



September 10, 2026 - Budget Meeting

Subject

Updates to Agenda September 9, 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 September 9, 2026) for the meeting of 9/10/2026 5:30 PM - September 10, 2026 - Budget Meeting

Generic Public Comment attached.

Adoption of Tentative Millage and Budget - First Public Hearing towards Adoption of FY27 Budget; and Adoption of Resolutions B-27-001, B-27-002 and B-27-003 -

Added the following attachments: Capital Improvement FY27-31 New Project Request, Exhibit A Revenue Changes, Exhibit B Expense Changes and 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

EXHIBIT B - Expense Changes Detail FY27 Tentative Budget

Funding Source	Department /Agency	Description	Category	Amount
General Fund	Port	Transfers Port (Sales Tax)	Adjustment to Budget	\$ 446,500
Port Authority	Port Authority	Transfers - Port Debt Service	Adjustment to Budget	2,513,662
Port Authority	Port Authority	FY27 Operating Budget	Adjustment to Budget	36,186,707
Unincorporated	Countywide	Aid to Private Organiztion - Correcting Entry	Adjustment to Budget	350,000
General Fund	Countywide	Project Management Overhead	Adjustment to Budget	724,222
Multiple Funds	Transfers	Transfers - Capital Improvement	Adjustment to Budget	(3,011,110)
Multiple Funds	Reserves - Capital Projects	Net Increase/Decrease to Capital Reserves	Adjustment to Budget	77,764,609
Multiple Funds	Reserves - Countywide	Net Increase/Decrease to Cash Balance & Stabiliation	Adjustment to Budget	1,500,868
OTHER:				
Projects & Grants	Prior Year Grants Balance/Prj	Grants Balance & Project Balance	Adjustment to Budget	886,969,328
Independent Special Districts	Special Dist - Housing Authority	Housing Authority	Adjustment to Budget	2,479,119
Independent Special Districts	Special Dist - Law Library	Law Library	Adjustment to Budget	224,728
Total Expense Adjusted to Budget FY27				\$ 1,006,148,633

EXHIBIT A - Revenue Changes Detail FY27 Tentative Budget

Funding Source	Revenue Type	Description	Action	Amount
Port	Charges for Services & Int Inc	Port Authority	Add Funding @ 95%	\$ 35,740,207
Port Debt Service	Transfers In	Port Authority - Debt Service	Add Funding	2,513,662
Port	Transfers In	Transfers - Port Mutual Tax	Add Funding	446,500
Multiple Funds	Interest Income	Interest Income	Adjust Funding	205,008
Multiple Funds	Transfers	Transfers - Capital Improvement	Transfers - Capital Improvement	(3,011,110)
Multiple Funds	Budget Cash Carryover	Rebalance Beginning Cash Balances	Beginning Balances	78,080,958
General Fund	State Revenue & Sales Tax	State Revenue & Sales Tax	Adjustment to Budget	2,500,233
OTHER:				
Projects & Grants	Prior Year Grants Balance/Prj	Grants Balance & Project Balance	Adjustment to Budget	886,969,328
Independent Special Districts	Special Dist - Housing Authority	Housing Authority	Adjustment to Budget	2,479,119
Independent Special Districts	Special Dist - Law Library	Law Library	Adjustment to Budget	224,728
Total Revenue Adjusted to Budget FY27				\$ 1,006,148,633

MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
FY27-31 New Tentative Capital Improvement Plan

Line #	Project #	Status	District	Project	Actual	Budget	Start	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	Total FY27-31	Grand Total
Natural Resources Category														
Parks & Aquatics														
1	PJTP27003	Requested	District 2	Mixon Farms Barn			2028		1,456,272				1,456,272	1,456,272
2	PJTP27004	Requested	District 2	Mixon Farms Garden			2028		556,772				556,772	556,772
3	PJTP27005	Requested	District 2	Mixon Farms – Pavilion			2028		223,950				223,950	223,950
4	PJTP27006	Requested	District 2	Mixon Farms – Citrus and Food Forest			2028		83,070				83,070	83,070
Project Count: 4					SubTotal	-	-	-	2,320,064	-	-	-	2,320,064	2,320,064
Project Count: 4					Natural Resources Category Total	-	-	-	2,320,064	-	-	-	2,320,064	2,320,064
Public Safety Category														
Building and Renovations														
5	PJTP27002	Requested	Countywide	Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Expansion & Technology Upgrade			2027	2,049,080					2,049,080	2,049,080
Project Count: 1					SubTotal	-	-	2,049,080	-	-	-	-	2,049,080	2,049,080
Project Count: 1					Public Safety Category Total	-	-	2,049,080	-	-	-	-	2,049,080	2,049,080
Potable Water														
Potable Water Supply														
6	PJTP27007	Requested	District 1	Pipeline Resiliency			2027	9,549,750	13,910,000	50,691,250			74,151,000	74,151,000
Project Count: 1					SubTotal	-	-	9,549,750	13,910,000	50,691,250	-	-	74,151,000	74,151,000
Project Count: 1					Potable Water Total	-	-	9,549,750	13,910,000	50,691,250	-	-	74,151,000	74,151,000
Solid Waste														
Other_Solid Waste														
7	PJTP27010	Requested	District 5	Landfill Scalehouse Improvements			2028		418,000	2,050,000			2,468,000	2,468,000
Project Count: 1					SubTotal	-	-	-	418,000	2,050,000	-	-	2,468,000	2,468,000
Project Count: 1					Solid Waste Total	-	-	-	418,000	2,050,000	-	-	2,468,000	2,468,000
Stormwater														
Other_Stormwater														
8	PJTP27008	Requested	District 2	Mixon Wetland Creation/Stream Enhancement			2027	283,550	643,500				927,050	927,050
9	PJTP27009	Requested	District 2	Collins Dairy Drain Urban Stream Restoration			2027	4,228,965					4,228,965	4,228,965
Project Count: 2					SubTotal	-	-	4,512,515	643,500	-	-	-	5,156,015	5,156,015
Project Count: 2					Stormwater Total	-	-	4,512,515	643,500	-	-	-	5,156,015	5,156,015
Wastewater														
Wastewater Collections														
10	PJTP27012	Requested	District 2	Tidevue Force Main Replacement			2029	10,233,000	40,929,000				51,162,000	51,162,000
11	PJTP27013	Requested	District 3	2025 Force Main and Valve AMP Package 1			2031					312,000	312,000	312,000
Project Count: 2						-	-	10,233,000	40,929,000	-	-	312,000	51,474,000	51,474,000
Wastewater														
Wastewater Lift Stations														
12	PJTP27011	Requested	District 4	12A Master Lift Station Upgrade			2031					2,361,000	2,361,000	2,361,000
13	PJTP27014	Requested	District 3	1M Master Lift Station Upgrade			2031					2,643,000	2,643,000	2,643,000
14	PJTP27015	Requested	District 5	Southeast SCADA Tower Replacement										
				Wastewater			2027	2,157,000					2,157,000	2,157,000
Project Count: 3					SubTotal	-	-	2,157,000	-	-	-	5,004,000	7,161,000	7,161,000
Project Count: 5					Wastewater Total	-	-	12,390,000	40,929,000	-	-	5,316,000	58,635,000	58,635,000
Total Project Count: 14					FY27-31 New Tentative Projects Total	-	-	28,501,345	58,220,564	52,741,250	-	5,316,000	144,779,159	144,779,159



Public Comment

Manatee County Government

Submitted On:
Sep 9, 2026, 01:40AM EDT

Full Name	First Name: Glen Last Name: Gibellina
Email	glenfede@yahoo.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	September 10, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	Future Agenda item
Comment	Terminate administrator Charlie Bishop The public deserves better.



Public Comment

Manatee County Government

Submitted On:

Sep 9, 2026, 06:57AM EDT

Full Name	First Name: Glen Last Name: Gibellina
Email	glengibellina@gmail.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	September 10, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	Budget resolutions
Comment	Members of the Board of County Commissioners RE: Urgent Need for Budget Transparency, Reconciliation, and Accountability Prior to Vote Dear Commissioners, As taxpaying residents, we expect and demand financial transparency and strict accountability before any vote is taken to adopt the upcoming budget. Based on the figures presented to the public, there are substantial taxpayer-value concerns that justify postponing adoption until the County provides a clear reconciliation, project-level accountability, and a defensible plan for its massive reserves and carryover funds. The core issue is not simply the overall size of the budget—it is the direct conflict between the numbers presented to the public and the resolution slated for approval. Specifically, the public resolution asks the Board to approve a \$3.704 billion gross budget, including \$1.512 billion in net expenditures, while separately carrying forward \$886.97 million in prior-year and continuing grant or project balances. However, just last month, the County's August FY27 proposed budget presentation reported a materially different gross budget of \$2.698 billion and a net budget of \$1.447 billion. That presentation also disclosed \$1.054 billion in reserves—accounting for roughly 39.1% of the gross budget—alongside a cash carryover of approximately \$774.7 million. Whether this \$1 billion difference stems from varying accounting presentation bases, added funds, recent amendments, or unbudgeted carryforwards, the public should not have to guess. Approval must not take place until the following conditions are met: A Full, Single-Source Reconciliation: The Board and the public must be provided a single, clear, and understandable presentation that directly reconciles the August proposed figures (\$2.698 billion gross) with the resolution figures (\$3.704 billion gross).

Project-Level Accounting: Full transparency regarding the \$886.97 million in carryover and grant balances, detailing specific project statuses, timelines, and line-item allocations.

Justification of Reserve Holdings: A comprehensive justification and clear expenditure strategy for holding over \$1 billion in reserves and \$774 million in cash carryover during a time when taxpayers are demanding maximum fiscal efficiency.

Commissioners, approving a multi-billion-dollar budget without resolving these glaring discrepancies undermines public trust. The taxpayers deserve a transparent, line-by-line accounting before a single vote is cast.

As always, the mandate of good governance remains simple:
FOLLOW THE MONEY

Glen GADFLY Gibellina image0.jpeg



Public Comment

Manatee County Government

Submitted On:

Sep 9, 2026, 01:38AM EDT

Full Name	First Name: Glen Last Name: Gibellina
Email	glengibellina@gmail.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	September 10, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	Budget Amendment
Comment	The taxpayers should be concerned based on the figures provided, there are substantial taxpayer-value and transparency concerns that justify opposing adoption until the County provides a clear reconciliation, project-level accountability, and a defensible plan for its very large reserves and carryforwards. Bottom line The most serious issue is not merely that the budget is large. It is that the resolution asks the Board to approve a \$3.704 billion gross budget, including a stated \$1.512 billion in net expenditures, while separately carrying forward \$886.97 million in prior-year and continuing grant/project balances. Those figures need to be reconciled in a single, understandable presentation before commissioners vote. The County's August FY27 proposed-budget presentation reported a materially different gross budget of \$2.698 billion and net budget of \$1.447 billion. It also showed \$1.054 billion in reserves, roughly 39.1% of the gross budget, and cash carryover of about \$774.7 million. The resolution's higher \$3.704 billion figure may reflect a different presentation basis, additional funds, amendments, or carryforwards—but the public should not have to guess. As always... Follow the money \$\$\$

From: abc <glengibellina@gmail.com> **On Behalf Of** Glen Gibellina

Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 6:55 AM

To: Tal Siddique <Tal@mymanatee.org>; George Kruse <george.kruse@mymanatee.org>; Amanda Ballard <Amanda.Ballard@mymanatee.org>; Jason Bearden <jason.bearden@mymanatee.org>; Robert McCann <DrBob.McCann@mymanatee.org>

Subject: Budget

CAUTION:This email originated from an external source.

Be suspicious of Attachments, Links and Request for Login Information and utilize the REPORT MESSAGE Button in Outlook if you feel this is a Phishing email.

TO: Members of the Board of County Commissioners

RE: Urgent Need for Budget Transparency, Reconciliation, and Accountability Prior to Vote

Dear Commissioners,

As taxpaying residents, we expect and demand financial transparency and strict accountability before any vote is taken to adopt the upcoming budget. Based on the figures presented to the public, there are substantial taxpayer-value concerns that justify postponing adoption until the County provides a clear reconciliation, project-level accountability, and a defensible plan for its massive reserves and carryover funds.

The core issue is not simply the overall size of the budget—it is the direct conflict between the numbers presented to the public and the resolution slated for approval.

Specifically, the public resolution asks the Board to approve a **\$3.704 billion gross budget**, including **\$1.512 billion in net expenditures**, while separately carrying forward **\$886.97 million** in prior-year and continuing grant or project balances. However, just last month, the County's August FY27 proposed budget presentation reported a materially different gross budget of **\$2.698 billion** and a net budget of **\$1.447 billion**. That presentation also disclosed **\$1.054 billion in reserves**—accounting for roughly 39.1% of the gross budget—alongside a cash carryover of approximately **\$774.7 million**.

Whether this \$1 billion difference stems from varying accounting presentation bases, added funds, recent amendments, or unbudgeted carryforwards, the public should not have to guess. Approval must not take place until the following conditions are met:

A Full, Single-Source Reconciliation: The Board and the public must be provided a single, clear, and understandable presentation that directly reconciles the August proposed figures (\$2.698 billion gross) with the resolution figures (\$3.704 billion gross).

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Glen GADFLY

Supporting Documents

 [Adoption of Tentative Millage and Budget- First Public Hearing towards Adoption of FY27 Budget; and Adoption of Resolutions B-27-001, B-27-002 and B-27-003. \(69878\)](#)

 [AGENDA 9.10.26.PDF](#)

 [RESOLUTIONS B-27-001.PDF](#)

 [RESOLUTIONS B-27-002.PDF](#)

 [RESOLUTIONS B-27-003.PDF](#)

 [Back to Meeting Outline](#)

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jonna Koellhoffer <jkoellhoffer@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 7:25 AM

To: Robert McCann <drbob.mccann@mymanatee.org>; Amanda Ballard <amanda.ballard@mymanatee.org>; Jason Bearden <jason.bearden@mymanatee.org>; Mike Rahn <mike.rahn@mymanatee.org>; George Kruse <george.kruse@mymanatee.org>; Tal Siddique <tal@mymanatee.org>; Tal Siddique <tal.siddique@mymanatee.org>

Subject: Urgent Need for Budget Transparency, Reconciliation, and Accountability Prior to Vote

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welfare jobs are long term, stable jobs, and every dollar that is invested into local jobs at a living wage has a 5x multiple in that community. Other investments for living wages and expansion into our local people such as EMS, Teachers, and other vital infrastructure should be considered.

Our county deserves to know where our money is going and to have commissioners that make investments in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Thank you

Jonna Koellhoffer
Manatee county resident & voter



Public Comment

Manatee County Government

Submitted On:

Sep 9, 2026, 07:47AM EDT

Full Name	First Name: Norma Last Name: Kennedy
Email	kennedynorma4@gmail.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	September 10, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	Budget Meeting
Comment	Subject: Public Budget Hearing Comment – Ensuring District 1 Representation in the FY27 Budget Dear Chairperson Tal Siddique and Members of the Board of County Commissioners, As a resident of District 1, I am writing to submit a formal public comment regarding the upcoming FY27 budget allocations. As you are aware, District 1 is currently without a dedicated commissioner to voice our local concerns, advocate for our neighborhood infrastructure, and protect our tax dollars during these crucial funding discussions. Because we lack a single-member representative at the table, we are uniquely relying on the entire Board—including our At-Large Commissioners—to look out for our community's well-being. I respectfully request that the Board actively review and safeguard the infrastructure, safety, and community service needs of District 1 during this budget cycle. Please ensure that our standard allocations, ongoing capital improvement projects, and essential neighborhood services are fully maintained and not overlooked in the absence of our district's specific advocate. Thank you for your leadership and for stepping up to ensure that all residents of Manatee County are equitably represented during this budget process. Sincerely, Norma Kennedy 5510 Fort Hamer Road, Parrish District 1 kennedynorma4@gmail.com 941-720-2670

From: Julie Madison <julie.madison@toptierk9.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 8:08 AM

Subject: Urgent Need for Budget Transparency, Reconciliation, and Accountability Prior to Vote and Investing in people in Manatee County

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considered.

Our county deserves to know where our money is going and to have commissioners that make investments in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Julie Madison Top Tier K9 - Bradenton 203-733-7183

From: Susan Stickle <susanjstickle@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 9:06 AM

To: George Kruse <george.kruse@mymanatee.org>; Mike Rahn <mike.rahn@mymanatee.org>; Amanda Ballard <amanda.ballard@mymanatee.org>; Tal Siddique <tal@mymanatee.org>; Jason Bearden <jason.bearden@mymanatee.org>; Robert McCann <drbob.mccann@mymanatee.org>; Charlie Bishop <charlie.bishop@mymanatee.org>
Subject: RE: Urgent Need for Budget Transparency, Reconciliation, and Accountability Prior to Vote

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wage has a 5x multiple in that community. Other investments for living wages and expansion into our local people such as EMS, Teachers, and other vital infrastructure should be considered.

Our county deserves to know where our money is going and to have commissioners that make investments in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Susan Stickle

Manatee County Resident, Voter and Animal Services Volunteer

District 4, Bayshore Gardens

973.885.3203



Public Comment

Manatee County Government

Submitted On:

Sep 9, 2026, 11:14AM EDT

Full Name	First Name: Susan Last Name: Stickle
Email	susanjstickle@gmail.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	September 10, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	2027 FY Budget
Comment	As taxpaying residents, we expect and demand financial transparency and strict accountability before any vote is taken to adopt the upcoming budget. Based on the figures presented to the public, there are substantial taxpayer-value concerns that justify postponing adoption until the County provides a clear reconciliation, project-level accountability, and a defensible plan for its massive reserves and carryover funds. The core issue is not simply the overall size of the budget—it is the direct conflict between the numbers presented to the public and the resolution slated for approval. Specifically, the public resolution asks the Board to approve a \$3.704 billion gross budget, including \$1.512 billion in net expenditures, while separately carrying forward \$886.97 million in prior-year and continuing grant or project balances. However, just last month, the County's August FY27 proposed budget presentation reported a materially different gross budget of \$2.698 billion and a net budget of \$1.447 billion. That presentation also disclosed \$1.054 billion in reserves—accounting for roughly 39.1% of the gross budget—alongside a cash carryover of approximately \$774.7 million. Whether this \$1 billion difference stems from varying accounting presentation bases, added funds, recent amendments, or unbudgeted carryforwards, the public should not have to guess. Approval must not take place until the following conditions are met: A Full, Single-Source Reconciliation: The Board and the public must be provided a single, clear, and understandable presentation that directly reconciles the August proposed figures (\$2.698 billion gross) with the resolution figures (\$3.704 billion gross). Project-Level Accounting: Full transparency regarding the \$886.97 million in carryover and grant balances, detailing specific project statuses, timelines, and line-item allocations. Justification of Reserve Holdings: A comprehensive justification and clear expenditure strategy for holding over \$1 billion in reserves and \$774 million in cash carryover during a time when taxpayers are demanding maximum fiscal efficiency. Commissioners, approving a multi-billion-dollar budget without resolving

these glaring discrepancies undermines public trust. The taxpayers deserve a transparent, line-by-line accounting before a single vote is cast.

As always, the mandate of good governance remains simple: Follow the money.

Sincerely,

Susan Stickle

District 4 Bayshore Gardens Manatee County Resident, Voter and
Animal Services Volunteer

973.885.3203



Public Comment

Manatee County Government

Submitted On:

Sep 9, 2026, 11:10AM EDT

Full Name	First Name: Susan Last Name: Stickle
Email	susanjstickle@gmail.com
Which meeting is this public comment for? (Please select date of meeting)	September 10, 2026
Topic/Agenda Item	2027 FY Budget
Comment	I am writing to urge the Manatee County Commissioners to make adequate funding for Manatee County Animal Services and the development of a safe, efficient, properly designed animal services facility a priority in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget. Animal Services is a public safety service, yet its current level of funding does not adequately reflect the essential services it is expected to provide to the residents of Manatee County. A \$6 million operating budget is not sufficient to provide the level of public safety and animal welfare services required by a rapidly growing county. For Fiscal Year 2027, I respectfully ask the County Commission to increase Animal Services' General Fund allocation to at least 7% of the Infrastructure sales tax AND find a different project to delay to prioritize the replacement of the prefabs. Funding personnel alone will not solve the problems facing Animal Services. The County must also provide Animal Services with a safe, efficient, hurricane-resilient and appropriately designed permanent facility that allows employees and volunteers to perform their jobs safely and effectively while providing humane conditions for animals in County care. The continuing controversy surrounding the Bishop Animal Shelter demonstrates why this issue deserves serious attention. The Bishop expansion included approximately \$12 million in prefabricated kennel buildings, adding capacity for approximately 120 dogs. Since the expansion opened, however, residents, volunteers and animal advocates have documented concerns regarding kennel design, indoor space, heat exposure, noise, storm preparedness, staff safety, and the efficiency of the facility's layout. More recently, County commissioners have continued to hear public concerns about the facility, including questions about heat, safety, capacity and whether the current design adequately meets the County's long-term needs. In June 2026, commissioners even considered obtaining a cost estimate for replacing the prefabricated structures with a permanent facility. The next step is budgeting. This should not simply be viewed as a disagreement over one shelter

design. It is a warning about the consequences of attempting to meet a growing county's long-term animal services needs without adequate investment in planning, infrastructure and operational efficiency. Manatee County is now going to have to budget for piecemeal investments in facilities that ultimately prove inefficient or inadequate AND a long term solution thanks to the improper planning of the County Administrator and the BoCC. We must establish a long-term capital plan for Animal Services and ensure that future facilities are designed specifically for the realities of a modern, high-volume animal services operation in Florida.

That facility must be:

- Safe for animals, employees, volunteers and the public.
- Hurricane-resilient and capable of maintaining critical operations during severe weather.
- Appropriately climate-controlled for Florida's extreme heat.
- Designed for efficient staff workflow and animal movement.
- Equipped with appropriate veterinary, isolation, intake, adoption, laundry, cleaning and animal-care spaces.
- Designed to minimize disease transmission and facilitate appropriate sanitation.
- Large enough to accommodate the County's current population and anticipated growth.
- Designed with adequate indoor space rather than relying excessively on outdoor or minimally conditioned kennel areas.
- Efficient enough that staff can spend their time caring for animals and responding to public safety needs rather than overcoming deficiencies in the physical layout.
- Built with the input of shelter medicine professionals, animal welfare experts, staff and experienced volunteers.

The County's own history demonstrates that the need for appropriate animal services infrastructure is not new. Earlier County planning documents recognized the need for significant investment in shelter facilities as Manatee County's population and animal population grew.

Animal Services Is a Public Safety Investment

The County's budget priorities should recognize that Animal Services performs many functions that directly protect the public.

Animal Services responds to dangerous and stray animals, animal bites, cruelty and neglect complaints, abandoned animals, animal-related emergencies and other situations that can affect public health and safety. It also provides sheltering, enforcement, disease prevention, veterinary care, licensing and community education.

When Animal Services is underfunded or lacks appropriate facilities, the consequences do not fall exclusively on animals. They affect residents, neighborhoods, law enforcement, public health, County employees and the overall quality of life in Manatee County.

For comparison, the Manatee County Sheriff's Office receives nearly 42% of the General Fund, or approximately \$269 million. Law enforcement is appropriately recognized as an essential public safety function and receives the resources necessary to fulfill that mission.

Animal Services deserves to be recognized in the same public-safety framework.

It is important to point out that you recently approved an additional \$10 million dollars for 33 staff for the Sheriff's Department, \$303,000 an employee, while Animal Services has been begging for properly paid staff at living wages for over a decade.

I am asking the County to recognize that Animal Services has been historically underfunded and to bring its funding level more appropriately in line with the responsibilities the County has assigned to it.

FY 2027 Requests

I respectfully ask the County Commission to:

1. Increase Animal Services' FY 2027 to 7% from the infrastructure sales tax
2. Provide dedicated capital funding for a safe, efficient, permanent Animal Services facility** designed to meet the County's current and future needs.
3. Commission an independent professional assessment and long-term facility plan** that evaluates the current Bishop campus, its operational efficiency, hurricane resilience, climate control, animal welfare, staff safety, capacity and future expansion needs.
4. Require meaningful input from shelter medicine professionals, Animal Services employees, experienced volunteers and community stakeholders** when determining the County's long-term facility design.
5. Develop a multi-year Animal Services capital improvement plan** so the County is not repeatedly forced into expensive short-term solutions.
6. Ensure that future Animal Services facilities are designed for operational efficiency**, allowing staff to spend their time providing public safety and animal care rather than working around an inefficient physical layout.
7. Provide adequate ongoing operational funding** for staffing, veterinary care, equipment, maintenance, enforcement, emergency response and community programs.

Manatee County is one of the fastest-growing communities in Florida. Its public safety infrastructure must grow with it.

The County cannot expect Animal Services to protect the public, enforce animal-related laws, respond to emergencies and care for vulnerable animals while providing it with inadequate operating resources and facilities that remain the subject of significant community concern.

A community's commitment to public safety should include every agency responsible for protecting that community.

I respectfully ask you to make Animal Services a genuine FY 2027 budget priority by providing a dedicated plan and funding mechanism for a safe, efficient, permanent Animal Services facility.**

Manatee County residents deserve an Animal Services system that is adequately staffed, properly funded and housed in a facility designed to meet the demands of a modern, growing community.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the residents

of Manatee County.

Sincerely,

Susan J Stickle

District 4 Bayshore Gardens Manatee County resident, voter and

Bishop Volunteer

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