

City of Pembroke Pines, FL

*City of Pembroke Pines
Charles F. Dodge City Center
601 City Center Way
Pembroke Pines, FL 33025*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

6:30 PM

Regular Commission Meeting

Commission Chambers

City Commission

*Mayor Angelo Castillo
Vice Mayor Michael A. Hernandez
Commissioner Thomas Good Jr.
Commissioner Maria Rodriguez
Commissioner Jay D. Schwartz*

6:30 PM REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present 5 - Mayor Angelo Castillo, Vice Mayor Michael A. Hernandez, Commissioner Thomas Good Jr., Commissioner Maria Rodriguez, and Commissioner Jay D. Schwartz

Also present: City Manager Charles F. Dodge, City Attorney Samuel Goren, and City Clerk Gabriel Fernandez.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Daya Butler.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The National Anthem was performed by Daya Butler.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ITEMS TO BE PULLED FROM AGENDA

City Clerk Fernandez announced there were no items pulled from the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS:

PRE-2 PRESENTATION NO. 2: MAYOR CASTILLO WILL PRESENT A PROCLAMATION TO BISHOP GLENFORD MALCOLM RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 2026 AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES.

Mayor Castillo read a proclamation declaring February 2026 as Black History Month in the City of Pembroke Pines, Florida. The Mayor explained that Black History Month served as a time to recognize and celebrate the rich history, achievements, and contributions of African Americans to the city, state, and nation. He traced the observance back to 1926 with Dr. Carter G. Woodson's establishment of Negro History Week, which later expanded into a month-long celebration in 1976. Mayor Castillo highlighted the critical role African Americans had played in shaping the cultural, economic, political, and social fabric of the community, as well as their lasting contributions across numerous fields. He reaffirmed the city's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice, and encouraged all residents to celebrate the city's diverse heritage and continue fostering an inclusive community.

Pastor Malcolm expressed gratitude to Mayor Castillo, the City Commissioners, and city leaders, while first giving praise and honor to Jesus Christ. He spoke humbly about the honor, emphasizing that it represented not only him but the entire Black community in Pembroke Pines and beyond. He credited God for diversity and inclusiveness and emphasized unity among all people, closing his remarks with a message of love to everyone.

Commissioner Good took a moment to commend Pastor Malcolm, describing him as a true gift to the Pembroke Pines community. The Commissioner praised his leadership, support, love, and spiritual guidance, noting that these qualities had been witnessed firsthand by the community. Pastor Malcolm was thanked for his dedication to serving God and for his genuine care for the community.

PRE-4 PRESENTATION NO. 4: MAYOR CASTILLO WILL PRESENT A PROCLAMATION TO DISEM FOR HIS ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES PANTHERS ON THE PROWL INITIATIVE.

Mayor Castillo read the proclamation and presented it to Desim, recognizing him for his artistic contributions to the City of Pembroke Pines. He explained that the city participated in the Panthers on the Prowl initiative, a fundraising effort benefiting the American Cancer Society and supported by Florida Panthers General Manager Bill Zito and his wife, Julie Zito. He noted that the project featured life-size panther sculptures celebrating Florida wildlife, community engagement, and hockey pride. Mayor Castillo highlighted that South Florida artist and cancer survivor Desim created the City of Pembroke Pines panther sculpture, incorporating sunrise and sunset-inspired colors and native Florida plants, which was proudly displayed at the City Center. He formally recognized Desim for his creativity, dedication, and support of the initiative, thanking him for enriching the community and advancing a meaningful cause.

Desim briefly addressed the audience, and said he felt deeply honored to be recognized. He expressed gratitude to the City of Hollywood, Joe Swan, Mayor Castillo, and everyone present for the honor, thanking them sincerely.

PRE-7 PRESENTATION NO. 7: MAYOR ANGELO CASTILLO AT THE REQUEST OF COMMISSIONER THOMAS GOOD JR. WILL PRESENT A PROCLAMATION TO THE PEMBROKE PINES OPTIMIST BENGALS 7U FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 7U SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP.

Mayor Castillo along with Commissioner Good, read a proclamation recognizing the Pembroke Pines Optimist Bengals 7U football team for their outstanding achievement in winning the American Youth Football League 7U Super Bowl Championship. Commissioner Good highlighted the team’s dominant 28-0 victory over the Pompano Eagles and noted their undefeated 13-0 season. Commissioner Good emphasized the strength of the Pembroke Pines Optimist (PPO) football program, referencing its long-standing success, numerous championships, and notable NFL alumni. He praised Head Coach for his leadership and recognized standout performances by Ray Shipman, who earned Offensive MVP honors after scoring three touchdowns, and Achilles Lewis, who earned Defensive MVP honors with 14 tackles. Mayor Castillo acknowledged the dedication of the players, families, and coaches, recognizing the Optimist Club’s legacy since 1968 in supporting youth development, sportsmanship, and community values. He formally congratulated the team and invited them forward for photos with him and the City Commission, expressing pride in their accomplishment.

Pembroke Pines Optimist Bengals 7U Football Team

Rayford Shipman IV	Joseph Robinson Jr.	Achilles Lewis	Ron Dyer	Carter Penn
Reginald Alouidor II	Carter Pollard	Parker Mason	Malachie F. Forestal Jr.	Lenox Williams
Justin Preal Jr.	Sidney Auguste Jr.	Jino Desarme Jr.	Javares Forbes Jr.	Elias Arce
Tristan Clacema	Zion Obas	Brodie Abruscati	Deejay Burden	Dash Smith
Adrian Desir	Daviar Daly	Elijah Garnett	Dontae Gordon	Josiah Walker
Tristan George	Damari Brodus	Willie Jones	Omari McFarlane	

PRE-3 PRESENTATION NO. 3: MAYOR CASTILLO WILL PRESENT A PROCLAMATION TO THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM (LADY JAGUARS) IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENT IN WINNING THE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP.

Mayor Castillo read and presented a proclamation honoring the Pembroke Pines Charter Middle School girls' basketball team, known as the Lady Jaguars, for winning their first-ever county championship. He noted their 35-30 victory over Pompano Middle School and emphasized that the championship reflected dedication, perseverance, and teamwork, particularly after returning to the finals following the previous year's appearance. He highlighted Tournament MVP Teyana Singh for scoring a game-high 15 points and recognized team captain Taylor Chancy for contributing 10 points and providing strong leadership. The Mayor also acknowledged the collective contributions of the entire team, praising their defensive intensity, unity, sportsmanship, and excellence both on and off the court. He officially congratulated the Lady Jaguars for setting a new standard of excellence, inspiring their community, and proudly bringing the championship trophy home to Pembroke Pines Charter Middle School, inviting the team forward for photos and celebration.

Pembroke Pines Charter Middle School - Lady Jaguar Girl's Basketball Team

Taylor Chancy	Alani Keys	Layal Mourad
Eva Nasser	Teyana Singh	Aaliyah De Leon
Zariya Asensio	Kailyn Murphy	Ivanna Gallego
Isabella Goldsmith	Chelsea Raphael	Olivia Smith
Penelope Telfort		

PRE-5 PRESENTATION NO. 5: VICE MAYOR GREG LANGOESKI FROM THE CITY OF WESTLAKE, FLORIDA AND ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES WILL PRESENT THE CITY COMMISSION WITH THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES MILESTONE AWARD FOR 50 YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP AND DEDICATED SERVICE.

Mayor Castillo introduced Vice Mayor Greg Langoeski of the City of Westlake, Florida, along with Denise Horland, councilwoman from the City of Plantation. He noted that they were present to offer a special proclamation and recognition to the City of Pembroke Pines.

Vice Mayor Greg Langoeski introduced himself as Vice Mayor of Westlake and an NLC board member and congratulated the City of Pembroke Pines on receiving the National League of Cities Milestone Award for 50 consecutive years of membership. He noted the city's membership since 1975 reflects its commitment to leadership, collaboration, and municipal advocacy. He highlighted Commissioner Good's service on the Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Committee, Commissioner Rodriguez's involvement in Women in Municipal Government, and the city's participation in the NLC Grant Access Program. He presented the award and commended Pembroke Pines on its 50-year commitment.

Vice Mayor Langoeski also acknowledged the presence of Broward League of Cities President Denise Horland, who served as Council President for the City of Plantation, as well as Mary Lou Tighe, Executive Director of the Broward League of Cities, recognizing their attendance and support.

Vice Mayor Langoeski and Councilwoman Denise Horland took pictures with the Mayor and Commission to commemorate the occasion.

PRE-6 PRESENTATION NO. 6: MAYOR CASTILLO WILL ANNOUNCE THE WINNER OF THE 2026 WINTER FLORIDA PREPAID SCHOLARSHIP RAFFLE SPONSORED BY THE PEMBROKE PINES CHARTER SCHOOL FOUNDATION, INC.

Mayor Castillo, along with Assistant City Manager Bonilla, presented the 2026 Florida Prepaid Scholarship contest. Mayor Castillo announced that ticket number 88 was the winner of the 2026 Winter Florida Prepaid Scholarship Raffle, sponsored by the Pembroke Pines Charter School Foundation, Inc. Principal Chance of the Pembroke Pines Charter Central Campus selected the winning ticket while the Mayor made the announcement. The scholarship beneficiary was Logan Valentin, a Pre-K student not yet enrolled in school. Mayor Castillo congratulated Logan, describing him as a very lucky young man and announced that he would be going to college.

PRE-1 PRESENTATION NO. 1: ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2026 WINNERS OF DISTRICTS 1 AND 2 NATALIE BELMONTE GREAT YARD AWARDS.

Mayor Castillo called for the Natalie Belmonte presentation, which was postponed until March 4, 2026, Commission Meeting.

PRE-8 PRESENTATION NO. 8: THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES COMMISSIONERS AND BROWARD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS WILL DISCUSS THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES RESOLUTION 3939 REGARDING THE IMPACT OF STUDENT STATION FEES AND THE COUNTY'S EDUCATIONAL MITIGATION TRI-PARTY INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT. ADDITIONALLY, SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER REBECCA THOMPSON WILL PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON HOW THE REDEFINING INITIATIVE WILL IMPACT THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES AND DISCUSS OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION MOVING FORWARD.

Mayor Castillo introduced several members of the Broward County School Board who were present and wished to speak about redefining public schools and the impact of the City of Pembroke Pines. He mentioned that the City had recently sent the School Board a resolution on a related but slightly different issue and asked for City Attorney Goren to set the tone for that discussion.

City Attorney Goren explained that the Commission had adopted a resolution on December 11, 2025, which took issue with an existing agreement among the School Board, the County, and the City regarding student station funding. That resolution had been forwarded to the School Board for review and consideration.

City Attorney Goren reminded the Mayor and Commission that their December discussion had centered on recently passed legislation that provided guidance on prohibiting and regulating the collection of school mitigation impact fees. He referenced an advisory letter issued by the Attorney General's Office to representatives of Chip LaMarca, which addressed the ability to collect such fees. Citing Section 163.3180(6)(j), he explained that a school district was prohibited from assessing and enforcing student station fees in addition to impact fees when those fees failed to meet the dual rational nexus test, regardless of whether an agreement was in place.

City Attorney Goren further stated that Chapter 2025-177 amended the relevant statutory provisions and clarified that school districts could not request, and governmental agencies were precluded from imposing alternative fees in lieu of impact fees to mitigate the impact of development on education. He specifically referenced Senate Bill 1080, which provided that a school district could not collect, charge, or impose any alternative fee instead of an impact fee for that purpose.

City Attorney Goren explained that the City had entered into an interlocal agreement around 2004 or 2006, last amended in 2018, relating to potential development in the City Center area, including the City Hall site and surrounding projects. He noted that one remaining parcel zoned for residential use could, if developed in the future, trigger a potential impact fee payment under the agreement. However, since the 2018

amendment, the Legislature had enacted statutory changes that clarified the requirements for collecting such fees, particularly where a clear nexus between need and payment did not exist, and the Attorney General provided additional guidance on the issue.

He emphasized that his comments were not made in a pejorative manner and that the original agreement had been entered into in good faith. However, he stated that circumstances had changed due to legislative amendments and the Attorney General's position. City Attorney Goren explained that the Commission, also acting in good faith, had adopted its resolution and requested that the School Board take immediate steps to release or amend the agreement to eliminate the student station fee and any other provisions no longer consistent with state law.

City Attorney Goren concluded by noting that additional information regarding potential financial calculations would be provided but reiterated that the City's actions were based on the 2025 legislative changes and guidance from the Attorney General. He stated that he was happy to answer any questions and that his remarks provided the framework leading to the December resolution.

Mayor Castillo thanked City Attorney Goren for his remarks and explained that the School Board members had been invited to attend at the suggestion of Commissioner Schwartz, who believed it was important, in light of the resolution, to bring them together for discussion. He noted that the invitation had also evolved into a broader presentation on redefining Broward Schools' impact on Pembroke Pines. Before calling the School Board members forward, he read a brief email he had received from School Board Member Debra Hixon. In her message, she explained that she was not feeling well after catching a virus and would be unable to attend the meeting. She stated for the record that she agreed with the City's position on suspending the fees and had advocated for that change during the workshop when it was discussed. She apologized for the late notice and her inability to attend. Mayor Castillo wished member Hixon a quick recovery and then turned the floor over to the School Board members present at the commission meeting.

Broward County School Board Member Rebecca Thompson thanked the Commission and stated that she had received the City's letter and

appreciated the feedback. She explained that while she could not negotiate on behalf of all nine board members, she personally was open to negotiation and to learning more about how to reach an agreement that would work for both parties.

Broward County School Board Member Maura Bulman then introduced herself, stating that she represented the area east of Douglas Road and south of Pines Boulevard. She said she believed they were present to hear the City's position. Ms. Bulman explained that she was not in a position to speak on behalf of the entire School Board, reiterating that neither she nor her colleague could negotiate for all nine members.

Ms. Thompson acknowledged that the new law had been passed and that she had received the Attorney General's opinion. She added that their own legal counsel was reviewing the matter and that she had been waiting for a formal opinion, though their attorney had been delayed due to other pressing matters. She expressed hope that they could hear the City's position and take that information back to the full Board, emphasizing that they intended to comply with the law as it was interpreted.

Commissioner Rodriguez shared several personal observations after reviewing the Attorney General's report. While recognizing it as an official opinion, she noted that, based on prior School Board meetings she had listened to, their counsel appeared to hold a different interpretation. She described a point of confusion she had initially experienced, which she later understood more clearly, but believed might also be misunderstood by other municipalities. Specifically, she questioned whether the fees being paid were intended to service debt for schools already built or improvements already completed, as opposed to funding new student stations. She commented that she agreed that if no new schools were being constructed, it raised the question of what the fees were being used for. However, she asked whether the funds might instead be supporting maintenance, prior improvements, or repayment of debt service, rather than financing new schools. The Commissioner acknowledged that this uncertainty could be contributing to confusion among other cities as well.

Mayor Castillo then asked City Attorney Goren whether the agreement contained any provision allowing the funds to be used for purposes other

than building new student stations. City Attorney Goren responded that he had reviewed the most recent amendment from 2018 and found no reference to bond funding or any purpose other than student stations. He explained that the agreement specifically referenced the Pembroke Pines City Hall plat and cited Broward County Code provisions requiring documentation of adequate school facilities before building permits could be issued. He reiterated that, while the City had agreed to mitigate the anticipated student impact of development on that property, he found no language in the document authorizing the funds to be used for debt service or other purposes beyond student stations.

Commissioner Rodriguez replied that her understanding was that School Board's counsel believed debt service could potentially be repaid using these fees. She suggested that the discrepancy might ultimately come down to differing legal interpretations and that perhaps the matter required further discussion between the respective attorneys. She acknowledged that, as a non-lawyer reviewing a legal document, she might not fully grasp every nuance, though she noted that others present were attorneys. She expressed a desire to better understand where the miscommunication or divergence in interpretation laid.

The Commissioner also raised concerns about escalating fees and suggested that, speaking for herself, there might be room for negotiation regarding the fee structure; perhaps establishing a flat fee or a more affordable arrangement for cities or developers. She observed that when developers undertake projects, the community ultimately benefits through increased property tax revenues. She concluded by stating that she had many questions and hoped a balance could be found between the City's request and the School Board's legal perspective. She suggested that some form of mitigation discussion or dialogue between representatives and legal counsel on both sides could help resolve the issue, adding that she would prefer to reach a conclusion collaboratively rather than through costly legal proceedings.

Mayor Castillo asked whether the School Board wished to proceed with the presentation on the redefining project. In response, School Board Member Thompson stated that she wanted to briefly reply to the prior discussion. She said she appreciated the perspective that had been shared and agreed that there was confusion. She reiterated that they were awaiting a more concrete legal opinion from their counsel. She

explained that the position being taken by the School Board's attorney was that some of the fees in question represented debt service, suggesting that schools may have been built in the past with the understanding that the district would later be reimbursed as development occurred. In that view, the fees would effectively repay obligations already incurred. She acknowledged, however, that she did not have definitive information to provide that evening and emphasized that before discussing negotiations or future arrangements, they first needed clarity on their current legal standing. She assured the Commission that she would speak with the board's attorney promptly, noting that their counsel had recently assumed the position and had been attempting to connect with outside counsel. She apologized that they were not as prepared as they would have liked to be and promised to follow up as soon as possible.

Commissioner Schwartz then asked the City Attorney about the date of the 2018 amendment to the agreement. City Attorney Goren responded that the last amendment had been approved by the Mayor and Commission on March 5, 2018. Commissioner Schwartz reflected that eight years earlier had been a very different time, when there had been no discussion of redefining schools and the City and School Board had been working collaboratively to improve public education in Pembroke Pines. He suggested that something had shifted more recently and stated that he would expand on that point after hearing the upcoming presentation.

The Commissioner expressed openness to reaching a resolution that would avoid formal dispute processes, mentioning that he had no appetite for escalating the matter into legal proceedings. He emphasized that the matter was a countywide issue, with multiple municipalities potentially holding differing viewpoints, and cautioned that it would be unfair to expect any individual School Board member to take a position back to the full Board without broader input. He suggested that Pembroke Pines could serve as the starting point for a larger countywide conversation. The Commissioner concluded by observing that when two government agencies engage in conflict, taxpayers ultimately bear the burden. Although the fees in question were collected from developers, he noted that they involved land acquisitions and a mix of private and public dollars. He expressed hope that, as a county, they could resolve the issue collaboratively without involving the judicial system, stating that

such an outcome would be ideal.

Mayor Castillo asked if anyone else wished to speak and then directed a question to the City Attorney, asking whether, based on his understanding of the statute, there was any scenario in which the City could enter into a new agreement with the Broward County School Board to tax development for the purpose of offsetting debt service on previously issued bonds, rather than creating new student stations.

City Attorney Goren responded that, in his opinion, the short answer was no. He then referenced the Attorney General's strongly worded opinion dated October 24th of the previous year, issued after the legislative session had concluded. He explained that the Attorney General had acknowledged that the Broward County School District had entered into separate interlocal agreements with multiple municipalities requiring payment of student station fees in addition to impact fees. Those agreements, he noted, had originally been adopted at a time when Broward County schools were overcrowded and lacked sufficient infrastructure. However, he emphasized that the Attorney General's opinion concluded that the statute, which took effect October 1, 2025, prohibited a school district from collecting, charging, or imposing any alternative fee in lieu of an impact fee to mitigate the impact of development on educational facilities. He stated that the opinion made clear that the statute invalidated the assessment of student station fees in addition to impact fees under existing agreements when those fees failed to meet the statutory test. He reiterated that he was simply placing the public record into context.

Mayor Castillo thanked City Attorney Goren and suggested that the School Board's general counsel contact the City's attorney to begin a dialogue. He acknowledged that the law required the City to act but expressed appreciation for the discussion and input. He then transitioned the meeting to the Redefining Broward Schools presentation.

School Board Member Thompson began by thanking the Commission for allowing time on the agenda and emphasized the importance of continuing the partnership between the City and public schools. Ms. Thompson introduced Dr. Valerie Wanza, Chief of Innovation and Strategy, noting that she had spearheaded the Redefining project and

that many Commissioners had likely seen her at prior community meetings. She also thanked the Commission for attending those meetings, explaining that District 2 had been the most impacted by the Redefining process.

School Board Member Thompson clarified that the purpose of Redefining was not due to any inadequacy in the schools themselves. She highlighted achievements within Pembroke Pines schools. She noted that the City had two A-rated high schools that excelled academically and athletically, including state championship achievements and strong performances in football and career and technical competitions. She highlighted middle schools with championship-level athletics and strong extracurricular programs, as well as Pines Collegiate Academy's transformation into a 6-12 model that provided a seamless pathway to a collegiate academy experience. She also praised several elementary schools for their academic performance, community engagement, and participation in district and regional competitions, including academic and extracurricular accomplishments.

She then explained the rationale behind Redefining Broward Schools. Over the past decade, the district's footprint had become too large due to declining enrollment, with approximately 50,000 students lost over ten years. She attributed that decline to migration toward charter schools, private schools, homeschooling, and the expansion of school choice vouchers. Because enrollment directly impacts funding, the district spent six months engaging the community to explore options for improving educational experiences while adjusting to financial realities.

Ms. Thompson described proposed consolidations, including discussions about Panther Run Elementary and Chapel Trail Elementary. The final decision was to close Panther Run Elementary and reassign students between Chapel Trail and Silver Palms. She explained that boundary decisions considered feeder patterns, neighborhood integrity, diversity, traffic patterns, and the needs of exceptional student education (ESE) students. Similarly, Palm Cove Elementary would close, with students reassigned to Lakeside Elementary and Pines Lakes Elementary.

School Board Member Thompson noted additional boundary

adjustments west of Interstate 75, which would alleviate traffic and realign students to Silver Trail Middle and Walter C. Young Middle, as well as adjustments affecting Flanagan and West Broward High Schools. She reassured the Commission that high school students would not be forced to transfer midstream; current students could remain at their existing schools through graduation. She concluded by outlining next steps, explaining that the district was actively supporting families, teachers, and staff through the transition process. Community meetings were ongoing to ensure smooth transitions and positive placements for students. Anticipating facility-related questions about the closed campuses, she invited Dr. Wanza to provide additional details.

Dr. Valerie Wanza addressed the Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, and City staff, providing further details on the Redefining Broward Schools project in Pembroke Pines. She noted that Panther Run Elementary and Palm Cove Elementary would be transitioned for other district uses. One building may become an administrative site, while others could partner with nonprofits like the United Way to create community resource hubs. Dr. Wanza emphasized that no buildings would sit empty and that the district is actively working with city staff to explore potential uses, including partnerships with the senior center and other community organizations.

School Board Member Thompson continued to present and addressed concerns about Walter C. Young, clarifying that there is currently no proposal beyond its closure. She explained that previous community discussions had explored the possibility of converting Flanagan High School into a 6-12 campus, which could potentially free up Walter C. Young for city use or a technical campus with a lease agreement. She sought feedback on these possibilities but emphasized that any decision about the facility must come from the School Board first.

Mayor Castillo responded that the City had been put in a difficult position previously when asked for input on Walter C. Young and clarified that the City's position had always been to avoid closing any schools. He stressed that the City cannot discuss future uses of a facility until it is officially declared surplus to avoid sending mixed messages to the community.

School Board Member Thompson acknowledged the difficulty of making

these decisions in a city like Pembroke Pines, where most schools are highly rated. She clarified that the lease for Walter C. Young ends and that her communications were never intended to blame the City. She expressed interest in exploring partnerships to support the community, promote public schools, and collaborate with the senior center. She concluded by opening the floor for questions.

Vice Mayor Hernandez expressed appreciation for Ms. Thompson's presentation and said that, although they served on the governing body of Pines Charter Schools, he also had children in traditional public schools: a son at Silver Trail and a daughter at Chapel Trail. He commended the school board for navigating difficult decisions during this challenging period. The commissioner highlighted the challenges of redefining schools with hundreds of parents and students involved, acknowledging the emotional and educational impact on children. Vice Mayor Hernandez emphasized that children from all neighborhoods deserved equal opportunities and expressed support for partnerships that benefited both charter and public schools. The Vice Mayor also noted that the decline in student enrollment was not unique to Broward County but part of a broader national trend affecting Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties. He welcomed further collaboration and offered personal support, including availability to assist with community partnerships.

Commissioner Rodriguez spoke about the importance of trade schools, advocating for their accessibility as a primary alternative to college. She emphasized that trades such as electricians, HVAC technicians, and plumbers offered viable paths to success without incurring college debt. Commissioner Rodriguez said that they had promoted trade programs within charter schools and noted that community interest existed in establishing trade schools in Pembroke Pines. While acknowledging the constraints of existing leases and the need for internal school board discussion, Commissioner Rodriguez encouraged exploring possibilities for partnerships or lease agreements that could support trade education. She cited a Sun Sentinel poll showing local interest in trade schools and stressed the responsibility of city leaders to at least present concepts to the school board.

Mayor Castillo acknowledged the Commissioner's interest in trade schools but emphasized the importance of formal proposals rather than

hypothetical discussions. He expressed concern that premature discussions could create community confusion or frustration. He clarified that under the current lease, the district could use facilities for any educational purpose, including technical schools, but stressed that any development should come in the form of concrete proposals to evaluate feasibility, investment requirements, and potential community impact. The Mayor added that closing Panther Run Elementary presented an opportunity to repurpose the site for a trade school, potentially attracting students and generating revenue. He reiterated the value of trade school opportunities for the community while respecting the need for the school board to make decisions based on enrollment, lease terms, and formal proposals.

Commissioner Schwartz thanked the school board members for coming, expressed his appreciation to Dr. Wanza and acknowledged the presence of the attendees. The Commissioner shared that he had been a resident of the city for 37 years and a father for 24, commenting that public education had always been important to him. Coming from a city with strong support for public schools in Philadelphia, he recalled how his own family had been impacted by boundary discussions before having children. He recounted neighbors who had spent years in trailers at Flanagan without ever seeing the inside of the school and described watching Pembroke Pines grow rapidly, realizing there were not enough seats for incoming students. After being elected, he served on selection committees for several elementary schools, including Pasadena Lakes and Pembroke Lakes, and fondly remembered his special bond with Carlton Campbell at Pines Middle, acknowledging the school's longstanding academic and population challenges.

Commissioner Schwartz recalled discussions from five years prior about potentially closing Pines Middle, which deeply frustrated him. He described a 2014 conversation with Mr. Runcie advocating for a bond, where he learned the community's needs exceeded the proposed \$800 million. The Commissioner spoke about the ongoing struggles facing residents, boundary changes, school closings, and the shifting identity of educational buildings. He also noted that a third of his students did not attend local schools, which he found concerning. Commissioner Schwartz addressed debates over SRO protection and school safety, highlighting the frequent turnover of superintendents over the last two decades and the resulting erosion of confidence in public education. He

reflected on leading a charge 11 years prior with 3,500 parents to secure a 15-year charter extension, illustrating his long-standing commitment to local schools.

The Commissioner explained the impact of nonresident students attending Pembroke Pines Charter Schools and the historical context of schools like Renaissance and Pines Lakes, describing collaborative efforts with school board members and principals to improve programs like STEM labs. Commissioner Schwartz also shared his experience as an adjunct professor, which deepened his appreciation for the challenges school boards faced, including inconsistent administrative directives and disrupted programs such as the Flanagan Band. He conveyed the community's fatigue, comparing it to a paperclip that eventually snaps, and expressed his desire to partner with the Broward County School Board to improve the system, criticizing administrative inefficiencies and emphasizing the importance of adult, decisive conversations rather than endless workshops.

Commissioner Schwartz then addressed concerns from homeschool parents, noting rising economic pressures and the appeal of hiring retired teachers for smaller, more personalized classes, which was drawing students away from local schools. He expressed worry about potential reductions in funding due to proposed homestead exemptions, stressing the local impact on Pembroke Pines and advocating for stronger support for public education. Throughout the discussion, Commissioner Schwartz spoke about the need for partnership, direct communication, and community engagement, underscoring that public schools define communities and that collaborative efforts were essential to address systemic challenges. He concluded by highlighting broader issues, such as teacher retention and hiring freezes, arguing that the problems extended beyond individual school boundaries to a larger challenge affecting the entire Broward County school system.

Commissioner Rodriguez clarified that communication with the school board had been ongoing, pointing out that Ms. Thompson and other board members had attended nearly every meeting. She specifically highlighted school board member Thompson's efforts, noting that Ms. Thompson had held twelve in-person community meetings and two virtual meetings, reaching over 2,000 residents regarding district issues. Commissioner Rodriguez acknowledged that communication could

always improve but stressed that, compared to other districts, the engagement in Pembroke Pines had been extensive and substantive. Commissioner Rodriguez then stressed that partnership needed to go both ways. She admitted that there had been meetings the city had missed, including one at Walter C. Young while she was away in Columbia, but she recognized the dedication of staff like Jonathan Bonilla who had attended on behalf of the city. The Commissioner emphasized that while the board had extended its hand to include the city in discussions, active engagement from city leadership was equally necessary to ensure effective collaboration.

Commissioner Schwartz weighed in and pointed out a broader systemic issue beyond specific schools or boundaries. He described a hiring freeze in Broward County schools that was forcing talented prospective teachers, many of whom he personally knew, to seek opportunities elsewhere. This, he noted, was a much larger problem than the geographic boundary of any single school, and he urged the school board to address these challenges with a more global perspective. School Board Member Thompson made a recommendation to schedule follow-up discussions in the coming weeks to maintain coordination and ensure both sides could work collaboratively.

Commissioner Good addressed the school board members Thompson and Bulman. He expressed admiration for the difficulty of their constitutional offices in Broward County and acknowledged the complexity of the issues they regularly faced. He recognized that their work offered little opportunity for respite and offered his prayers for them. Commissioner Good then responded to points raised by Dr. Wanza, noting that much of the communication had centered on student transitions and balancing enrollment across schools. He observed that discussions about what would happen to facilities after transitions often occurred as an afterthought. Commissioner Good reflected on conversations with the city manager regarding potential developments at Panther Run and Lakeside/Pine Lake, which were near senior centers. However, the Commissioner noted that he had heard little about Palm Cove, aside from general plans for partnerships that were not school based but could provide other community services. He agreed that adding services to the community was positive but expressed concern about the development process for these facilities. Specifically, managing community questions regarding vacant or repurposed

buildings and whether residents would have a meaningful opportunity to provide input on the activities that would occupy these spaces.

Dr. Wanza responded to Commissioner Good's concerns. She explained that the district had three or four administrative sites under consideration. One site had already been sold, necessitating staff relocation, and two others were expected to go on the market shortly thereafter. The representative emphasized that once the district determined which spaces were needed for administrative purposes, any remaining facilities such as Palm Cove would be considered for community use. Dr. Wanza indicated that conversations would be held with the city and other local or county offices expressing interest in occupying available space. The representative stressed that the district would engage directly with the communities where these facilities were located to address unique local needs. She highlighted the importance of municipal input in identifying appropriate uses for former school buildings, suggesting potential partnerships where the district could provide space and the city could provide resources, thereby addressing community needs collaboratively.

Commissioner Good responded that he inquired about the development of former school facilities with the City Manager.

City Manager Dodge responded by confirming that communication had already occurred with the school district. City Manager Dodge noted that one potential project involved expanding a senior center, which would need to be adjacent to existing city programs. Mr. Dodge indicated that other opportunities might exist but clarified that final decisions about available space had not yet been made. Once those decisions were finalized, the city would review possibilities for collaboration with the district and the community.

Commissioner Good explained that he understood staff were working behind the scenes to draft plans, but that formal presentations would only occur once preliminary ideas were solidified. The Commissioner expressed uncertainty about when and how the city would become involved in these discussions, noting that the manager would typically bring matters to the commission for consideration. The commissioner emphasized that, because these developments directly impacted his district, it was a priority to stay informed and ensure the community was

not surprised by decisions. Commissioner Good requested to participate in the early stages of the development process, citing the importance of representing constituents' perspectives, both to identify proposals that might face resistance and to support initiatives likely to be embraced. The Commissioner explicitly requested to be involved alongside the Mayor in monitoring the development process to provide input throughout. He reiterated their interest in staying informed during the development stage and thanked the city manager for their time and cooperation.

School Board Member Thompson then shifted to a separate topic regarding the WGI contract and color guard programs, likely in response to Commissioner Schwartz's earlier comments. She explained that the WGI contract had been under discussion with legal counsel, and that emails had been sent indicating the board would not be signing the contract in its current form. Dr. Wanza clarified that the contract had never formally come before the school board. She noted that three meetings had been scheduled with WGI to resolve outstanding issues, primarily related to compliance with FERPA and the handling of educational records. They emphasized that the board remained committed to advocating for the district's color guard teams at Silver Trail and Walter C. Young, and that staff would communicate to the public that the school board was actively addressing the matter.

Vice Mayor Good asked about Somerset, noting that they had received emails regarding that entity and wanted clarification on its status in relation to the previous discussion about contracts and school programs.

ITEMS AT THE REQUEST OF THE PUBLIC

There were no items at the request of the public.

COMMISSION AUDITOR REPORT:

None.

APPEALS OF BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT DECISIONS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

BA-1 BOARD APPOINTMENT: MAYOR CASTILLO WISHES TO ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT OF LAURIE HENRIQUEZ AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE DIVERSITY AND HERITAGE BOARD (CURRENTLY SERVING AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER).

Mayor Castillo announced he was appointing Laurie Henriquez, who had previously served as an alternate member of the Diversity and Heritage Board, to a regular board member position. The Mayor noted that his alternate replacement would be appointed at the next meeting. Mayor Castillo commented that Laurie Henriquez attended the Commission Meeting, and invited her to come forward, expressing gratitude for her previous service and contributions.

Laurie Henriquez, 600 NW 86 Avenue, Pembroke Pines, Florida, addressed the Commission and expressed pride as a Pembroke Pines resident, noting she had lived there for 26 years. She also highlighted the importance of staying involved in local events. Laurie then expressed her happiness to join the board as a regular member.

Mayor Castillo thanked Laurie Henriquez again for her service to the board.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Hernandez, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Mayor Castillo, Vice Mayor Hernandez, Commissioner Good Jr., Commissioner Rodriguez, and Commissioner Schwartz

Nay 0

1. MOTION TO APPROVE REQUEST TO ADVERTISE SOLICITATION(S):

(A) PSUT-25-14 "CCNA SUNSWEPT COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROGRAM"

A motion was made to approve on the Consent Agenda

2. MOTION TO APPROVE A SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE OF SYMBIONT™ MODEL PH300 GEOTHERMAL POOL HEATING/COOLING SYSTEM FROM SYMBIONT SERVICE CORP. FOR THE ACADEMIC VILLAGE POOL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$147,803 PURSUANT TO SECTION 35.18(C)(3) OF THE CITY'S CODE OF ORDINANCES.

A motion was made to approve on the Consent Agenda

3. MOTION TO AWARD IFB # TS-25-21 "CISCO SECURITY INCIDENT RESPONSE RETAINER ENHANCED" TO THE MOST RESPONSIVE/RESPONSIBLE BIDDER, PRESIDIO NETWORKED SOLUTIONS LLC, IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$148,104 FOR A ONE YEAR PERIOD.

A motion was made to approve on the Consent Agenda

QUASI JUDICIAL CONSENT AGENDA:

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

SECOND READING ORDINANCES:

4. MOTION TO ADOPT PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01 ON SECOND AND FINAL READING.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01 IS AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; AMENDING SECTION 155.203 "DEFINITIONS" TO ADD DEFINITIONS FOR RECOVERY RESIDENCE AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION; CREATING SECTION 155.535 "REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION APPLICATION FOR RECOVERY RESIDENCE"; RENUMBERING SECTIONS RELATING TO "NONCONFORMING USES", TO ALLOW FOR FUTURE USES; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

A motion was made by Commissioner Good Jr., seconded by Vice Mayor Hernandez, to adopt Proposed Ordinance No. 2026-01 on Second and Final Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye** 5 - Mayor Castillo, Vice Mayor Hernandez, Commissioner Good Jr., Commissioner Rodriguez, and Commissioner Schwartz
- Nay** 0

Enactment No: 2057

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN:

City Attorney Goren read Proposed Ordinance 2026-01 into the record by title.

Mayor Castillo asked for discussion; there was none from the City Commission.

Mayor Castillo opened the item for public comment.

There were no members of the public who wished to speak on the item.

AFTER THE VOTE WAS TAKEN:

City Attorney Goren stated on the record that, in his legal opinion, adoption of the ordinance placed the Mayor and Commission in compliance with Chapter 2025-182, which is founded in Section 397.487 of the Florida Statutes.

FIRST READING ORDINANCES:

RESOLUTIONS:

5. MOTION TO ADOPT PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2026-R-02.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2026-R-02 IS A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES ("CITY") TO ACCEPT TWO (2) SPECIAL WARRANTY DEEDS FROM THE CHAPEL TRAIL CORPORATE PARK ASSOCIATION, INC. FOR PROPERTY WHICH WILL BE USED FOR A DRAINAGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT AREA; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE TWO (2) SPECIAL WARRANTY DEEDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACKNOWLEDGING AND AGREEING TO THE RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS AND CONDITIONS ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT "B" TO THE SPECIAL WARRANTY DEEDS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Hernandez, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, to adopt Proposed Resolution No. 2026-R-02. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Mayor Castillo, Vice Mayor Hernandez, Commissioner Good Jr., Commissioner Rodriguez, and Commissioner Schwartz

Nay 0

Enactment No: 3942

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN:

City Attorney Goren read Proposed Resolution 2026-R-02 into the record by title.

Mayor Castillo asked for discussion; there was none from the City Commission.

Mayor Castillo opened the item for public comment.

There were no members of the public who wished to speak on the item.

REGULAR AGENDA:

REPORTS OF LEAGUE AND MPO REPRESENTATIVES

Commissioner Rodriguez stated that the directors' meeting would be held the following day in Lighthouse Point. She said she would attend and report back at the next meeting.

Commissioner Good did not have any updates to report from the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Mayor Castillo reported that he had just returned from Washington, D.C., where he attended the United States Conference of Mayors. He commented on how cold it had been and shared that he had met with several mayors, including a one-on-one meeting with the Mayor of Minneapolis, which he particularly enjoyed. He reported that he had attended a water board meeting and raised Commissioner Good's earlier question regarding the disposal of PFAS once it is removed from the water supply. He explained that while disposal methods would be required, the best option had not yet been determined. He noted that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would be developing new guidelines, that carbon processes appeared somewhat easier for disposal than ion exchange, and that ion exchange had been recommended for Pembroke Pines due to its water table. He described concerns about incineration and landfill methods, particularly given environmental risks and local conditions, and emphasized that specialized companies handled PFAS disposal. He stressed that although the City did not yet have complete answers, it would need environmentally sound solutions before the project was operational. He praised Commissioner Good for raising the issue early and emphasized that staff were proactively working on best practices.

In response to questions, Mayor Castillo stated that the discussions surrounding PFAS and environmental regulations were nonpartisan. He remarked that the Conference of Mayors operated on a bipartisan agenda and focused on practical governance rather than party labels. jurisdictions.

City Manager Dodge explained that based on the City's conversation with its engineering consultant, Hazen and Sawyer, administration would bring back an RFP that would include the discussed provision.

Commissioner Schwartz asked whether he had a general sense of choosing ion exchange or carbon if a decision had to be made immediately. Mayor Castillo responded that he was not capable of making that determination himself. He stated that it was an engineering decision left to those who had studied the issue extensively. Mayor Castillo said that the City's staff had advised that ion exchange was the appropriate path and that this was the direction being recommended and pursued. He added that regardless of the treatment method selected, the City would still need the ability to properly dispose of the screened material, and that the EPA and other responsible agencies would need to fulfill their respective roles. The Mayor emphasized that the City had time to further develop the plan and noted that officials had been highly complementary of the City of Pembroke Park for its proactive approach. He observed that many cities across the country remained paralyzed by the issue due to lack of funding, resources, or clarity on how to address it. Mayor Castillo also responded to Commissioner Schwartz's inquiry, and he indicated that he found the discussion to be nonpartisan.

The Mayor then summarized additional conference themes, explaining that artificial intelligence had been a dominant topic, with strong consensus that cities adopting AI early would have significant advantages in efficiency, customer service, and cost savings. He also noted that housing affordability had been a major concern nationwide and that many mayors treated opposition to development as unrealistic given the urgency of the crisis. Finally, he described immigration discussions, recounting concerns raised by some mayors about federal actions affecting local governments. He characterized the conference as intense, exhausting, and worthwhile, and thanked the commission for allowing him to attend.

Commissioner Rodriguez also spoke about Broward Days, explaining that it was related to the Florida League of Cities. Although she did not attend the League of Cities event, she did attend Broward Days, which took place around the same time, requiring them to choose between the two. Commissioner Rodriguez chose to travel to Washington, D.C. for Broward Days and said similar to how artificial intelligence had been a major topic at other events, property taxes were a primary focus of discussion during Broward Days. There were extensive conversations about how potential changes could impact local businesses, residents,

and city leadership. The Commissioner emphasized that one of the most important takeaways was the need to improve communication with the public, particularly in explaining how taxpayer dollars were currently being used within the city before any proposed amendments or bills took effect. She noted that the City's communications team was already working on this effort.

Commissioner Rodriguez further explained that, at the time of their attendance, there was still significant uncertainty regarding the outcome of the proposed legislation. Although three bills had been introduced in the House, there was no companion legislation in the Senate. As a result, she stressed the importance of closely monitoring developments and continuing to work with the City's lobbyists to gather updated information.

Mayor Castillo thanked Commissioner Rodriguez and explained that he had already asked the City Manager and finance department to prepare financial scenarios illustrating how property tax revenues were currently used and what the impact would be if that revenue were eliminated without replacement. The Mayor clarified that he was not advocating for a position but wanted residents to have factual information before any potential ballot measure. He expressed concern about how police and fire services would be funded without property tax revenue, noting that a significant portion of the City's budget supported public safety.

City Manager Dodge confirmed that most of the City's ad valorem revenue funded public safety operations.

Mayor Castillo expressed skepticism about proposals that would eliminate property taxes while exempting police and fire funding, noting that such measures would likely require cuts to other services or increased user fees. He stated that public safety personnel were not volunteers and needed to be paid, and he questioned how that would occur without a replacement revenue source. Although he acknowledged his long-standing support for stable millage rates and tax restraint, he described the elimination of property taxes without an alternative funding plan as a major step with serious consequences. He directed staff to prepare objective, fact-based materials outlining possible impacts and asked that they be reviewed by the commission auditor to ensure credibility. He concluded by stating that he would not be intimidated in

discussing the issue and that he expected professional analysis from staff before any decisions were made. No further discussion followed.

REPORTS OF THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY ATTORNEY

City Manager Dodge and City Attorney Goren stated that they had no items to report.

COMMISSION ITEMS:

6. COMMISSIONER JAY D. SCHWARTZ ITEM #1: COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ WILL PROVIDE THE COMMISSION WITH AN UPDATE ON THE CODE ENFORCEMENT STEMMING FROM COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ'S ITEM FROM 2025 Q4.

This Commission Items was No Action Taken.

Commissioner Schwartz provided an update on the assignment the Commission had given him several months earlier to meet with administration and review current code enforcement policies and their implementation. He stated that he had met with staff for approximately three hours over two sessions, describing the discussions as robust and informative. He thanked Pembroke Pines Police Chief Vargas and staff for their openness and support, particularly regarding efforts to allow code enforcement to operate as a self-sufficient unit. He noted that the first meeting included a historical review of the program and confirmation from the City Attorney that the City was following the law. He shared independent research he had conducted, including ICMA guidance and building code references, and concluded that the City was compliant with applicable statutes.

Commissioner Schwartz reported that, for the first time since code enforcement had been integrated into the police department, the unit was now fully staffed. He described that as a significant milestone, noting that vacancies in prior years had resulted from promotions, leaves of absence, and the time required to certify new personnel. He stated that full staffing should now allow the City to implement the deployment model funded in prior budgets, particularly increasing code presence in areas without homeowners' associations. He emphasized that he and Commissioner Good had long advocated for stronger enforcement presence in those neighborhoods.

The Commissioner stated that administration appeared open to direction from the Commission if policy changes were desired. He discussed operational matters, including the Click2Gov/SeeClickFix reporting system, public outreach improvements, and the limitations imposed by state law that no longer allowed anonymous complaints. He reiterated that he had offered to allow residents to use his name if anonymity was a concern. He cited statistics showing that approximately 80 percent of initial complaints were resolved without further enforcement action.

Commissioner Schwartz raised concerns about the efficiency of mailing courtesy notices in addition to posting them on properties, questioning whether that use of staff time and postage was necessary for

shorter-term violations. He also referenced his longstanding suggestion of adding case managers to reduce administrative burdens on code officers. He reported that administration had compared Pembroke Pines to several other South Broward cities and advised him that the City's procedures were largely consistent, though Pembroke Pines' fines were somewhat higher at \$250 per day. He noted that some constituents were dissatisfied with that response and posed the broader question of whether the Commission was satisfied with the current system or wished to pursue further improvements.

Commissioner Schwartz highlighted one significant procedural enhancement being implemented to improve code officer safety, stating that it would align officer protections more closely with those afforded to police personnel. He credited that initiative to departmental leadership and expressed strong support for the change. He also reported that the City Manager was reviewing a previously withdrawn 2024 resolution that would give the special magistrate greater authority to impose higher fines on repeat offenders, particularly businesses that treated fines as a cost of doing business. He concluded by stating that he preferred to allow administration time to operate at full staffing, monitor progress, and return with an update in the third quarter, at which time the Commission could evaluate further action.

Mayor Castillo thanked the commissioner for following up with staff and expressed strong appreciation for the code enforcement team. He said that, given what he viewed as a weak state statute, it was remarkable that the team accomplished as much as they did, largely through persuasion and voluntary compliance. The Mayor emphasized that residents also deserved understanding, noting that many code situations arose because people had fallen on hard times: losing a job, a spouse, their health, or financial stability. He reflected on the long-standing "blue house" eyesore near the golf course and said he wished the "We Love Pembroke Pines" initiative had existed then so the community could have organized a day of caring to help. Drawing from his years representing Century Village, he said residents typically responded to enforcement in one of two ways: either expressing gratitude for police presence and traffic enforcement or criticizing the city for targeting seniors instead of more serious criminals. From that experience, the Mayor concluded that enforcement rarely pleased everyone and that the law was meant to be just, not necessarily fair, though the two ideally

aligned. He clarified that while he was not a magistrate, he would have dismissed a case if proper notice had not been ensured, though Commissioner Schwartz later explained the distinction between courtesy notices and certified enforcement mailings. Acknowledging that nuance, the Mayor asked staff to review additional best practices and provide an updated report by the third quarter. Mayor Castillo concluded by reiterating that although improvements were always possible, the code team was doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances and thanked both staff and the commissioner for addressing the matter.

City Manager Dodge responded that staff would provide an updated report by the third quarter.

Commissioner Good commented that code enforcement was a particularly challenging job in the communities they represented, especially because there were no formal homeowners' associations to serve as a secondary support system. The Commissioner noted that some violations were not as clear-cut as they appeared and had to be handled with care, while others were serious and required action. However, he pointed out that legal limitations sometimes prevented full resolution, explaining that in some cases the city could only place a lien on a property, mentioning one example where the lien was worth twice the value of the home. Commissioner Good acknowledged administrative burdens raised by Commissioner Schwartz and suggested exploring whether artificial intelligence could help reduce paperwork so code officers could spend more time in the field. They also emphasized that residents often did not realize when code enforcement was actively addressing a property because there was no visible notice, and accessing information online was not always easy. He said this lack of transparency contributed to residents' frustration and added to the concerns brought to him as a commissioner. Commissioner Good proposed creating a simpler, more accessible way for the public to see which properties were under code action, suggesting that doing so might ease tensions. He expressed appreciation for staff's efforts and reiterated that code enforcement was a frequent topic of concern in their district.

Vice Mayor Hernandez briefly moved to close the item, offering no further comment.

Commissioner Rodriguez did not have any comments.

Commissioner Schwartz announced plans to host a Town Hall meeting on the 25th of February at 6:30 p.m. in the Commission Chambers and said he would coordinate with the administration to promote it on social media. Commissioner Schwartz thanked his colleagues for allowing him to work on the issue and expressed confidence that ongoing discussions would lead to progress. The Commissioner agreed that the system for informing residents about code actions needed improvement, described it as somewhat wonky, and suggested that artificial intelligence might help streamline the process.

Commission Agenda Q&A to be forthcoming, as / if / and when available via the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/mtkmvsud>

NEW BUSINESS:

OLD BUSINESS:

ADJOURN - 8:58 P.M.

CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES

Gabriel Fernandez
City Clerk