

**MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY LIAISON COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR, MANATEE ROOM
1112 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, Florida
February 20, 2026**

Present were:

Mark Stanoch, Chairman
David Otterness, Vice-Chairman
John Settineri
Jeff Covert

Absent was:

Don Berg

Present were:

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER**



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

INVOCATION

Chairman Stanoch delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Stanoch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES



A motion was made by Member Otterness, seconded by Member Settineri, and carried 5-0, to approve the minutes of December 9, 2025.

AGENDA

GE20260220DOC001

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



Brent Anderson, Government Relations Manager, noted the letter to the Florida Chief Financial Officer (CFO) was dropped off on January 21, 2026. There has been no response. The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) responded to Manatee County.

GE20260220DOC002

3. **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

This item will be presented on March 17, 2026.

4. **COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**



Chairman Stanoch reviewed a document prepared by Member Berg to address sharing procurement strategies. Purchasing Cards are separate from centralized procurement. Combining purchasing with the School District of Manatee County (SDMC) is the number one priority to explore.

 Discussion ensued regarding the County does not have access to the School Board purchasing department, there are different finance departments for each governmental entity, Enterprise Agreements with Microsoft, shared printing tools, staff to gather purchasing information, need detailed purchase history, Constitutional Officers and the Sheriff's budgets are part of the County budget, reach out to the Cities first, State government agencies may not provide budget information, concentrate on a smaller number of items, recommend asking for everything, concentrate on Manatee County entities, and request all 2025 purchasing history. GE20260220DOC003

Member Covert distributed Expenditure Trends and compared four years of data by various County Departments, the three largest departments are the Sheriff, Public Safety, and Utilities, steady growth within the Sheriff's Department, and data includes population growth and inflation. GE20260220DOC004

 Discussion ensued regarding the difference between the Sheriff and Public Safety, Utilities is an enterprise fund; therefore, not part of ad valorem taxes, 2024 exhibits higher expenditures in Public Safety due to storms, reimbursement from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), do funds come out of reserves then reimbursed by FEMA, and the State CFO only looked at General Fund when coming up with numbers. GE20260220DOC005

Member Otterness reviewed a spreadsheet regarding interlocal agreements and how they come to fruition, negotiated agreements between two or more government entities, organizational benefit for the County, agreements may go back 20 years, what is the credit and debit for each organization, how to create future interlocal agreements that will benefit both entities, shared fiber conduit with the SDMC, Manatee County provides water to Island Cities, Sarasota, and Palmetto, Supervisor of Elections uses fire district facilities as voting locations, who initiates interlocal agreements, all interlocal agreements are reviewed by the County Attorney's Office and approved on the Board of County Commissionmer's Consent Agenda, why is it important to formalize these agreements, are grants involved, identify value of the spending, and either entity can initiate an interlocal agreement. GE20260220DOC006

Discussion ensued regarding what expenditures are going to the SDMC.

 Member Settineri reviewed DOGE bullet points, Board of County Commissioners should understand the budget process, are there reports on Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), is the information on the CIP available to the public, need accountability, \$500,000 deposit lost on a project that was not completed, and who are the responsible parties for CIP projects. GE20260220DOC007

Mr. Anderson explained State funding for the trail program that interconnects Counties and offers alternate travel routes for citizens, the Governor only vetoed trail funding last year, Financial Management should oversee the spending, Tourist Development Tax (TDT) has restrictions on spending, and revisit using the old jail building downtown.

 Discussion ensued to identify the problem and then present a solution, the problem is the process, the Board can respond and solve the issues, State DOGE Report identified the Gulf Island Ferry as an issue, identify how many cars are being eliminated by ferry use, there may be more than one problem that needs to be identified, cost+benefit=value, can the permissible uses for TDT funds be revised, is there a way to eliminate some reserves

to spend the funds elsewhere, certain items are not in question, and survey the County on what the citizens want.



Mr. Anderson suggested ways to present information to the Board, provide a summary page, and offer options.



Discussion continued regarding sharing the bullet points with Claudia Campos, Interim CFO, if Commissioners have questions, they can reach out to the County Administrator, who is in charge of bond funding, who is to blame for the \$500,000 arbitrage, and there is more than likely waste in the Sheriff's budget.

RECESS/RECONVENE: 11:34 a.m. -11:37 a.m. All Members present.



Chairman Stanoch used a slide presentation to address a deep dive into Information Technology (IT), goal is to review organizational improvements and identify aggregation opportunities with the SDMC, people, process, and technology, constraints and statutory requirements diverge, County and SCMC IT departments have many attributes in common, software licensing, business applications, cyber security, collect high level budget and operations data, Chairman Stanoch is meeting with the School District on Monday, hold a series of workshops to identify synergies, and the objective is for both IT organizations to work together in identifying and executing opportunities for improvement and consolidation.

GE20260220DOC008



Discussion ensued regarding multiple buses and fueling areas between the County and SDMC, original thought was to review line items for waste, but looking toward consolidation, general public does not see the intergovernmental interaction, and how to fill the gap caused by lost revenue if property tax revenue is lost.



Mr. Anderson reviewed the Legislative Bills regarding property tax before the House of Representative and the Senate, School Board and Public Safety would be untouched, decisions based on public input and discussions with legislators, seems as if the legislature is leaning toward increasing the homestead exemption, 59 percent of ad valorem taxes in Manatee County are from non-homestead properties, and the final process for imposing changes the property tax.

Discussion ensued regarding these decisions would take effect after the Government Efficiency Liaison Committee (GELC) is terminated, and the Governor is realizing any property tax reform will need to be done slowly and be more digestible for everyone.

5. **GOALS**

Chairman Stanoch suggested devoting the next meeting to defining the end product, and Members should continue working on their areas of interest. The next meeting is March 17, and the Board of County Commissioners' meeting is March 24.

Mr. Anderson noted any meeting between the Board and the GELC would be under Sunshine, reports can be presented at a Board meeting, and the Board has the option to extend the GELC.

6. **CITIZEN COMMENTS** (Submitted Online)

There were no citizen comments.

7. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There being no citizen comment, Chairman Stanoch closed citizen comments.

8. **MEMBER COMMENTS**



Mr. Anderson noted he can serve as a liaison between Members so they work together.

9. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Stanoch adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.

Minutes Approved: _____