MINUTES

SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
FINAL MILLAGE & FINAL BUDGET

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
AT 5:15 PM
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 SW FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994

CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Eula R. Clarke
Commissioner Laura Giobbi
Commissioner Merritt Matheson
Commissioner Sean Reed
Commissioner Campbell Rich

ADMINISTRATIVE

Interim City Manager, Jim Chrulski
City Attorney, Lee J. Baggett
City Clerk, Mary R. Kindel

ROLL CALL

5:15 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Clarke, Commissioner Giobbi, Commissioner Rich, Commissioner Reed, Commissioner Matheson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMENTS BY CITY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Reed

- Commented that he doesn't support raising taxes on the City's constituents.

COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

5:17 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
Motion approved unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Non-Agenda Related) (3 Minutes Max.)

COMMISSION ACTION

1. FINAL MILLAGE FOR FY 2027 (RC):

   RESOLUTION No. 68-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR THE CITY OF STUART IN MARTIN COUNTY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Jim Chrulski, Interim City Manager, read language into the record pertaining to the final millage and final budget adoption.

Lee Baggett, City Attorney, read the Resolution title into the record.

Anthony Cooling, Budget & Procurement Manager, stated the millage as 5.0 and a total levy $20,112,867 and required to budget 95% of that amount, totaling $19,107,224.

Commissioner Matheson commented that there have been two (2) budget workshops and discussions; noted that he supports the millage as proposed. Stated that there have been no suggestions about what the Commissioners would like to cut, who are not in support of the 5.0 millage.

Interim City Manager Chrulski stated that the legal opinion is that the statute states there needs to be a minimum of four (4) Board member votes to pass the millage rate of 5.0.

Mr. Cooling proposed options for budget reduction such as removal of positions, ambulance replacement, and Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) funds.

5:20 PM MOTION: Approve Resolution No. 68-2026, final millage.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
VOTE: Motion failed 3/2. [Needed minimum of 4/1]
YES: Eula Clarke, Campbell Rich, Merritt Matheson
NO: Laura Giobbi, Sean Reed

Mr. Cooling reported on the budget with the reduced millage of 4.95, thanked William Perez for his calculations. Discussion of City-owned leased property.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Althea Wiley - Stuart; Commented on the people affected, why are some holding out, is it personal? It's about the community as a whole.
2. Ostyn Levi - Stuart, Commented on the Florida Statute for the legally required vote. [City Attorney responded 4 out of 5 vote on 4.95 mills.]
3. David Kehlmann - Stuart; Commented on ways the budget can be adjusted without jeopardizing the Fire positions. [Mr. Cooling reviewed the percentages and funds.]
4. Mike Mortell - Stuart; Commented on his proposal; needs to make budget amendments. The recommendation is to pass the budget at 5 mills and continue to

hire staff and move forward. The best chance of resources to balance itself, 3 to 5 years out.

5. Lucille Smilth - Stuart; No comment on the budget, commented on cleaning up the empty lots and land rentals in East Stuart.
6. Dayne Oldenborg - Stuart; Commented on the budget, commented on the expenses of the new firefighters, the rehiring of Mr. Mortell, signs in Confusion Corner, and leases.
7. Will Laughlin - Stuart; Commented on using CRA funding to make up the difference in the budget.

5:48 PM MOTION: Approve a millage rate at 4.95.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
VOTE: Motion passed 4/1. 6:24 PM
YES: Eula Clarke, Laura Giobbi, Campbell Rich, Merritt Matheson
NO: Sean Reed

2. FINAL BUDGETS FOR FY 2027 (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 69-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGETS OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2026, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Anthony Cooling, Budget & Procurement Manager, reviewed the budget balancing from 5.0 to 4.95 mills. Stated some cuts need to be proposed by the Finance Department or the Commissioners and voted by 3/2 of the Commission to have a balanced budget.

Commissioner Matheson stated that the proposal is to go into our reserve fund. Requested clarification on the 60-day operation reserves.

6:40 PM MOTION: Approve Resolution No. 69-2026 final budget for the upcoming fiscal year 2027, and $50,796,422 as the expense budget for the general fund and the difference from unallocated fund reserve.
6:46 PM AMEND MOTION: Approve Resolution No. 69-2026 reducing the General Fund Section 1A by $202,000.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Sean Reed
VOTE: Motion passed 3/2.
YES: Eula Clarke, Campbell Rich, Laura Giobbi
NO: Sean Reed, Merritt Matheson

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

ADJOURNMENT

6:51 PM

Mary R. Kiddel, City Clerk

Eula Clarke, Mayor

Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission Meeting this 28th day of September, 2026.