

**REGULAR MEETING
LEVY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 3, 2026**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was held on February 3, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. in the BoCC Meeting Room at the Levy County Government Center.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Tim Hodge called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M..

INVOCATION: Given by Comm. Hiers

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Comm. Mills

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

District 1: Vice Chairman Charlie Kennedy
District 3: Comm. Desiree Mills
District 4: Chairman Tim Hodge
District 5: Comm. Johnny Hiers

ALSO PRESENT:

County Manager – Mary-Ellen Harper
Legal Counsel - NGN, Evan Rosenthal

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- **Action Taken:**

- **Amendments:**

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|----------------|--------------------|
| ○ Motion | Comm. Kennedy |
| ○ Second | Comm. Mills |
| ○ Vote Outcome | 4-0 motion passes. |

RECOGNIZE ELECTED OFFICIALS: **NONE**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Speaker One: Jeff Hardison (Chiefland) Apologized for being late as he had to fill his tires with air
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BUSINESS OR INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**1. Adopt Resolution No. 2026-3 RESOLUTION NUMBER 2026-3 A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA ADOPTING A DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY FOR LEVY COUNTY TRANSIT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE (Audio 5:03)**

- **Presenter:** Connie Conley, Community Services Division Director
 - **Discussion:** FDOT requires the Zero Tolerance Drug & Alcohol Policy to be updated for Levy County Transit.
 - **Action Taken:**
 - Motion Comm. Hiers motioned to approve.
 - Second Comm. Mills
 - **Vote Outcome** 4-0 motion passes.
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2. Approve an Amendment to Levy County's RESTORE Act Spill Impact Component (Pot 3) State Expenditure Plan to remove Project 12-1 to "Waccasassa Land Acquisition" and Project 12-3 "Septic-to-Sewer Conversion" and add new Project 12-4 "Levy County Coastal Working Waterfront: Cultural Heritage, Economic Development, and Reef Restoration (CLEAR Initiative)." (Audio 5:55)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** This project, funded at \$10.5 million, will be implemented by the Levy County Board of County Commissioners and will restore approximately 25–35 acres of oyster reef habitat at Corrigan's Reef and nearby estuarine areas. Activities include planning, permitting, reef construction, workforce training, monitoring, and community engagement. The CLEAR Initiative builds upon Project 12-2, a smaller, previously funded effort demonstrating effective reef restoration techniques. Together, these efforts expand from localized restoration to a regional scale, combining habitat recovery with economic revitalization for the working waterfront communities of Cedar Key, Yankeetown, and Inglis. This project was unanimously approved by the Levy County RESTORE Act Advisory Committee on January 27, 2026.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Hiers
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.

3. Approve TASK ASSIGNMENT 2026-2 Amendment No. 1 between Levy County and Dewberry Engineers Inc. for \$244,200.00 to expand the scope of work for the updated Levy County Vulnerability Assessment. (Audio 7:47)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** This amendment is a result of DEP increasing Levy County's grant award from \$204,000 to \$244,200.00 to include the Town of Inglis and the part of Fanning Springs in Levy County.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.

4. Requesting the Levy County Board of County Commissioners to adopt Resolution 2026-4: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA, DECLARING CERTAIN PROPERTY AS SURPLUS; PROVIDING CERTAIN FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING DISPOSITION OF SAID SURPLUS PROPERTY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Audio 8:45)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** CareerSource Citrus|Levy|Marion assists local job seekers and employers by providing free job search assistance, career counseling, workforce training, recruitment services, and other resources tailored to local workforce needs. The Board of County Commissioners currently has vacant space within the Government Center. By surplussing and leasing this space to CareerSource, the County can generate revenue and receive valuable in-kind services while bringing critical workforce assistance directly to the Government Center. Additionally, with the recent relocation of the Economic Development Office to the Government Center, co-locating CareerSource alongside Development Services and Economic Development will create a centralized, convenient hub that supports business growth, workforce readiness, and future economic development opportunities for Levy County. CareerSource will pay: 1. Rent in the amount of \$200 per month during the term of this Lease. 2. Utility fees of \$200.00 per month during the term of the Lease to compensate Lessor for water, sewer, and electricity costs for the Leased Premises. 3. Cleaning fees of \$375 per month during the term of the Lease to compensate Lessor for janitorial services for the Leased Premises. 4. In kind contribution: CareerSource will provide an additional \$10,000 in customized staff training tailored to the needs of the Levy County Board of County Commissioners.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Hiers motioned to approve
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.

5. Authorize the County Manager to sign an Engagement Letter with Gray Robinson to serve as interim County Attorney; 2. Set an effective date. (Audio 9:55)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** The BoCC terminated the County Attorney's employment on October 21, 2025. The firm Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson was selected as the Interim County Attorney on November 4, 2025 (approximately 90 days). The Request for Levy County Legal Services is scheduled to be issued the last week of January, with proposals due back by the end of February. It is reasonable to anticipate that the Board will complete the review process and be positioned to select a new County Attorney in March or April (potentially an additional 60 days). Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson has served the county with distinction during this transition. Due to the firm being based out of Tallahassee, they are not interested in serving as the permanent County Attorney, but they are willing to continue to provide litigation and other services as needed by the County. The attached proposal was provided by Gray Robinson to provide Interim County Attorney Services for up to six months. Gray Robinson currently serves as one of the County's contracted firms for Labor and Employment Services. Further, they are willing to submit a proposal to serve as the permanent County Attorney.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy motioned to terminate the agreement with NGN to make it immediate and contract with GrayRobinson as interim legal counsel.
 - Second: Comm. Mills seconded with comments and being grateful for NGN legal services.
 - Discussion: GrayRobinson would be legal counsel for six months and no early termination clause. Evan Rosenthal provided clarification on the new agreement and stated termination would be possible if mutually agreed upon. Gray Robinson representative, Stephanie Marchman, made clear to BoCC if they wanted to go with another firm during the six month term, they would mutually agree to terminate contract. GrayRobinson Senior Associate, Eleanor Samuels Siegel, was also in attendance representing GrayRobinson.
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.

6. Approve Purchasing two (2) John Deere 6120E Tractor via Florida Ag and Lawn Equipment 25101900-21-STC from John Deere for \$184,785.74. (Audio 15:25)

- **Presenter:** Donald Clifton, Road Department Director
- **Discussion:** John Deere Tractors cost per \$92,392.87 totaling \$184,785.74. Funded from GL 301-0310-541- 64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Florida Ag and Lawn Equipment. The Division of State Purchasing the state term contract for Agriculture and Lawn Equipment 25101900-21-STC. This has already been agreed to by the BoCC but this is to give the final approval with the quotes and the new cost is less than originally presented.
- **Action:**

- Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Hiers
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.
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7. Approve Purchasing two (2) Bush Hog 15' Batwing Attachment via Florida Ag and Lawn Equipment Contract 25101900-21-STC from John Deere for \$52,332.60. (Audio 16:41)

- **Presenter:** Donald Clifton, Road Department Director
 - **Discussion:** Bush Hog Batwing cost per \$26,166.30 totaling \$52,332.60. Funded from GL 301-0310-541- 64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Florida Ag and Lawn Equipment. The Division of State Purchasing the state term contract for Agriculture and Lawn Equipment 25101900-21-STC.
 - **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Mills
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.
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8. Approve Purchasing a John Deere 60P Mini Excavator via Sourcewell Contract 011723-JDC from John Deere for \$131,746.42. (Audio 17:36)

- **Presenter:** Donald Clifton, Road Department Director
 - **Discussion:** The total cost of \$131,746.42. Funded from GL 301-0310-541-64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Sourcewell Contract 011723-JDC.
 - **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Mills
 - Chairman Hodge asked about the equipment if other implements will be attached. Director Don Clifton confirmed several implements will be available for multiple uses of this piece of equipment.
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.
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9. Approve Purchasing a John Deere 75P Mini Excavator via Sourcewell Contract 011723-JDC from John Deere for \$159,748.13. (Audio 19:45)

- **Presenter:** Don Clifton, Road Department Director
- **Discussion:** The total cost of \$159,748.13. Funded from GL 301-0310-541-64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Sourcewell Contract 011723-JDC
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Hiers motioned to approve.

- Second: Comm. Mills
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.
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10. Approve Purchasing two (2) Ford F-550 via Florida Sheriffs Association Contract FSA 25VEH-23 from Duval Ford for \$168,266.000. (Audio 20:30)

- **Presenter:** Don Clifton, Road Department Director
 - **Discussion:** Ford F-550 cost per \$84,133.00 totaling \$168,266.00. Funded from GL 301-0310-541-64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Florida Sheriff Contract FSA 25VEH-23.
 - **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.
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11. Approve Purchasing a 33' Texas Trailer via Florida Sheriffs Association Contract FSA23-EQU211 from Texas Trailer for \$33,350.00. (Audio 21:13)

- **Presenter:** Don Clifton, Road Department Director
 - **Discussion:** The total cost of \$33,350.00. Funded from GL 301-0310-541-64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Florida Sheriff Contract FSA23-EQU21.1.
 - **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Mills
 - Chairman Hodge asked if this trailer could haul (2) pieces of equipment. Director Don Clifton clarified this will for a larger piece of equipment with an implement due to size and weight. This will keep crews mobile and self-sufficient.
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.
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12. Approve Purchasing two (2) Ford F-350 via Florida Sheriffs Association FSA 25VEH-23 from Duval Ford for \$148,108.00. (Audio 23:35)

- **Presenter:** Don Clifton, Road Department Director
- **Discussion:** Ford F350 cost per \$74,054.00 totaling \$148,108.00. Funded from GL 301-0310-541-64010 Equipment. To Piggyback off the Florida Sheriff Contract FSA 25VEH-23.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Hiers motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Speaker One: Terry Witt (Bronson) Asked if the change in legal counsel was due to something NGN did wrong. Comm. Mills responded that there was nothing negative that has occurred to lead the BoCC to this decision. Comm. Hiers made a statement that NGN was in Tallahassee and further away and NGN had recommended the BoCC find a firm that is closer. There was no dissatisfaction with NGN legal services. Mr Witt confirmed GrayRobinson to have an office from Gainesville.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS: *(Audio 27:27)*

- Vice Chairman Kennedy: Historical Society hosted a chili cook-off. The Bronson youth league attended along with other groups. Was a judge of the chili cook-off. Although a cold day the event was well attended.
 - Comm. Mills: Please keep Florida farmers in mind with this severe cold weather.
 - Comm. Hiers: Williston this Thursday night will host first round of basketball playoffs. Please cheer them on for success. Attended the chili cook-off and had a great time visiting with the community.
 - Chairman Hodge: Support our schools and the sports teams.
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Requesting Approval of Expenditures:

- Chairman Hodge requested approval of expenditures in the amount of \$2,865,903.38.
 - **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes.
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13. Request for Approval of Minutes *(Audio 31:05)*

- **Presenter:** Matt Brooks, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
 - **Discussion:** Request Board approval of minutes for Regular Meeting held January 6, 2026 and January 27, 2026.
 - **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Hiers
 - Vote Outcome: 4-0 motion passes
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ADJOURNMENT: 9:35 AM

Minutes Submitted by: Matt Brooks, Clerk of Court & Comptroller
Date Submitted: 2/3/2026

DRAFT