

RESOLUTION NO. R-26-048

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING APPROVING DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM; DIRECTING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO DESIGN AND PRESENT A MODEL MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM, INCLUDING APPLICATION MATERIALS, PROGRAM SCHEDULING, AND OUTREACH DOCUMENTS; PROVIDING FOR LEGAL REVIEW AND BOARD APPROVAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, (Board) recognizes that community engagement and civic education is vitally important to a healthy republic and functioning democracy; and

WHEREAS, actively involving Manatee County youth in understanding their local government can lead to a more engaged and informed citizenry; and

WHEREAS, participating in a youth leadership program can promote experiential learning of the functions of government, develop healthy citizenry habits, and promote public awareness of the strengths and abilities of youth; and

WHEREAS, the Board supports in concept providing an annual youth civics program to the public and open to participants who have completed tenth grade and are enrolled full-time in a public school, private school, or home education program; and

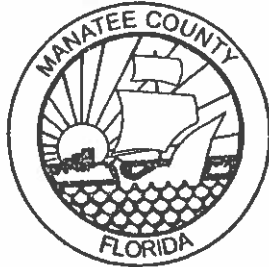
WHEREAS, the Board finds that developing such a youth civics program serves a valid public purpose and is in the best interests of the residents of Manatee County as such a program could foster civic awareness, encourage responsible citizenship, and support the development of future community leaders.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, as follows.

1. The recitals set forth above are hereby adopted as findings of the Board and are incorporated herein by reference.
2. The Board hereby approves developing an annual Model Manatee County Government Civics Education Program to promote civic engagement among area youth.

3. The Board hereby directs the County Administrator to cause to be developed a Model Manatee County Government Civics Education Program (Program), designed to provide participating students with experiential learning opportunities regarding the functions, operations, and responsibilities of County government, including, but not limited to, interaction with County Commissioners, attendance at public meetings, and participation in a simulated or mock commission process, consistent with best practices for youth civic engagement programs. At a minimum, the Program design shall include:
 - a. A clearly defined mission, purpose, and scope of the Program;
 - b. Eligibility criteria and selection procedures for participants consistent with this resolution;
 - c. A structured schedule, which may include attendance at Board meetings, workshops, and other governmental proceedings, as well as educational or interactive components;
 - d. Opportunities for participants to gain practical insight into County governance, including a culminating mock or simulated commission session or similar exercise; and
 - e. Such additional components as deemed appropriate to further civic education and community engagement.
4. The Board further directs the County Administrator to cause to be developed and prepared all documents necessary for implementation of the Program, including, but not limited to:
 - a. A standardized application form for prospective participants;
 - b. A detailed program schedule;
 - c. Informational and promotional materials, including flyers or similar outreach documents, for distribution to the public; and
 - d. A parental or guardian consent form for participation by minors.
5. The Board further directs the County Administrator to submit all Program materials, documents, and proposed procedures to the County Attorney's Office for review and approval as to legal form and sufficiency.
6. The Board further directs the County Administrator to cause the complete recommended Program design and materials to be presented to the Board for consideration and approval prior to implementation.
7. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

April **DULY ADOPTED** with a quorum present and voting this 21st day of _____, 2026.



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: J. H.
Chairperson

**ATTEST: ANGELINA COLONNESO
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER**

By: Robin T. O'Connell
Deputy Clerk



April 21, 2026 - Regular Meeting

Subject

Adoption of Resolution R-26-048, approving development of a Model Manatee County Government Civics Education Program, Brent Anderson, Government Relations Manager

Category

REGULAR

Briefings

Briefing Provided Upon Request

Contact and/or Presenter Information

Brent Anderson, Government Relations Manager x3680

Action Requested

Adoption of Resolution R-26-048.

Enabling/Regulating Authority

N/A

Applicable Advisory Board

N/A

Background Discussion

This is a program being model after similar ones from around the state. The goal is to cultivate civic understanding, engagement, and leadership among Manatee County youth through experiential learning and direct interaction with local government.

The Model Manatee County Government Civics Education Program (Model Manatee) is an annual, multi-session educational experience for Manatee County students who have completed 10th grade and are enrolled full time in public, private, or home education programs. Participants will attend county meetings, engage with County Commissioners and staff, and complete a culminating mock commission session. We hope this will lead to an increase in students' understanding of Manatee County's governmental functions, encourage civic responsibility and participation, provide hands-on experience with public processes, including meetings, workshops, and decision-making, and foster the next generation of community leaders.

Attorney Review

Formal Written Review (Opinion memo must be attached) D'Agostino

Also to: Stephanie Garrison@mymanatee.org,
Lori.stephens@manateeclerk.com, Patricia.nolan@mymanatee.org, and
Sabrina.oien@mymanatee.org, 4/23/26, RT

Instructions to Board Records

Per telephone call with Brent Anderson 4/20/26: Forward by email, an executed
copy of Resolution R-26-048, RT

Cost and Funds Source Account Number and Name

Amount and Frequency of Recurring Costs

From: Pamela DAgostino <pamela.dagostino@mymanatee.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 4:25 PM
To: Brent Anderson <brent.anderson@mymanatee.org>
Cc: Stephanie Garrison <stephanie.garrison@mymanatee.org>; Crosley Jones <crosley.jones@mymanatee.org>; Courtney DePol <courtney.depol@mymanatee.org>; Charlie Bishop <charlie.bishop@mymanatee.org>
Subject: Model Manatee Resolution; Civics Education Program; RLS No. 25-26-0231

In this Request for Legal Services (RLS), you have asked the County Attorney's Office (CAO) to review a draft resolution.

The following facts and information are relevant to my response:

1. You advise that Commissioner Ballard brought to your attention the idea of creating program in Manatee County program similar to the Junior Commission program currently in place in Charlotte County.
2. The resolution provided was drafted to establish a program in Manatee County similar to the program currently in place in Charlotte County.
3. If the Board approves the creation of such a program, same will be run by the Legislative Affairs Division of the Government Relations Department.
4. The RLS submission provides very little facts and does not identify any particular clauses or provisions of the resolution which are believed to be questionable or legally concerning.
5. To better understand staff's objective, I consulted resources online from the Charlotte County website regarding their program.

I provide the following advice in response to this RLS:

1. The resolution provided, which was submitted in a non-editable format, is not legally sufficient. The attached resolution has been drafted for staff's review and consideration and contains my legal advice and recommendations. It will be legally sufficient for presentation to the Board provided any further revisions are consistent with the advice contained herein and attached.
2. The resolution provided by staff established a program but did not provide any details regarding the scope of same. Instead, it purported that "all corresponding details" would be "outlined and promoted by" the Board and staff. Neither the RLS submission nor the resolution explain or elaborate on the logistics of accomplishing the foregoing. This is legally problematic as the delegation to staff could arguably be considered an improper delegation of authority. The attached resolution approves development of the program in concept, directs staff to fully develop same, and bring same back for approval by the Board, after legal review.
3. The resolution provided by staff limited this program to those in public or charter schools only. For staff's edification, charter schools are public schools. As proposed by staff, students of private schools and home education programs would not be eligible to participate. It is unlikely that the CAO could successfully defend an allegation that the program impermissibly excludes some from access to a public benefit. For comparison, the Charlotte County program is open to those enrolled full time in any public, private, or accredited home school

program. For this reason, the attached resolution allows students of private and home education programs to participate.

This completes my response to your RLS. Please contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. D'Agostino
County Attorney
Manatee County Government
Office of the County Attorney
1112 Manatee Avenue West, Suite 969
Bradenton, Florida 34205
pamela.dagostino@mymanatee.org
Phone: 941-745-3750
Fax: 941-749-3089



RESOLUTION NO. R-26-XXX

Commented [PD1]: Please call x3750 to obtain a resolution number.

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING APPROVING DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM; DIRECTING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO DESIGN AND PRESENT A MODEL MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM, INCLUDING APPLICATION MATERIALS, PROGRAM SCHEDULING, AND OUTREACH DOCUMENTS; PROVIDING FOR LEGAL REVIEW AND BOARD APPROVAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, (Board) recognizes that community engagement and civic education is vitally important to a healthy republic and functioning democracy; and

WHEREAS, actively involving Manatee County youth in understanding their local government can lead to a more engaged and informed citizenry; and

WHEREAS, participating in a youth leadership program can promote experiential learning of the functions of government, develop healthy citizenry habits, and promote public awareness of the strengths and abilities of youth; and

WHEREAS, the Board supports in concept providing an annual youth civics program to the public and open to participants who have completed tenth grade and are enrolled full-time in a public school, private school, or home education program; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that developing such a youth civics program serves a valid public purpose and is in the best interests of the residents of Manatee County as such a program could foster civic awareness, encourage responsible citizenship, and support the development of future community leaders.

Commented [PD2]: Added by the CAO to establish that creation of the program is deemed to serve a valid public purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, as follows.

1. The recitals set forth above are hereby adopted as findings of the Board and are incorporated herein by reference.
2. The Board hereby approves developing an annual **Model Manatee County Government Civics Education Program** to promote civic engagement among area youth.

Commented [PD3]: Revised consistent with the title in the resolution provided by staff. Should the name of the program change, it should be changed in the title and here.

3. The Board hereby directs the County Administrator to cause to be developed a Model Manatee County Government Civics Education Program (Program), designed to provide participating students with experiential learning opportunities regarding the functions, operations, and responsibilities of County government, including, but not limited to, interaction with County Commissioners, attendance at public meetings, and participation in a simulated or mock commission process, consistent with best practices for youth civic engagement programs. At a minimum, the Program design shall include:
 - a. A clearly defined mission, purpose, and scope of the Program;
 - b. Eligibility criteria and selection procedures for participants consistent with this resolution;
 - c. A structured schedule, which may include attendance at Board meetings, workshops, and other governmental proceedings, as well as educational or interactive components;
 - d. Opportunities for participants to gain practical insight into County governance, including a culminating mock or simulated commission session or similar exercise; and
 - e. Such additional components as deemed appropriate to further civic education and community engagement.
4. The Board further directs the County Administrator to cause to be developed and prepared all documents necessary for implementation of the Program, including, but not limited to:
 - a. A standardized application form for prospective participants;
 - b. A detailed program schedule;
 - c. Informational and promotional materials, including flyers or similar outreach documents, for distribution to the public; and
 - d. A parental or guardian consent form for participation by minors.
5. The Board further directs the County Administrator to submit all Program materials, documents, and proposed procedures to the County Attorney's Office for review and approval as to legal form and sufficiency.
6. The Board further directs the County Administrator to cause the complete recommended Program design and materials to be presented to the Board for consideration and approval prior to implementation.
7. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

Commented [PD4]: Much of this is suggestions so that there is clear direction from the Board to staff as to what needs to be developed. Feel free to revise consistent with the desired concept.

DULY ADOPTED with a quorum present and voting this _____ day of _____, 2026.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: _____
Chairperson

ATTEST: ANGELINA COLONNESO
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

By: _____
Deputy Clerk