



May 19, 2026 - Regular Meeting

Subject

Old Memphis Cemetery – District 5

Category

COMMISSIONER AGENDA/COMMENTS

Briefings

None

Contact and/or Presenter Information

Commissioner Dr. Bob McCann

Action Requested

Motion for staff to assess the cost to repair, secure, and restore the Old Memphis Cemetery.

Enabling/Regulating Authority

Commissioner

Applicable Advisory Board

N/A

Background Discussion

This item addresses the recent desecration of the Old Memphis Cemetery (17 graves were vandalized).

Attorney Review

Instructions to Board Records

Cost and Funds Source Account Number and Name

N/A

Amount and Frequency of Recurring Costs

N/A

See attached Agenda Update Memos 5.13.26 & 5.18.26



May 19, 2026 - Regular Meeting

Subject

Updates to Agenda – May 13, 2026

Category

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Briefings

None

Contact and/or Presenter Information

Bobbi Roy, Agenda Division Supervisor, ext 6878

Action Requested

Updates incorporated appropriately

Enabling/Regulating Authority

N/A

Applicable Advisory Board

N/A

Background Discussion

Below are agenda updates (dated 5/13/26) for the meeting of May 19, 2026:

GENERIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

- This agenda item was updated with additional generic comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Financial Management

Item 14, Execution of Change Order No. 1 to GMP Addendum No. 1 to Agreement No. 24-TA005354JK for North Regional Water Reclamation Facility Storage Expansion, Daniel Velazquez, Project Manager - District 1

- This agenda item was updated to correct the presenter from Daniel Velazquez, Project Manager, to read Patrick Shea, Utilities Director.

Item 15, Execution of Change Order No. 3 to Agreement No. 20-TA003404CD for Southwest Water Reclamation Facility Electrical Distribution System Rehabilitation, Daniel Velazquez, Project Manager - District 4

- This agenda item was updated to correct the presenter from Daniel Velazquez, Project Manager, to read Patrick Shea, Utilities Director.

REGULAR

Item 32, Follow-Up Presentation of Results from the Manatee County AI Pilot with Digibuild

- This agenda item has been deferred to June 16, 2026.

Item 35, Approval to fund the Manatee County Task Force for a period of five years; and Adoption of Budget Amendment Resolution B-26-000, Jodie Fiske, Public Safety Director

- This agenda item was updated with a public comment.

COMMISSIONER AGENDA ITEMS

Items for Discussion

Item 37, Old Memphis Cemetery Desecration and County Response – District 2

- This agenda item was added to the Agenda.

Item 38, Advertising Revenue for Public Transit System – District 3

- This agenda item was added to the Agenda

Item 39, Old Memphis Cemetery – District 5

- This agenda item was added to the Agenda.

Attorney Review

Not Reviewed (No apparent legal issues)

Instructions to Board Records

N/A

Cost and Funds Source Account Number and Name

N/A

Amount and Frequency of Recurring Costs

N/A



May 19, 2026 - Regular Meeting

Subject

Updates to Agenda - May 18, 2026

Category

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Briefings

None

Contact and/or Presenter Information

Bobbi Roy, Agenda Division Supervisor, ext 6878

Action Requested

Updates incorporated appropriately

Enabling/Regulating Authority

N/A

Applicable Advisory Board

N/A

Background Discussion

Below are agenda updates (dated 5/18/26) for the meeting of May 19, 2026:

GENERIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

- This agenda item was updated with additional generic comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Financial Management

Item 11, Adoption of Budget Amendment Resolution B-26-069, Claudia Campos, Interim Chief Financial Officer – Countywide

- This agenda item was updated with the revised Budget Amendment Resolution B-26-069.

Government Relations

Item 20, Execution of Updated Non-Profit Agreement with Manatee Educational Television Consortium (METV), Stephanie Garrison, Director of Government Relations

- This agenda item was updated with Letters of Support.

Public Safety

Item 26, Authorization to Issue Letter of Non-Opposition for the SUNSKY 10K Temporary Closure of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Jodie Fiske, Public Safety Director - Countywide

- This agenda item was updated with a public comment.

Public Works

Item 27, Execution of the Mangrove Point Mitigation Bank Purchase Agreement with Mangrove Point Mitigation Point LLC, for .57 Dual Estuarine Forested UMAM Credits and .08 Dual Estuarine Herbaceous UMAM Credits for a total of .65 Credits from the Mangrove Point Mitigation Bank for the Fort Hamer Bridge Four-Lane Project located in the Manatee River Basin, Scott May, P.E., County Engineer – District 1

- This agenda item was deferred to June 2, 2026.

REGULAR

Government Relations

Item 33, Update on infrastructure phase of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Grant and Lasting Manatee Program, Ashley Schnitker, Grants Division Manager, and Odugo Ohizu, Communications Coordinator

- This agenda was updated with a PowerPoint Presentation.

Public Safety

Item 35, Approval to fund the Manatee County Task Force for a period of five years; and Adoption of Budget Amendment Resolution B-26-000, Jodie Fiske, Public Safety Director

- This agenda item was deferred to June 16, 2026.

COMMISSIONER AGENDA ITEMS

Items for Discussion

Item 37, Old Memphis Cemetery Desecration and County Response – District 2

- This agenda item was updated with public comments and attachments.

Item 39, Old Memphis Cemetery – District 5

- This agenda item was updated with public comments.

Attorney Review

Not Reviewed (No apparent legal issues)

Instructions to Board Records

N/A

Cost and Funds Source Account Number and Name

N/A

Amount and Frequency of Recurring Costs

N/A



Public Comment

Submitted On: May 17, 2026, 07:31AM EDT

Manatee County Government

Full Name	First Name: GLEN GADFLY Last Name: GIBELLINA
Email	Glengibellina@gmail.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	May 19, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS
Comment	FORMAL CONDEMNATION OF CHRONIC NEGLECT AND FAILURE OF CARE AT THE OLD MEMPHIS CEMETERY To: Manatee County Property Management Department, County Administration, and the Board of County Commissioners From: Community Advocates and Concerned Residents of Manatee County To the Leadership of Manatee County Property Management, This letter serves as a formal condemnation of the Manatee County Property Management Department's decades-long failure to uphold its legal and moral obligations to maintain, protect, and respect The Old Memphis Cemetery. For 38 years, this sacred ground has been subjected to systemic abandonment by the very county government tasked with its perpetual care. The recent, sickening desecration of the property is the direct, predictable consequence of a department that has looked the other way for far too long. A History of Bureaucratic Erasure and Disinvestment The Old Memphis Cemetery is a vital piece of our local history. Filled by 1977 and officially taken over as an abandoned site by Manatee County in 1988, this one-acre historically Black cemetery has faced a continuous onslaught of institutional neglect. While the Property Management Department is explicitly mandated to supply the field staff and crews for routine physical maintenance, the reality on the ground tells a story of utter failure: Overgrown Vegetation & Canopy: The site has been routinely left to be swallowed by dense overgrowth, making it invisible and vulnerable. Sunken Dirt Pits: Unmarked graves have been left as hazardous, sunken pits, showing a complete lack of basic landscaping oversight. Chronic Disinvestment: Old Memphis stands as a painful local example of a statewide crisis—the historical erasure and defunding of Black burial grounds. The Cost of Neglect: A Blatant Act of Desecration When a government department signals that a space does not matter, criminals take notice. The extreme lack of security, lighting, and basic upkeep directly enabled the horrific vandalism discovered recently. The damage is catastrophic and heartbreaking: Seventeen gravesites were actively desecrated and defiled. Headstones were violently knocked over and shattered. Concrete crypts were smashed open. Political names were spray-painted across the final resting places of our community's ancestors. This is not just a failure of property maintenance; it is a failure of human decency. The families of those buried at Old Memphis, and the entire Manatee County community, deserve a drastic change in leadership

and accountability.

Immediate Demands for Action

We will no longer accept excuses or temporary patches. We demand that the Property Management Department immediately coordinate with County Administration to execute the following steps:

Immediate Restoration: Deploy emergency crews to repair the 17 smashed crypts and clean the defaced headstones under the guidance of cultural preservation experts.

Routine, Transparent Maintenance: Establish a strict, publicly accountable schedule for weed cutting, tree trimming, and leveling the sunken unmarked graves.

Security Measures: Install permanent fencing, lighting, and security cameras to ensure this site is never targeted again.

Perpetual Care Budget: Allocate distinct, permanent county funding to guarantee that The Old Memphis Cemetery is treated with the same dignity and respect as any other historic site in Manatee County.

The time for passive oversight is over. Our ancestors deserve dignity, our community demands accountability, and we expect an immediate public response outlining your department's corrective action plan

FOR THE RECORD

GLEN GADFLY GIBELLINA

<https://electglengibellina.com/>



Public Comment

Submitted On: May 18, 2026, 12:56AM EDT

Manatee County Government

Full Name	First Name: Brenda Last Name: Glasbrenner
Email	smdbrenda@yahoo.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	May 19, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	FORMAL CONDEMNATION OF CHRONIC NEGLECT AND FAILURE OF CARE AT THE OLD MEMPHIS CEMETERY
Comment	To the Leadership of Manatee County Property Management, This letter serves as a formal condemnation of the Manatee County Property Management Department's decades-long failure to uphold its legal and moral obligations to maintain, protect, and respect The Old Memphis Cemetery. For 38 years, this sacred ground has been subjected to systemic abandonment by the very county government tasked with its perpetual care. The recent, sickening desecration of the property is the direct, predictable consequence of a department that has looked the other way for far too long. A History of Bureaucratic Erasure and Disinvestment The Old Memphis Cemetery is a vital piece of our local history. Filled by 1977 and officially taken over as an abandoned site by Manatee County in 1988, this one-acre historically Black cemetery has faced a continuous onslaught of institutional neglect. While the Property Management Department is explicitly mandated to supply the field staff and crews for routine physical maintenance, the reality on the ground tells a story of utter failure: • Overgrown Vegetation & Canopy: The site has been routinely left to be swallowed by dense overgrowth, making it invisible and vulnerable. • Sunken Dirt Pits: Unmarked graves have been left as hazardous, sunken pits, showing a complete lack of basic landscaping oversight. • Chronic Disinvestment: Old Memphis stands as a painful local example of a statewide crisis—the historical erasure and defunding of Black burial grounds. • The Cost of Neglect: A Blatant Act of Desecration When a government department signals that a space does not matter, criminals take notice. The extreme lack of security, lighting, and basic upkeep directly enabled the horrific vandalism discovered recently. The damage is catastrophic and heartbreaking: • Seventeen gravesites were actively desecrated and defiled. • Headstones were violently knocked over and shattered. • Concrete crypts were smashed open. • Political names were spray-painted across the final resting places of our community's ancestors. This is not just a failure of property maintenance; it is a failure of human decency. The families of those buried at Old Memphis, and the entire Manatee County community, deserve a drastic change in leadership and accountability. Immediate Demands for Action We will no longer accept excuses or temporary patches. We demand that the Property Management Department immediately coordinate with County Administration to execute the following steps: 1. Immediate Restoration: Deploy emergency crews to repair the 17 smashed crypts and clean the defaced headstones under the guidance of cultural preservation experts. 2. Routine, Transparent Maintenance: Establish a strict, publicly accountable schedule for weed cutting, tree trimming, and leveling the sunken unmarked graves. 3. Security Measures: Install permanent fencing, lighting, and security cameras to ensure this site is never targeted again.

4. Perpetual Care Budget: Allocate distinct, permanent county funding to guarantee that The Old Memphis Cemetery is treated with the same dignity and respect as any other historic site in Manatee County.

The time for passive oversight is over. Our ancestors deserve dignity, our community demands accountability, and we expect an immediate public response outlining your department's corrective action plan.
