

**Official Minutes of
MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

August 6, 2025

CALL TO ORDER:

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) met in a special session in Commission Chambers at 1:02 p.m. on Wednesday, August 6, 2025 at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC HEARING BY CHAIRMAN KATHY BRYANT

Chairman Bryant advised that the public hearing was scheduled this afternoon to consider adoption of a Resolution authorizing a per parcel unit Assessment for East Lake-Woodmar Improvement Project.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call the following members were present: Chairman Kathy Bryant, District 2; Vice-Chairman Carl Zalak, III, District 4; Commissioner Craig Curry, District 1; and Commissioner Matthew McClain, District 3. Commissioner Michelle Stone, District 5, was absent due to a prior commitment. Also present were County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Tracy Straub.

The Deputy Clerk was in receipt of a 145 page Agenda packet to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation.

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

Deputy Clerk Thornton presented Proof of Publication of a display ad entitled, "Notice of Hearing to Impose and Provide for Collection of Special Assessment in East Lake - Woodmar – SE 143rd Street and Portion of SE 145th Ave Improvement Area" published in the Star Banner newspaper on July 17, 2025. The Notice states the Board will consider creation of the East Lake - Woodmar – SE 143rd Street and Portion of SE 145th Ave Improvement Area and imposition of special assessments for the construction of road improvements.

STAFF PRESENTATION

1. Public Hearing to Consider Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing a Per Parcel Unit Assessment for East Lake - Woodmar Improvement Project and Award Bid: 25B-063 to Integrity Site Development, Inc. Ocala, FL

Municipal Service (MS) Director Chad Wicker presented the following recommendation:
Description/Background: The proposed project consists of approximately 0.36 miles of County maintained paved roads within the East Lake and Woodmar subdivisions. The subdivisions were originally platted in 1885 and 1905, respectively. The estimated cost for this project is \$540,685.95 with the per parcel assessment at \$8,863.70. This was a petition-based road improvement that

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passed with 51.4% of responding property owners voting in favor of the road assessment.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of \$540,685.95.

Recommended Action: Motion to: Adopt a Resolution authorizing per parcel unit assessment for a 15-Year assessment period for East Lake - Woodmar Improvement Area and certify the Assessment Roll to the Tax Collector.

And

Motion to award Project 25B-063 East Lake - Woodmar Improvement Area to Contractor Integrity Site Development, Inc. and authorize Chairman and Clerk to execute contract upon approval by Legal.

MS Director Chad Wicker advised that the Board has received correspondence from residents relating to this project, which has been added to the public record. There are 6 written in support of the project and 1 not in favor.

Mr. Wicker provided a brief history of the proposed project. He advised that this was a citizen-initiated petition that passed with a 51.4 percent (%) approval. The official results of the petition included 35 responses out of the 44 requested with 18 in favor, 15 not in favor and 2 were considered invalid by the Clerk of Court's office.

Mr. Wicker stated the project is a new road construction built to the MS Citizen Standard: a minimum of 6 inches of lime rock base course, 8 inches of stabilized subgrade and a minimum of 1.25 inches compacted asphaltic concrete type SP 9.5 approved by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The current lime rock road is partially constructed on private property; therefore, part of this project will be reestablishing County right-of-way (ROW) and center of road. He advised that this project also utilizes a stormwater management plan (SWMP), noting the current lack of drainage retention areas (DRAs) and the drastic elevation change on SE 145th Avenue posed a bit of a challenge. Mr. Wicker stated while working closely with engineers' staff has designed an effective plan to manage, store and convey water runoff with the use of ditch blocks and roadside swales. He advised that as part of the plan the driveway will also be constructed to act as ditch blocks.

Mr. Wicker stated in Marion County when a potential project is created and is put out to bid the County policy is to award the job to the lowest, qualified bidder. He advised that Integrity Site Development Inc. is the lowest bidder at \$378,000.00, noting 7 bids were received. Mr. Wicker clarified that the \$378,000.00 is the cost of the construction alone; however, the loaded cost is inclusive of the engineering, testing, legal fees and interest associated with the project. The loaded cost is \$540,685.95, the per parcel unit cost is \$8,863.70 and the annual amount to be applied to the property owner's tax bill is \$948.39 per parcel unit for 15 years. He commented on the previously expressed concerns relating to the annual assessment being inaccurate on the original letter sent to residents, which has since been verified and corrected. Mr. Wicker advised that there was a community meeting with the affected property owners last week to better explain the project to them and address any questions or concerns. He stated the qualified contractor is ready to start, noting if approved today then construction would begin within 60 days and substantial completion of it in 90 days.

Commissioner Curry questioned if the assessment is for the next 10 years. Mr. Wicker advised that it is for 15 years.

In response to Chairman Bryant, Mr. Wicker stated the areas included in the assessment are parcels in the East Lake and Woodmar Subdivision, which are on the map outlined in

red (shown on the overhead screens). He stated the funds will contribute to reconstructing SE 143rd Street Road and a portion of SE 145th Avenue.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Bryant opened the floor to public comment.

Tim Roberson, SE 143rd Terrace, Weirsdale, expressed support for the assessment, noting it will address a number of infrastructure and safety concerns. He advised that this petition began 2 years and 4 months ago and the residents are eager to get this done. Mr. Roberson expressed appreciation to the BCC for their service.

Jack Harward, SE 143rd Terrace, Wiersdale, stated he has lived in the area since 1996. He advised that there is a safety issue on the County Road (CR), which is also the only road into and out of the subdivision onto another public highway. Mr. Harward encouraged the Board to vote in favor of this project.

Chairman Bryant advised that public comment is now closed.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND CLOSING COMMENTS

Commissioner Zalak questioned what the percentage is of homesteaded property owners for the area. Mr. Wicker advised that he does not have the information with him at this time.

Commissioner Zalak stated this passed as a citizen led initiative at over 50%, noting the Board should follow suit in its decision.

A motion was made by Commissioner Zalak, seconded by Commissioner Curry, to adopt a Resolution authorizing per parcel unit assessment for a 15-Year assessment period for East Lake - Woodmar Improvement Area, certify the Assessment Roll to the Tax Collector and award Project 25B-063 East Lake - Woodmar Improvement Area to Contractor Integrity Site Development, Inc. and authorize Chairman and Clerk to execute contract upon approval by Legal.

County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes, Administration, advised that the County would be exposed with the new law for assessments. For example, there may be situations where some parcels with an Agricultural Exemption cannot be assessed and the County would have the burden of offsetting this cost. He opined that in this situation, however, there is minor risk.

Commissioner Zalak stated this will have to be addressed case by case. He opined that most residents want to take care of their road and subdivision. Commissioner Zalak advised that the residents have been pursuing this for over 2 years and he does not want to delay it any longer.

Chairman Bryant stated before staff brings any more assessments forward that this issue be resolved.

Commissioner Zalak advised that the Board has made this a Legislative priority.

Commissioner McClain questioned whether there is a method to assess what the risks would look like for future projects. Mr. Bouyounes advised that staff would be able to; however, things can change during the life of a project.

Chairman Bryant questioned if any of the parcels in favor of the project that would have been affected by the Statute can voluntarily accept participation in the assessment. Mr. Bouyounes advised that the Statute may prohibit that.

General discussion ensued.

The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

Resolution 25-R-271 is entitled:

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A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD IMPROVEMENTS; CREATING THE EAST LAKE -WOODMAR - SE 143RD STREET AND PORTION OF SE 145TH AVENUE IMPROVEMENT AREA: AMENDING AND CONFIRMING THE INITIAL ASSESSMENT RESOLUTION; ESTABLISHING THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF THE ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR EACH PARCEL UNIT; IMPOSING ASSESSMENTS AGAINST REAL PROPERTY WITHIN SUCH IMPROVEMENT AREA; APPROVING THE ASSESSMENT ROLL; PROVIDING FOR COLLECTION OF THE ASSESSMENTS: AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 1:19 p.m.

Kathy Bryant, Chairman

Attest:

Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk