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

October 8, 2026 – Land Use Meeting

Subject
Authorization to Settle Shelby Tillman v. Manatee County, Circuit Court Case No. 2024-CA-001842 in the amount of $70,000.00

Category
CONSENT AGENDA

Briefings
Briefing Provided Upon Request

Contact and/or Presenter Information
Douglas Polk, Assistant County Attorney, Ext. 3741

Action Requested
Motion to authorize the County Attorney's Office to settle Shelby Tillman v. Manatee County, Case No. 2024-CA-001842 on behalf of Manatee County for $70,000.00 and issue a settlement check in the amount of $70,000.00 to the Plaintiff, Shelby Tillman, in exchange for a full and complete release of any and all of Plaintiff's claims against the County, a dismissal of Plaintiff's lawsuit against the County with prejudice, and to execute all related documents in connection with the settlement.

Enabling/Regulating Authority
Manatee County Code of Ordinances Article II ½, § 2-2-35, and Article VII

Applicable Advisory Board
N/A

Background Discussion
This is a personal injury case emanating from a motor vehicle accident that occurred on October 18, 2023. Plaintiff, Shelby Tillman (Plaintiff), was a restrained patient on a stretcher in a Manatee County Emergency Medical Services ambulance, who was being transported to Lakewood Ranch Medical Center for medical reasons unrelated to the subject incident. The ambulance rear-ended another vehicle on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard while enroute to the emergency room. Plaintiff seeks damages for past and future medical expenses and pain and suffering for alleged injuries to her head, neck, and back, and cardiac complaints. The past medical expenses are approximately $223,383.41. Her medical insurance paid approximately $12,480.53, and Plaintiff paid out of pocket expenses of approximately $296.75. Adjustments were made in the amount of $176,219.72 leaving a remaining balance of approximately $34,386.41.

On May 20, 2025, the Board allowed Plaintiff's first Proposal for Settlement (Plaintiff's First Proposal) in the amount of $200,000.00 to expire based on the recommendation of the County Attorney's Office (CAO). On June 23, 2025, the County served a Proposal for Settlement (County's First Proposal) on Plaintiff in the amount of $25,000.00, which Plaintiff did not accept. On December 2, 2025, the Board allowed Plaintiff's second Proposal for Settlement (Plaintiff's Second Proposal) in the amount of $150,000.00 to expire based on the recommendation of the CAO. On the same date, the Board authorized the CAO to serve a second Proposal for Settlement (County's Second Proposal) on Plaintiff in the amount of $50,000.00, which Plaintiff did not accept. On June 16, 2026, the Board allowed Plaintiff's third Proposal for Settlement (Plaintiff's Third Proposal) in the amount of $95,000.00 to expire based on the recommendation of the CAO.

Following expiration of Plaintiff's Third Proposal, negotiations continued with Plaintiff's counsel, and a proposed settlement agreement was conditionally agreed upon. Pending Board approval, in exchange for Plaintiff executing a full and complete release of all of Plaintiff's claims, including attorney's fees and costs, and a stipulation for dismissal with prejudice of Plaintiff's lawsuit against the County, Plaintiff has agreed to accept $70,000.00 in full and final settlement of all her claims against the County.

Given Plaintiff's claimed medical expenses, medical treatment to date, the facts of the subject incident, and costs the County will incur in defending this case through trial, the CAO recommends the Board grant the CAO authority to settle this matter for $70,000.00 in exchange for 1) a full and complete release of any and all of Plaintiff's claims against the County, including attorney's fees and costs, and 2) Plaintiff's dismissal of the lawsuit with prejudice.

If the requested action is not approved by the Board, this case will continue through litigation, including a potential trial, which is currently scheduled for February 8, 2027.

The CAO conferred with the Director of the Public Safety Department, and she concurs with the CAO's recommendation.

Because this case is in active litigation, if Commissioners have questions regarding this item, we respectfully advise that they request private briefings with the CAO and refrain from discussing it publicly.

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

Instructions to Board Records Emailed 10/9/2026
Please e-mail a copy of this agenda item to:
Douglas Polk, Assistant County Attorney, at douglas.polk@mymanatee.org;
Melissa Mayernick, Paralegal, at melissa.mayernick@mymanatee.org;
Diane Hajek, Legal Assistant, at diane.hajek@mymanatee.org.

Cost and Funds Source Account Number and Name
Cost: $70,000.00; Account Number: 5050001500 Object Code: 549102 (Insurance Claims)

Amount and Frequency of Recurring Costs
N/A