

**Citizen Charter Review Committee
December 18, 2025
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Leon County Main Library
Programming Room**

The Leon County 2025-2026 Citizen Charter Review Committee (CCRC) met on December 18, 2025, at 11:30 a.m. in the Leon County Main Library with Committee members Mary Ann Lindley, Chauncy Haynes, Darryl Jones, Linda Bond Edwards, Henry Lewis, III, Bruce Strouble, Jr., Howard Kessler, Ryan Ray, Liz Ellis, Joey Davis, Barry Wilcox, Katrina Tuggerson, Temple Robinson, Max Herrle, Shamarial Roberson, Heidi Otway, Sean Pittman and Jarrett Terry in attendance. Also present were Assistant County Administrator Ken Morris, Assistant County Administrator Shington Lamy, County Attorney Chasity O'Steen, Assistant to the County Administrator for Legislative and Strategic Initiatives Nicki Hatch, Director of the Office of Human Services and Community Partnerships Abby Thomas, Management Analyst Cameron Williams, and Clerks to the Board, Beryl Wood and Daniel J. Antonaccio.

Absent Members: William Smith, Slaton Murray and Anita Favors.

Call to Order and Opening Mary Ann Lindley, Chair

Chair Lindley called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Nicki Hatch advised the Committee that the audio team was experiencing technical issues and requested that those planning to provide public comments submit their speaker cards to her.

Consent:

Ryan Ray moved, seconded by Linda Bond Edwards, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- *Vice Chairman Chauncy Haynes arrived at 11:31 a.m.*
- *Shamarial Roberson and Temple Robinson arrived at 11:32 a.m.*
- *Darryl Jones and Heidi Otway arrived at 11:39 a.m.*
- *Sean Pittman arrived at 11:42 a.m.*

The motion carried 18 – 0 with Committee Members Anita Favors, Slaton Murray and William Smith not present.

Approval of December 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Receipt & File of Written Public Comments

Public Comment:

- Mary Miaisha Mitchell, 1009 Ellington Court, addressed the Committee regarding food insecurity in Leon County, with particular emphasis on its impact on youth. She urged the Committee to move forward with consideration of this item, highlighting the importance of farm-to-table programs to support children and families in the future.

- Camille Lewis, 1689 Corey Wood Circle, addressed the Committee stating that Leon County's food challenges stem from a lack of coordinated structure rather than a lack of programs. She advocated for a charter amendment to establish food access and food system resilience as a county responsibility, including creation of an Office of Food Systems, a countywide food system plan with measurable goals, and annual public reporting to ensure accountability and long-term durability.
- Lynn Jones, 3211 Notre Dame Street, spoke in support of addressing food insecurity. She highlighted the role of community gardens in supporting youth development and discussed ways to better support children.
- Melanie Andrade Williams, 3349 Argonaut Drive, spoke in support of addressing food insecurity. She referenced Leon County's strategic initiative related to food insecurity, requesting the inclusion of additional goals. She asked that staff return with proposed Charter language for the Committee's consideration.
- Tiffany Hill, 1401 Lola Drive, addressed the Committee regarding affordable housing options and noted that HUD grant funding could be pursued.

General Business:

Item #1: Status Report on City-County Consolidation in Florida

Assistant County Administrator Ken Morris introduced the item, noting that the remaining three items would be presented by Shington Lamy and Abby Thomas, who can speak on human services trends, community needs, the CHSP process, and County and City investments. Ken Morris stated that the human services items were grouped together to provide the Committee with a comprehensive understanding of service delivery, gaps, and coordination between public and nonprofit agencies. He also noted that after discussion of the agenda items, there will be another opportunity for Committee members to offer additional Charter amendment concepts for future consideration.

Ken Morris explained that in November the Board of County Commissioners requested a status report on City and County consolidation, including how the process would work and general pros and cons. That item was prepared for the Board's December 9 meeting. At the Committee's prior meeting, members requested that the same materials be presented for review and discussion. Therefore, the Board agenda materials were included in the Committee's packet. He provided an overview of the consolidation process, noting that consolidation would require development of a comprehensive consolidation plan, adoption by the Legislature through a special act, and approval by voters via referendum. He explained that a consolidation plan would need to address numerous issues including governance structure, staffing, salaries, contracts, unions, retirement benefits, and debt. On December 9, the Board directed staff to bring back draft language for a non-binding straw ballot question for the November 2026 General Election to gauge community interest in consolidation. Based on the Board's action, he stated that no action by the Committee was recommended at this time, but staff welcomed feedback and questions.

Sean Pittman asked whether the County considered potential savings for the community which would be important in drafting ballot language.

Ken Morris clarified that the item focused on the consolidation process, and that any cost or savings analysis would occur during development of a consolidation plan. He further clarified that this is a non-binding straw ballot intended to assess public interest.

Barry Wilcox asked for clarification regarding next steps should the straw ballot indicate support for consolidation.

Ken Morris explained that following a favorable vote, the County Commission would need to determine whether to proceed jointly with the City or independently engage the Legislative Delegation. Mr. Morris noted that a fully executed consolidation could take several years as it requires the development of a consolidation plan, approval by the Legislature, approval by voters, and a transition period.

Ryan Ray commented that, given current community needs and broader governance challenges, consolidation was not advisable at this time. He expressed concerns about limiting local capacity and involving the Legislature in local governance decisions.

Max Herrle inquired about the items that will come back to the Board regarding consolidation. He also asked about the Board's voting threshold for placing this topic on the ballot.

Ken Morris responded that an item discussing draft language for the ballot will be presented to the Board in the spring. A simple majority vote of the Board is needed to place the straw ballot question on the ballot.

Barry Wilcox commented on the concept of functional consolidation. He asked whether functional consolidation between the City and County had been examined to identify duplicative efforts and inquired about the process for evaluating such consolidation.

Ken Morris clarified that functional consolidation can be implemented through an interlocal agreement between the City and the County.

Vice Chairman Chauncy Haynes moved, seconded by Ryan Ray, for Option #1: Accept the report and take no further action.

The motion carried 18 – 0 with Committee Members Anita Favors, Slaton Murray and William Smith not present.

Item #2: Food Insecurity Provisions

Assistant County Administrator Shington Lamy introduced the item, noting that Leon County established a department dedicated to food security efforts in 2022. He also noted that no other county charters in Florida include the specific issue of food insecurity. Mr. Lamy outlined options for the Committee, including encouraging the Board to continue its commitment to reducing food insecurity through a recommendation in the Committee's final report, or moving forward with a Charter amendment.

Darryl Jones stated that food security has long been a County priority and remarked that a government's values are reflected in how it allocates funding. He expressed that codifying these values in the Charter could protect them from changes resulting from elections or political shifts.

Linda Bond Edwards expressed concern regarding the apparent disconnect between information presented by staff and testimony provided by public speakers. She noted that despite existing efforts, food insecurity persists, suggesting that the overall structure may require further evaluation.

Shington Lamy stated that the County does not have authority to mandate actions by entities such as Leon County Schools and that a Charter amendment would replicate authority that the County already has.

County Attorney O'Steen directed the Committee's attention to Article IX, Section 4 of the Florida Constitution, noting that counties lack authority over school districts. She explained that prior County actions, including mandatory mask requirements, explicitly excluded schools due to this limitation. She further discussed Charter provisions related to funding, noting that while some charters require funding for specific purposes, they typically avoid prescribing exact dollar amounts and instead leave discretion to the governing board. She also explained that proposed charter amendments in other jurisdictions to limit a county's revenue generation have been preempted by Chapters 129 and 200, Florida Statutes, and that there is no case law supporting Charter-mandated funding.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., provided a separate handout to the Committee and commended the efforts of the County's Office of Human Services and Community Partnerships. He emphasized that food insecurity increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly among vulnerable populations. He cited examples of bodies created by other jurisdictions to address this issue, including New York City's Offices of Food Policy and Urban Agriculture as well as Philadelphia's Office of Sustainability.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., moved, seconded by Heidi Otway, to direct staff to bring back charter language establishing a County duty for food access and food system resilience, creating an office of food systems under the executive branch to monitor efforts, and requiring a countywide food systems plan, annual reporting, countywide minimum standards, and that an ordinance be made within 12 months of a charter amendment being passed.

The motion was not voted on.

Shamarial Roberson raised concerns regarding fiscal impacts, adjacent programs, and federal regulations. She questioned how a Charter amendment would address these complexities and suggested a policy-based approach focused on measurable outcomes, a countywide plan, and a coordinating committee.

Katrina Tuggerson noted the involvement of the Capital City Chamber of Commerce in recent food system initiatives and referenced ongoing coordination with County staff to secure grants and address service gaps.

Heidi Otway highlighted that beginning in October 2026, Florida will assume responsibility for SNAP administration and urged prioritization of food security in advance of these changes.

Chair Lindley asked whether a policy recommendation would allow for a more timely response.

Nicki Hatch stated that the March 2026 County Commission meeting would include all proposals and policy recommendations for the Board's consideration.

Darryl Jones distinguished between Charter language and strategic planning, emphasizing that Charter provisions should empower rather than constrain, and cautioned against overly prescriptive language that could affect voter support.

Vice Chairman Chauncy Haynes made a substitute motion, seconded by Liz Ellis, for Option #2: Direct staff to include a recommendation encouraging Leon County to continue its long-standing commitment to reduce food insecurity in the community as part of the Citizen Charter Review Committee report.

The motion failed 11 – 7 with Chair Mary Ann Lindley, Vice Chairman Chauncy Haynes, Linda Bond Edwards, Liz Ellis, Heidi Otway, Shamarial Roberson and Barry Wilcox in favor of the motion. Committee Members Anita Favors, Slaton Murray and William Smith were not present.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., stated that any proposed structure would be subject to annual appropriation and would establish minimum standards rather than fixed funding amounts.

Darryl Jones made a substitute motion, seconded by Jarrett Terry, for Option #3: Direct staff to draft a proposed charter amendment on food insecurity as determined by the Citizen Charter Review Committee.

The motion carried 18 – 0 with Committee Members Anita Favors, Slaton Murray and William Smith not present.

Max Herrle asked whether items not yet discussed could be modified based on stakeholder input and whether attachments could be submitted.

Nicki Hatch confirmed that stakeholders may submit materials through public comment. She explained that they would take up remaining items during the Jan 8, 2026 Committee meeting.

Item #3: Funding Mechanisms for Affordable Housing

Item #4: Funding Mechanisms for Healthcare Access for Low-Income Residents

Committee Discussion on Proposed Charter Amendments


Motion to adjourn:

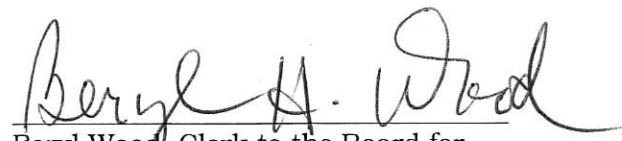
Ryan Ray moved, seconded by Max Herrle, to adjourn the meeting.

The motion carried 18 – 0 with Committee Members Anita Favors, Slaton Murray and William Smith not present.

Chair Lindley adjourned the meeting at 1:29 p.m.

ATTEST:


Mary Ann Lindley, Chair
Leon County Citizen Charter Review Committee


Beryl Wood, Clerk to the Board for
Gwen Marshall Knight, Clerk of Court