

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

March 3, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) met in regular session in Commission Chambers at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday March 3, 2026, at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The meeting opened with invocation by Commissioner McClain and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country.

9:00 AM ROLL CALL:

Upon roll call the following members were present: Chairman Carl Zalak, III, District 4; Vice-Chairman Matthew McClain, District 3; Commissioner Craig Curry, District 1; Commissioner Kathy Bryant, District 2; and Commissioner Michelle Stone, District 5. Also present were Clerk Gregory C. Harrell, County Attorney Matthew G. Minter, County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes, Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Angel Roussel, ACA Tracy Straub, ACA Amanda Tart and Executive Director of Internal Services Mike McCain.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chairman Zalak addressed upcoming scheduled meetings as listed on the Commission Calendar (Item 13.2.1).

1. PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Upon motion of Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, the BCC approved and/or ratified the following:

1.1. PROCLAMATION - Marion County Girl Scout Week - Raey Morrison, Volunteer Leader, Marion County Girl Scouts (Approval and Presentation)

The Board presented the Proclamation designating March 8 through 14, 2026 as "Marion County Girl Scout Week" to Volunteer Leader Raey Morrison, Marion County Girl Scouts, and several other representatives.

Volunteer Leader Raey Morrison, Marion County Girl Scouts, expressed appreciation for everyone that supports the girls of the organization. She stated they are in their final two weeks of cookie sales, which teaches the girls marketing skills, goal setting and life skills needed for the future. Ms. Morrison advised of a historical display at the Ocala Public Library Headquarters (HQ) for the month of March. She introduced volunteers Lynn "Cupcake" Sansspre and Audrey Fowler, as well as staff member Melissa Casto.

Commissioner Stone stated the BCC appreciates what the Marion County Girl Scouts do and it is an honor to recognize them when they reach the pinnacle award.

1.2. PROCLAMATION - Gardening Month - John Holcombe, Master Gardener Volunteer President (Approval and Presentation)

The Board presented the Proclamation designating March as "Gardening Month" to Master Gardener Volunteer President John Holcombe and several other representatives.

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Volunteer President John Holcombe, Master Gardeners, expressed gratitude to the Board for all of the support they have given over the years, noting they are all in this together when it comes to making Marion County a beautiful place.

Horticulture Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator Jeremy Rhoden, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), expressed appreciation to the over 150 Master Gardeners who come out every year to put on the organization's Spring Festival. He noted it started with selling blueberry pies in a small booth/table and has evolved into a big event that has around 10,000 people every year. Mr. Rhoden advised that the Spring Festival is one of the largest horticulture festivals in the entire southeastern United States (US) and is strictly related to gardening. He commented on the differences between the Master Gardener Spring Festival and typical Home and Garden shows. Mr. Rhoden stated the organization has a targeted audience that is coming to buy plants and to learn how to take care of Marion County ecosystems, noting there are 3 large first magnitude springs in the area. He stated the County has a lot of hidden treasures for Floridians and the rest of the Country. Mr. Rhoden advised that the Master Gardeners are doing what they can to promote protection of those areas and educating citizens on what they can do to better take care of the environment and ecosystems, noting it is a service provided to the community that is mostly free of charge. He advised that UF/IFAS is here to support the community and show what they have to offer, such as helping people at their home or on farms with resources. Mr. Rhoden expressed gratitude to the Marion County Public Relations (PR) team for advertising the Spring Festival and for the BCC's support.

Chairman Zalak commented on activities available for families and children at the event. He expressed appreciation for all the organization does.
Commissioner Bryant out at 9:18 a.m.

2. AGENDA ITEM PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Reserved for comments related to items specifically listed on this agenda. Scheduled requests will be heard first and limited to five (5) minutes. Unscheduled requests will be limited to two (2) minutes. Citizens may contact Marion County Administration by 5:00 p.m. the Friday before the meeting at 352-438-2300 to request to speak or submit the request online at: www.marionfl.org.

Chairman Zalak opened the floor for public comment.

Clay Pederson did not appear when called upon to speak.

Commissioner Bryant returned at 9:20 a.m.

Joseph Walker, SE 54th Place, Ocklawaha, expressed concern regarding Agenda Items 7.4.5 (Mowing and Grounds Maintenance for Fire Stations) and 7.4.7 (Mowing Maintenance for Baseline and Recycling Center), noting a lack of maintenance. He presented images as seen on the overhead screens depicting litter and debris on various County properties.

Chairman Zalak advised that public comment is now closed.

(Ed. Note: The Deputy Clerk was not in receipt of Mr. Walker's presented images.)

3. ADOPT THE FOLLOWING MINUTES: (4 Sets)

3.1. October 7, 2025 A

3.2. October 7, 2025 B

3.3. October 20, 2025

3.4. October 21, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Curry, to adopt the meeting minutes of October 7 (2 sets), 20 and 21, 2025. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

4. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENTAL OR OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

4.1. Billy Woods, Sheriff - Request \$5,000 from Law Enforcement Trust Fund for Donation to Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute

The Board considered the following recommendation from Sheriff William “Billy” Woods, Marion County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO):

Description/Background: The Sheriff has certified that this request meets the requirements of Chapter 932 of the Florida Statutes and that there are no recurring expenses for subsequent fiscal years.

Budget/Impact: Neutral.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the request to expend \$5,000 from the Law Enforcement Trust Fund (LETF) for the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Stone, to approve the request to expend \$5,000 from the LETF for the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute (FCJEI). The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

5. CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT:

Upon motion of Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Stone, the Board adopted the following Budget Amendment Resolutions transferring funds as presented by Clerk Harrell:

5.1. Budget Amendment

5.1.1.a. 26-R-50 - Budget Transfer from Law Enforcement Trust Fund to MSTU for Law Enforcement - \$5,000

5.1.1.b. 26-R-51 - Budget Transfer from Law Enforcement Trust Fund to MSTU for Law Enforcement - \$5,000

5.1.2. 26-R-52 - Fire, Rescue and EMS Fund - Fire Rescue Services - \$187,500

5.1.3. 26-R-53 - General Fund - Legislative - \$9,000

5.1.4. 26-R-54 - Marion County Utility Fund - Utilities Wastewater System - \$101,920

5.1.5a. 26-R-55 - General Fund - Sheriff Emergency Management TR - \$76,272

5.1.5b. 26-R-56 - Fine and Forfeiture Fund - Sheriff Regular - Transfer - \$13,162

5.1.5c. 26-R-57 - MSTU for Law Enforcement - Sheriff Patrol CID - TR - \$152,723

(Ed. Note: MSTU is the acronym for Municipal Services Taxing Unit; EMS is the acronym for Emergency Medical Services; and CID is the acronym for Criminal Investigation Division.)

5.2. Clerk of the Court Items

5.2.1. Present the Acquisition or Disposition of Property Forms Authorizing Changes in Status, as Follows: 046236, 046278, 046768, 046769, 047824, Fire Disposal List, and Solid Waste Disposal List

A motion was made by Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, to approve the Disposition of Property forms 046236, 046278, 046768, 046769, 047824, Fire Disposal List, and Solid Waste Disposal List. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

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7. CONSENT:

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda is a motion to approve all recommended actions. All matters on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion unless desired by a Commissioner. Upon motion of Commissioner McClain, seconded by Commissioner Stone, the Board acted on the Consent Agenda as follows:

7.1. Community Services:

7.1.1. Request Approval of the Marion County Standard Professional Services Agreement Home Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan Program with Carrfour Supportive Housing Inc. (Budget Impact - Neutral; not to exceed \$70,028)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Community Services Director Cheryl Butler:

Description/Background: On August 6, 2024, the Marion County Board of County Commissioners approved the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan and subsequent Action Plans for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program. In 2021, Congress enacted the American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP), expanding eligible uses of HOME funds to include supportive services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Carrfour Supportive Housing, Inc., a nonprofit organization, is requesting \$70,028 in HOME-ARP funds to support the Housing Stability Program at Mercy Village, a 59-unit permanent supportive housing community in Ocala. Non-Profit Operating funding and/or Non-Profit Capacity Building funding from the HOME-ARP budget will provide a Program Coordinator to deliver on-site coordination of supportive services for 30 formerly homeless households, including 15 units for individuals with disabling conditions.

This initiative promotes resident engagement, identifies achievable short-term community projects, and aligns with the Public Policy Institute's The Long Way Home study's housing recommendations and coordinated services approach for vulnerable populations in Marion County.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; not to exceed \$70,028.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute all necessary documents associated with this agreement with Carrfour Supportive Housing, Inc. and authorize the Community Services Director to extend the term of the agreement if necessary.

7.2. Fire Rescue:

7.2.1. Request Approval of the Renewal of the Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Automatic Aid/Mutual Aid Agencies by Marion County Fire Rescue (Budget Impact - None)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Fire Chief James Banta, Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR):

Description/Background: Marion County Fire Rescue has been providing emergency medical services to the citizens and visitors of Marion County since 1978. In 1994, the level was increased from basic life support to advanced life support non-transport. Then, in 2008, it was upgraded to advanced life support transport. The attached application seeks to renew the advanced life support transport certificate of public convenience and necessity (COPCN). The current

term is valid from March 10, 2020, through March 9, 2026. If the renewal is approved, the COPCN will be valid through March 9, 2032.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve and authorize the chairman to execute the renewal of the Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Automatic Aid/Mutual Aid Agencies by Marion County Fire Rescue.

7.3. Parks & Recreation:

7.3.1. Request Approval of the February 2026 Ocala-Marion County Veterans Memorial Park Master Plan (Budget Impact - None)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Parks and Recreation Director Jim Couillard:

Description/Background: The Parks & Recreation department is presenting the February 2026 Ocala-Marion County Veterans Memorial Park Master Plan for consideration and approval. The department has worked closely with the Veteran’s Services department, the Friends of Marion County Veterans Park Foundation, the Marion County Veterans Council, Inc., Vets Helping Vets, the Veterans Resource Center and County Administration to update the Master Plan. The changes were presented during the Veterans Quarterly Meeting on February 5, 2026, and the consensus across the group supported the changes being provided to the Board in this update.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the February 2026 Ocala-Marion County Veterans Memorial Park Master Plan.

7.4. Procurement Services:

7.4.1. Request Approval of Bid Award: 26B-024 SE 79th Street and SE 95th Street Reclamation Project - Art Walker Construction, Inc., Ocala, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; expenditure of \$660,658)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Susan Olsen:

Description/Background: On behalf of the Office of the County Engineer, Procurement advertised a bid for reclamation of SE 79th Street from SE 41st Court to Juniper Road and SE 95th Street from South Magnolia Avenue to SE 7th Avenue. The work generally includes, but is not limited to reclaiming and resurfacing the roadway, installing raised curbs, placing and restriping pavement markings, installing new signage, and sodding shoulders to restore disturbed areas. One contractor was awarded both projects based on the lowest combined total bid. A total of five (5) submittals were received in response to the solicitation, and the bid tabulation is provided below:

Firm – Location	Bid Total
Art Walker Construction, Inc. - Ocala, FL	\$660,658.00
C.W. Roberts Contracting, Inc. - Ocala, FL	\$744,635.75
John L. Finch Contracting - Belleview, FL	\$890,689.14
Superior Asphalt, Inc. - Oneco, FL	\$893,001.00
Anderson Columbia Co., Inc. - Ocala, FL	\$965,644.38

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Steven Cohoon, P.E., County Engineer, recommends that Art Walker Construction, Inc. receive the award as the lowest, most responsive, and most responsible bidder. Attached for review is a draft of the contract. Upon approval at today's meeting, it will be sent to Art Walker Construction, Inc., for signature, and upon return will be forwarded to the Clerk and Chairman for signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of \$660,658. Up to ten percent (10%) contingency will be added to the Purchase Order in accordance with the Procurement Manual. Funding is from: BM761541-563221-TIP000027 and TIP000028 (80% Gas Tax Construction Fund).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the recommendation and allow staff to issue a contract, and upon approval by Legal, authorize the Clerk and Chairman to execute contract with Art Walker Construction, Inc., under 26B-024.

7.4.2. Request Approval of Change Order to Purchase Order 2501321: 25B-060 Farm Fence - NW/SW 80th Avenue & West Highway 40 Intersection - R&C Construction & Sitework, LLC, Salt Springs, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; additional expenditure of \$1,287.65)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On March 18, 2025, the Board approved Bid 25B-060 and awarded a contract to R&C Construction & Sitework, LLC for removal and installation of fencing along SW 80th Avenue and State Road 40. The fence marks the property boundary between Disney Double Diamond, LLC and Marion County. The fence relocation was required under the settlement agreement with Disney Double Diamond, LLC related to the County's eminent domain acquisition.

Due to delays associated with utility relocations, the contractor incurred additional re-mobilization and equipment rental costs. The total additional cost is \$6,180.00. Of this amount, \$4,892.35 is covered within the approved 10% contingency. The remaining \$1,287.65 exceeds contingency and requires Board approval.

The Change Order and detailed proposal are attached for review. Upon approval at today's meeting, the Change Order will be forwarded to the Chairman for signature.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; additional expenditure \$1,287.65. Funding comes from VJ738541-563220-STC073868 (Infrastructure Surtax Capital Project Fund).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the Change Order, allow staff to process, and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute Change Order 5 to Purchase Order 2501321.

7.4.3. Request Approval of Contract Amendment (Renewal): 22P-219-CA-01 Light-Duty Auto Parts Consignment – Advance Stores Company, Inc., DBA Advance Auto Parts, Raleigh, NC and TPH Holdings, LLC d/b/a/ The Parts House, Jacksonville, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$300,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On February 7, 2023, the Board approved contracts with Advance Auto Parts and The Parts House to provide and supply light-duty auto parts under consignment including weekly cycle counts to ensure that inventory is adjusted appropriately. Since then, both suppliers have met the terms and

conditions outlined in the original agreement. Following positive performance evaluations, Fleet Director Mark Williams recommends renewing the contracts for an additional one (1) year.

Attached for review are both draft contracts. Upon approval at today's meeting, they will be sent to the suppliers for signatures and once returned, will be forwarded to Legal, the Clerk, and Chairman for signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$300,000. Funding is from AA178519-552257 (General Fund).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the recommendation and allow staff to issue the contracts, and upon approval by Legal, authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the contract with Advance Auto Parts and The Parts House under 22P-219.

7.4.4. Request Approval of Contract Amendment (Renewal): 23P-143-CA-02 Ultrasound Screening and Firefighter Annual Physicals - Occupational Health Centers Southwest, P.A. d/b/a Concentra Medical Centers, Ocala, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$166,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On September 9, 2023, the Board approved an agreement with Occupational Health Centers Southwest, P. A. d/b/a Concentra Medical Centers to provide ultrasound screening services as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) article 31.3 where Marion County is required to offer ultrasound testing to their firefighters, every two years. The Firm has complied with the original agreement's terms and conditions. Marion County Fire Rescue Chief, James Banta, recommends using a one (1) year renewal. Attached for review is a draft of the contract. Upon approval at today's meeting, it will be sent to Concentra Medical Centers for signatures and once returned, will be forwarded to the County Attorney, Clerk, and Chairman for signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$166,000. Funding is from AA305526-531339 (EMS Fund).

recommended action: Motion to approve the recommendation, allow staff to issue the contract, and upon approval from Legal, authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the renewal with Concentra Medical Centers under 23P-143.

7.4.5. Request Approval of Contract Amendment (Renewal): 24B-059-CA-02 Mowing and Grounds Maintenance for Fire Stations - Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc., Anthony, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$95,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On March 5, 2024, the Board approved a contract to provide mowing and grounds maintenance for Marion County fire stations. Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc. (Southern Lawn) has performed these services in a satisfactory and professional manner, receiving favorable evaluations from Marion County Fire Rescue. Southern Lawn has expressed they would like to continue the contract into the next term.

It is the recommendation of Marion County Fire Rescue to renew this contract for the upcoming term beginning March 31, 2026, through April 1, 2027.

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Attached for review is the draft contract amendment. Upon approval at today's meeting the agreement will be sent to Southern Lawn for signature, and upon approval by Legal, it will be forwarded to the Clerk and Chairman for signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$95,000.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve recommendation, allow staff to issue contract, and upon approval by Legal, authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the renewal with Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc., under 24B-059.

7.4.6. Request Approval of Contract Amendment (Renewal): 24B-077-CA-01 Equipment, Parts and Supplies for Marion County Fire Rescue - Ten-8 Fire and Safety, LLC, Bradenton, FL, Municipal Equipment Company, LLC, Orlando, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$50,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On March 5, 2024, the Board approved agreements with Ten-8 Fire & Safety, LLC and Municipal Equipment Company, LLC to provide brand specific fire equipment and supplies used by Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR).

Ten-8 Fire & Safety, LLC and Municipal Equipment Company, LLC have expressed their desire to continue providing services and have received favorable reviews from the department.

MCFR recommends renewing this contract for the two-year renewal term.

Attached for review are drafts of the contract amendment. Upon approval at today's meeting, it will be sent to each vendor for signatures and once returned, will be forwarded for the County Attorney, Clerk, and Chair's signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; estimated annual expenditure of \$50,000 is based on the actual need for equipment and supplies.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve recommendation, allow Staff to issue contracts, and upon approval by Legal, authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute contracts to listed suppliers under 24B-077.

7.4.7. Request Approval of Contract Amendment (Renewal): 24B-099-CA-01 Mowing Maintenance for Baseline & Recycling Center - Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc., Anthony, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$55,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On March 19, 2024, the Board approved a contract with Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc. for the mowing maintenance of approximately 37 acres per cycle, with 41 cycles per year, of grassed or vegetated areas at the Baseline Landfill and recycling centers, including road easements drainage swales, and retention pond sites. Since execution of the agreement, Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc., has consistently met the terms and conditions of the original contract. Solid Waste Director, Mark Johnson, recommends renewing the contract for an additional one (1) year.

Attached for review is a draft contract amendment. Pending approval at today's meeting, it will be sent to Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc. for signatures and upon return, will be forwarded to Legal, the Clerk, and Chairman for signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$55,000. Funding comes from ZA427534-534101 - Solid Waste Disposal Fund.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the recommendation and allow staff to issue the contract, and upon approval, by Legal, authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the contract with Southern Lawn Care Mid Florida, Inc. under 24B-099.

7.4.8. Request Approval of Contract Amendment (Renewal): 24B-102-CA-01 - End of Life Electronics Processing – Electronic Recycling Center, Inc., Miami, FL (Budget Impact - Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$75,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: On March 19, 2024, the Board approved a contract with Electronic Recycling Center, Inc. for the collection, transportation, recycling, and de-manufacturing of End-of-Life or Obsolete Electronics (EOLOE) collected by, or as a result of collections supported by Solid Waste. Since execution of the agreement, Electronic Recycling Center, Inc. has consistently met the terms and conditions of the original contract. Solid Waste Director Mark Johnson recommends renewing the contract for an additional one (1) year.

Attached for review is a draft of the contract amendment. Pending approval at today's meeting, the contract amendment will be forwarded to Electronic Recycling Center, Inc. for signature. Upon receipt of the executed copy, it will then be routed to Legal, the Clerk, and the Chairman for final signatures.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; estimated expenditure of \$75,000. Funding comes from ZA427534-534101 - Solid Waste Disposal Fund and ZA423534-534145 - Solid Waste Disposal Fund.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the recommendation and allow staff to issue the contract amendment, and upon approval by Legal, authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the contract amendment with Electronic Recycling Center, Inc., under 24B-102.

7.4.9. Request Approval of Purchases \$50,000 and Over

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Procurement Services Director Olsen:

Description/Background: The item(s) below have been received by Procurement Services and are approved for conformance with the Procurement Code/Manual, pending approval at today's meeting.

1. Pending Requisition/College of Central Florida d/b/a Marion Technical College - Marion County Fire Rescue requests approval to purchase 13 student positions for the spring semester and 19 student positions for the summer semester EMT School Non-Certification courses at \$1,720.44 per student. The total for the spring semester is \$22,365.72. The total for the summer semester will be \$32,688.36. Total expenditure of \$55,054.08. Funds are available in line EF300522-555501 and AA305526-555501. This purchase meets the competitive requirements under 12C-157.
2. Pending Requisition/Beard Equipment Company - Marion County Office of the County Engineer requests approval to purchase one (1) 2026 Eager Beaver 50-GSL-3 Detachable Neck Lowboy Trailer. Total Expenditure of \$101,377. Funds are available in line BL400541-564101. This purchase

meets the competitive requirements under Florida Sheriffs Association Contract, FSA23-EQU 21.0.

3. Pending Requisition/Cumberland International Trucks of Florida - Marion County Office of the County Engineer requests approval to purchase one (1) 2026 International HX Grapple Truck. Total Expenditure of \$338,471.30. Funds are available in line BL400541-564101. This purchase meets the competitive requirements under Florida Sheriffs Association Contract, FSA25-VEH23.0.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve requested purchases.

7.5. Tourist Development:

7.5.1. Request Approval of Tourist Development Council Recommendations for Arts and Cultural Destination Enhancement Funding (Budget Impact - Neutral; expenditure of up to \$37,500)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by Tourist Development Director Loretta Shaffer:

Description/Background: The Tourist Development Council (TDC) seeks funding approval for organizations that have festivals, events, or programs which support the TDC's mission of growing the economy and accelerating prosperity in Marion County through effective destination sales and marketing. The Arts and Cultural Destination Enhancement Funding Program is a multi-faceted approach to enhancing the tourism product within Ocala/Marion County and aid in the programming and promotions of arts, culture, history, heritage and nature experiences that, as one of their main purposes, attract tourists, as evidenced by the promotion of the experience to tourists.

College of Central Florida Foundation, Inc. F/B/O Appleton Museum of Art	\$10,000
Ocala Civic Theatre, Inc.	\$10,000
Marion Cultural Alliance, Inc.	\$7,500
Reilly Arts Center, LLC	\$10,000

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of up to \$37,500. Funding from CP155552-548101.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the Tourist Development Council funding requests and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the attached funding agreements.

7.6. Transportation - County Engineer:

7.6.1. Request Approval of the Release of a Subdivision Improvement Agreement with Bond Associated with Ocala Preserve Phase 8 (Budget Impact - None)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Steven Cohoon, Office of the County Engineer (OCE):

Description/Background: This is a request to approve the Release of a Subdivision Improvement Agreement with Irrevocable Letter of Credit associated with Ocala Preserve Phase 8. The engineering improvements were inspected on November 6, 2025. The release will be recorded in the public record for proper satisfaction of the surety bond.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the attached Release and to authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.2. Request Approval of the Release of a Subdivision Improvement Agreement with Bond Associated with Ocala Preserve Phase 12 (Budget Impact - None)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request to approve the Release of a Subdivision Improvement Agreement with Irrevocable Letter of Credit associated with Ocala Preserve Phase 12. The engineering improvements were inspected on November 6, 2025. The release will be recorded in the public record for proper satisfaction of the surety bond.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the attached Release and to authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.3. Request Approval of an Indemnification Agreement Between Southern Impression Homes LLC and Marion County for the Proposed Fountain Villas Subdivision, Application 32052 (Budget Impact - None)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request seeking approval of an Indemnification Agreement associated with Land Development Code Section 2.18.4.E, which allows for up to 10 building lots to be constructed in a subdivision prior to recording the Final Plat. The five (5) conditions outlined in the proposed Indemnification Agreement have been met and the County Attorney's office has approved the proposed agreement for Fountain Villas subdivision. This will allow up to 20 individual permits for the construction of 10 building lots prior to Final Plat approval. This subdivision is located in the southern portion of the County and contains 94 lots and two (2) tracts on 35.95 acres with 0.88 miles of roads.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the attached indemnification Agreement between Southern Impression Homes LLC and Marion County for the proposed Fountain Villas subdivision and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.4. Request Approval of a Purchase Agreement Associated with the SW 80th Street Road Improvement Project for Parcel 3545-002-003 (Budget Impact - Neutral; expenditure of \$35,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request to approve a Purchase Agreement in the amount of \$35,000 plus closings costs for parcel 3545-002-003 associated with the SW 80th Street road improvement project (SW 80th Avenue to SW Hwy 200). This is an unimproved parcel of approximately 0.23 acres.

The negotiated agreement is inclusive of any and all costs associated with this transaction. There are cost savings recognized in this negotiation by avoiding additional costs that occur during condemnation proceedings.

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Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of \$35,000 plus closing costs (Fund TIP000045- TIPROADS- EXPANSROW-772- GB772541-561301).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the Purchase Agreement and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.5. Request Approval of a Purchase Agreement Associated with the NW 49th Street Phase 3 Road Improvement Project for a Portion of Parcel 1304-051-013 (Budget Impact- Neutral; expenditure of \$20,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request to approve a Purchase Agreement in the amount of \$20,000 plus closing costs for a portion of parcel 1304-051-013 associated with the NW 49th Street Phase 3 Road Improvement Project (from NW Hwy 225A to NW 44th Avenue). This right-of-way taking is approximately 0.007 acres.

The negotiated agreement is inclusive of any and all cost associated with this transaction. There are cost savings recognized in this negotiation by avoiding additional costs that occur during condemnation proceedings.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of \$20,000 plus closing costs (Fund STC073811- CIPTRANSP- NEWINF ROW-738 - VJ38541-561301).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the Purchase Agreement and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.6. Request Approval of a Purchase Agreement Associated with the NW 49th Street Phase 3 Road Improvement Project for a Portion of Parcel 1304-056-004 (Budget Impact - Neutral; expenditure of \$71,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request to approve a Purchase Agreement in the amount of \$71,000 plus closing costs for a portion of parcel 1304-056-004 associated with the NW 49th Street Phase 3 Road Improvement Project (NW Hwy 225A to NW 44th Avenue). This is a 0.026-acre right-of-way taking of a 0.69-acre lot.

The negotiated agreement is inclusive of any and all costs associated with this transaction. There are cost savings recognized in this negotiation by avoiding additional costs that occur during condemnation proceedings.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of \$71,000 plus closing costs (Fund STC073811- CIPTRANSP- NEWINF ROW-738- VJ38541-561301).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the Purchase Agreement and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.7. Request Approval of a Purchase Agreement Associated with the NW 80th/70th Avenue Segment 3 Road Improvement Project for a Temporary Construction Easement on a Portion of Parcel 21625-000-01 (Budget Impact - Neutral; expenditure of \$1,700)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request to approve a Purchase Agreement in the amount of \$1,700 plus closing costs for a Temporary Construction Easement

on a portion of Parcel 21625-000-01 associated with the NW 80th/70th Avenue Segment 3 road improvement project (from +/- 900 feet north of SR 40 to +/- 600 feet south of US Hwy 27). This is a 0.002-acre taking of a 3.00-acre parcel.

The negotiated agreement is inclusive of any and all cost associated with this transaction. There are cost savings recognized in this negotiation by avoiding additional costs that occur during condemnation proceedings.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure of \$1,700 plus closing costs (Fund STC073812- CIPTRANSP- EXPANS ROW-738- VJ738541-561301).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the Purchase Agreement.

7.6.8. Request Approval of a Purchase Agreement Associated with the NW 80th/70th Avenue Segment 3 Road Improvement Project for a Portion of Parcel 21625-000-06 (Budget Impact - Neutral; expenditure of \$15,000)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request to approve a Purchase Agreement in the amount of \$15,000 plus closing costs for a portion of parcel 21625-000-06 associated with the NW 80th/70th Avenue Segment 3 Road Improvement Project (from +/- 900 feet north of SR 40 to +/- 600 feet south of US Hwy 27). This is a 0.027-acre right-of-way taking of a lot approximately 3.00 acres in size.

The negotiated agreement is inclusive of any and all cost associated with this transaction. There are cost savings recognized in this negotiation by avoiding additional costs that occur during condemnation proceedings.

Budget/Impact: Neutral; expenditure \$15,000 plus closing costs (Fund STC073812- CIPTRANSP- EXPANS ROW-738- VJ738541-561301).

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the Purchase Agreement and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

7.6.9. Request Approval of an Indemnification Agreement Between Colen Built Development, LLC and Marion County for the Proposed Melody Preserve Subdivision, Application 32624 (Budget Impact - None)

The Board accepted the following recommendation as presented by County Engineer Cohoon, OCE:

Description/Background: This is a request seeking approval of an Indemnification Agreement associated with Land Development Code Section 2.18.4.E, which allows for up to 20 individual permits for the construction of 10 building lots prior to Final Plat approval. The five (5) conditions outlined in the proposed Indemnification Agreement have been met and the County Attorney's office has approved the proposed agreement for Melody Preserve subdivision.

This subdivision is located in the southwest portion of the County and contains 233 lots and eleven tracts on 70.06 acres with 1.92 miles of roads.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the attached indemnification Agreement between Colen Built Development, LLC and Marion County for the proposed Melody Preserve subdivision and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the same.

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8. COUNTY ATTORNEY: NONE

9. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR: NONE

County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes, Administration, requested the Board's permission to move Item 14.1.4 up at this time. It was the general consensus of the Board to concur.

14.1.4. Present Notification of the Appointment of Bobbi Perez as Marion County Human Resources Director

Mr. Bouyounes introduced Roberta "Bobbi" Perez as the new Human Resources (HR) Director.

General discussion ensued.

HR Director Bobbi Perez advised that the opportunity is bitter sweet, noting the PR team will continue to be amazing. She stated she is looking forward to her future in the HR Department.

Chairman Zalak advised that Ms. Perez is the definition of an ideal team player, noting she has taken every challenge put in front of her and handled it well. He stated he is very proud of Ms. Perez and staff know they can count on her. Chairman Zalak expressed gratitude to Ms. Perez.

10. COMMITTEE ITEMS: NONE

11. NOTATION FOR ACTION:

11.1. Request Approval to Schedule and Advertise Two Public Hearings to Consider Ordinances to Amend the Marion County Land Development Code on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 5:30 p.m., and Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., with Each Hearing to be Held in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium

Growth Services Director Chuck Varadin presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: Staff has submitted a Land Development Code (LDC) Amendment Application to consider amendments to the following:

- LDC Article 1, Division 2, Definitions.
- LDC Article 4, Zoning, Division 2, Zoning Classification, Section 4.2.2. General Requirements for all Agricultural Zoning Classifications.
- LDC Article 4, Zoning, Division 2, Zoning Classification, Section 4.2.6. Requirements for all Residential Zoning Classifications.
- LDC Article 6, Technical Standards and Requirements, Division 6, Habitat Protection, Section 6.6.6 Open Space.
- LDC Article 6, Technical Standards and Requirements, Division 7, Tree Protection and Replacement.
- LDC Article 6, Technical Standards and Requirements, Division 8, Landscaping.

The proposed revisions are to be considered by the Land Development Regulation Commission (LDRC) in a public hearing to be held on March 11, 2026, at 5:30 p.m., consistent with LDC Section 2.4.3.

LDC Section 2.5.5.A(1) requires the Board to consider the adoption of the proposed amendments in two advertised public hearings for each revision to the LDC. At least one hearing is to be held after 5:00 p.m. on a weekday, unless the Board, by a majority plus one vote, elects to conduct that hearing at another time

of day. Further, the second public hearing shall be held at least ten days after the first hearing. The following dates and times are being requested to conduct each of the required public hearings and accommodate the required advertising to consider the proposed Amendments:

- Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 5:30 p.m., in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium and
- Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to schedule and advertise Board of County Commissioners two Public Hearings to consider revisions to LDC Article 1, Division 2 Definitions; Article 4, Division 2, Zoning, Section 4.2.2. General Requirements for All Agricultural Zoning Classifications; Article 4, Division 2, Zoning, Section 4.2.6. Requirements for All Residential Zoning Classifications; Article 6, Division 6, Habitat Protection, Section 6.6.6 Open Space; Article 6, Division 7, Tree Protection and Replacement; and Article 6, Division 8, Landscaping, on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. and Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, to schedule and advertise two Public Hearings to consider revisions to LDC Article 1, Division 2 Definitions; Article 4, Division 2, Zoning, Section 4.2.2. General Requirements for All Agricultural Zoning Classifications; Article 4, Division 2, Zoning, Section 4.2.6. Requirements for All Residential Zoning Classifications; Article 6, Division 6, Habitat Protection, Section 6.6.6 Open Space; Article 6, Division 7, Tree Protection and Replacement; and Article 6, Division 8, Landscaping, on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. and Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

11.2. Request Approval to Schedule a Workshop to Discuss Utilities' Capital Improvement Program on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium

Utilities Director Tony Cunningham presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: Marion County Utilities maintains a rolling five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to plan and prioritize infrastructure investments. Staff have completed the annual update to reflect current needs, updated construction costs, and recent water and wastewater master planning efforts. Projects have been prioritized based on available revenues, regulatory requirements, system capacity, and long-term maintenance needs.

Staff will present the updated CIP, highlight key changes and progress to date, and provide the Board with an opportunity for questions and feedback prior to finalization.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve a workshop to discuss the Utilities CIP on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, to approve a workshop to discuss the Utilities CIP on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 2:00

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p.m. in the McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

11.3. Request Approval of Trail Dedication Location in Honor of Larry Whitler and Robin MacBlane

ACA Amanda Tart, Administration, presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: On November 4, 2025, Thomas Whitler, Larry Whitler's brother, came before the Board and requested that a trail or something in nature be named after Larry Whitler and Robin MacBlane. Larry and Robin were big advocates of environmental conservation. Larry and Robin tragically lost their lives in July, 2025 after their vehicle was struck by a pickup truck that failed to stop at a red light.

The Board tasked staff with coming up with a way to keep their legacy alive. Staff worked with the family to determine a location for the dedication. After being presented with a few options, the family chose a trail at Horseshoe Lake Park & Retreat. The trail picked to be dedicated is a portion of the Bald Eagle Trek & Hawk Walk trails.

Upon approval, staff will work with the family to coordinate signage and a small ceremony to dedicate the trail in Larry and Robin's honor.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the trail dedication location in honor of Larry Whitler and Robin MacBlane.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, to approve the trail dedication location in honor of Larry Whitler and Robin MacBlane. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

11.4. Request Ratification of the Extensions of the State of Emergency Orders Signed by the Chairman on February 17, 2026, and February 24, 2026, and Request Approval to Extend the State of Emergency Order, Pertaining to a Ban on the Use of Flares, Explosives, or Outdoor Burning Devices or Otherwise Lawful Outdoor Burning

Executive Assistant Jennifer Clark, Commission Office, presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: Dry and windy conditions continue to cause and exacerbate wildfires in Marion County, so a mandatory burn ban is being used as a measure to protect the health, safety, welfare and property of citizens and visitors.

The burn ban prohibits all outdoor burning with the following exceptions:

- Use of outdoor cookers or grills as long as they are attended by a responsible adult at all times the unit is burning, cooking or otherwise in use
- Commercial land clearing where: inspection of review and approval has been granted by the Florida Forest Service or Marion County Fire Rescue on a case by case basis and it is determined that there will be sufficient fire suppression personnel and equipment on scene. Authorization must be granted by the Florida Forest Service
- Public fireworks displays with adequate fire suppression equipment and personnel on site; and pursuant to Marion County Special Use Permit and Marion County Fire Rescue Fireworks Permit

A State of Emergency Order (Order) went into effect on February 10, 2026, and was extended, pursuant to the Order, until 5:00 p.m. on March 3, 2026. If approved by the board, the Order will be extended until 5:00 p.m. on March 10, 2026.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to ratify the extensions of the Orders signed by the Chairman on February 17, 2026, and February 24, 2026, and motion to approve extending Order for an additional seven (7) days.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, to ratify the extensions of the Orders signed by the Chairman on February 17, 2026, and February 24, 2026, and to approve extending the Order for an additional seven (7) days. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

11.5. Request Ratification of the Order Extending the Declaration of State of Local Emergency Signed by the Chairman on February 24, 2026, and Request Approval of an Order to Extend the Declaration of State of Local Emergency, Related to the Railroad Tie Fire on CSX Property in the City of Dunnellon

County Attorney Mathew G. Minter, Legal, presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: On Sunday morning, February 1, 2026, a railroad tie fire in the City of Dunnellon prompted the deployment of Marion County Fire Rescue and Marion County Emergency Management to safeguard local businesses and residents.

On February 3, 2026, the Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution to declare a state of local emergency as a result of the fire, which was extended, pursuant to the resolution, until March 3, 2026.

If approved by the board, the Declaration of State of Local Emergency (Declaration) will be extended for an additional seven (7) days until March 10, 2026.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to ratify the order extending the Declaration signed by the Chairman on February 24, 2026, for the railroad tie fire on CSX property in the City of Dunnellon, and motion to approve the order to extend the Declaration for an additional seven (7) days.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stone, seconded by Commissioner McClain, to ratify the order extending the Declaration signed by the Chairman on February 24, 2026, for the railroad tie fire on CSX property in the City of Dunnellon and to approve the order to extend the Declaration for an additional 7 days. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Scheduled requests will be heard first and limited to five (5) minutes. Unscheduled speakers will be limited to two (2) minutes. Citizens may contact Marion County Administration by 5:00 p.m. the Friday before the meeting at 352-438-2300 to request to speak or sign up online at: www.marionfl.org .

Chairman Zalak opened the floor for public comment.

James Sampson, SE 186th Terrace, presented a newspaper by Youthful Spirit with articles entitled “Youth Boxers Take a Stand Against Bullying” and “School Resource Officers to be Recognized”, as well as framed images shown to the BCC regarding an

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antibullying campaign initiated by Commissioner Bryant. He commented on the history of the antibullying program.

General discussion ensued.

Mary Rider, NE 6th Street, expressed concern about farmland preservation, noting she would like to see the land used as farmland to make Florida self-sustainable. She commented on development and the County's aquifer water supply.

Chairman Zalak advised that 50 percent (%) of Marion County is in some kind of conservation. He addressed the Farmland Preservation Area (FPA), which is intended to keep farms rural and productive as farms (cattle, horses, agriculture, etc.). Chairman Zalak stated the Board intentionally puts more development intensity inside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), so it does not impact rural areas. He advised that it is the strategic goal of the BCC to make sure Marion County maintains its character.

Commissioner Stone stated those types of decisions are not made in a vacuum and the Board does not issue water permits. She clarified that those permits go through 2 Districts. The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) manages everything west of Interstate 75 (I-75) and the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) oversees everything east of I-75. Commissioner Stone advised that it is not just the BCC making a decision, noting water permitting is done at the State level through those water management authorities.

Jason Martin, SE 58th Avenue, addressed County oversight of the Stump Dump location located at 5451 SE Maricamp Road. He provided an overview of the history of the business' operations and their permits, as well as expressing concern regarding the migration of sawdust. Mr. Martin opined that the enlargement of the site since 2018 and the designation as a Disaster Debris Management site beginning in 2019 through today by Marion County should have disqualified the property as a non-conforming use. He stated the County sets land use, not the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

Chairman Zalak stated FDEP is the permitting agency for Class III landfills. He clarified that the site is not even operating as a Class III landfill, noting they are operating as a tree recycling debris yard.

Mr. Martin advised that it is an industrial operation.

Chairman Zalak stated the stronger zoning/use is the landfill use. He advised that someone mulching trees is less intense than burying garbage in the ground.

In response to Chairman Zalak, Mr. Minter stated Mr. Martin referenced a discussion from 2022 and he is not prepared to advise on it without going back to review the situation.

Chairman Zalak opined that the best thing to do is to have Growth Services and Mr. Minter get together to find out if there is any issue. He stated he is not aware of anything that would not allow them to operate. Chairman Zalak advised that until the County Attorney tells the Board Stump Dump is not allowed to operate or needs to do something specific, they are allowed to continue.

General discussion ensued regarding property rights.

Chairman Zalak stated Mr. Martin moved in next door to an existing use, noting the BCC is not going to remove an existing use without the County Attorney making a legal opinion that they have definitely obscured the law. He advised that Stump Dump has property rights as well. Chairman Zalak stated if Mr. Martin has a case that the business is operating illegally then he should take it to court.

In response to Chairman Zalak, Mr. Martin advised that Stump Dump having a permit to operate as a landfill does not give them carte blanche to operate as any type of industrial

facility. He stated he has sawdust invading his property, home, windows, etc. and the County has done nothing.

Chairman Zalak reiterated that staff believes he has a legal use.

Mr. Martin stated Stump Dump does not have the right to impede the use of his property, noting someone is not exercising oversight.

Chairman Zalak advised that the oversight is done by FDEP.

In response to Mr. Martin, Chairman Zalak stated the Board sets land use, but the regulating agency is FDEP. He commented on FDEP's enforcement of landfills. Chairman Zalak reiterated that if there is sawdust coming onto Mr. Martin's property then his issue is with FDEP.

Mr. Martin opined that it is litter on his property.

Louine Ek, SW 59th Street, commented on the County's seal, noting she is present today to bring words of wisdom and encouragement. She read quotes from former United States (US) presidents Ronald Reagan, John F. Kennedy, and John Quincy Adams into the record.

Chairman Zalak directed Legal to speak with Growth Services Director Varadin for an opinion on the matter regarding Mr. Martin's concerns.

Thomas Whittler, Pine Course, expressed appreciation for the approval of Item 11.3 regarding the dedication of a trail at Horseshoe Lake Park & Retreat in honor of Larry Whittler and his partner Robin MacBlane.

Chairman Zalak stated he is very excited to have the dedication at the park in his District, noting it is a beautiful thing. He advised that they left an incredible legacy for Marion County and promoted everything great about the community.

Commissioner Bryant stated they were wonderful people.

13. COMMISSIONER ITEMS:

13.1. Commission Comments

Commissioner Stone commented on the recent Run for the Springs event held on February 28, 2026, noting nearly 300 people came out to participate. She expressed gratitude to all of the volunteers for making the experience very special for everyone to enjoy.

Commissioner Bryant advised that she has nothing further to add.

Commissioner Curry stated Linda Norman, Dog Classification Board, has decided to step down. He advised that he decided to appoint Justin McClure and provided an overview of his qualifications.

Commissioner Curry stated Mark Anderson, PR, received the Brilliance Photo Award from the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC) in New Smyrna. He advised that there were 5 awards for photos and he received the top one.

Commissioner McClain advised that he has nothing further to add.

Chairman Zalak stated there will be a prayer at the Ocala-Marion County Veterans Memorial Park at 7:30 a.m. on March 4, 2026 and every Wednesday through July 4, 2026. He advised that the Veterans Hall of Fame is opening on March 19, 2026. Chairman Zalak commented on the upcoming Marion County Day, the 250th Ball, and July 4th celebrations.

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Chairman Zalak noted it is the ten o'clock hour.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Request Proof of Publication) at 10:00 am:

Public participation is encouraged. When prompted, please step up to the podium and state your name and address for the record. Please limit your comments to the specific issue being addressed.

6.1. PUBLIC HEARING to Consider Adoption of a Resolution to Close and Abandon Tract A of the Carriage Trail Plat, Plat Book 001, Page 138

County Engineer Cohoon, OCE, presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: This is a request to consider approval of a Resolution by Petitioners Willie B. Hayter and Karla S. Hayter to close and abandon Tract A of the Carriage Trail Plat (Plat Book 001, Page 138) to renounce and disclaim any right of the County and the general public.

The request for Road Closure was heard and approved by the Development Review Committee on December 15, 2025.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve and authorize the Chairman and Clerk to execute the Resolution closing and abandoning Tract A of the Carriage Trail Plat (Plat Book 001, Page 138).

Deputy Clerk Thornton presented Proof of Publication of a legal ad entitled, "Notice of Public Hearing to Close and Abandon Road(s)" published in the Voice of South Marion newspaper on January 29, 2026. The Notice states the Board will consider the petition by Marion County to close and abandon certain road(s).

County Engineer Cohoon, OCE, presented a Location Map as seen on the overhead screens. He provided an overview of the request to close and abandon Tract A of the Carriage Trail Plat, noting this section has never been developed.

In response to Chairman Zalak, Mr. Cohoon advised that the Property Appraiser is who determines how the property would be split back. He stated he is relatively certain based on the parcel lines that this would go back to the individual property owners that are adjacent, but clarified that he has not spoken with the Property Appraiser. Mr. Cohoon advised that staff received 4 letters of support and if approved today there would be a full abandonment including the right-of-way (ROW) and the conservation area. Any utility easements that are on the property would still remain.

Commissioner Bryant commented on a recent abrogation case, noting the property legally goes back to the original parcel it came from.

In response to Chairman Zalak, Mr. Cohoon stated through the process staff has found all the easements associated with their existing access.

Chairman Zalak opened the floor for public comment.

Kevin Vickers, SE 17th Court, stated he is in support of this request and expressed gratitude to the Board, Administration, and the Development Review Committee (DRC) for their work.

Secretary Clay Pederson, Carriage Trail Homeowners Association (HOA), SE 87th Place, expressed support on behalf of the Carriage Trail HOA.

Joseph Walker, SE 54th Place, Ocklawaha, commented on legal access by the Tractor Supply and the subject area.

Chairman Zalak advised that the person behind the property already has legal access and a driveway.

In response to Chairman Zalak, Mr. Cohoon stated this abrogation will not cut off access. Commissioner Bryant stated the individual did not have access through this abrogation

to begin with.

Chairman Zalak advised that this is taking the property that was part of a subdivision previously set aside by a developer and giving it back to the people that are there taking care of the property.

In response to Chairman Zalak, ACA Tracy Straub, Administration, stated Mr. Walker is referring to private property owned by Tractor Supply where people had been cutting across.

Chairman Zalak advised that it was never a dedicated easement. Ms. Straub concurred. General discussion resumed.

In response to Mr. Walker, Commissioner Curry stated he has visited the Tractor Supply site with staff. He advised that Mr. Walker is right, noting part of the legal access is on Federal land. Commissioner Curry stated he is continuing to work with OCE and the Florida Forestry Service (FFS) to get the legal access cleaned up, but it is a difficult road to have that done through the Federal government.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Curry, to approve Resolution 26-R-58 closing and abandoning Tract A of the Carriage Trail Plat (Plat Book 001, Page 138). The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (5-0).

Resolution 26-R-58 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA; INCORPORATING RECITALS; PROVIDING A FINDING THAT CHAPTER 336, FLORIDA STATUTES, AUTHORIZES AND EMPOWERS THE BOARD TO ACT ON THE PETITION TO VACATE, ABANDON, DISCONTINUE AND CLOSE A CERTAIN ROAD(S) AND TO RENOUNCE AND DISCLAIM ANY RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MARION COUNTY AND THE PUBLIC IN AND TO ANY LAND IN CONNECTION WITH SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S); PROVIDING A FINDING THAT SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S) IS NOT A PORTION OF FEDERAL OR STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM; PROVIDING A FINDING THAT THE ROAD(S) IS NOT BEING USED BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC AS A ROAD(S); PROVIDING A FINDING THAT IT IS NOT THE INTENT OF THE BOARD TO VACATE ANY EASEMENTS FOR PUBLIC UTILITIES THAT MAY EXIST WITHIN SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S); PROVIDING A FINDING THAT VACATING, ABANDONING, DISCONTINUING, AND CLOSING SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S) AND DISCLAIMING ANY RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MARION COUNTY AND THE PUBLIC IN AND TO ANY LAND IN CONNECTION WITH SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S) WOULD BENEFIT THE GENERAL PUBLIC WELFARE AND WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC; VACATING, ABANDONING, DISCONTINUING, AND CLOSING SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S); RENOUNCING AND DISCLAIMING ANY RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MARION COUNTY AND THE PUBLIC IN AND TO ANY LAND IN CONNECTION WITH SAID CERTAIN ROAD(S); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF CONFLICTING RESOLUTIONS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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13.2. Commission Calendar

13.2.1. Present Commission Calendar

The Chairman acknowledged receipt of the Commission calendar covering the period of March 3 to April 7, 2026.

14. NOTATION FOR RECORD:

14.1. County Administrator Informational Items:

14.1.1. Present Resignation from the Pine Run Municipal Services Taxing Unit Advisory Council - Brenda Guastini

14.1.2. Present Approved Proposal from Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson's for Legal Services on the County's Annual Fire Assessment Program

14.1.3. Present Update for Marion County Veterans Hall of Fame

14.1.4. Present Notification of the Appointment of Bobbi Perez as Marion County Human Resources Director

14.2. Present Walk-On Items From Previous BCC Meeting:

14.2.1. WALK ON: Presented on February 17, 2026, as Agenda Item 8.1.: Requesting Board Approval of an Agreement to Waive the Normal 12-Month Period for Refiling an Application for a Small Scale Plan Amendment and Concurrent PUD Rezoning, and to Hold in Abeyance a Pending Request for Mediation Pursuant to Section 163.3184(4), Florida Statutes and Petition For Relief Pursuant to Section 70.51, Florida Statutes ("FLUEDRA" Proceeding), Regarding Applicant Linda Capozzoli, and Related Civil Action, as Further Discussed Below

14.2.2. WALK ON: Presented on February 17, 2026, as Agenda Item 8.2.: Requesting Board Consensus for the County Administrator, County Attorney, Clerk of Court, And Outside Bond Counsel to Continue Discussions with and Conducting Preliminary Due Diligence Assessment of a Proposal from Upward Communities to Deliver Affordable Essential Workforce Housing for Public Agency Employees

14.3. Clerk of the Court:

14.3.1. Present Report No. 2026-01 Initial Construction Audit of Freedom Library Remodel and Addition

14.3.2. Present Administrative Budget Transfer Report for FY 2025-26

14.3.3. Present Regular Report of Utilization for Reserve for Contingencies

14.4. Present for information and record, minutes and notices received from the following committees and agencies:

14.4.1. Code Enforcement Board - January 14, 2026

14.4.2. Dog Classification Board - June 4, 2025

14.4.3. Development Review Committee - February 2 and 9, 2026

14.4.4. Housing Finance Authority - November 19, 2025

14.4.5. Land Development Regulation Committee - February 4, 2026

14.4.6. License Review Board - December 9, 2025

14.4.7. MCFR and EMS Advisory Board - August 20, 2025

14.5. General Informational Items:

14.5.1. Marion County Health Department – For the Latest health news and information, Visit the Website at <http://marion.floridahealth.gov/>

14.5.2. Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) - For Minutes and Agendas, Visit the Website at <http://www.WaterMatters.org>

14.5.3. St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) - For Minutes and Agendas, Visit the Website at <https://www.sjrwmd.com>

14.5.4. Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) - For Minutes and Agendas, Visit the Website at <https://ocalamariontpo.org>

14.5.5. Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) - For Minutes and Agendas, Visit the Website at <http://www.wrwsa.org>

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Carl Zalak, III, Chairman

Attest:

Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk

DRAFT

March 3, 2026

DRAFT

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