyclable. He discussed rights to public records. He said that man is running the show and he is telling them what is in Florida Statutes. He said to call the State Attorney General's office and ask about the public records. He said we need honesty and integrity in this business. He said he wants to see what happened to the fence, that was his money and they paid for it.

Commissioner Scott said the contract he submitted in the paperwork was for the contractor to install a new fence, remove and dispose properly of the existing fence. He said there was not a requirement for it to be recycled or have a chain of custody to document every step where the fence went.

Stephanie Widner said the commissioners have heard multiple citizens advocating on animal welfare. She said a lot of these issues would not exist if the county provided funding. She said we have the money and we have speed bumps costing \$5,000 each. She said we have money for other things. She said Animal Control is not fulfilling their core mission and there should be a low cost spay neuter program.

Commissioner Troutman said Captain Varnadore is working to establish and re-establish relationships with fosters and agencies.

Commissioner Scott said with taking the animal control tours and speaking to the counties that have regulations for the county over taking animal control they are all overwhelmed by the volume of cats. He said the ones that are trap, neuter and release do not have those issues because they do not have the requirement to house them. He

said that is the commonality he has seen and it is not just a Polk County thing. He said they all have a dedicated liaison and are doing a tremendous job to minimize the amount of euthanasia. He said it is an uphill battle when you look at the volume of cats.

The regular session of the Board meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.