

**MINUTES OF THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGARDING THE FISCAL YEAR
2025/2026 COUNTY-WIDE BUDGET**

SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Present: Commissioner Michael S. Kohler, Chair, District 2
Commissioner Ashlee M. Hofberger, Vice Chair, District 4
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Steven R. Stroberger, District 1
Debbie Bowers, Assistant County Administrator
Honorable Pam Childers, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
Codey Leigh, General Counsel, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Jose Gochez, Operations Manager, County Administrator's Office

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Minutes prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA ITEM

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, called the First Budget Public Hearing to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Commissioner Stroberger led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Dr. Eric Truss of Friendly Baptist Church, led the Invocation.

MINUTES – September 9, 2025

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

3. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

The Board was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that:

- A. The 5:01 p.m. First Budget Public Hearing for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 was advertised in the Board's Weekly Meeting Schedule in the *Pensacola News Journal* on September 4, 2025;
- B. As required by Florida Statute 197.363, the 5:02 p.m. Public Hearing for consideration of adopting the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Fire Protection MSBU and First Year Assessment Rolls for street lighting, holding pond maintenance, Perdido Key beach mouse, and nuisance abatement Municipal Services Benefit Units (MSBUs) was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on August 15, 2025, and First Class Notices were mailed to all property owners in the affected MSBU Districts; and
- C. A Notice of Street Lighting MSBU Adjustment was also published in the *Pensacola News Journal* on August 15, 2025.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner May
Disposition: Carried unanimously

5. Board Action Items

I. 5:01 p.m. - Public Hearing for Consideration of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

- A. Presentation of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 - County Administrator Wes Moreno

The Board was advised by Assistant County Administrator Bowers that:

- (1) This is the first of two required Public Hearings for the Board to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget. The Board, later in the meeting, will set the second Public Hearing;
- (2) The Escambia County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the 2025/2026 tentative millage rates for TRIM notification purposes at the BCC meeting held on July 10, 2025;

(Continued on Page 3)

MINUTES – September 9, 2025

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

5. Continued...

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

- (3) The law requires that prior to consideration of the tentative budget, an explanation of the “Rolled Back Rate” be provided and entered into the records. The “Rolled Back Rate” is a computed millage rate that would generate the same amount of Ad Valorem tax dollars as the prior Fiscal Year, based on the proposed year’s tax roll, excluding new construction;
- (4) The millage rates tentatively approved by the Board for TRIM notification are 6.6165 for the County-wide millage rate, .3590 for the Library Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU), and .6850 for the Sheriff’s Law Enforcement Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU). The aggregate of these millage rates proposed for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 is 4.83% above the “Rolled Back Rate” of 7.1312, certified by the Property Appraiser. This represents the percentage increase in property taxes tentatively adopted by the Board; and
- (5) For information and to avoid any misunderstanding concerning the process of this meeting, this Public Hearing is convened tonight to discuss the County’s Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget. Because of time constraints, we will need to confine our discussion to this subject. Increases in property assessments, remarks or questions concerning individual property appraisals should be addressed to the County Property Appraiser at his office during normal business hours.

B. Questions/Discussion from the Board

There were no questions or discussion for this item.

MINUTES – September 9, 2025

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

6. Public Forum

The Board heard comments from Larry Downs, Jr.

7. Board Action Items Continued

I. Board Adoption of the Tentative Millage Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Tentative Millage Resolution [R2025-90], as presented in the Agenda backup, of 6.6165 mills for the County-Wide Millage rate, .359 for the Library MSTU and .685 mills for the Sheriff's Law Enforcement MSTU for Fiscal Year 2025/2026.

Motion: Move the item
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

II. Board Adoption of the Tentative Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Tentative Budget Resolution [R2025-91] of \$824,440,150 for Fiscal Year 2025/2026, as presented in the Agenda backup.

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

III. Announcement of the Date and Time of the Second Public Hearing for the Adoption of the Final Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, announced that the second Public Hearing for adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget will be held September 23, 2025, at 5:01 p.m., in the Board Chambers on the First Floor of the Ernie Magaha Government Building located at 221 Palafox Place.

Motion: So moved
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

MINUTES – September 9, 2025

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

7. Continued...

IV. 5:02 p.m. - Public Hearing for Consideration of Adopting the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

1. Board Adoption of a Resolution to amend Resolution R2003-71, as Amended by R2025-63, Revising the Cost of Service and Units of Assessment With no Change in the Proposed Fire MSBU Assessment Rates

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion recommending that the Board consider adopting a Resolution [R2025-92] to amend Resolution R2003-71, as amended by R2025-63, to revise the Cost of Service and Units of Assessment used to calculate the adjusted rates with no change in the proposed Fire MSBU assessment rates

Motion: Move the item
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

2. Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

Assistant County Administrator Bowers advised that a list of all Non-Ad Valorem rates is provided in the agenda backup.

3. Presentation of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Mainland Fire MSBU Assessment Roll

That the Board Adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Non-Ad Valorem Assessment Roll for the County Mainland Fire Protection Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU), following the 5:02 p.m. Public Hearing.

MINUTES – September 9, 2025

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

7. Continued...

IV. Continued...

4. Public Forum

The Board heard comments from the following citizens:

Tim Myers
Mary Konopka
Kurt Burge
Joanne T. Gibson
Jennifer M. Buttacavoli
Lisa Rogers
Regina Russell
Gordon Morse
Jacob Rockwell
William Pickard
Walter Buck, Sr.
Harvey Carroll
Michael Waldo
Nick Thimaras
Warren Sitzman
Linda Saighman
Faith Wylie
Ellyn Perez
Doug Freeman
Natalie Goodykoontz
Cheryl Johnson
Adam Gitschlog

Fran Opitz
Jim Pankuch
Ian Gilmore
Bruce Gamiere
Dan Ahoe
Jan Simmons
Robert Passero
William King
Ken Burnham
Dan Gough
Edward Sisson
Daniel Strawbridge
Josh Roberson
Elvis Christopher
Melissa Pino
Kevin Wade
Destiny Watson
Kristy Rosen
Louise Noeth
Rosemarie Dewolf

MINUTES – September 9, 2025

AGENDA ITEM – Continued

7. Continued...

IV. Continued...

5. Board Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Non-Ad Valorem Special Assessments Roll, as presented in the Agenda backup.

Motion: So moved
For Information: The Board discussed the purpose of the Special Assessments; how tax dollars are collected, restricted, and used; and possible future options to reduce the burden on taxpayers.
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously

V. Board Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 BOCC Employee Pay Scale as prepared by the Human Resources Department

Commissioner Kohler, Chair, advised that the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 BOCC Employee Pay Scale, as presented in the Agenda backup.

Motion: Move the item
Made by: Commissioner Barry
Seconded by: Commissioner Stroberger
Disposition: Carried unanimously
Speaker(s): Melissa Pino, Kevin Wade, and Josh Roberson

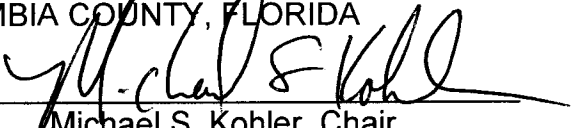
MINUTES – September 9, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

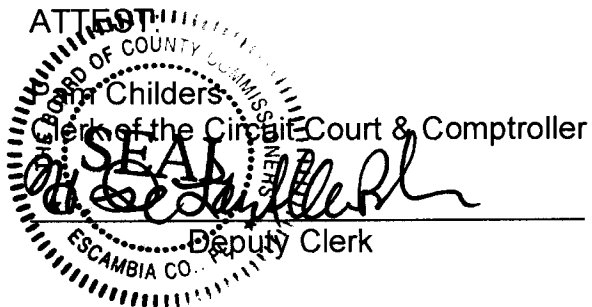
There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Kohler, Chair, declared the First Budget Public Hearing regarding the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 County-Wide Budget of the Board of County Commissioners adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____


Michael S. Kohler, Chair

ATTEST:



Approved: October 2, 2025