

**Annual Report**  
**City of Pembroke Pines Citizen's Budget Advisory Board**  
*Prepared on May 21, 2026*

Current Members:

***Mayor At Large:***

Hugo Alvarez  
Brandon Carrero  
Maguana Jean

***District 1:***

Frank Girardi, Vice-Chair  
(Vacancy)

***District 2:***

Kennedy Rosario  
Raul Ruiz

***District 3:***

Carolina Veira  
William Huff

***District 4:***

Scott Barnett, Chair  
Jorge Rodriguez

The Citizen's Budget Advisory Committee set forth on a mission to honor Mayor Castillo's original directive to bring further transparency to the budget issues facing the City by addressing pertinent capital needs along with relevant discussions about the affordability crisis now facing our residents. A significant amount of discussion centered on the possibility of legislative changes to the property tax code along with theoretical analysis and possible stress factors that may affect future City revenue structures. Key members of the City government presented detailed information about the function of each department in relation to the overall City budget, these were not only thorough and detailed, but every question was answered with conviction and integrity. We enjoyed frank discussions long into the night and have been privileged to be joined by the City Manager, City Attorney, the Asst. City Managers, Lisa Chong and Lesley Whyte, the Finance and Budget staff along with representatives Thomas Petrero of the Fire Department and Mark Manning of the Police Department. We also appreciate the staff members who do not go unseen attending our meetings, along with the occasional City commissioner. We would especially like to thank board secretary Marlene Graham for her generosity and insight, as well as her ability to keep us on track for success.

It is important that we honor our position as an advisory body by continuing to share our thoughts and conclusions with the City Commission, as evidenced through our recent support of the City's renewed media initiative to help our common constituency

understand how their dollars are utilized to maintain a high standard of living that welcomes families, entrepreneurs as well as a thriving senior community. We are a City of many with a common purpose and the citizenry deserve to know how their tax dollars benefit their everyday lives.

The following is a breakdown of the subject matter discussed over the past year:

**April 28, 2025** presentation: **Mayor Castillo's** presentation on his expectation of the Citizen Budget Advisory Board. Chair Barnett recommended board members watch the video again to view the mayor's specific expectations about the objectives and mission of the Citizen Budget Advisory Board.

**May 19, 2025** presentation – **Police Department and Fire Department** – Capital Costs. Board members wish to review the status of police and fire capital costs and set up a future meeting to discuss it.

**June 16, 2025** presentation – The **Utilities Department**, Water Treatment System presented by Tim Welch, Utilities Director.

**August 18, 2025** presentation – City Manager Dodge discussed the **City Budget**. Board members wish to explore the possibility of discussing financial relationships between the city and schools, focusing on **Pembroke Pines Charter Schools**, and reviewing potential budget items related to **PFAS** sludge disposal and its impact on the city budget.

**September 22, 2025** presentation – **Planning and Economic Development Department** presented by **Mike Stamm**, with **Steve Pizzillo** of the **Building Department**. Board members wish to assess the efficiency of the permitting process and consider ways to improve customer service regarding permits and address the concerns of residents about permitting fees and problems with contractors.

**October 20, 2025** presentation – **Community Services Department and Community Transportation** presented by **Jay Shechter**. Board members commented on Community Services and highlighted it as effective, but communication about offerings needed improvement for public awareness.

**November 17, 2025** presentation – **Recreation and Cultural Arts Department** presented by **Christina Goulding**. Board members commented that City facilities, including parks, are underutilized despite their quality and availability for rent. From sports programs to grounds-maintenance and the use of artificial turf. Consideration of how to best utilize **Club 19** as a premium asset with potential for greater revenue. The demand for recreational programs changed post-COVID, affecting facility usage but analysis of utilization and costs would be warranted

**December 15, 2025** presentation—**Budget Administration Director Lesley Whyte** discussed **Property Taxes** and impacts on City budgets. Board members wish to review

the analysis of outsourced contracts versus in-house staffing costs for a future board meeting.

**March 16, 2026** presentation— **Assistant City Manager Jonathan Bonilla** presented an overview of the **Pembroke Pines Charter Schools budget**.

**April 20, 2026** presentation—**Procurement Director Mark Gomes** presented an overview of the city's **Procurement Department budget** and there was discussion on how vendors continue to be vetted.

**May 18, 2026** presentation—**Communications Director Marianne Wohlert** presented an overview of the city's Communications Department budget and the future addition of a social media manager.

