MANATEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY LIAISON COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR, MANATEE ROOM
1112 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, Florida
October 28, 2025

Meeting video link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUlgjuGhS-qV966RU2Z7AtA

Present were:

Mark Stanoch - Chairman
David Otterness – Vice-Chairman
Don Berg
John Settineri

There is one vacant seat.

Present were:

Stephanie Garrison, Government Relation Director
Brent Anderson, Government Relations
Crosley Jones, Legislative Aide
Vicki Tessmer, 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.

AGENDA GE20251028DOC001
MINUTES
A motion was made by Member Berg, seconded by Member Otterness, and carried 4-0 to approve the minutes of September 23, 2025.

2. **GRANTS PRESENTATION**
Stephanie Garrison, Government Relations Director, used a slide presentation to review the grants management program, over $1 billion in grant funding, grants administration teams including pre-award, post-award, Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery, (CDBG-DR), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) teams, Grants Summary, staff salaries, FY25 grants, currently $622 million in grants this year, FY25 Grants Breakout, formula grants, partners in grantmaking and grantseeking, advisory boards, FY26 will be first full year for the grants team, and the program used to manage grants is Finance Enterprise by Central Square, which is cloud based.

Sheila Mclean, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), explained there are approximately 250 to 300 users on Finance Enterprise.

Michele Davis, Grants Division Manager, explained there is a grants module in Finance Enterprise, and noted there are 197 grants awarded to the County at this time.

Ms. Garrison stressed the four distinct areas for grants, and there are several people who work in each. There are specific users for each grant, and it is necessary to have accounting skills and knowledge of federal programs. GE20251028DOC002

Discussion ensued regarding all the other employees who work on grants in other departments and Constitutional Officers, annual cost for the use of the software, future objective for grants, three storms last year that created the need for a larger team, grant process, technology, does Manatee County pay out grants to organizations, 50 non-profit organizations who are not related to Manatee County, sub-recipients can be awarded funds, and $19.64 million in grants to non-profit organizations.

Ms. McLean clarified the difference between the dedicated millage voted on by the citizens of Manatee County for Children's Services and other grant funds. Some non-profits are paid out of the general fund, because the organizations provide services to the County, otherwise those services would need to be completely covered by the County. There is close to half a million paid out to non-profits for services. GE20251028DOC003

3. **PROCUREMENT PRESENTATION**

Sheila McLean, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Jacob Erickson, Procurement Official, continued the slides to review the mission and vision of the procurement division and structure, 17 staff members, construction, non-construction, and operations team, Procurement Division function, facilitate the process to ensure items are purchased properly, governing rules and regulations including Florida Statutes, Florida Administrative Code, and the Procurement Ordinance, purchasing categories, anything over $500,000 has to go to the Board of County Commissioners to approve, price-based solicitation, Invitation to Quote (ITQ), Invitation for Bid (IFB), and Invitation for Bid Construction (IFBC), Qualitative-Based Solicitation Methods, Request for Offers (RFO), Request for Proposal (RFP), and Request for Qualifications (RFQ), other procurement methods including Invitation to Negotiate (ITN), Piggyback Purchases, emergency purchases, public/private partnerships, and single/sole source, and Construction and Professional Services Procurement regulations and rules.

Mr. Erickson responded to questions and explained the total purchasing for FY25, was $662 million, elaborated on technology used including OnBase (Finance Enterprise), module for contract listing, $12.8 million in FY25 with P-card purchases, Manatee County does not go through the Florida Department of Management Services (FDMS), an eligible user is a political entity, they can utilize FDMS contracts, but they do not need to go through them for purchases, State Contracts, anything Information Technology (IT) related goes through an IT process, depending on the best way to purchase, and three quotes are required.

Discussion ensued regarding all purchases are signed off by the Director, stay within the thresholds, Clerk's office audits all P-card purchases each month, there is P-card user training, and $112 million in overspending in question found by the State.

Ms. McLean clarified the $112 million is in waste in the General Fund, where does that funding lie, 119 staff members in Financial Management, services, travel, education, and look for areas to reduce spending, what is important to one department, may not be important to another department, some services that cannot be cut include Public Safety and Cyber Security, there is no breakdown yet of the $112 million, and cutting spending by 47 percent is not sustainable.

Discussion ensued regarding the role of this Committee is to remain sustainable, it is important to have the outside looking in to bring input, start with largest spend rather than smaller items, there may be contracts in the County that are not offering a return on investment, the call to save and be efficient is clear, show a win soon by the Committee, expecting more information regarding the $112 million from the State in perhaps January when the Florida Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) presents their findings to the State House, present findings prior to the report for good public relations, what information the Committee wants staff to evaluate, DOGE report will be the line items, not the bulk $112 million, and the State CFO is more general and DOGE is more detailed.

Mr. Erickson noted interlocal agreements are not presented through Procurement, and the P-card regulation is charges $5,000 or below. He clarified they have not looked at partnering with other governmental agencies, since they have a different set of rules and policies to follow.

Ms. McLean noted each agency has their own guidelines, and if they partnered with the County, they would have to abide by a stricter set of rules than what they are actually following at this time. Some of their larger purchases need to be brought before the Board for approval.

Discussion ensued regarding sharing aggregate, and commodity purchasing.

4. **TOURIST INFORMATION TAX PRESENTATION**

Elliot Falcione, Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau Director, continued the presentation to address the Tourism Department is funded by a "bed tax" via Florida Statute 125.0104, the tax is six percent per dollar on all short term rentals (less than six months), with projected revenues this year of approximately $39 million, surplus revenues go into reserves for future opportunities, the makeup of the Tourism Development Council, Department responsibilities include tourism development, Powel Crosley Estate, programming at the Premier Sports Campus, and the administration of the Bradenton Area Convention Center, water taxi operations, the division of the Tourist Development Tax including beach renourishment, the tax is very restrictive, 31.5 percent growth since 2006 in tourism dollars, Tourist Development Tax invested assets, providing a list of investments, Capital Project at the Bradenton Area Convention Center, return on investment of $31 million annually due to the renovations, largest convention center on the west coast from Pinellas County to Naples, projected to generate $38 to $40 million in tourism tax, and brings in approximately $90 million in sales tax.

Discussion ensued regarding tourism tax is a revenue managed by the County Commission, citizens want tourist traffic reduced, tourism funds cannot be used to improve transportation facilities, Manatee County needs to be a destination County, looking at ways to save money, and why is the County funding a private non-profit organization such as the Performing Arts Center.

Mr. Falcione clarified there are specific uses for the Tourism Tax, arts and entertainment is an important factor for businesses moving to Manatee County, as well as tourism related jobs. There are specific programs that capture tourism statistics. Social Media is used for marketing. Manatee County is partners with Visit Tampa especially for marketing to European visitors, and they stretch dollars with Airport marketing. Tourist Development funds could not be used to purchase the Mixon Fruit Farms property. The Board of County Commissioners cannot change the way the Tourist tax can be spent, and he will follow-up with additional information.

6. **FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS**

Mr. Anderson explained Chairman Stanoch's presentation could be presented at the next meeting.

7. **FUTURE AREAS OF INTEREST**

Mr. Anderson noted this can be discussed in November.

8. **BUDGET SHAREPOINT SITE**

Mr. Anderson explained Members can be added to the Budget Sharepoint site, to see more information.

9. **DOCUMENT SHARE ON WEBSITE**

Mr. Anderson noted there is now a link on the website to the Clerk's website to view agenda items and minutes.

5. **FLORIDA CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PRESENTATION**

Staff is working on getting a breakdown on the Spend per Resident comparison with other Counties.

Discussion ensued regarding having a presentation on IT in December, can the government use volunteers to perform services, volunteers can be used for some Constitutional Officers, several positions were moved from other departments to perform similar tasks, seeking a better understanding of reserves, County Administrator can speak to reserves, how is the Cost of Living increase calculated, CFO is reviewing departments and would it be useful to review her findings, important to announce wins, citizens want to know what the Committee is accomplishing, and important to know the formula used by the State to come up with the $112 million found by the CFO's office.

A motion was made by Member Otterness, seconded by Member Berg, and carried 4-0, to move forward with a request to send a letter to the State CFO requesting how the results were derived.

10. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Ken Piper, expressed concern with how the Commissioners set policy, and suggested decreasing the amount property owners pay in taxes.

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

11. **MEMBER COMMENTS.**

Member Otterness noted he met with current and former County staff members to learn processes.
Member Berg suggested discussing how the Committee should address citizen concerns brought forward to the Committee and whether or not the comment is within the purview of the Committee.

Mr. Anderson noted a process can be brought forward at the next meeting.

12. **ADJOURN**
There being no further business, Chairman Stanoch adjourned the meeting at 12:13 p.m.

Minutes Approved: ____________________