



**Hillsborough
County** Florida

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**Hillsborough
County Florida**

Chair: Adam Elend
(District 6 Appointee)

Vice Chair: John-Michael Elms
(District 7 Appointee)

Citizens Advisory Committee

November 8, 2024 - 9:30 a.m. – In-Person Quorum Required

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Call to Order | Staff |
| • Pledge of Allegiance | CAC Members |
| • Presentation of Service Certificate | Chair Elend, Vice Chair Elms |
| • Determination of Quorum | Staff |
| • Storm Response & Recovery | Deputy Administrator Horwedel, Assistant
County Administrator Kim Byer, Director
Engineering & Operations Josh Bellotti |
| • Meeting Recap Review
Acceptance of Recaps – August 23, 2024,
September 9 (Special Call) & October 4, 2024 | Chair Elend |
| • Public Comment | Staff |
| • Old Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Monthly Meeting Day/Time & December Date | CAC Members & Staff |
| • Adjournment | Chair Elend |

Notes:

NEXT MEETING: December 20, 2024 – time TBD
24th Floor Conference Room 2416W-A



Recap of the Citizens Advisory Committee October 4, 2024

Members Present in Person: Chair Elend, Vice Chair Elms, Barbara Aderhold, Patrick Baskette, Wanda Broughton, Sid Shah, Heddie Sumpter (arrived at 9:32 a.m.)

Members Attending Virtually: Karen Jaroch, Telephonically: none

Members Absent: Chuck Burgess, Melissa Canfield, Pastor Johnson, Allison Roberts, Joe Pullarac, Dr. Paulette Walker

Staff Attending Virtually or In Person: Administrator Lisa J. Montelione (in person)

Public Attending In Person providing Public Comment: none

Call to Order: The October 4, 2024, meeting was called to order by Chair Elend at 9:12 a.m.

Quorum: Was not achieved with 7 members present in person at the time of the Call to Order

Meeting Recap and Progress Report: n/a due to not having a quorum present

Invited Guest Speakers/Presenters: Greg Horwedel, Deputy County Administrator

*NOTE: The following was taken from the meeting transcript and edited for clarity and brevity.

Chair Elend welcomed members opening the meeting asking Deputy Administrator Horwedel to introduce himself. Deputy Administrator Horwedel, referring to a slide presentation, discussed the Community Investment Tax (CIT) funding. His points and members comments included:

- **Community Investment Tax**

Funding and Allocation: The state allows us to levy 1/2 percent the reason for us, it's only a half percent instead of a full penny like Pinellas or other jurisdictions, is because we have the Indigent Care Sales Tax. And that is 1/2 percent as well. Those dollars help support care for those who don't have any insurance or are indigent according to the metrics established by the BOCC. Interestingly approximately 20% of CIT dollars are paid by people who don't live in the County.

In 1996 the BOCC approved the CIT for a period of 30 years. This BOCC felt 30 years was too long and they wanted to be accountable and transparent to the public, from a staff perspective there isn't a problem with the 15-year term. Yes, you can do things for 30 years that you couldn't do in 15, but that it makes it incumbent upon the Administration to make great recommendations to the BOCC. Also mentioned is that there's a 70% limitation on bonding funds. Tactically thinking, there is a continuing need to fund emerging projects without bonding. With current needs, it'll be 50% to 60%. Every year "pay go" dollars will be used, and projects for the BOCC to approve on an annual basis for accountability and transparency to the public.

On straight population basis the County would be about 69% for the allocation of CIT dollars, but it is close to 75% because the state sales tax formula recognizes there are things that the County does that benefit the entire community and we do projects in partnership with some of the municipalities, roads that go in and out of the city and county for example or other examples are



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aging services, children's services and pet resources; all County wide functions which are not charged to the municipalities. The allocation is about 22% for Tampa, Plant City 2.2% and Temple Terrace, 1 1/2%. A major change is Instead of the previous 25%, 5% is projected to go to the School District. In 1996, the school district did not have any capital ability to raise funds, now they do. Since 2018 the school district has had their own half cent sales tax, generating approximately \$188 - \$900,000,000 a year for their capital needs. They cannot use any of it for operating expenses. If the CIT is approved, they will get approximately \$190m and they've identified there are four schools they would like to build.

Projects: Emphasized were transportation and public safety and the need for strategic bonding to ensure ongoing project funding. Highlighted were significant road improvement projects like Lithia Pinecrest (+/- \$200m) project and Van Dyke Rd. (+/- \$69m) project, much needed deferred projects. Certain projects are already planned to be funded as the BOCC wanted to see projects identified. Some projects are smaller, like fixing sidewalks, but to repair every section of sidewalk and fill every gap, the cost would be more than \$650 million. That isn't a problem the CIT will solve. Many large projects got done in the first 5 years of the tax's existence because the then BOCC decided to issue bonds for new road projects and school building.

County's CIT funds nearly 50% of intersection improvements, repaving roads, sidewalks, trails, etc. Some of those investments haven't kept pace with the population growth. Next on the slide are schools, because in the initial construct of the CIT, 25% went to schools. Next is public safety. The County and municipal partners invested significantly to buy cars and equipment. buyer rescue, for example, from the year 2000, they've had almost a 200% increase in the number of calls. The Sheriff's Office is only 75% since 2009 equating to about 1.3 million calls per year.

Raymond James Stadium appears because of debt service and capital maintenance obligations over past 28 years, the true total is \$271m. The County owns Raymond James, Amalie Area and Steinbrenner Field. Capital Maintenance (i.e. girders that support the seats in RayJay) is allowed, but operating expenses are not permitted. The City of Tampa will share in the costs of projects.

Potential projects include updating the Pet Resources Center, it is antiquated and overcrowded in part as a result of population growth. It's difficult to retain veterinarians, turnovers increase cost. Expansion of the jail is important, as is updating the court's complex (+/- \$100m in County funds, with allocations from the state as a partner, if supported by the legislature. Nine fire stations are planned as are storm water improvements (\$180m). There are a variety of other things, for instance infrastructure for a grocer in a food desert area of Sulfur Springs. Parks is planned to increase their artificial turf fields we have several and if the CIT is approved the number will increase. It is a cost saving according to the analysis, savings in maintenance (no pesticide /herbicide applications, no mowing) and almost 24/7/365 use of facilities. As the CAC has discussed, some septic to sewer projects, especially in rural areas of the county, it became especially important as learned from the recent storm there is a lot of groundwater infiltration, having centralized sewer is a better option. A small contingency will be held, about 2.3%, 60 million if something were to come up.

- **Implementation and Management** of tax dollars was discussed. Every project funded by the CIT from 1996 to present can be found at <https://hcfl.gov/government/budget/budget->



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[information/community-investment-tax](#) In addition to that transparency, Florida Statutes require the [Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability \(OPPAGA\)](#) to oversee a performance audit of local governments with an upcoming referendum on the discretionary sales surtax. The audit must be conducted at least 60 days before the referendum is held. [View the 2024 Surtax Performance Audit.](#)

The estimated total what we received in this current allocation last 20 years was about \$3.6b. If this is approved by the voters in November, we would generate approximately \$3.7b. The county would receive approximately \$2.7b, City of Tampa, \$800m, school district almost \$190m, Plant City roughly \$80m and Temple Terrace about \$53m.

In 1996, the argument to institute a CIT was growth. We needed to invest in our infrastructure, otherwise, we were going to fall behind. That is still true today. It could be argued that we're more desirable today than we were in 1996 for a variety of reasons. If impacts to Tampa Bay during hurricane season changes the calculus at all for some of the folks who might think about moving here, is yet to be seen. Our area has not had any major impacts (citing the previous week's possible landfall in Tampa). Housing prices have risen significantly over the past five to six years dampening slightly the number of people moving here, being able to stay here. There has been a lot of discussion by the BOCC regarding the housing crunch, generally feeling that the government doesn't have to fund every unit, but as the BOCC determined, there has to be a balance. The County has a lot of affordable housing money already that comes from the state and federal government.

Proceeds used to fund infrastructure have to have a useful life of 5 years. The County tries to stick to 20 years or more. Proceeds cannot be used for operating expenses. Although 28 fire stations could be built (current need), if this is passed money to staff them, depending on the size of the station, and the apparatus is anywhere from \$3.5 to \$5 million. There are different needs for different parts of the community, and spending tries to be sensitive to that.

- **CIT Education vs Advocacy:** Clarification of the Administration's role being only one of education of what the CIT is and what it funds would be applicable to the CAC's role to ensure compliance. Advocacy for or against the CIT is not permitted
- **Population growth:** 475,000 people are projected to move into the County by 2050, which will put just Hillsborough County over 2 million people. There has been an 83% population increase since 1996. Most of that growth has happened in unincorporated Hillsborough County. Plant City had growth of 56%. Tampa and Temple Terrace both have seen about 40% growth. That means the CIT will generate revenue in 15 years what it used to take 30 years to do. This growth curve nearly matches the revenue curve.
- **Members Comments:** reducing the amount bonded was emphasized, prioritizing Town & Country Stormwater improvements, and needs over wants must guide spending. Keeping spending on sports facilities should be kept to just the obligation amount. Breaking out the dollars in the public facilities category would be more transparent. Hillsborough County can't do a penny like Pinellas and Pasco because of the Indigent Care Tax. Reallocation would only be possible if the state allowed direct funding to Fire Rescue and have the Legislature to amend the statute to be able to make the Indigent Care Tax variable again so there isn't a huge reserve. Identifying cost savings to front load



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projects to pay for them in 2025 dollars instead of waiting. Mr. Horwedel needed to get that calculation and report results back to the CAC, it may presume some projects are bonded. Public input on prioritizing projects is important. Requested was a breakdown of the total 7.5% sales tax levied in Hillsborough County. Three discretionary sales tax levied (schools, CIT and Indigent Care). If Medicaid expansion would be requested so that County dollars would be reduced for indigent care. The BOCC will be considering their Legislative Agenda in November/December and staff will focus on that. Those that can be advocates need to be out supporting the CIT in November, understanding that the County can only educate, which includes the CAC. Individuals on their own can, but not as a member of the CAC. A follow up request was made to receive a copy of the Maximus study on the allocation of Indigent Health Care dollars.

- **Meeting Scheduling:**

- The team discussed the possibility of rescheduling the October meeting to early November to accommodate members' schedules and ensure participation. The decision was made to explore moving the meeting, considering the impact on member availability and the administrative process required for rescheduling.
- Concerns were raised about the timing of meetings and the impact on traffic and member availability. A suggestion was made for future meetings to avoid peak traffic times, with a consensus forming around a potential new meeting time of 11:30.

- **Support for Affected Member:** The team expressed a willingness to support member Robert, who lost her home and business due to a storm. The discussion highlighted the community's readiness to assist and the importance of reaching out to affected members during difficult times.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Meeting Schedule:** Review the bylaws to confirm if the meeting can be rescheduled or cancelled as per the chair's discretion. (Administrator)
- **Member Support:** Contact member Robert to offer support and assistance during her recovery from the storm's impact. (Administrator)

Member Baskette thanked Deputy County Administrator for the work he and the County staff for the work you they do every day for us. There are a lot of very dedicated public servants they are appreciated for their work.

Chair Elend thanks Deputy Administrator for his time and providing such in-depth information. He encouraged anyone who had questions to call him directly.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.



Recap of the Citizens Advisory Committee September 9, 2024

Members Present in Person: Chair Elend, Vice Chair Elms, Barbara Aderhold, Patrick Baskette, Pastor Johnson, Allison Roberts, Heddie Sumpter

Members Attending Virtually: Karen Jaroch, Telephonically: none

Members Absent: Wanda Broughton, Chuck Burgess, Melissa Canfield, Joe Pullara Sid Shah, Dr. Paulette Walker

Staff Attending Virtually or In Person: Administrator Lisa J. Montelione

Public Attending In Person providing Public Comment: none

Call to Order: The September 9, 2024, HC CAC Special Call meeting was called to order by Chair Elend at 4:02 a.m.

Quorum: Was not achieved with 7 members present in person at the time of the Call to Order

Meeting Recap and Progress Report: n/a

Invited Guest Speakers/Presenters: none

*NOTE: The following was taken from the meeting transcript and edited for clarity and brevity.

Chair Elend welcomed members opening the meeting by asking Members how they wanted to proceed since a quorum was not achieved. Concerns were expressed, with others wanting to go ahead with the discussion. Participating Members may be able to identify portions of the recommendations that need revision and make headway toward consensus; if a quorum is eventually achieved, the vote could be taken. Some expressed a concern that such an approach could derail a discussion when those who arrive later didn't partake in the discussion and then able to vote on it. It would put them at a disadvantage.

Vice Chair Elms thanked those present for their flexibility, noting it is a rare occurrence that quorum is not met. Regarding the issue at hand, he didn't feel Thursday's BOCC Budget vote would be the end of the issue. It will come back to the BOCC in the future. Having the time, the CAC can delve even further into the issue and hear from additional sources to explore possible proposals. Acknowledging there was dissonance, he felt that is a good thing, and proffers better results. Vice Chair Elms also felt that next year they will be better prepared to make recommendations on issues affecting the budget. He supports the part of the plan to use funds to provide Fire/Rescue funds as they often provide care to the indigent. He has a few issues with the HC Plan: taxing without representation, since there isn't a built in "check" by voters and that the large reserve is a source of risk. Feeling in general, the CAC as a whole, even when there are points of disagreement about how the program is run, how the funds are raised and how they're expended, the CAC agrees there is a lot of good being done. They universally agree that that good needs to be protected and preserved moving forward. The CAC's points of contention are how to do that in good faith between most, if not all, the BOCC members. The other issues of contention are how the money is raised in keeping with the spirit of our representative government system and Home Rule.

Members inquired about their options. The Administrator explained that without a quorum, and without a vote in the affirmative, none of the Members could speak at the BOCC's Budget Public Hearing on behalf of the CAC as was the Chair and Vice Chair's intention. Members could individually speak, in person or virtually, making it clear that they are not representing the group, but are speaking simply as a resident of Hillsborough County. Alternatively, they can send the letter under their own name, and on their own letterhead, as it was their own words. Or you can write your own letter, taking parts of this letter, editing it to add their own thoughts.

Member Sumpter thought someone should speak, not representing the CAC, but to communicate as Chair Elend mentioned, the value the CAC adds to the process and the deep dive they did into this (and past) issue(s). It was important

Recap of the Citizens Advisory Committee September 9, 2024

to her that the BOCC know that they discuss issues, they educate themselves and work together to compromise on recommendations for the BOCC (and the Administration) to consider.

Member Jaroch apologized for not being present in person, and thanked those who did make it. She agreed with all that she heard and will be sending her own letter to the BOCC. What prompted her to take issue with the program was Director Brickey's presentation when the large reserve came to light. Her biggest concern was that this tax was never voted into being by residents. She felt that the amount of benefits per person was a little high. She does want to delve deeper into those costs, as she honestly doesn't know if the ratio is common in the sector. Initially it was never meant to be their only source of healthcare. She thinks that providing help is needed and mostly should be left to charities and but having the HC HCP is justified but would like to see more of a balance in the system so the large reserve isn't permanent.

Member Roberts thanked the Chair for drafting the letter incorporating feedback from members and was comfortable with the contents of the letter, as was Member Aderhold and Member Sumpter.

Chair Elend supports the HC HCP, and the letter represents compromise. He didn't feel lowering the percentage of the tax is a good idea. If not for the state legislature, the previous configuration of adjusting the rate based on the revenue generation was a better option, but that isn't allowable anymore. He is supportive of responsible stewardship but remains concerned about putting something to the voters since that would likely put the program in danger of reduction to the point of making the program ineffective.

Future Meeting Planning: The Administrator asked who they would like to invite for the CIT discussion in September. Chair Elend asked for someone from the Administration, and wanted to know more about how they are communicating with the public. Member Baskette will request Commissioner Cohen be present, as he asked for the CAC to discuss the CIT. He also asked that someone from the County Administrator's office be present.

The Administrator also mentioned the need to discuss changing the meeting time from Friday mornings, acknowledging ongoing concerns about the current meeting schedule.

Member Tenure: Lisa provided insights into the potential changes in CAC membership following the upcoming elections, indicating uncertainty about the future composition of the committee.

Follow-up tasks:

- Meeting Scheduling: Identify a new meeting time that accommodates all members.
- CIT Presentation: Contact Commissioner Cohen for CIT presentation at the September meeting. (Administrator)
- CIT Communication: Find out who is responsible for CIT communications and invite them to the September meeting. (Administrator)

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.



Recap of the Citizens Advisory Committee August 23, 2024

Members Present in Person: Chair Elend, Vice Chair Elms, Barbara Aderhold, Patrick Baskette, Chuck Burgess Pastor Johnson, Joe Pullara, Allison Roberts

Members Attending Virtually: Heddie Sumpter, Dr. Paulette Walker Telephonically: none

Members Absent: Wanda Broughton, Melissa Canfield, Karen Jaroch, Sid Shah

Staff Attending Virtually or In Person: Administrator Lisa J. Montelione/GR&SS, Maria Castillo, Legislative Aide to Commissioner Wostal

Public Attending In Person providing Public Comment: none

Call to Order: The August 23, 2024, HC CAC meeting was called to order by Chair Elend at 9:07 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: led by Member Burgess

Quorum: Was achieved with 8 members present in person at the time of the Call to Order, lost at 10:35 a.m. with the departure of Pastor Johnson due to an emergency.

Meeting Recap: Motion to approve the June 28, 2024 & July 26, 2024 Recaps by Member Baskette, seconded by Vice Chair Elms. Motion passed unanimously.

Invited Guest Speakers/Presenters: none

*NOTE: The following was taken from the meeting transcript and edited for clarity and brevity.

Chair Elend welcomed members opening the meeting with a review of the CAC's presentations on the HC Health Care Plan. He felt two questions, should be considered. If the CAC agrees to make a recommendation to the BOCC and if so, what would the content be. Adding this is very late in the process to have impact on the proposed FY25 budget, but having an impact on the issue is possible. Recommendations could be made after the FY25 budget is approved for input as FY26's budget is being planned. Alternatively, the CAC could decide more information is needed. Acknowledging this is the most controversial topic the CAC has taken up and that although Members have differing opinions and perspectives, everyone has been collaborative. He felt most importantly, Members are listening to each other, and he thanked everyone for their respectful consideration.

CAC Members discussion included:

- Praise for the detailed and thorough the presentations by staff and representatives of TGH
- Member Baskette noted takeaways included knowing the CAC can't control certain aspects i.e. Medicaid expansion
- Acknowledgement of the need with the quandary of if the HC HCP wasn't in place where would residents find care, and who would pay for it? Would the CAC consider encouraging the BOCC to support Medicaid expansion to the state legislature?
- Details and data are needed on emergency services provision of services to the indigent, data capture methods should be explored, but by who and how
- Consideration of the BOCC moving \$20m+/- of Plan funds into Fire/Rescue
- Follow up is needed on Vice Chair Elms' request for the consulting firm's examination of Fire/Rescue's participation in the indigent care process.
- Is Fire/Rescue's budget for training, manpower, maintenance, buying new equipment building new facilities, etc impacted by their care of the indigent?
- Member Baskette opined that many residents' entry into the healthcare system through Fire/Rescue services because their illness may be further along due to their indigent status, how can their health be improved to avoid such costs?
- Are the considerations budgetary purposes this year, or a one-time consideration, or an overall change?
 - o The Chair commented that it's a board level, not a one-time allocation. It is a policy allocation. Note that at any point some things could radically change if the politics of the County or the Commission changes.



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- Chair Elend With the BOCC not having discretion over the revenue that can widely fluctuate (it's a flat percentage, with no mechanism to raise or lower it). The changes in state statute mean the innovative way the County had implemented changes in 1991 cannot be done anymore. At that time, there was a built-in mechanism to raise or lower the sales tax to balance revenue coming in to more closely match need. That was creative problem solving by the Board which they do not currently have due to the State Legislature. Any change has to be made by referendum on the ballot for voters to decide.
- Vice Chair Elms felt the County Health Care Plan is fairly well run from what was learned, even being somewhat skeptical, he was impressed. A sentiment many agreed with, feeling a fund with such high reserves could run amok. Adding that there is a lot of due diligence in the last five to ten years at least. Management has been very responsible and does what they can, recognizing this effort is not an effort to solve the problems of the indigent. There's a healthy respect for the fact that this is just buying time to improve the health or at least maintain the health of our indigent residents. Hope is not usually a course of action, but sometimes it's still only one you've got that in you're buying time for the individual circumstances of those individuals to improve by other means.
- The Plan from its inception was rooted partially in economics. TECO's President/CEO of TECO, H.L. Culbreath, was a forward thinker, but had said that the healthier they are, the more money they have, the more they're going to spend on electricity. Tampa General had been caring for indigent patients and was overwhelmed and falling into economic hardship.
- HC HCP is a managed care model, avoiding treating the patient for chronic conditions by preempting those conditions and triaging their health issues. It's less expensive to triage somebody with a propensity for high blood pressure than wait till they have a stroke. Fire/Rescue is less likely to be involved outside of the random event
- Communication seems to be an issue. A quick social media search, people are saying there isn't health care if you don't have money. Mostly all the comments are a string of confusion and misinformation. Member Roberts mentioned she wasn't deeply knowledgeable about the differences between, HCP, ACA, employer provided, self-insured, the private market and other things like Good RX or how it all works, who's eligible for what, what are the hard lines in there? What are the blurry lines? It's very confusing.
- The general public doesn't know that the surtax exists. Having a one-page chart of the different options and information people can use, who qualifies for what and where to get more information or to sign up would educate county residents. She is a big fan of separating emotion out and replacing it with fact
- It was brought up that some agents/brokers are unscrupulous salespeople taking people off the County plan and signing them up on the ACA when it isn't the best plan for that person. It may not be a huge problem, but asked if the County monitoring this, and if so, what are they doing to quickly address those who drop off the County Plan?
- Member Johnson asked if the behavior was considered fraudulent, or is it just unethical
- Member Roberts mentioned an article in Health News Florida that she will share with Members. It discussed that state and federal resources get involved when they receive reports. It stated that fraud is when people are encouraged to lie on applications in terms of their address, income and potentially other factors like paying applicants on the spot to do so. Giving people money to make a false statement on a federal form is fraud.
- Who ultimately pays when the person has catastrophic care, ends up at the hospital? Members felt the CAC needs to learn more; may be premature to provide a recommendation. Chair Elend suggested speaking with Director Earley again, as he may have more information or a suggestion for addressing the issue. It was mentioned that in Pinellas County, the roadside stands are reported to the Business Tax division. If they aren't registered, they are fined; if that makes a difference wasn't clear, it may open the door to a licensure investigation
- Communicating with people potentially could qualify, (about fifty thousand people) is hard, but it sounded that the department is doing a good job. Currently the Plan serves around thirty thousand.
- Wide Communications - The public needs to be educated about the potential for "roadside brokers" and the potential for fraud. Communication with the general public to broaden knowledge of the Plan may help
- Vice Chair Elms mentioned a third element of communication is between law enforcement agencies or those that might notice this fraud taking place and those who could investigate it. Law enforcement professionals are overwhelmed with what they're already investigating. This is probably a pretty low priority. He thought it may be something the Health Care Advisory Board may have looked at since they have a larger grasp of the situation than the CAC or the BOCC.



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- Member Johnson was concerned that Fire/Rescue has budgetary issues, and why fundamental budgeting practices are insufficient for covering needs that have been there year after year. Budgets can rationally be made and if we can't have rational budgeting, this is where mistakes and frauds can progress. When they appeal to the County for certain funds, they should be rational, based on history, and trends monitored. Why create a separate fund or use this as a slush fund in order for them to apply for extra dollars that could have simply been budgeted?
- Chair Elend relayed information from his inquiries. It is his understanding that the need is being met from the General Fund. The large surplus in the Health Care Plan is because the County doesn't control the levers of revenue. The communities need and the County's expenditures are tracked by staff. Some years revenue is high, some years not, with the ups and downs of the economy and tourism. Indigent care sales tax funds are restricted and highly regulated. The question is how can we not just store that money but use it to offset other costs? For example, we're spending General Fund money on Fire/Rescue. Management & Budget staff advised that if this money gets allocated to Fire/Rescue, it reduces the General Fund money that Fire/Rescue is going to get, it's an offset. There are other ways for Fire/Rescue to ask for more money when they need it. The surplus can be utilized, but it takes creative problem solving to find a solution to the fluctuating revenue and overage issue.
- Addressing his concern, Chair Elend explained to Member Johnson that the BOCC allocates funds, not a secondary board. He was also reassured that Fire/Rescue Department is not requesting a grant from a separate entity. He reiterated funds directed either to Fire/Rescue or to the prisons is an offset out of the General Fund and replaced by Health Care Plan sales tax funds at the discretion of the BOCC. It is a policy decision that it seems a majority of CAC Members agrees with.
- The HC HCP is a model for the country. It works and it's funded. It's paid for by sales tax, which means we all share the burden and the people who come and visit us share the burden as well. This is not a choice between paying for health care and not paying for healthcare. This is a question of who pays for this healthcare, because when someone goes to TGH, they get served and if it's all catastrophic, it costs more.
- Without a County Health Care Plan, those who have insurance will pay higher prices because providers have to be repaid in some fashion. Here, the HC HCP County fills the gap.
- Massive economic and population growth resulted in not only increased need for indigent care from providers and from Fire/Rescue. It also is compounding increases in the funding faster than the need as currently allocated. Increase in the need that is not anticipated, helping the Fire/Rescue and helping the prison system can contribute to managing the growth of that need. The excess won't be there forever and shouldn't be counted on.
- Chair Elend thought the CAC wasn't planning on making a recommendation for FY25 because it will have no impact. He preferred the CAC celebrate the innovation of the BOCC to deal with it, considering there were proposals that the BOCC didn't choose to achieve the same goal i.e. changing the qualification to 200% of the poverty line, expanding the people who could be covered. That's a policy choice they didn't make. If there is creativity about how this excess is used, then the system is working in our government is working.
- Chair Elend expressed interest in the CAC acknowledging how important the program is and why it matters. When it comes to 2026, placing a ballot measure to reduce the sales tax and lowering revenue because of this excess is going to be very attractive to the BOCC and to residents who will vote to lower sales taxes. He is worried about the program's future. Literally, if the HC HCP sales tax is lowered, it would be about eight years until the program was totally gone; even the revenue plan for Fire/Rescue and prisons won't happen.
- Vice Chair Elms agreed, adding an appreciation of how well it has been managed, at least in the recent memory. Even when their numbers went down, when they went into the red for a while, he didn't think it was because the program was being mismanaged. Those periods of red being as much about economic downturns as it is about anything else. The revenue stream dried up. Expectations are that a recession about every ten years, so there will be a period of retraction at some point, and it will bounce back.
- Even if there was no health care plan, we can't collect a sales tax and spend it on whatever we want. The Community Investment Tax can only be spent on infrastructure, the Health Care Plan sales tax on indigent care. A majority of funds have restrictions. Director Brickley and Mr. Fessler spoke in detail about the budget, pointing out it was a misstatement to say that the Administration has a \$3b budget. The County Administrator can only allocate a very small portion of the actual funds, because so many of those funds are so highly restricted.



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- Data is needed on the impact a long range rate change, as a long option would have on the economics of our County as compared to raising the eligibility to 200% of poverty level.
- Any CAC recommendation letter should, without disparaging other ideas. It should be said that we recognize the value of the program, how well and the good manner in which it's been managed, historically and presently. And then we endorse the two options that we all agree to in terms of covering or assisting in the funding of the Hillsborough County Fire/Rescue, recognizing their participation in the indigent care effort. The prison program proposal is one that all Members of the CAC would support. Member Roberts would like to add acknowledgement of the creative problem solving by the BOCC.
- Vice Chair Elms noted that this is about as good a home rule effort as you can have in this day and age. The county has been responsible in local home rule on this issue and that is reflecting well. The amount of the surplus while concerning, it reflects how well has been managed, because it could have been spent.
- Coming to a vote on this means a letter could be sent to the BOCC in August endorsing the HC HCP the fraudulent aspect can be mentioned to put it on their radar because they might not be even aware as Commissioners that any of that is happening and its impact on the cost of indigent care.
- A Commissioner would ask for a future item for staff to come back and report on the situation. Once that report is given, some of the information the CAC could use to consider a plan to suggest how to handle the situation
- Should the letter include there is an opportunity to improve communication about this model program to the citizens at large, letting people know that this program exists and that it's there for their neighbors, family and friends.
- If a letter isn't voted on at this meeting, there isn't another opportunity to do so. Votes cannot be taken remotely. A special meeting would need to be held
- Individuals can write their own letters or speak on their own at the BOCC Public Hearing, but no one, not even the Chair or Vice Chair can speak on behalf of or give the impression as a member of the CAC. It would only be as an individual.
- Calling a special meeting requires public notice, the location has to be open and accessible to the public and notes have to be taken.
- Members found this issue that they've looked at for the last quarter fascinating and thinks we've been remarkably productive. The previous topic, the water/sewer assessment was productive as well. A deep dive and report back on what we learned but perhaps failed give solid recommendations on a few things in regard to the topic for i.e. methods for collecting data, that seemed missing, perhaps utilizing the permitting process was something for consideration. We've done a great job coming up with quality recommendations here, we might be able revisit that topic to make solid recommendations.
- Chair Elend recalled there were four specific recommendations and appreciates it being mentioned in context of what the CAC can do better. Perhaps at the CAC's next meeting, that letter and this one be reviewed, to consider how recommendations can be made better, more actionable.
- Member Baskette asked for a discussion of the CIT during September's meeting at the request of Commissioner Cohen. So that's a priority, moving it to the top of our list
- Member Walker wondering if he would have any interest in speaking with us at that meeting. Member Baskette will make that inquiry. It was also suggested that a the Administrator of the CIT should also participate, perhaps Communications as well since they are the ones responsible for getting the message out

The Chair thanked the CAC Members for another productive meeting, adjourning at 10:57 am.



**Hillsborough
County Florida**

Citizens Advisory Committee

2025 Proposed Calendar

General Meetings are held on the fourth Friday of each month.

601 E. Kennedy Boulevard - 24th Floor Conference Room

Conference Room 2416W-A

TIME TBD

(unless otherwise noticed, meetings are the fourth Friday of every month)

January 24, 2025
February 28, 2025
March 28, 2025
April 25, 2025
May 23, 2025 (note Memorial Day is 5/26)
June 27, 2025
July 25, 2025
August 22, 2025
September 26, 2025
October 24, 2025
November 21, 2025 (Third Friday) Third Friday due to the Thanksgiving holiday
December 19, 2025 (Third Friday) Third Friday due to Winter holidays