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OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Volusia County Council

Reported by Melissa Lammers

Report Date: August 19, 2026

Meeting Date: August 18, 2026

LINK TO FULL MEETING AGENDA:
https://vcservices.vcgov.org/agenda/agendas/20260817/agenda.htm

REPORT

HEALTHCARE

Consent Agenda Item F
FILE NUMBER 13678
Request to approve FY 26/27 Medicaid cost share for County's 3 hospital districts.
Revenue: $8,714,932

Summary/Highlights: County's FY 2026/27 annual Medicaid contribution is $11,024,582,
a 4.29% increase from the previous year. County may divide the responsibility proportionally among its 3 special taxing districts that benefit from Medicaid. In September 2025, County Council approved updated cost share percentages based on current Medicaid enrollment data by zip code and established a three-year review cycle for future updates. County has historically paid 20.95% ($2,309,649.93) of the annual contribution in acknowledgement of nursing homes within the county, with the hospital districts responsible for the remaining balance. Consistent with previously approved cost share percentages, the hospital district cost shares are: Halifax Hospital Authority (42.18%) - $3,675,958.35; Southeast Volusia Hospital Authority (9.21%) - $802,645.24; and West Volusia Hospital Authority (48.61%) - $4,236,328.48. The hospital taxing districts have been notified of their proposed cost shares. All districts are currently up to date on their payments. Staff requested Council authorization to invoice all three hospital taxing districts and pursue legal remedies if any district fails to pay their approved contribution.

Result: APPROVED.

ENVIRONMENT-CONSERVATION LANDS - BEACHES

Item G

FILE NUMBER 13689

Renewal of leases for cattle grazing on Deep Creek Preserve and Beck Ranch properties with Deep Creek Cattle, LLC, 13-P-23JD and 13-P-24JD.
Estimated annual revenue: $21,500

Summary/Highlights: On August 22, 2013, the Council approved two cattle grazing leases (Deep Creek Preserve and Beck Ranch) with Deep Creek Cattle, LLC., Osteen, Florida, with two five (5) year terms and the option to renew the lease annually thereafter. Brings lease rates up to current market values to generate approximately $21,500 annually, compared to $10,140 under previous rate. Revenue from the Deep Creek Preserve property goes to Volusia Forever Land Management Fund, and revenue from the Beck Ranch property goes to general fund. Extends each lease for an additional five-year period through August 31, 2031, with the option to renew for an additional five-year period upon mutual agreement. **Result:** APPROVED

Item N

FILE NUMBER 13690

Budget Resolution - Amendment No. 2 to FDEP Agreement No. 26V01, Florida Beach Management Assistance Funding Program - Ponce de Leon Inlet Management Plan Grant Agreement

Summary/Highlights: Increases FDEP funding obligation for beach restoration by $78,836.00, from $140,917.00 to $219,753.00, to cover completed FY25 monitoring work; Increases the corresponding County matching obligation by $78,836.00, from $140,917.00 to $219,753.00. Extends the agreement term by twelve (12) months, through December 31, 2029, Replaces the Grant Work Plan with a Second Revised Grant Work Plan reflecting the updated funding and revised deliverable due date of September 30, 2029

Result: APPROVED

Item O

FILE NUMBER 13692

Resolution of support for application to the State of Florida, Beach Management Funding Assistance Program for Fiscal Year 2027-2028.
Expenditure: $49,000 [$24,500 from grant funds; $24,500 local match

Summary/ Highlights: Affirms Council's support for beach monitoring within Volusia

County and its statutory obligation to execute the Ponce de Leon Inlet Management Plan (IMP); Confirms the County's agreement to serve as local sponsor for implementation of the IMP; Confirms the County has sufficient budgeted reserves to meet the local match requirement, and, if necessary, the ability to levy ad valorem property taxes to fund the match; and Affirms and authorizes the County Manager and the County's engineering consultant, Taylor Engineering, Inc., to apply for the funding assistance and take actions necessary to obtain it.

Result: APPROVED

GROWTH MANAGEMENT/ENVIRONMENT

Item 04
FILE NUMBER 13730
Presentation on Data Centers and Senate Bill 484.
(presentation is attached to agenda item)

Summary/Highlights:
Report distinguishes among different types and scales of data centers and evaluates their electrical and water demands, noise impacts, infrastructure requirements, workforce characteristics, economic implications, potential incentives, and compatibility with the County's existing Comprehensive Plan and development regulations and presents three policy options for Council consideration. **Applies only to unincorporated Volusia County**

Volusia County retains substantial authority over the review and regulation of data center development through its existing planning, zoning, and permitting authority. Florida SB 484, (2026), preserves local zoning, permitting, and incentive decisions, and also bars utilities from shifting data center infrastructure costs onto residential ratepayers. County's dependence on the Volusia-Floridan Sole Source Aquifer makes water consumption the most significant local constraint, since Florida's Outstanding Florida Springs protections and the limited capacity of the County's reclaimed water system would make permitting a large, water-intensive facility difficult without significant mitigation

Data centers can generate meaningful property tax revenue and potentially construction jobs but not much long-term permanent jobs. Noise from continuous cooling equipment

and periodic generator testing is a community compatibility concern that may exceed what the County's existing noise standards were designed to address. The broader shift

toward AI and data infrastructure is increasing demand for skilled trades and technical occupations, an area where the County's existing workforce institutions are positioned to respond

Result: DISCUSSION

Item 05
FILE NUMBER 13727 **SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENT**
First Reading of Ordinance 2026-16 - Temporary moratorium on large-scale data centers.

Summary/Highlights
At the July 21, 2026 meeting, Council voted to direct staff to bring back a 6- month moratorium on large-scale data centers to give staff adequate time to examine what regulations may be necessary to accommodate the unique resource demands and impacts on the surrounding environments that accompany such large-scale data centers. Ordinance 2026- 16 provides for a six-month moratorium, terminating on March 3, 2027 unless terminated earlier or extended via resolution.

Some discussion about SB 180 and SB 484 in conflict. Also, some discussion about Bert J. Harris act allowing moratorium up to 12 months.

Many concerns about available land in unincorporated county, collaboration with cities, water use, water recharge (large impermeable surfaces) and sinkholes

Result: After very convoluted and confusing discussion about moratorium and /or a ban or versus a ban, and how to wordsmith things to make sure they survive legal challenges, the Council descended into procedural gridlock. An amended motion for a 12-month moratorium and a full ban on large-scale data centers failed on procedural grounds. Then somehow, it was brought back (even the County attorney was stymied by what motion had been made). The final vote was to ban large scale data centers. It passed. So staff will bring back a new ordinance to that effect and which will go through the requisite two readings (hearings) for a vote. However, their intent is clear.