

**MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY LIAISON COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR, MANATEE ROOM
1112 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, Florida
APRIL 14, 2026**

Present were:

David Otterness, Chairman
Jeff Covert, Vice-Chairman (attended via Zoom)
Don Berg
John Settineri

Present were:

Brent Anderson, Government Relations
Crosley Jones, Legislative Aide
Vicki Tessmer, Board Records Supervisor, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

AGENDA

GE20260414DOC001


1. **CALL TO ORDER**

 Chairman Otterness called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Otterness, delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

 A motion was made by Member Settineri, seconded by Member Berg, and carried 4-0, to approve the minutes of March 17, 2026.

The next meeting will be held on May 26, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

AGENDA

GE20260414DOC001

2. **LETTER TO FLORIDA CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Brent Anderson, Government Relations, noted there are no updates regarding Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) letter, which was dropped off to the Chief Financial Officer on January 21, 2026.

3. **DISCUSSION WITH INTERIM CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

GE20260414DOC002

Member Settineri addressed staffing levels in the DOGE report, and it was found that staffing levels are in line with other Counties based on population. He focused on the process by which the Board acts on certain items. He suggested quarterly reports to the Board regarding the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), questioned the arbitrage payment due to not spending all the funds from a bond on time, and noted processes could be more streamlined.


Claudia Campos, Interim Chief Financial Officer, noted processes are daily tasks. There are some things the Board cannot control, as there are Statutory requirements. June 8, 9, and 10, are budget work sessions, and she encouraged the Members to attend. Staff is prepared to identify areas in need, and there are periodic reports given throughout the year. The CIP dashboard is available online. The arbitrage payment was not a common occurrence, and ideas will need to be filtered through the Commissioners.

Discussion ensued regarding reserves, certain projects can sit for years, each new Board has their priorities, each year the Board reviews everything in the budget, the ACFR (Annual Comprehensive Financial Report) was published and addresses restricted reserves, unrestricted bond funds, Florida Statute requires a certain amount of reserves, the County sets an internal resolution to have 20 percent of the budget in the reserves, and ad valorem taxes have gone down.


Mr. Settineri noted Tourist Development Tax (TDT) can be used for roads and bridges that do not strictly relate to tourism, with a vote by the Board. He suggested creating a process to utilize specific funds for other purposes. Employees have moved to the 9000 Building, and he questioned if the building has enough space to accommodate staff.

Ms. Campos noted certain funds have restrictions, but it was difficult to find line items in the State DOGE report.


Brent Anderson, Government Relations, stated the Governor vetoed trail funding this year, but \$1.5 million was received by the federal government. There is an extensive trail system planned to connect to surrounding counties, and most of the funding was from appropriations. Each trail has a separate purpose, the trail system planned for in-town is to alleviate traffic on roads and allow individuals who do not have cars to move about in a safer way.


 Discussion ensued regarding as State and federal funds are received, the funds set aside for the trails that were County funds, are moved out and replaced in other funding sources.

Mr. Anderson noted there has always been an Information Outreach program, and those staff positions were moved from one department to another.

 Ms. Campos explained there is misleading information from sources outside the County, and Departments are struggling to keep up with daily tasks, because they cannot maintain staffing levels due to salary.

Discussion ensued regarding no response to the DOGE report regarding the ferries, met with State DOGE in February, Manatee County was happy with the report, what is the benefit of having the ferry service, and the 9000 Building will be 100 percent utilized by County employees.

 Mr. Anderson and Ms. Campos explained the County Administration Building will be utilized by Constitutional Offices, the County Attorney, County Information Technology, and remains the County Seat.

 Discussion ensued regarding the 9000 Building is an investment in real estate and is an asset, the issue raised by the public is the process by which the 9000 Building was acquired, driving distance to the 9000 Building for employees, no one has left the County due to the commute, hotel offices are available in the Administration Building for staff to use on meeting days, the majority of staff does not come to the Administration Building, there is parking available at the 9000 Building, obtain Sheriff's crime reports to evaluate the Sheriff's budget, School Resource Officer and Crossing Guard needs are outside the Sheriff's control, and increased costs are related to technology needs.

Member Berg addressed consolidating purchasing capability between the County and Constitutional Officers and questioned if there is an opportunity to consolidate.

Ms. Campos explained piggyback purchasing occurs throughout the County, and collaboration exists. Government entities work with each other to ensure the best deal. The Supervisor of Elections Office has unique purchasing requirements.



Discussion ensued regarding some Constitutionals have their own purchasing departments including the School District of Manatee County and the Sheriff.

4. **SELECTION OF FINAL MEETING DATES**

Crosley Jones, Legislative Aide, noted the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 26, 2026, and the following meeting would be June 23, 2026.

Brent Anderson explained the final meeting could be in July, and GELC can report to the Board on July 28, 2026. The Committee could wrap up their report in June.

Discussion ensued to have the final meeting on June 23, and present to the Board in July, and there is no need to meet in July.

5. **FINAL REPORT TEMPLATE**



Brent Anderson, Government Relations, displayed the final report template with the breakdown of areas of interest, each member would present their report, including interlocal agreements, spending trends, purchasing synergy, and overall procedures, conclusion (wrap up slide, thanking staff), have County Administrator confirm the findings at one of the final meetings, may not address the items in the Florida DOGE report, and Members would need to be prepared for questions from the Board.

6. **PRESENTATION ON INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT**

Crosley Jones, Legislative Aide, reviewed a spreadsheet of the related information on interlocal agreements.

Discussion ensued regarding taking advantage of interlocal agreements and sharing resources, funding sources, traded assets, and ensure the County recoups any costs through grants and other sources.

7. **CITIZEN COMMENTS (SUBMITTED)**

There were no comments submitted online.

8. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There being no citizen comment, Chairman Otterness closed citizen comment.

9. **MEMBER COMMENTS**

Jeff Covert

- Questioned if there is a format for the final report

Mr. Anderson will create the final report for the Board to review.

Member Berg

- Suggested having one page related to scope in the report regarding the breakdown of taxes (Dollar bill illustration)

10. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Otterness adjourned the meeting at 11:21 a.m.

Minutes Approved: May 26, 2026