

Pinellas County

*333 Chestnut Street
Clearwater, FL 33756*



Minutes - Final

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

9:30 A.M.

Budget Information Session

Palm Room

Board of County Commissioners

*Brian Scott, Chair
Dave Eggers, Vice-Chair
René Flowers
Chris Latvala
Vince Nowicki
Kathleen Peters
Chris Scherer*

ROLL CALL - 9:30 A.M.

Present: Chair Brian Scott, Vice-Chair Dave Eggers, Commissioner René Flowers, Commissioner Chris Latvala, Commissioner Vince Nowicki, Commissioner Kathleen Peters, and Commissioner Chris Scherer

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; and Tammy Burgess, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

Chair Scott provided information regarding the budget process and discussed the Board's role in it; whereupon, he related that two budget hearings will be held in September; and that, during the September budget hearings, the members will approve the millage rates and fees that fund the Departments.

1. Introduction and Budget Overview

Mr. Burton provided brief comments regarding the budget process and indicated that a recommended budget, which will be based on feedback received during the budget information sessions, will be presented on July 22.

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation titled *FY26 Introduction and Budget Overview*, Office of Management and Budget Director Chris Rose, with input by Mr. Burton, provided information regarding this year's countywide property tax roll growth when compared to the previous fiscal year and efforts to reduce costs. Mr. Rose and Mr. Burton also discussed a structural imbalance within the Fiscal Year 2026 budget request and adjustments to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office budget and funding for 9-1-1; whereupon, Mr. Rose noted that, for planning purposes, a general salary increase was not included for most departments, with the exceptions of the Property Appraiser and the Sheriff.

In response to comments by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Burton, with input from Mr. Rose, confirmed that a 3% general salary increase for employees, amounting to a total of \$2.4 million, is not included in the calculated structural imbalance; whereupon, Messrs. Burton and Rose provided brief comments regarding efforts to reduce costs, build back reserves, and work toward more sustainable budgets.

Mr. Rose indicated that discussion by the members regarding the budget and the maximum millage is scheduled for July 22; that two budget workshops have been tentatively scheduled for August 14 and August 28; and that public hearings regarding the budget will be held on September 4 and September 18.

Responding to comments and queries by the members, Messrs. Burton and Rose, discussed various topics, including a potentially lower general increase for exempt employees, millage for local road repairs, and efforts to ensure that vacant positions are needed.

2. Property Appraiser

Presentation and review of property value trends, taxable value, residential housing market sales statistics and trends, residential homestead exemptions, the “recapture rule”, recent legislation, public education sessions, and the budget summary and discussion of various topics, including assessment caps, vacant positions, and storm-related considerations.

Presenter: Mike Twitty, Pinellas County Property Appraiser

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator

Documents displayed: *FY 26 Budget Information Session Kickoff* and *Property Appraiser*

3. Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

Mr. Burton indicated that the Sheriff's budget presentation will be held at a later date.

Mr. Burton indicated that, since Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Ken Burke is not present at this time, the Tax Collector's budget will be presented.

5. Tax Collector

Presentation and review of wait time reductions for the Department of Motor Vehicles, cost savings due to a change in vendors, and the budget summary and discussion of funding provided by the County and the potential for additional registration renewal kiosks.

Presenter: Adam Ross, Pinellas County Tax Collector

Document displayed: *Tax Collector*

4. Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

Presentation and review of County-funded Clerk Departments, decision packages, and efforts to evaluate replacement options for the current Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and discussion of various topics, including the decision packages, resources related to implementation of a new ERP system, and use of artificial intelligence technology.

Presenter: Ken Burke, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator

Document displayed: *Clerk Of The Circuit Court*

Meeting Recessed: 11:12 A.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 11:23 A.M.

6. Human Resources - including Employee Health Benefits

Presentation and review of the budget summary, budget drivers, and cost allocation.

Office of Management and Budget presenter: Veronica Ettel, Budget and Financial Management Analyst

Input provided by: Chris Rose, Office of Management and Budget Director

Document displayed: *Human Resources*

Presentation and review of Department priorities and discussion of various topics, including operating expenses, existing benefits package, and accrual and payout of annual leave and paid time off.

Presenter: Wade Childress, Chief Human Resources Officer

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; and Chris Rose, Office of Management and Budget Director

Employee Health Benefits

Presentation and review of the Employee Health Benefits Fund, including budget drivers and the budget summary.

Office of Management and Budget presenter: Veronica Ettel, Budget and Financial Management Analyst

Document displayed: *Employee Health Benefits*

Presentation and review of accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2025 and the work plan and discussion of incentives related to employee health and reserves.

Presenter: Wade Childress, Chief Human Resources Officer

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; and Chris Rose, Office of Management and Budget Director

Meeting Recessed: 12:23 P.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 1:00 P.M.

7. General Fund and General Government

Presentation and review of the budget summary and budget drivers and discussion of various topics, including General Fund revenue sources, expenditures, and General Government funding.

Office of Management and Budget presenter: Jim Abernathy, Management and Budget Manager

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; and Chris Rose, Office of Management and Budget Director

Documents displayed: *General Fund and General Government & ARPA Fund*

8. Public Works

Presentation and review of the budget summary, efficiencies and cost-saving measures, budget drivers, decision packages, proposed changes to user fees, and the Capital Improvement Plan report and discussion of various topics, including the Local Option Fuel Tax, fleet inventory, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit inspections.

Office of Management and Budget presenter: Belinda Amundson, Budget and Financial Management Analyst

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Kelli Hammer Levy, Public Works Director; and Chris Rose, Office of Management and Budget Director

Document displayed: *Public Works*

Presentation and review of accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2025, the work plan, and performance measures and discussion of various topics, including local infrastructure repairs, the Local Option Fuel Tax, and dedicated millages.

Presenter: Kelli Hammer Levy, Public Works Director

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Paul Dean, Public Works Deputy Director; Chris Rose, Office of Management and Budget Director; and Jewel White, County Attorney

Documents displayed: *Condition Assessment Process, Transportation Enhanced Level of Service*, and *Transportation Trust Fund: Fund Forecast FY26 - FY31*

9. Housing and Community Development and Lealman CRA

Presentation and review of the Housing and Community Development Department's purpose, budget summary, budget drivers, and funds and discussion of state funding.

Office of Management and Budget presenter: Katherine Bleakly, Budget and Financial Management Analyst

Input provided by: Bruce Bussey, Community Development Planning Division Manager

Document displayed: *Housing & Community Development*

Presentation and review of accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2025, performance measures, and the work plan and discussion of affordable housing.

Presenter: Glenn Bailey, Planning Division Manager

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; and Bruce Bussey, Community Development Planning Division Manager

Lealman Community Redevelopment Area

Presentation and review of the Lealman Community Redevelopment Area's objectives and initiatives, fund overview, efficiencies and cost-saving measures, and budget drivers.

Office of Management and Budget presenter: Katherine Bleakly, Budget and Financial
Management Analyst

Document displayed: *Lealman CRA Trust*

Presentation and review of accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2025 and the work plan
and discussion of various topics, including alleyway programs, professional services,
and economic development strategy.

Presenter: Amy Davis, Assistant to the County Administrator

Input provided by: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator

ADJOURNMENT - 3:40 P.M.