

**REGULAR MEETING
LEVY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 27, 2026**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was held on January 27, 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 6:00 P.M.

INVOCATION: Given by Comm. Meeks

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Comm. Kennedy

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

District 1: Vice Chairman Charlie Kennedy
District 2: Rock Meeks
District 3: Desiree Mills
District 4: Chairman Tim Hodge
District 5: Johnny Hiers

ALSO PRESENT:

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- **Action Taken:**

- Amendments:
- Motion Comm. Kennedy motioned to amend the agenda to move items #6-7 to the end of the meeting to allow for department heads to handle county business then leave for the evening.
- Second Comm. Mills
- Vote Outcome 5-0 motion passed.

RECOGNIZE ELECTED OFFICIALS:

- Sue Beaudet- City of Williston, addressed BoCC as present for the annex building in Williston item on the agenda. In attendance to answer any questions when the item comes up.

PUBLIC COMMENT: *NONE*

BUSINESS OR INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. Status update on Interim County Attorney and County Attorney Services. (Audio 9:00)

- **Requestor:** Vice Chair, Commissioner Kennedy
- **Discussion:** Gray Robinson legal firm discussed to be interim on trial basis 6 months basis as an RFP goes out to other firms that may be interested. Legal counsel recommended the contract come back to the BoCC for consideration.
- **Action Taken:**

- Motion Comm. Kennedy motioned for County Manager to get contract details and bring back for BoCC to consider and vote on at the next meeting.
- Second Comm. Mills
- Vote Outcome 5-0 motion passes and contract for Gray Robinson will be decided at the next BoCC meeting.

2. Requesting the Levy County Board of County Commissioners to declare 930 square feet of office space at 375 Garner Street Suite D as surplus and directing the County Manager to negotiate a lease with CareerSource Citrus|Levy|Marion. (Audio 14:50)

- **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.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Hiers motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Meeks
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes.

3. Requesting Levy County Board of County Commissioners approval of an Amendment to Commercial Office Space Lease with the City of Williston, Florida and authorization for the Chair to execute the Amendment. (Audio 16:48)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** The County no longer needs the Premises and desires to relocate the staff currently housed there to the main Board of County Commissioners office space. The City has already approved the lease amendment. The City Resolution No. 2026-01-06 and the proposed Lease Amendment are attached.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

4. Authorize the County Manager to sign AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO AGREEMENT NO. 25PLN34 between the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Levy County. (Audio 17:40)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** This amendment is to allow for extend the task timelines within the grant period to allow the County's Vulnerability Assessment Data to be updated prior to completing the Adaptation Plan. There's more funding coming and the extension allows for the funding to be received.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

5. Approve TASK ASSIGNMENT 2026-2 between Levy County and Dewberry Engineers Inc. for \$204,000.00 to update the Levy County Vulnerability Assessment. (Audio 18:50)

- **Presenter:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- **Discussion:** The County has received \$204,000.00 from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Resilient Florida Grant Program to update the Levy County Vulnerability Assessment. Levy County previously completed a grant-funded county-wide Vulnerability Assessment and is under contract for a grant-funded Adaptation Plan. This third grant award will update the data that was compiled during the initial Vulnerability Assessment. Dewberry Engineers completed the Vulnerability Assessment for Levy County and is under contract to complete the Adaption Plan. Staff recommends that it makes sense for Dewberry to also complete the Vulnerability Assessment Update. County plans to assist Inglis and Fanning Springs.
- **Action:**

- Motion: Comm. Meeks
- Second: Comm. Kennedy
- Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

8. To approve the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) for Emergency Air Transport Services by Rocky Mountain Holdings, LLC, d/b/a Air Methods LLC. (Audio 21:20)

- **Presenter:** Mitch Harrell, Public Safety Director
- **Discussion:** This certificate is required for the entity to operate an air ambulance out of Levy County. This would allow for establishment for aviation medical transports in Levy County. Jerry Forton, Area Manager for Northwest Florida. Helicopter location would be at White Farms Airport in Chiefland. Air Methods is working in partnership with HCA Florida Healthcare. Out of pocket expense is typically less than \$200 average for patients requiring transport. Flight time is 18 minutes from Chiefland to the hospital in Gainesville. This will be a regional asset based in Levy County.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Public Comment: Timothy Eckert- if this is done for Chiefland why not think about having one in Williston and Bronson. Chief Harrell clarified there are landing zones all over the county.
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

9. To approve the Avtec Consoles as surplus property once they are taken out of service and to provide direction to staff on what to do with the consoles once they are surplussed. (Audio 34:30)

- **Presenter:** Clayton Drew, Communications Manager
- **Discussion:** The Avtec consoles will become surplus property once the new P25 system is operational. The City of Williston Police Department has expressed an interest in the consoles for their dispatch center. Staff is requesting direction from the BoCC as to whether there is an interest in donating or selling the equipment once it is surplussed. These are no longer needed for the county and Williston Police have expressed interest. Commissioner Hiers brought to BoCC attention that other Chiefs of Police in Cedar Key and Chiefland agreed in idea to donate to Williston. The radios need to stay together to work as a unit.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Hiers motioned to donate to Williston Police.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Public Comment: Sue Beaudet & Chief Mike Rolls of Williston would be appreciative of this action if voted in the affirmative. This would increase communications efforts and impact public safety in Levy County.
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes and will come back in the form of a resolution for approval to memorialize the action.

10. Approve the Agreement for Professional Services between Levy County and Clemons, Rutherford and Associates, Inc., effective as of the dates signed by the last party below (the “Effective Date”). (Audio 41:30)

- **Presenter:** Leatha Keene, Emergency Management Director
- **Discussion:** As documented by Chapter 2024-36, Laws of Florida, Section 6, Specific Appropriation 2725, the Legislature and the Governor appropriated \$10,972,471.00 of Fixed Capital Outlay funds for the design and construction of the “Levy County EOC/911 Center Remodel”. The County issued Request for (RFQ) No. 2025_002 for the professional services described in Article 2, in accordance with the Consultants’ Competitive Act. CRA submitted a response to the RFQ and was subsequently selected by the County to provide these services. The County seeks to obtain planning and design services to support the future build of the Levy County EOC/911 Center Remodel.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

11. To approve the Piggy Back off Sumter Countywide Pavement Maintenance and Rehabilitation Continuing Services for Countywide Chip Seal projects. Asphalt Paving Systems, Inc. is proposing to utilize Sumter County Contract, ITB 450-0-2023/RS. (Audio 45:20)

- **Presenter:** Don Clifton, Road Department Director
- **Discussion:** For road improvements with asphalt, for safety, cost-efficiency, longevity, and community benefits. A roadway in Williston that was slag and being broken up to be repaved. This roadway was approved to be resurfaced in 2002-03 and APS was brought in to save money instead of repaving. This roadway will be chip seal. This could help with other roadways and get them off the grading schedule. This process has been performed in Alachua County previously. This type of roadway would last approximately 15 plus years. There's still maintenance needs with this type of process.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills
 - Second: Comm. Kennedy
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

12. Approve the purchase of a 2026 - 48' Mac trailer from Nationwide Haul in the amount of \$108,361.00 off of Florida Sheriff's Contract FSA23-EQU231.0. (Audio 54:50)

- **Presenter:** Travis Newsome, Assistant Director, Solid Waste
- **Discussion:** Replacement of Asset # 10322 LF 92 Mac Trailer that burned up in September 2025. Funds are coming from our Insurance Claim. Another trailer was damaged and this is an insurance claim.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Meeks
 - Second: Comm. Mills
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

*****ITEMS #6-7 ARE MOVED TO END OF AGENDA TO ACCOMODATE DEPARTMENT HEADS TO CONDUCT BUSINESS AND RETURN HOME FOR THE EVENING*****

6. Public Hearing – Approve attached Order Denying Special Exception Application No. SE 24-01 (the “Application”), submitted by applicant Jose Lopez of Kimley-Horn, agent for owners Mildred Johns and June Stoeber, which application sought a Special Exception to conduct a mining operation on property located at 11986 NE State Road 24 Archer, Florida 32618, Parcel ID No. 0322100200. (Audio 56:40)

- **Presenter:** Bernard Cox, Director of Development
- **Discussion:** On December 16, 2025, the Board conducted a public hearing to consider the Application (the “Public Hearing”) and, upon conclusion of the Public Hearing, voted 4-1 to direct the County Attorney to prepare an order denying the Application, to be noticed and placed before the Board for final action pursuant to Section 50-755(c)(4), LDC. Consistent with the Board’s direction, an order denying the Application is attached.
- **Legal Counsel:** Read proposal to deny to the BoCC. Tonight there’s an order to deny for consideration by the BoCC.
- Public hearing was opened by Chairman Hodge.
 - Patrick Krechowski, Balch & Bingham LLP. Attorney out of Jacksonville. Entered memo into record for review. Clerk received memo into the record. Expressed confusion of this order to deny after the applicant met all regulations. This board should make a decision based on competent facts presented.
 - Doug Cliche (Bronson)- made comments on testimony given at previous Quasi Judicial hearing and defended the expert testimony. Named the experts and their qualifications. Restated denial by the BoCC initially and claims the applicant didn’t meet the criteria. Requested to vote to approve the order to deny tonight.
 - Mark Vandeboulder- urging BoCC to approve the motion to deny. Values the rural nature of the county and wants to protect public safety, health and welfare through stopping the harming of the best drinking water in the world. The project would create more harm than it would help the greater community.
- Public hearing was closed by Chairman Hodge.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy makes a motion to approve the order to deny.

- Second: Comm. Hiers
- Commissioner Comments:
 - Commissioner Mills stated Levy County needs sand and this application just did not work. County hired a contractor and was let down.
 - Commissioner Hiers stated finding the right location is necessary. There is a place and a need. Trucks on the road pay heavy road taxes. We are not against trucks. Most goods are delivered on trucks.
 - Commissioner Meeks commented that another application that comes through it needs to be complete and issues addressed. County staff need to do better and even though it was subcontracted out staff should have made sure it was sufficient. We will need sand to continue building in Levy County.
 - Commissioner Hodge stated the big trucks are needed for building. Not against sand mines.
- Vote Outcome: 4-1 motion passes (Comm. Meeks votes no)

7. Public Hearing – Adopt Ordinance Number 2025-10: AN ORDINANCE OF LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT, THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT AND THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT OF THE LEVY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BASED ON AN UPDATED REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 163.3177(6)(C)4, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR EXCLUSION FROM CODIFICATION; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING DIRECTION TO THE CLERK AND COUNTY STAFF; AND PROVIDING EFFECTIVE DATES. (Audio 1:19:02)

- **Presenter:** Bernard Cox, Director of Development
- **Discussion:** An Ordinance of Levy County, Florida, amending the current Levy County Comprehensive Plan to adopt, by reference, the Levy County Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (WSFWP) and to update related provisions of the Infrastructure, Conservation, and Intergovernmental Coordination Elements. This amendment is required by Section 163.3177(6)(c)4, Florida Statutes, which mandates adoption of a local WSFWP within 18 months after the applicable Water Management District adopts a Regional Water Supply Plan in March 2024, requiring Levy County to adopt its WSFWP by September 2025. This is the second reading of the ordinance.
- Public hearing was opened by Chairman Hodge.
 - Timothy Eckert (Williston)- didn't understand the staff member and what was presented.
 - Bo Cox clarified this is work that's being done at University Oaks water utility and this is to update the water system to meet state requirements.
- Public hearing was closed by Chairman Hodge.
- **Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Meeks
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS: (Audio 1:23:53)

- Comm. Kennedy: Bid opening for the renovations of the courthouse. Renovation starting soon.
- Comm. Meeks: Rural County Days was a success in Tallahassee.
- Comm. Mills: Restore Act meeting was held today and oyster restoration. County Manager requested Congresswoman Kat Kammack to conduct a study on waterway flows in south of county.
- Comm. Hiers: A good turnout at Rural Days in Tallahassee and legislators are working for rural counties. A few good meetings were held with our Senator and State Representative. Thank you to our Tourism Development team for a nice booth and Glenn Brooks for his contribution for the great seafood. Thank you to Tim Haines of Driftwood Restaurant also donated fish dip samples.
- Chairman Hodge: A lot of work and changes are taking place at the Government Center right now. Commissioner Hodge is taking on representing the BoCC on the committee for the new EOC project when it gets started.

Requesting Approval of Expenditures:

- Chairman Hodge requested approval of expenditures in the amount of \$2,274,224.76.

PAYMENT NUMBER	157021-157027, 157240-157363/463-508
FUND	AMOUNT
GENERAL REVENUE	1,220,904.89
ROAD	399,275.65
SHIP	309.37
MOSQUITO CONTROL	849.75
TRANSPORTATION	25,921.69
COURT FACILITIES	11,909.24
MISC GRANTS	11,408.60
EMS	109,651.07
FIRE	282,090.28
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT	25,915.69
UTILITIES	10,779.47
BLDG INSPECT & SAFETY	68,380.64
RESTORE ACT	12,958.84
CAPITAL PROJECTS	5,904.00
ROAD IMPRV & RESTORE	34,028.88
LANDFILL	53,936.70
TOTAL	\$ 2,274,224.76

- Action:**

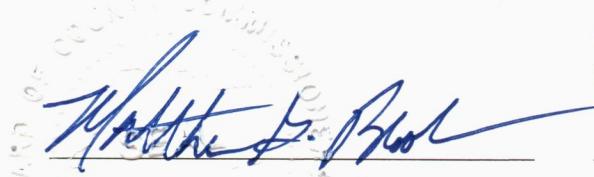
- Motion: Comm. Mills motioned to approve
- Second: Comm. Meeks
- Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

13. Request for Approval of Minutes (Audio 1:29:59)

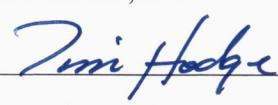
- Presenter:** Matt Brooks, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
- Discussion:** Requesting Board approval of the following minutes: Special Meeting, November 13, 2025; Regular Meeting, November 24, 2025; Regular Meeting, December 2, 2025; Regular Meeting, December 16, 2025; Regular Meeting, December 23, 2025;
- Action:**
 - Motion: Comm. Kennedy motioned to approve.
 - Second: Comm. Meeks
 - Vote Outcome: 5-0 motion passes

**BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION THE MEETING
WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:30PM**

ATTEST:


Clerk of Court, Matt Brooks

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEVY COUNTY, FL


Chairman, Tim Hodge

Minutes Submitted by: Matt Brooks, Clerk of Court & Comptroller
Date Submitted: 01/27/2025