APPROVED in Open Session
10/8/2026
Manatee County Board of County Commissioners

October 8, 2026 – Land Use Meeting

Subject
Annual Report of County Attorney for Fiscal Year 2024/2025

Category
CONSENT AGENDA

Briefings
Briefing Provided Upon Request

Contact and/or Presenter Information
Pamela D'Agostino, County Attorney, extension 3750

Action Requested
I move to accept the Annual Report of the County Attorney for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Enabling/Regulating Authority
Section 125.01, Florida Statutes; Article II½, Chapter 2-2, Manatee County Code of Ordinances

Applicable Advisory Board
N/A

Background Discussion
The County Attorney's Office (CAO) is established and operates pursuant to Article II½, Chapter 2-2 of the Manatee County Code of Ordinances, which requires that the County Attorney include a summary of settlements pursuant to his/her delegated authority to the Board of County Commissioners in an annual report.

The County Attorney respectfully requests that the Board accept the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Attorney Review
Other (Requires explanation in field below) D'Agostino
This is a County Attorney item.

Instructions to Board Records **Emailed 10/9/2026**
If accepted by the Board, please email an approved copy of this agenda item to Patricia Nolan, Law Office Administrator, at patricia.nolan@mymanatee.org.

Cost and Funds Source Account Number and Name

None.

Amount and Frequency of Recurring Costs
None.

October 8, 2026 - Land Use Meeting

Subject
Updates to Agenda - October 2, 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 (10/2/26) for the meeting of October 8, 2026:

CONSENT AGENDA
Attorney
Item 4, Annual Report of County Attorney for Fiscal Year 2024/2025

- This agenda item was updated with a revised Annual Report due to typographical errors.

Development Services
Item 8, Authorization for staff to record Satisfactions of Multiple Code Enforcement Liens, Stephanie Charles, Development Services Deputy Director - Countywide

- This agenda item was updated to correct the Instructions to Board Records Section to delete Tom Wooten, Code Enforcement Chief, and replace with Stephanie Charles, Development Services Deputy Director; and include revised Certificate for Satisfaction of Lien for all attached CE cases.

Financial Management
Item 9, Adoption of Budget Amendment Resolution B-26-117 and Budget Amendment Resolution B-26-120 for Infrastructure Sales Tax, Claudia Campos, Chief Financial Officer

- Corrected coversheet in strikethrough underline format to revise instructions to Board Records.

ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARINGS- QUASI-JUDICIAL
Presentations Upon Request
Item 17, PDC-18-21(Z)(P)(R) – Sawgrass Storage –PSI Atlantic Parrish FL 2 LLC (Owners) – PLN2511-0132-Quasi-Judicial - Lindsey Craig, Planner I -District 1 - Added request for continuance and moved to upon request.

Regular
Item 22, Planning Commission Appointment- Choose two - Nicole Knapp, Director

- Revised PC Matrix candidate uploaded.

COMMISSIONER AGENDA ITEMS
Item 24, Public Notice and Neighborhood Meeting Signs

- This agenda item has added public comment.

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

OFFICE OF THE MANATEE COUNTY ATTORNEY
ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2024 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025





AS OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

OFFICE AT A GLANCE

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

COUNTY ATTORNEY
Pamela J. D'Agostino

DEPUTY COUNTY ATTORNEY
Christopher M. De Carlo

CHIEF ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
Sarah A. Schenk
Florida Bar Board Certified in City, County, and Local Government Law

ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEYS
Douglas E. Polk
Camilo A. Soto
Master of Urban and Regional Planning
Whittni M. Hodges
Deanne C. Fields
Katherine H. Welch
Rebecca E. Waterman
Master of Business Administration
Jared M. Monahan
Kristina H. Snyderman

LAW OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
Patricia Nolan * †

LEGAL ASSISTANTS
Diane Hajek
Janet Gable

LAW OFFICE ASSISTANT
Sabrina Oien

PARALEGALS
Alicia Stull * †
Advanced Certified Paralegal: Real Estate Principles
Juliet Shepard * †
Advanced Certified Paralegal: Land Use and Contract Management
Pamala Roberts *
PACE Registered Paralegal
Kayla Lewis *
Melissa Mayernick *
Donna Belcher *

RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION

RISK MANAGER
Nicole Bezdek ‡
Certified in Workers' Compensation Litigation

RISK ANALYST
Tracey Martin ‡
Master of Business Administration
Certified Safety Manager

SENIOR CLAIMS ADJUSTER
Sheila Moore ‡

WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS ADJUSTER
Melinda Dunnam ‡

CLAIMS ADJUSTER
Shannon Moore ‡

*Florida Registered Paralegals
†Certified Paralegal
‡Licensed Accredited Claims Adjuster

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2024/2025 (FY24/25) was a year of rebuilding and renewed momentum for the County Attorney's Office (CAO). The CAO remained steadfast in its mission to provide exemplary, cost-effective, ethical, and timely legal representation and risk management services to the Board of County Commissioners (Board) and County departments. While continuing to navigate the increasing complexity, urgency, and volume of matters requiring legal and risk management support, the CAO focused on strengthening and stabilizing its team and operations. We said goodbye to valued team members as they transitioned to new professional opportunities and challenges, celebrated the growth and promotion of existing team members, and welcomed new team members whose experience and perspectives further strengthened the team.

Strategic priorities remain largely consistent with prior years (including, but not limited to, maintaining continuity of legal services and organizational resilience, strengthening collaboration and communication with County Administration and County departments, retaining and recruiting high-quality team members, fostering professional development and leadership growth, identifying opportunities for improvement, and succession planning). The comprehensive legal representation and risk management services delivered in FY24/25 to advance and protect the County's interests and as described herein are estimated to equate to a more than $3 million financial benefit for the County, reflecting a strong return on investment for the Board and this community.

For the first time in the history of the CAO, all of the paralegals are Florida Registered Paralegals. To earn this accolade, a paralegal must satisfy the education, training, certification and work experience requirements outlined in Chapter 20 of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar. According to May 2025 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Florida has more than 40,000 paralegals and legal assistants, yet fewer than 5,000 paralegals have this credential. As such, this designation reflects a significant professional accomplishment and distinguishes the CAO's paralegals as members of a relatively small group of paralegals who have met The Florida Bar's rigorous standards.

Guidelines for Work Assignments

Since 1998, the CAO has been guided by certain Guidelines for Work Assignments (Guidelines). The Guidelines have been set forth each year in the annual report and have been approved by the Board pursuant to the Board's acceptance of the annual report. They are of critical importance to the CAO in helping to maintain a positive and productive working relationship with the Board and with individual Commissioners. The Guidelines are included in the annual report again this year.

GUIDELINES FOR WORK ASSIGNMENTS

The County Attorney's Office (CAO) will undertake any work assignment directed by a majority of the Board of County Commissioners (Board) consistent with applicable law, Article II½, Chapter 2-2 of the Manatee County Code of Ordinances, as may be amended from time to time, and the contract between Manatee County (County) and the County Attorney. No attorney in the CAO is required to render legal services where to do so would violate applicable ethical standards or create a conflict of interest.

The attorneys in the CAO maintain an attorney-client relationship with the Board as a collegial body. The CAO intends to avoid any action that undermines or jeopardizes the confidence and trust that are essential to maintenance of the attorney-client relationship. In the absence of a legal or ethical mandate, the CAO will not knowingly undertake action that is inconsistent with the will of the majority of the Board.

The ordinary mission of the CAO includes routine handling of legal issues that are the subject of requests for legal services from managerial-level County employees pertaining to County business, without waiting for specific Board direction. When a request for legal services (RLS) comes from someone other than a majority of the Board (e.g., a Commissioner, the County Administrator, or a Department Director), attorneys in the CAO ordinarily will utilize the following guidelines in responding:

A. County Commissioners are constitutional officers and are entitled to legal advice regarding issues related to the performance of their duties as Commissioners. Therefore, unless precluded by other considerations, a County Commissioner is entitled to a complete response to a RLS regarding such issues.

B. The CAO will follow normal legal/ethical principles in determining the priority to be given to work assignments, such as the approach of deadlines, the significance of the matter at issue, the consequences of delay in responding, etc. Other things being equal, Board requests and requests from the County Administrator or Department Directors, acting at the behest or direction of the majority of the Board, shall have priority over other requests.

C. The CAO will not undertake legal work that entails an inordinate commitment of time or other resources in the absence of direction from the Board.

D. The CAO will not undertake to draft an ordinance, resolution, or other formal expression of County policy if there is reason to believe the majority of the Board does not support it.

E. The CAO does not review the propriety or legality of actions or omissions of a Commissioner in the absence of a request to do so from the involved Commissioner.

F. The CAO does not respond to requests which pose hypothetical or speculative fact situations.

GUIDELINES FOR WORK ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

G. When legal service has been undertaken on a matter, whether or not pursuant to a Board request, and it appears that completion of the service may demand considerably more resources than anticipated at the outset of service, the CAO may request Board direction on whether to continue the service.

H. The CAO will not review past decisions of the Board for legality in the absence of a majority request, unless there is reason to believe that the past decision could result in serious future loss or damage to the Board or the County and that legal review could lead to corrective action that would prevent or mitigate the loss or damage.

I. The CAO ordinarily will not undertake legal service regarding matters outside the scope of the Board's powers and duties, (e.g., review of actions of constitutional officers), unless said action appears to pose a serious impact or concern affecting the County's interests or unless directed to do so by a majority of the Board and the work can be done without ethical impropriety.

J. The CAO will not undertake legal service regarding actions by or issues confronting the Board solely in a different capacity where the Board has separate legal counsel in that capacity (e.g., the Port Authority) unless directed to do so by majority request and the work can be done without ethical impropriety.

K. The CAO does not represent and does not furnish legal advice to Commissioners or other County employees regarding their personal business or legal problems encountered outside the scope of their duties as County officers or employees.

L. Matters that ordinarily would not be addressed may be reviewed if it appears that failure to undertake such review and advise the Board could adversely affect the interests of the Board or the County or that the review deals with issues which the Board must consider in the future.

M. In the absence of extraordinary circumstances, the usual protocol is that a RLS is directed to the County Attorney, who will then assign it to an Assistant County Attorney for response.

Identification of the Need for Legal Guidance

Generally, the CAO relies upon managerial-level County team members to raise legal issues and seek legal advice when it is prudent to do so. It is the responsibility of managerial staff to be alert for potential legal issues and to consult with the CAO when necessary to protect the County's interests. The primary mechanism by which the CAO renders legal advice and guidance to the various departments is in response to a request for legal services (RLS) submitted via a pre-approved form which contains all relevant information and is transmitted with all appropriate and material documentation.

SUMMARY OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION DELIVERED

During FY24/25, 532 RLSs and 380 litigation matters were active, 458 RLSs and 185 litigation matters were opened, and 468 RLSs and 191 litigation matters were answered/closed. On average, the legal representation workload demands appear to have increased by approximately 5% compared to the prior fiscal year.

ATTORNEY AND PARALEGAL HOURS

The attorneys in the CAO have a combined more than 200 years of experience, averaging more than 18 years of legal practice per attorney. The average prevailing market rates in the community for similar legal services by attorneys, paralegals, and legal assistants of reasonably comparable skill, experience, and reputation are estimated to be at least $277, $121, and $60 per hour, respectively. Therefore, procuring the legal services performed by the CAO's personnel through outside law firms would have likely cost the County approximately $6.5 million in Fiscal Year 24/25.

	Litigation	Non-Litigation	Total
Attorney	**6,296.3**	**11,778.5**	**18,074.8**
Paralegal	**4,493.7**	**4,445.7**	**8,939.4**
Total Hours	**10,790.0**	**16,224.2**	**27,014.2**

HOURS BY DEPARTMENT

Department	Litigation		Non-Litigation		
	Hours	Percentage	Hours	Percentage	Total
Board of County Commissioners	10,288.3	95.4%	3,918.4	24.2%	14,206.7
Community & Veterans Services	23.7	0.2%	347.4	2.1%	371.1
Convention & Visitors Bureau	0.0	0.0%	313.0	1.9%	313.0
County Administration	0.0	0.0%	243.9	1.5%	243.9
Development Services	8.9	0.1%	3,424.1	21.1%	3,433.0
Financial Management	0.0	0.0%	1,182.1	7.3%	1,182.1
Government Relations	0.0	0.0%	103.0	0.6%	103.0
Human Resources	53.2	0.5%	1,601.7	9.9%	1,654.9
Information Technology	0.0	0.0%	13.5	0.1%	13.5
Natural Resources	0.0	0.0%	575.7	3.5%	575.7
Property Management	0.0	0.0%	1,558.5	9.6%	1,558.5
Public Safety	263.8	2.4%	1,394.5	8.6%	1,658.3
Public Works	21.0	0.2%	906.8	5.6%	927.8
Sports & Leisure	0.0	0.0%	141.0	0.9%	141.0
Utilities	131.1	1.2%	500.6	3.1%	631.7
Total Hours	**10,790.0**		**16,224.2**		**27,014.2**



REQUESTS FOR LEGAL SERVICES

BY DEPARTMENT

Department	RLS	Percentage
Board of County Commissioners	14	2.6%
Community & Veterans Services	12	2.3%
Convention & Visitors Bureau	20	3.8%
County Administration	6	1.1%
Development Services	127	23.9%
Financial Management	22	4.1%
Government Relations	9	1.7%
Human Resources	36	6.8%
Information Technology	4	0.8%
Natural Resources	19	3.6%
Property Management	75	14.1%
Public Safety	97	18.2%
Public Works	48	9.0%
Sports & Leisure	14	2.6%
Utilities	29	5.5%
Total	**532**	



LITIGATION SNAPSHOT

LITIGATION CASES AND HOURS

Category	Cases	Percentage	Hours	Percentage
Animals in Distress	2	0.5%	39.4	0.4%
Auto Property Liability	7	1.8%	416.7	3.9%
Bankruptcy	59	15.5%	219.6	2.0%
Civil Rights	3	0.8%	190.1	1.8%
Code Enforcement	39	10.3%	451.6	4.2%
Construction	1	0.3%	14.3	0.1%
Declaratory or Injunctive Relief	13	3.4%	789.3	7.3%
Eminent Domain	31	8.2%	210.8	2.0%
Employment	4	1.1%	72.7	0.7%
Environmental	1	0.3%	4.3	0.0%
Foreclosure	12	3.2%	77.7	0.7%
Garnishment	8	2.1%	25.9	0.2%
General Liability	3	0.8%	126.6	1.2%
Land Use	8	2.1%	982.6	9.1%
Other	17	4.5%	1,741.2	16.1%
Personal Injury	63	16.6%	5,196.7	48.2%
Probate	108	28.4%	219.5	2.0%
Sunshine/Records/Ethics	1	0.3%	10.2	0.1%
Total	**380**		**10,790.0**	

RECOVERIES

Matter Type		Amount
Bankruptcy	$	4,102.85
Code Enforcement Liens	$	5,513.16
Foreclosures (SHIP Loans)	$	181,770.64
Garnishment Attorney's Fees	$	500.00
Opioid Settlement Funds	$	3,672,630.78
Probate:	$	17,678.50
Other:	$	3,002.67
Total	**$**	**3,885,198.60**





OUTSIDE COUNSEL

Outside counsel are generally engaged for matters that cannot be handled solely by the CAO's attorneys when (a) a conflict of interest exists, (b) a case presents the need for particular expertise that our attorneys do not have; (c) a special matter demands an unusually concentrated and heavy time commitment; and/or (d) the professional responsibilities of the attorneys cannot be met with an increase in workload. Attorneys have a duty to manage their workload in a manner that ensures they can competently, diligently, and ethically represent each client. This includes not accepting more cases or assignments than they can reasonably handle, so as to avoid compromising the quality of legal services, violating ethical obligations, or failing to meet professional standards of care.

Excluding workers' compensation, the CAO utilized outside counsel for 16 litigation matters and 9 non-litigation matters. Outside counsel provided approximately 15% of the total legal services performed on behalf of the County for FY24/25. The outside counsel services paid by the CAO for FY24/25 were $510,351.57 ($223,479.57 for workers' compensation plus $286,872 for all other legal services). Individual departments fund certain outside counsel expenses (e.g., bond counsel—Finance; eminent domain—Public Works; immigration—sponsoring department). The below firms were retained by the CAO to provide legal representation for the County in specified matters in FY24/25:

Law Firm	Legal Areas
Cohen Vaughan, LLP	Workers' Compensation
Ford Harrison	Labor & Employment
Gray Robinson	Eminent Domain; General Representation
Greenberg Traurig	Bond Counsel
Immigration Attorneys, LLP	Immigration
Johnson Anselmo	Jail Medical Litigation
Law Offices of Scott F. Bergthold	Civil Rights
Nabors Giblin	Bond Disclosure
Ogletree Deakins	Union Negotiations
Romano Law Group	Opioids Litigation
Trenam Law	Bankruptcy; Construction
Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Berman, PL	Statutory Challenge

SETTLED CLAIMS, LITIGATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

MATTERS RESOLVED PURSUANT TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY OF UP TO $30,000:

Case or Claimant Name	Case/Claim Number	Type	Amount	Date
Azcui, Jose	2024022496	Tort	$ 3,000.00	10/7/2024
Cook, Lynne	2022-CA-3694	Tort	$ 17,500.00	10/23/2024
Albritton, Dawn	2024022476	Tort	$ 812.97	10/28/2024
Hermes, Devon	2024022380	Tort	$ 6,614.52	10/31/2024
Crawford, Trudy	2025022550	Tort	$ 2,672.55	11/12/2024
Harley, Katrina	2023020248	Tort	$ 6,500.00	11/22/2024
VanDam, Hailey	2025022864	Tort	$ 2,500.00	11/22/2024
Beauregard, Donna	2022005324	Tort	$ 17,000.00	12/10/2024
Moran, Doug (Estate of Jeanette Moran)	2022-CA-1223	Tort	$ 25,000.00	12/11/2024
Miller, Judy	2023-CA-1229	Tort	$ 21,500.00	12/17/2024
Orellana Duran, Andreas	2025022658	Tort	$ 3,113.76	1/4/2025
Torres, Yeni	2024022359	Tort	$ 3,224.59	1/7/2025
Yokeum, Travis	2020-CA-1844	Tort	$ 10,000.00	1/16/2025
Floyd, Jeremy	2024022442	Tort	$ 5,165.02	1/27/2025
Van Landingham, Lenabelle	2025022840	Tort	$ 5,400.00	1/28/2025
Skorski, John	2025022837	Tort	$ 4,000.00	1/31/2025
Little League, Lakewood Ranch	2024022511	Tort	$ 970.00	2/4/2025
Chavez, Douglas	2024021802	Tort	$ 5,844.94	2/5/2025
Joy Gonzalez	2024022295	Tort	$ 3,266.69	2/20/2025
Ardila, Gerard And Suzanne	2025023005	Tort	$ 461.74	2/20/2025
Pacheco Guerrero, Ivan	2025022943	Tort	$ 4,585.86	2/24/2025
Snowden, Vista	N/A	Employment	$ 10,000.00	2/24/2025
Hackney, Samantha	2024-CA-1844	Tort	$ 7,500.00	3/4/2025
Cupidon, Violette	2025023067	Tort	$ 5,000.00	3/5/2025
Armstrong, Jill	2024021321	Tort	$ 18,359.98	3/7/2025
Thompson, Walter O/B/O Imperial Lakes Estates	2025022924	Tort	$ 2,390.00	3/11/2025
Emmalena Lord	2025023162	Tort	$ 5,668.57	3/14/2025
Sissel, Joseph	2024022464	Tort	$ 4,322.96	3/14/2025
Ann Colonna	2025023095	Tort	$ 8,592.70	3/18/2025
Sturgill, Casey	2025022955	Tort	$ 3,665.94	3/18/2025
Scott, Allowishes	2023-CA-6360	Tort	$ 15,000.00	3/19/2025
Lane, Kevin	2024022519	Tort	$ 201.90	3/19/2025
Hudson, Betty	2023-CA-2610	Tort	$ 30,000.00	3/19/2025
Stephens, Darline	2025023094	Tort	$ 16,875.00	3/20/2025
Macey, Ryan	2025023200	Tort	$ 4,546.00	3/20/2025
Corbett, James	A2350308	Workers' Comp	$ 26,419.00	3/21/2025
Witt, Christina	2024022443	Tort	$ 451.50	3/21/2025
Beckmann, Karrie	2025023202	Tort	$ 477.19	3/24/2025
Chavez, Rafael	2023020174	Tort	$ 5,000.00	3/25/2025
Florida Power and Light Company	2024022413	Tort	$ 3,667.67	3/25/2025
Kotter, Christa	2025023233	Tort	$ 3,340.99	3/27/2025
Klomp, Jack	2025023054	Tort	$ 10,199.17	4/1/2025
Kerestesy, Randy	2024-CA-519	Tort	$ 29,500.00	4/3/2025
Kerestesy, Shelly	2024-CA-519	Tort	$ 29,500.00	4/3/2025

SETTLED CLAIMS, LITIGATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

MATTERS RESOLVED PURSUANT TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY OF UP TO $30,000:

Case or Claimant Name	Case/Claim Number	Type	Amount	Date
Hiram Feliciano-Safeco Insurance Co.	2025023035	Tort	$ 12,683.20	4/3/2025
King, Adam	2025023000	Tort	$ 2,240.58	4/7/2025
Thurber, Jason	2025023307	Tort	$ 547.18	4/10/2025
Tashunda Richardson	2025023255	Tort	$ 10,523.76	4/11/2025
Smith, Marsha	2024022508	Tort	$ 4,000.00	4/14/2025
Paizes, Spiros	2021-SC-6805	Tort	$ 7,000.00	4/22/2025
Nesllali Herreria	2025023047	Tort	$ 1,013.29	4/28/2025
Zane, Larry	2025023099	Tort	$ 2,820.52	4/30/2025
Mays, Yolanda	2025023222	Tort	$ 1,700.00	5/5/2025
Robison, Natalie	2025023310	Tort	$ 1,075.00	5/6/2025
Williams, Norma	2025023263	Tort	$ 1,000.00	5/13/2025
Muchna, Tim	2025023404	Tort	$ 428.00	5/16/2025
Snowden, Vista	A2420249	Workers' Comp	$ 25,000.00	5/20/2025
Harvey, Wayne	A2420331	Workers' Comp	$ 15,100.00	5/20/2025
Davenport, Marne	2025023343	Tort	$ 5,547.20	5/20/2025
Catalina Rojas	2025023151	Tort	$ 2,990.18	5/21/2025
Save Gates Creek	2020-CA-4515	Land Use	$ 2,155.71	6/2/2025
Michael Sanz Pomier	2025023089	Tort	$ 2,783.63	6/5/2025
Nasaire, Fanel	2024-CA-672	Tort	$ 20,000.00	6/9/2025
Weisz, Andrew	2025022832	Tort	$ 1,500.00	6/10/2025
Matthews, Susan	2025023376	Tort	$ 1,388.47	6/26/2025
Freeman, Joseph	2024-CA-1844	Tort	$ 20,000.00	7/3/2025
Weiskopf, Kristopher	A2380033	Workers' Comp	$ 20,100.00	7/8/2025
Mcavoy, Karen	2025022972	Tort	$ 882.98	7/8/2025
Cole, Harold	2025023447	Tort	$ 1,570.84	7/10/2025
Currie, Paul	2025023354	Tort	$ 10,000.00	7/15/2025
Wooton, Lee Ann	2023021257	Tort	$ 10,000.00	7/15/2025
Hudson, Katie	2024022024	Tort	$ 12,500.00	7/21/2025
Burke, Michael	2025022974	Tort	$ 6,159.60	7/24/2025
Dunfee (Minor), Jasper	2024022099	Tort	$ 5,500.00	7/24/2025
Chibli, Zeina	2024-CA-894	Tort	$ 30,000.00	8/4/2025
Frederic Tinord, Celavie	2024022469	Tort	$ 12,911.82	8/11/2025
Bradley, Sharon	2025023688	Tort	$ 88.52	8/11/2025
Smith, John	2025022829	Tort	$ 1,539.52	8/19/2025
Santiago-Casillas, Erangelis	2025023636	Tort	$ 8,873.24	8/20/2025
Neville, Myriam	FY24/25-0535	Employment	$ 900.98	8/26/2025
Gillis, Tania	FY24/25-0535	Employment	$ 1,068.56	8/26/2025
Peltz, Mark	2025023777	Tort	$ 1,274.81	9/3/2025
Cole, Madeline	2025023737	Tort	$ 9,693.39	9/9/2025
Jason Thurber	2025023876	Tort	$ 1,750.00	9/16/2025
Calzada (Minor), Jose	2024022168	Tort	$ 7,500.00	9/17/2025
Simmons, Cindy	2025023630	Tort	$ 415.00	9/18/2025
Carson, Bennie	2023020386	Tort	$ 3,500.00	9/19/2025
Cohen, Ellen	2024-CA-582	Tort	$ 10,000.00	9/19/2025

SETTLED CLAIMS, LITIGATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

MATTERS RESOLVED PURSUANT TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY OF UP TO $30,000:

Case or Claimant Name	Case/Claim Number	Type	Amount	Date
Austin Hamblin	2025023770	Tort	$ 2,493.38	9/23/2025
Paul Lang	2025023771	Tort	$ 4,404.96	9/25/2025
Watson, Tyrone	A2420309	Workers' Comp	$ 24,100.00	9/26/2025
Ganey, Katherine	2025023666	Tort	$ 5,885.00	9/30/2025

SUMMARY OF SETTLEMENTS

Type	Number	Total Amount	Average
Employment	3	$ 11,969.54	$ 3,989.85
Land Use	1	$ 2,155.71	$ 2,155.71
Tort	83	$ 599,576.28	$ 7,223.81
Workers' Comp	5	$ 110,719.00	$ 22,143.80
Totals	**92**	**$ 724,420.53**	**$ 7,874.14**





RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION ACTIVITIES

LIABILITY, PROPERTY, AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

In FY24/25, the Risk Management Division received, processed, and adjusted 1,396 new claims. This is an increase of more than 5% over the number of new claims for the prior fiscal year. This correlates into each of the three claims adjusters handling approximately 465 new claims in FY24/25, in addition to adjusting any open claims from prior years.

The Risk Management Division received and analyzed 614 incident reports in FY24/25. This is a decrease of almost 25% from the number of incident reports for the prior fiscal year. This decrease is likely attributable to the fact that there were not two major hurricanes in FY24/25.

The Risk Management Division utilizes outside counsel (Cohen Vaughan, formerly Vaughan McLean) for workers' compensation matters. In FY24/25, 38 workers' compensation matters were handled by outside counsel at a total cost of $223,479.57.

RECOVERIES

In FY24/25, the Risk Management Division recovered $2,938,620.79 in subrogation, salvage, restitution, and payouts from insurance companies on damage to County-owned property and automobiles. The recovery increase includes property damage reinsurance for Hurricane Debby, Hurricane Helene, and Hurricane Milton. The Risk Management Division also recovered $18,392.22 in subrogation and $26,684.77 in reinsurance from workers' compensation claims.

CONCLUSION: RETURN ON INVESTMENT AND COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

The CAO delivers substantial financial value through its in-house legal team. During FY24/25, the CAO's total personnel cost for its in-house legal team was approximately $3.2 million. By comparison, obtaining comparable legal services through outside counsel was estimated to cost approximately $6.5 million. The County avoided more than $3.3 million in costs by maintaining legal services in-house. In addition to these cost savings, the CAO helped recover more than $3.8 million for the County. Together, these results demonstrate the significant financial value generated by an experienced, dedicated in-house legal team while providing the County with legal services that are readily available, knowledgeable about County operations, and integrated into the organization.

The CAO remains dedicated to delivering superior, cost-effective, ethical, impartial, and prompt legal representation and risk management services to the Board of County Commissioners and its various operating departments.



Manatee County Attorney's Office
1112 Manatee Avenue West, Suite 969
Bradenton, FL 34205
941-745-3750

OFFICE OF THE MANATEE COUNTY ATTORNEY
ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 1, 2024 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2025
FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025

REVISED





AS OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

OFFICE AT A GLANCE

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

COUNTY ATTORNEY
Pamela J. D'Agostino

DEPUTY COUNTY ATTORNEY
Christopher M. De Carlo

CHIEF ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
Sarah A. Schenk
Florida Bar Board Certified in City, County, and Local Government Law

ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEYS
Douglas E. Polk
Camilo A. Soto
Master of Urban and Regional Planning
Whittni M. Hodges
Deanne C. Fields
Katherine H. Welch
Rebecca E. Waterman
Master of Business Administration
Jared M. Monahan
Kristina H. Snyderman

LAW OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
Patricia Nolan * †

LEGAL ASSISTANTS
Diane Hajek
Janet Gable

LAW OFFICE ASSISTANT
Sabrina Oien

PARALEGALS
Alicia Stull * †
Advanced Certified Paralegal: Real Estate Principles
Juliet Shepard * †
Advanced Certified Paralegal: Land Use and Contract Management
Pamala Roberts *
PACE Registered Paralegal
Kayla Lewis *
Melissa Mayernick *
Donna Belcher *

REVISED

RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION

RISK MANAGER
Nicole Bezdek ‡
Certified in Workers' Compensation Litigation

RISK ANALYST
Tracey Martin ‡
Master of Business Administration
Certified Safety Manager

SENIOR CLAIMS ADJUSTER
Sheila Moore ‡

WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS ADJUSTER
Melinda Dunnam ‡

CLAIMS ADJUSTER
Shannon Moore ‡

*Florida Registered Paralegals
†Certified Paralegal
‡Licensed Accredited Claims Adjuster

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2024/2025 (FY24/25) was a year of rebuilding and renewed momentum for the County Attorney's Office (CAO). The CAO remained steadfast in its mission to provide exemplary, cost-effective, ethical, and timely legal representation and risk management services to the Board of County Commissioners (Board) and County departments. While continuing to navigate the increasing complexity, urgency, and volume of matters requiring legal and risk management support, the CAO focused on strengthening and stabilizing its team and operations. We said goodbye to valued team members as they transitioned to new professional opportunities and challenges, celebrated the growth and promotion of existing team members, and welcomed new team members whose experience and perspectives further strengthened the team.

Strategic priorities remain largely consistent with prior years (including, but not limited to, maintaining continuity of legal services and organizational resilience, strengthening collaboration and communication with County Administration and County departments, retaining and recruiting high-quality team members, fostering professional development and leadership growth, identifying opportunities for improvement, and succession planning). The comprehensive legal representation and risk management services delivered in FY24/25 to advance and protect the County's interests and as described herein are estimated to equate to a more than $3 million financial benefit for the County, reflecting a strong return on investment for the Board and this community.

REVISED

For the first time in the history of the CAO, all of the paralegals are Florida Registered Paralegals. To earn this accolade, a paralegal must satisfy the education, training, certification and work experience requirements outlined in Chapter 20 of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar. According to May 2025 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Florida has more than 40,000 paralegals and legal assistants, yet fewer than 5,000 paralegals have this credential. As such, this designation reflects a significant professional accomplishment and distinguishes the CAO's paralegals as members of a relatively small group of paralegals who have met The Florida Bar's rigorous standards.

Guidelines for Work Assignments

Since 1998, the CAO has been guided by certain Guidelines for Work Assignments (Guidelines). The Guidelines have been set forth each year in the annual report and have been approved by the Board pursuant to the Board's acceptance of the annual report. They are of critical importance to the CAO in helping to maintain a positive and productive working relationship with the Board and with individual Commissioners. The Guidelines are included in the annual report again this year.

GUIDELINES FOR WORK ASSIGNMENTS

The County Attorney's Office (CAO) will undertake any work assignment directed by a majority of the Board of County Commissioners (Board) consistent with applicable law, Article II½, Chapter 2-2 of the Manatee County Code of Ordinances, as may be amended from time to time, and the contract between Manatee County (County) and the County Attorney. No attorney in the CAO is required to render legal services where to do so would violate applicable ethical standards or create a conflict of interest.

The attorneys in the CAO maintain an attorney-client relationship with the Board as a collegial body. The CAO intends to avoid any action that undermines or jeopardizes the confidence and trust that are essential to maintenance of the attorney-client relationship. In the absence of a legal or ethical mandate, the CAO will not knowingly undertake action that is inconsistent with the will of the majority of the Board.

The ordinary mission of the CAO includes routine handling of legal issues that are the subject of requests for legal services from managerial-level County employees pertaining to County business, without waiting for specific Board direction. When a request for legal services (RLS) comes from someone other than a majority of the Board (e.g., a Commissioner, the County Administrator, or a Department Director), attorneys in the CAO ordinarily will utilize the following guidelines in responding:

REVISED

A. County Commissioners are constitutional officers and are entitled to legal advice regarding issues related to the performance of their duties as Commissioners. Therefore, unless precluded by other considerations, a County Commissioner is entitled to a complete response to a RLS regarding such issues.

B. The CAO will follow normal legal/ethical principles in determining the priority to be given to work assignments, such as the approach of deadlines, the significance of the matter at issue, the consequences of delay in responding, etc. Other things being equal, Board requests and requests from the County Administrator or Department Directors, acting at the behest or direction of the majority of the Board, shall have priority over other requests.

C. The CAO will not undertake legal work that entails an inordinate commitment of time or other resources in the absence of direction from the Board.

D. The CAO will not undertake to draft an ordinance, resolution, or other formal expression of County policy if there is reason to believe the majority of the Board does not support it.

E. The CAO does not review the propriety or legality of actions or omissions of a Commissioner in the absence of a request to do so from the involved Commissioner.

F. The CAO does not respond to requests which pose hypothetical or speculative fact situations.

GUIDELINES FOR WORK ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

G. When legal service has been undertaken on a matter, whether or not pursuant to a Board request, and it appears that completion of the service may demand considerably more resources than anticipated at the outset of service, the CAO may request Board direction on whether to continue the service.

H. The CAO will not review past decisions of the Board for legality in the absence of a majority request, unless there is reason to believe that the past decision could result in serious future loss or damage to the Board or the County and that legal review could lead to corrective action that would prevent or mitigate the loss or damage.

I. The CAO ordinarily will not undertake legal service regarding matters outside the scope of the Board's powers and duties, (e.g., review of actions of constitutional officers), unless said action appears to pose a serious impact or concern affecting the County's interests or unless directed to do so by a majority of the Board and the work can be done without ethical impropriety.

J. The CAO will not undertake legal service regarding actions by or issues confronting the Board solely in a different capacity where the Board has separate legal counsel in that capacity (e.g., the Port Authority) unless directed to do so by majority request and the work can be done without ethical impropriety.

K. The CAO does not represent and does not furnish legal advice to Commissioners or other County employees regarding their personal business or legal problems encountered outside the scope of their duties as County officers or employees.

L. Matters that ordinarily would not be addressed may be reviewed if it appears that failure to undertake such review and advise the Board could adversely affect the interests of the Board or the County or that the review deals with issues which the Board must consider in the future.

M. In the absence of extraordinary circumstances, the usual protocol is that a RLS is directed to the County Attorney, who will then assign it to an Assistant County Attorney for response.

REVISED

Identification of the Need for Legal Guidance

Generally, the CAO relies upon managerial-level County team members to raise legal issues and seek legal advice when it is prudent to do so. It is the responsibility of managerial staff to be alert for potential legal issues and to consult with the CAO when necessary to protect the County's interests. The primary mechanism by which the CAO renders legal advice and guidance to the various departments is in response to a request for legal services (RLS) submitted via a pre-approved form which contains all relevant information and is transmitted with all appropriate and material documentation.

SUMMARY OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION DELIVERED

During FY24/25, 532 RLSs and 380 litigation matters were active, 458 RLSs and 185 litigations matters were opened, and 468 RLSs and 191 litigation matters were answered/closed. On average, the legal representation workload demands appear to have increased by approximately 5% compared to the prior fiscal year.

ATTORNEY AND PARALEGAL HOURS

The attorneys in the CAO have a combined more than 200 years of experience, averaging more than 18 years of legal practice per attorney. The average prevailing market rates in the community for similar legal services by attorneys, paralegals, and legal assistants of reasonably comparable skill, experience, and reputation are estimated to be at least $277, $121, and $60 per hour, respectively. Therefore, procuring the legal services performed by the CAO's personnel through outside law firms would have likely cost the County approximately $6.5 million in Fiscal Year 24/25.

	Litigation	Non-Litigation	Total
Attorney	6,296.3	11,778.5	18,074.8
Paralegal	4,493.7	4,445.7	8,939.4
Total Hours	10,790.0	16,224.2	27,014.2

REVISED

HOURS BY DEPARTMENT

Department	Litigation		Non-Litigation		
	Hours	Percentage	Hours	Percentage	Total
Board of County Commissioners	10,288.3	95.4%	3,918.4	24.2%	14,206.7
Community & Veterans Services	23.7	0.2%	347.4	2.1%	371.1
Convention & Visitors Bureau	0.0	0.0%	313.0	1.9%	313.0
County Administration	0.0	0.0%	243.9	1.5%	243.9
Development Services	8.9	0.1%	3,424.1	21.1%	3,433.0
Financial Management	0.0	0.0%	1,182.1	7.3%	1,182.1
Government Relations	0.0	0.0%	103.0	0.6%	103.0
Human Resources	53.2	0.5%	1,601.7	9.9%	1,654.9
Information Technology	0.0	0.0%	13.5	0.1%	13.5
Natural Resources	0.0	0.0%	575.7	3.5%	575.7
Property Management	0.0	0.0%	1,558.5	9.6%	1,558.5
Public Safety	263.8	2.4%	1,394.5	8.6%	1,658.3
Public Works	21.0	0.2%	906.8	5.6%	927.8
Sports & Leisure	0.0	0.0%	141.0	0.9%	141.0
Utilities	131.1	1.2%	500.6	3.1%	631.7
Total Hours	10,790.0		16,224.2		27,014.2



REQUESTS FOR LEGAL SERVICES

BY DEPARTMENT

Department	RLS	Percentage
Board of County Commissioners	14	2.6%
Community & Veterans Services	12	2.3%
Convention & Visitors Bureau	20	3.8%
County Administration	6	1.1%
Development Services	127	23.9%
Financial Management	22	4.1%
Government Relations	9	1.7%
Human Resources	36	6.8%
Information Technology	4	0.8%
Natural Resources	19	3.6%
Property Management	75	14.1%
Public Safety	97	18.2%
Public Works	48	9.0%
Sports & Leisure	14	2.6%
Utilities	29	5.5%
Total	**532**	

REVISED



LITIGATION SNAPSHOT

LITIGATION CASES AND HOURS

Category	Cases	Percentage	Hours	Percentage
Animals in Distress	2	0.5%	39.4	0.4%
Auto Property Liability	7	1.8%	416.7	3.9%
Bankruptcy	59	15.5%	219.6	2.0%
Civil Rights	3	0.8%	190.1	1.8%
Code Enforcement	39	10.3%	451.6	4.2%
Construction	1	0.3%	14.3	0.1%
Declaratory or Injunctive Relief	13	3.4%	789.3	7.3%
Eminent Domain	31	8.2%	210.8	2.0%
Employment	4	1.1%	72.7	0.7%
Environmental	1	0.3%	4.3	0.0%
Foreclosure	12	3.2%	77.7	0.7%
Garnishment	8	2.1%	25.9	0.2%
General Liability	3	0.8%	126.6	1.2%
Land Use	8	2.1%	982.6	9.1%
Other	17	4.5%	1,741.2	16.1%
Personal Injury	63	16.6%	5,196.7	48.2%
Probate	108	28.4%	219.5	2.0%
Sunshine/Records/Ethics	1	0.3%	10.2	0.1%
Total	**380**		**10,790.0**	

REVISED

RECOVERIES

Matter Type		Amount
Bankruptcy	$	4,102.85
Code Enforcement Liens	$	5,513.16
Foreclosures (SHIP Loans)	$	181,770.64
Garnishment Attorney's Fees	$	500.00
Opioid Settlement Funds	$	3,672,630.78
Probate:	$	17,678.50
Other:	$	3,002.67
Total	**$**	**3,885,198.60**





OUTSIDE COUNSEL

Outside counsel are generally engaged for matters that cannot be handled solely by the CAO's attorneys when (a) a conflict of interest exists, (b) a case presents the need for particular expertise that our attorneys do not have; (c) a special matter demands an unusually concentrated and heavy time commitment; and/or (d) the professional responsibilities of the attorneys cannot be met with an increase in workload. Attorneys have a duty to manage their workload in a manner that ensures they can competently, diligently, and ethically represent each client. This includes not accepting more cases or assignments than they can reasonably handle, so as to avoid compromising the quality of legal services, violating ethical obligations, or failing to meet professional standards of care.

REVISED

Excluding workers' compensation, the CAO utilized outside counsel for 16 litigation matters and 9 non-litigation matters. Outside counsel provided approximately 15% of the total legal services performed on behalf of the County for FY24/25. The outside counsel services paid by the CAO for FY24/25 were $510,351.57 ($223,479.57 for workers' compensation plus $286,872 for all other legal services). Individual departments fund certain outside counsel expenses (e.g., bond counsel—Finance; eminent domain—Public Works; immigration—sponsoring department). The below firms were retained by the CAO to provide legal representation for the County in specified matters in FY24/25:

Law Firm	Legal Areas
Cohen Vaughan, LLP	Workers' Compensation
Ford Harrison	Labor & Employment
Gray Robinson	Eminent Domain; General Representation
Greenberg Traurig	Bond Counsel
Immigration Attorneys, LLP	Immigration
Johnson Anselmo	Jail Medical Litigation
Law Offices of Scott F. Bergthold	Civil Rights
Nabors Giblin	Bond Disclosure
Ogletree Deakins	Union Negotiations
Romano Law Group	Opioids Litigation
Trenam Law	Bankruptcy; Construction
Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Berman, PL	Statutory Challenge

SETTLED CLAIMS, LITIGATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

MATTERS RESOLVED PURSUANT TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY OF UP TO $30,000:

Case or Claimant Name	Case/Claim Number	Type	Amount	Date
Azcui, Jose	2024022496	Tort	$ 3,000.00	10/7/2024
Cook, Lynne	2022-CA-3694	Tort	$ 17,500.00	10/23/2024
Albritton, Dawn	2024022476	Tort	$ 812.97	10/28/2024
Hermes, Devon	2024022380	Tort	$ 6,614.52	10/31/2024
Crawford, Trudy	2025022550	Tort	$ 2,672.55	11/12/2024
Harley, Katrina	2023020248	Tort	$ 6,500.00	11/22/2024
VanDam, Hailey	2025022864	Tort	$ 2,500.00	11/22/2024
Beauregard, Donna	2022005324	Tort	$ 17,000.00	12/10/2024
Moran, Doug (Estate of Jeanette Moran)	2022-CA-1223	Tort	$ 25,000.00	12/11/2024
Miller, Judy	2023-CA-1229	Tort	$ 21,500.00	12/17/2024
Orellana Duran, Andreas	2025022658	Tort	$ 3,113.76	1/4/2025
Torres, Yeni	2024022359	Tort	$ 3,224.59	1/7/2025
Yokeum, Travis	2020-CA-1844	Tort	$ 10,000.00	1/16/2025
Floyd, Jeremy	2024022442	Tort	$ 5,165.02	1/27/2025
Van Landingham, Lenabelle	2025022840	Tort	$ 5,400.00	1/28/2025
Skorski, John	2025022837	Tort	$ 4,000.00	1/31/2025
Little League, Lakewood Ranch	2024022511	Tort	$ 970.00	2/4/2025
Chavez, Douglas	2024021802	Tort	$ 5,844.94	2/5/2025
Joy Gonzalez	2024022295	Tort	$ 3,266.69	2/20/2025
Ardila, Gerard And Suzanne	2025023005	Tort	$ 461.74	2/20/2025
Pacheco Guerrero, Ivan	2025022943	Tort	$ 4,585.86	2/24/2025
Snowden, Vista	N/A	Employment	$ 10,000.00	2/24/2025
Hackney, Samantha	2024-CA-1844	Tort	$ 7,500.00	3/4/2025
Cupidon, Violette	2025023067	Tort	$ 5,000.00	3/5/2025
Armstrong, Jill	2024021321	Tort	$ 18,359.98	3/7/2025
Thompson, Walter O/B/O Imperial Lakes Estates	2025022924	Tort	$ 2,390.00	3/11/2025
Emmalena Lord	2025023162	Tort	$ 5,668.57	3/14/2025
Sissel, Joseph	2024022464	Tort	$ 4,322.96	3/14/2025
Ann Colonna	2025023095	Tort	$ 8,592.70	3/18/2025
Sturgill, Casey	2025022955	Tort	$ 3,665.94	3/18/2025
Scott, Allowishes	2023-CA-6360	Tort	$ 15,000.00	3/19/2025
Lane, Kevin	2024022519	Tort	$ 201.90	3/19/2025
Hudson, Betty	2023-CA-2610	Tort	$ 30,000.00	3/19/2025
Stephens, Darline	2025023094	Tort	$ 16,875.00	3/20/2025
Macey, Ryan	2025023200	Tort	$ 4,546.00	3/20/2025
Corbett, James	A2350308	Workers' Comp	$ 26,419.00	3/21/2025
Witt, Christina	2024022443	Tort	$ 451.50	3/21/2025
Beckmann, Karrie	2025023202	Tort	$ 477.19	3/24/2025
Chavez, Rafael	2023020174	Tort	$ 5,000.00	3/25/2025
Florida Power and Light Company	2024022413	Tort	$ 3,667.67	3/25/2025
Kotter, Christa	2025023233	Tort	$ 3,340.99	3/27/2025
Klomp, Jack	2025023054	Tort	$ 10,199.17	4/1/2025
Kerestesy, Randy	2024-CA-519	Tort	$ 29,500.00	4/3/2025
Kerestesy, Shelly	2024-CA-519	Tort	$ 29,500.00	4/3/2025

REVISED

SETTLED CLAIMS, LITIGATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

MATTERS RESOLVED PURSUANT TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY OF UP TO $30,000:

Case or Claimant Name	Case/Claim Number	Type	Amount	Date
Hiram Feliciano-Safeco Insurance Co.	2025023035	Tort	$ 12,683.20	4/3/2025
King, Adam	2025023000	Tort	$ 2,240.58	4/7/2025
Thurber, Jason	2025023307	Tort	$ 547.18	4/10/2025
Tashunda Richardson	2025023255	Tort	$ 10,523.76	4/11/2025
Smith, Marsha	2024022508	Tort	$ 4,000.00	4/14/2025
Paizes, Spiros	2021-SC-6805	Tort	$ 7,000.00	4/22/2025
Nesllali Herreria	2025023047	Tort	$ 1,013.29	4/28/2025
Zane, Larry	2025023099	Tort	$ 2,820.52	4/30/2025
Mays, Yolanda	2025023222	Tort	$ 1,700.00	5/5/2025
Robison, Natalie	2025023310	Tort	$ 1,075.00	5/6/2025
Williams, Norma	2025023263	Tort	$ 1,000.00	5/13/2025
Muchna, Tim	2025023404	Tort	$ 428.00	5/16/2025
Snowden, Vista	A2420249	Workers' Comp	$ 25,000.00	5/20/2025
Harvey, Wayne	A2420331	Workers' Comp	$ 15,100.00	5/20/2025
Davenport, Marne	2025023343	Tort	$ 5,547.20	5/20/2025
Catalina Rojas	2025023151	Tort	$ 2,990.18	5/21/2025
Save Gates Creek	2020-CA-4515	Land Use	$ 2,155.71	6/2/2025
Michael Sanz Pomier	2025023089	Tort	$ 2,783.63	6/5/2025
Nasaire, Fanel	2024-CA-672	Tort	$ 20,000.00	6/9/2025
Weisz, Andrew	2025022832	Tort	$ 1,500.00	6/10/2025
Matthews, Susan	2025023376	Tort	$ 1,388.47	6/26/2025
Freeman, Joseph	2024-CA-1844	Tort	$ 20,000.00	7/3/2025
Weiskopf, Kristopher	A2380033	Workers' Comp	$ 20,100.00	7/8/2025
Mcavoy, Karen	2025022972	Tort	$ 882.98	7/8/2025
Cole, Harold	2025023447	Tort	$ 1,570.84	7/10/2025
Currie, Paul	2025023354	Tort	$ 10,000.00	7/15/2025
Wooton, Lee Ann	2023021257	Tort	$ 10,000.00	7/15/2025
Hudson, Katie	2024022024	Tort	$ 12,500.00	7/21/2025
Burke, Michael	2025022974	Tort	$ 6,159.60	7/24/2025
Dunfee (Minor), Jasper	2024022099	Tort	$ 5,500.00	7/24/2025
Chibli, Zeina	2024-CA-894	Tort	$ 30,000.00	8/4/2025
Frederic Tinord, Celavie	2024022469	Tort	$ 12,911.82	8/11/2025
Bradley, Sharon	2025023688	Tort	$ 88.52	8/11/2025
Smith, John	2025022829	Tort	$ 1,539.52	8/19/2025
Santiago-Casillas, Erangelis	2025023636	Tort	$ 8,873.24	8/20/2025
Neville, Myriam	FY24/25-0535	Employment	$ 900.98	8/26/2025
Gillis, Tania	FY24/25-0535	Employment	$ 1,068.56	8/26/2025
Peltz, Mark	2025023777	Tort	$ 1,274.81	9/3/2025
Cole, Madeline	2025023737	Tort	$ 9,693.39	9/9/2025
Jason Thurber	2025023876	Tort	$ 1,750.00	9/16/2025
Calzada (Minor), Jose	2024022168	Tort	$ 7,500.00	9/17/2025
Simmons, Cindy	2025023630	Tort	$ 415.00	9/18/2025
Carson, Bennie	2023020386	Tort	$ 3,500.00	9/19/2025
Cohen, Ellen	2024-CA-582	Tort	$ 10,000.00	9/19/2025

REVISED

SETTLED CLAIMS, LITIGATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

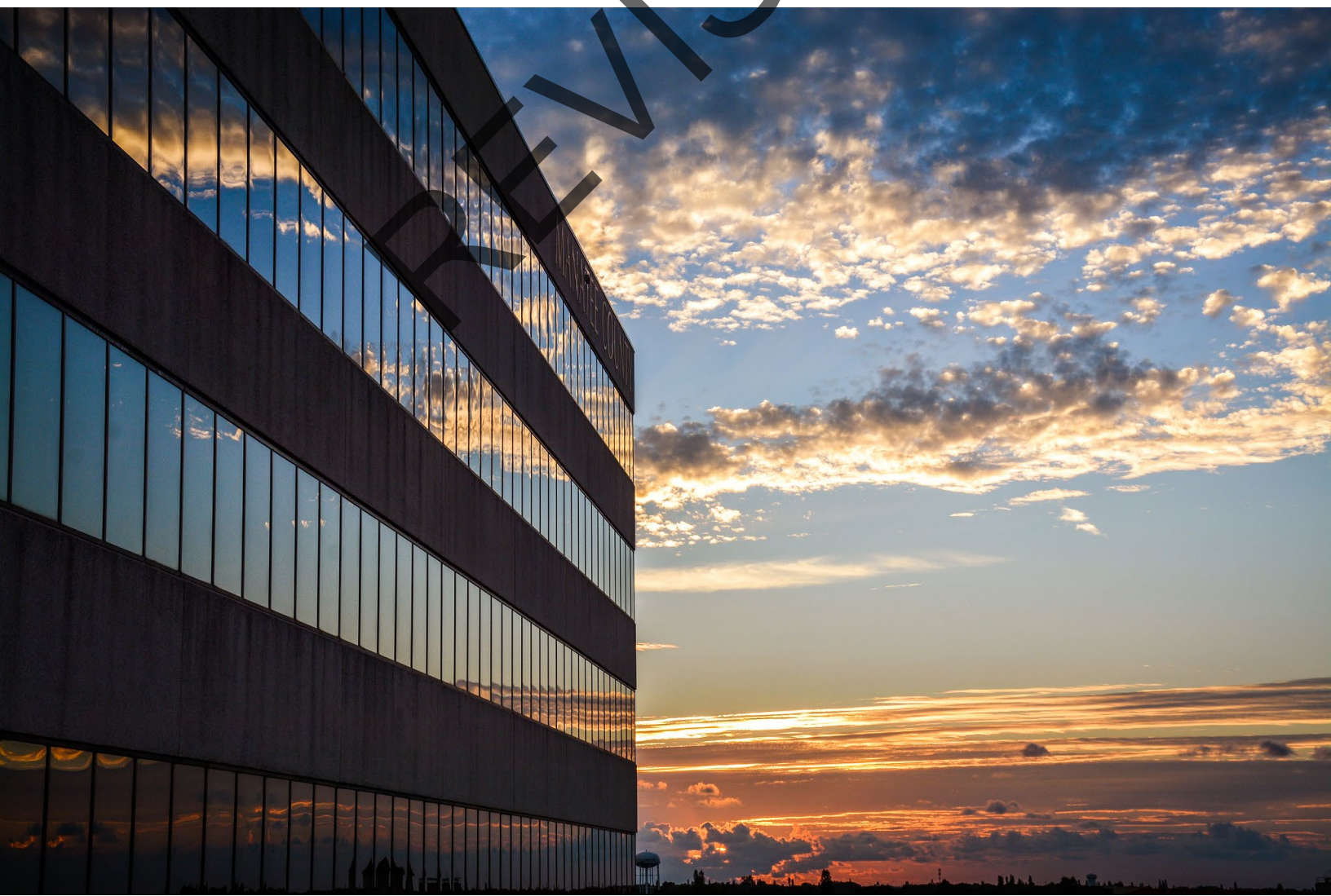
MATTERS RESOLVED PURSUANT TO COUNTY ATTORNEY'S SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY OF UP TO $30,000:

Case or Claimant Name	Case/Claim Number	Type	Amount	Date
Austin Hamblin	2025023770	Tort	$ 2,493.38	9/23/2025
Paul Lang	2025023771	Tort	$ 4,404.96	9/25/2025
Watson, Tyrone	A2420309	Workers' Comp	$ 24,100.00	9/26/2025
Ganey, Katherine	2025023666	Tort	$ 5,885.00	9/30/2025

SUMMARY OF SETTLEMENTS

Type	Number	Total Amount	Average
Employment	3	$ 11,969.54	$ 3,989.85
Land Use	1	$ 2,155.71	$ 2,155.71
Tort	83	$ 599,576.28	$ 7,223.81
Workers' Comp	5	$ 110,719.00	$ 22,143.80
Totals	**92**	**$ 724,420.53**	**$ 7,874.14**

REVISED





RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION ACTIVITIES

LIABILITY, PROPERTY, AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

In FY24/25, the Risk Management Division received, processed, and adjusted 1,396 new claims. This is an increase of more than 5% over the number of new claims for the prior fiscal year. This correlates into each of the three claims adjusters handling approximately 465 new claims in FY24/25, in addition to adjusting any open claims from prior years.

The Risk Management Division received and analyzed 614 incident reports in FY24/25. This is a decrease of almost 25% from the number of incident reports for the prior fiscal year. This decrease is likely attributable to the fact that there were not two major hurricanes in FY24/25.

The Risk Management Division utilizes outside counsel (Cohen Vaughan, formerly Vaughan McLean) for workers' compensation matters. In FY24/25, 38 workers' compensation matters were handled by outside counsel at a total cost of $223,479.57.

RECOVERIES

In FY24/25, the Risk Management Division recovered $2,938,620.79 in subrogation, salvage, restitution, and payouts from insurance companies on damage to County-owned property and automobiles. The recovery increase includes property damage reinsurance for Hurricane Debby, Hurricane Helene, and Hurricane Milton. The Risk Management Division also recovered $18,392.22 in subrogation and $26,684.77 in reinsurance from workers' compensation claims.

REVISED

CONCLUSION: RETURN ON INVESTMENT AND COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

The CAO delivers substantial financial value through its in-house legal team. During FY24/25, the CAO's total personnel cost for its in-house legal team was approximately $3.2 million. By comparison, obtaining comparable legal services through outside counsel was estimated to cost approximately $6.5 million. The County avoided more than $3.3 million in costs by maintaining legal services in-house. In addition to these cost savings, the CAO helped recover more than $3.8 million for the County. Together, these results demonstrate the significant financial value generated by an experienced, dedicated in-house legal team while providing the County with legal services that are readily available, knowledgeable about County operations, and integrated into the organization.

The CAO remains dedicated to delivering superior, cost-effective, ethical, impartial, and prompt legal representation and risk management services to the Board of County Commissioners and its various operating departments.

PROPOSED



Manatee County Attorney's Office
1112 Manatee Avenue West, Suite 969
Bradenton, FL 34205
941-745-3750