

# **SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

*COUNTY SERVICES BUILDING  
1101 EAST FIRST STREET  
SANFORD, FLORIDA  
32771-1468*



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, September 10, 2025**

**5:30 PM**

**Budget 1st Public Hearing**

**BCC Chambers**

**Board of County Commissioners**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**Present:** Chairman Jay Zembower  
Vice Chairman Andria Herr  
Commissioner Bob Dallari  
Commissioner Lee Constantine  
Commissioner Amy Lockhart

Additional Attendees: County Attorney Kate Latorre, County Manager Darren Gray, Clerk of Court and Comptroller Grant Maloy, and Deputy Clerk Kyla Farrell.

**II. INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Tekoa Pouerie, The Sharing Center, gave the Invocation. David Johnson, Property Appraiser, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA**

Chairman Zembower stated the purpose of tonight's hearing is to present the Tentative Millage Rates and Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and to allow for public comments. The public should be reminded that the Board of County Commissioners does not have control over the tax levies or budgets of the School Board, the Water Management District, the Property Appraiser, Tax Collector, or any of the seven cities in Seminole County. Questions regarding assessed property valuations should be addressed to the Property Appraiser, David Johnson.

County Manager Darren Gray advised tonight is the first of two public hearings for the FY 2024-25 budget that are required by Florida Statute. The purpose of the meeting is to present to the public the tentative budget for all funds and the proposed millage rates for the Countywide District, Fire MSTU, Roads MSTU, as well as the rolled-back rates. By the State's definition, the rolled-back millage rate is a rate when applied to next year's tax base (excluding new construction) that will generate the same revenue as was raised in the previous year. This public hearing was advertised through the "Notice of Proposed Property Taxes" that was mailed to each property owner in August. The millage rates and budgets considered for tentative adoption tonight are the end result of nearly a year of work. This year's budget process started earlier than usual. In December of 2024, Departments were directed to submit budget requests under new guidelines that focused on essential services and discouraged discretionary increases. For the first time, these same guidelines were also shared with the Constitutional Officers to promote consistency and transparency across all budget participants. In March of this year, County leadership held a budget update with the Board to review the revenue trends, cost projections, and the structural challenges the County is facing. These discussions continued in March when the BCC held a retreat where staff outlined potential solutions and emphasized the need for coordinated action.

Mr. Gray stated later in April, all department directors came together for a full-day retreat focused on operational efficiencies. That session produced more than 40 "Seminal Moments" designed to reduce costs, streamline processes, and improve service delivery. All of that groundwork prepared them for the budget work sessions where the Commissioners reviewed every Constitutional Office, County department, and service area in detail. Throughout the process, the shared goal has been to balance fiscal responsibility with maintaining essential

services while meeting expectations of the growing community.

Mr. Gray discussed a few key highlights in the tentative budget including directing County departments to submit a 0% increase to their base operating budget, reduction of positions, and consolidating internal services through attrition and restructuring. He noted the budget highlights some investments in the future such as SCOUT, an indoor sports complex, continued redevelopment of Rolling Hills and Deer Run, stormwater and drainage improvements in Midway, and planning and design for the Rosenwald Community Center project. On the revenue side, to sustain the essential services to meet State mandates, the budget does include a 0.5 mill increase to the General Fund millage. This adjustment was not made lightly, but it is necessary to maintain critical services such as public safety, transportation, stormwater management for flooding, and parks.

Mr. Gray stated the County's general fund reserves is projected at \$69 million, or 18% of the operating expenses and revenues. Water, sewer, and solid waste enterprise funds remain fiscally sound with resources for ongoing operations and future capital improvements. The tentative budget represents a balanced plan, and it invests in the needs they face today while they are preparing for the challenges of tomorrow. It reflects a shared sacrifice and shared progress from staff and the community they serve.

### **Accept Proofs of Publication**

This public hearing was advertised through the "Notice of Proposed Property Taxes" mailed to each property owner in August.

### **FY 2025-26 Tentative Millage Rates and Budget Presentation**

1. FY 2025/26 First Budget Public Hearing - This is the First Public Hearing to discuss and approve the FY 2025/26 Tentative Millage Rates and Budget and set the date and time for the Second Public Hearing. Countywide (Timothy Jecks, Management & Budget Director) [2025-876](#)

Mr. Jecks addressed the Board and displayed a PowerPoint (as included in the agenda backup). He reviewed the FY 2025/2026 Tentative Millage rates as follows: The general countywide millage of 5.3751 mills is 16.42% above the rolled-back rate of 4.6168 mills. The Fire Rescue MSTU millage of 2.7649 mills is 5.43% above the rolled-back rate of 2.6226 mills. The Unincorporated Roads MSTU millage of 0.1107 mills is 5.33% above the rolled-back rate of 0.1051 mills. The Tentative Aggregate millage for all BCC taxing districts of 7.3663 mills is 12.70% above the aggregate rolled-back rate of 6.5363 mills. Mr. Jecks advised the Tentative Countywide Budget of \$1,215,087,959 for all funds includes \$12,990,504 in First Public Hearing adjustments.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

With regard to public participation, the following spoke: Leslie Grubl, Larry Meador, Brenda Urias, Richard Glover, Bob Chabot, Judy Desrosiers, George Sellery (document received and filed), Tom Haller (document received and filed), Joseph Humphreys, Nancy Harmon, Cindy Haller (document received and filed), Virginia Creedon, Richard Creedon, Wafa Esposito (document received and filed), Deanna Houston, David Leavitt, Pete Buis, Ron Ligthart,

Eunice Brown, Eric Fiedler, Fred Piering (document received and filed), Miguel Pico, Michelle Smith, Tekoa Pouerie, Deidre Barnecott, and John Horvath.

Al Leiker submitted a Public Comment Form but did not address the Board when his name was called.

Public Comment Forms were received and filed.

Written Public Comment Forms were received and filed from the following: Richard Daviduke, Thomas Cave, William Ennis, Carol Canon, Dan and Melinda LaMay, Mary Jo Martin, Gail Hoffmann, Arnaud Temporel, and Leslie Grubl (document received and filed).

No one else spoke and public input was closed.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

The Commissioners shared their comments regarding public participation and their opinions on the budget. Commissioner Dallari requested staff review what was presented during public participation and provide the Board with information regarding public comments. Commissioner Lockhart suggested the County should put a "Myth versus Fact" or an FAQ on their website regarding some of the public comments made tonight.

Motion by Commissioner Constantine, seconded by Vice Chairman Herr, to adopt the FY 2025/26 tentative millage rates as presented.

Districts 2, 3, 4, and 5 voted AYE.

District 1 voted NAY.

Motion passes 4 to 1.

Motion by Vice Chairman Herr, seconded by Commissioner Dallari, to adopt the FY 2025/26 tentative budget of \$1,215,087,959.

Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 voted AYE.

Chairman Zembower announced the second and final public hearing to adopt the County millage and budget will be scheduled for Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the BCC Chambers.

**IV. ADJOURN BCC MEETING**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m., this same date.

**APPROVED by the BCC:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Court and Comptroller  
As Clerk to the BCC