



July 24, 2025

Dear Chairman Kruse,

The Florida DOGE team, in partnership with Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Blaise Ingoglia and the Office of Policy and Budget (OPB), have identified Manatee County for further review and an on-site visit. Although Manatee County has taken steps to reduce the county-wide millage rate in recent years, rising property values have pushed annual property tax collections up by over \$200 million since 2019, according to your published budgets. This increased burden on property owners has helped Manatee County increase the county's net annual budget by almost \$600 million since 2020 – an increase in spending of 80% during that period.

Having entrusted their governments with the power to tax, the citizens of Florida have a right to expect that their elected officials will spend the collected funds responsibly, not recklessly, and on truly necessary programs. Through the DOGE effort, Governor DeSantis has charged us to identify and report on this type of excessive spending at the county and municipal level, and the citizens of Florida have responded with enthusiasm. We appreciate Manatee County's establishment of a DOGE committee as an example of that enthusiasm, and we hope that our work will ultimately support responsible decision-making by Manatee County leaders.

In exercise of the Governor's authority under Article 4, Section 1(a) of the Florida Constitution, the Chief Financial Officer's authority under ss. 17.04 and 17.05 Florida Statutes, and the Office of Policy and Budget's authority under the Laws of Florida, chapter 2025(199), Section 124, we hereby request access to your county's physical premises, data systems, and responsive personnel, as detailed below our signatures, on August 5, 2025 and August 6, 2025 at the County Administration Building and such other locations that you identify as necessary to comply with these requests.

Please reach out to the Florida DOGE team and OPB by July 30 to provide us with an on-site contact for those dates, and to pose any questions regarding this request, at 850-759-2440 or EOGDOGE@laspbs.state.fl.us. In addition, please encourage a representative from the Manatee County DOGE committee to contact us as well (once the members have been selected).



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Responses to the information requests may be provided at the time of the requested access, or may be provided electronically in advance by contacting us for access to a secure electronic portal to which documents and other types of data may be uploaded.

You should note that financial penalties may accrue for your failure to comply with each of the following requests for access on those dates.

Sincerely,

Eric Soskin
Senior Advisor to the
Governor and DOGE
Team Lead
Executive Office of
Governor Ron DeSantis

Blaise Ingoglia
Chief Financial Officer
State of Florida
Department of Financial
Services

Leda Kelly
Director, Office of Policy
and Budget
Executive Office of
Governor Ron DeSantis

Cc: Charlie Bishop, Manatee County Administrator

SPECIFIC REQUESTS

For each of the following topic areas, you are requested to make available: (i) the information and documents described; (ii) access to the data systems containing such information and documents; and (iii) individuals with appropriate expertise to describe the county's activities and decisions

Topic: Procurement and Contracting

Request No. 1: Policies, procedures, rules, and legal requirements for procurements or contracts in excess of \$10,000.

Request No. 2: A list of all procurements and contracts in excess of \$10,000,

Request No. 3: All records of bid solicitations, vendor selections, and contract documents for procurements or contracts responsive to Request No. 2.

Request No. 4: All information supporting the determination of the reasonableness of pricing for procurements or contracts responsive to Request No. 2.

Request No. 5: A listing of all sole source procurements or contracts in excess of \$10,000.

Request No. 6: For all sole source procurements or contracts responsive to Request No. 5, the sole source procurement justification form and all other information supporting use of a sole source procurement.

Request No. 7: For all sole source procurements or contracts responsive to Request No. 5, all information supporting a determination that the pricing was fair and/or reasonable.

Request No. 8: All reviews and reports on the timeliness of work authorizations, notices to proceed, change order approval, billing, invoicing, and payment.

Request No. 9: All reviews and reports on the timeliness of work authorizations, notices to proceed, change order approval, billing, invoicing, and payment.

Topic: Personnel Compensation

Request No. 1: The amount of regular pay, overtime pay, bonuses, and other cash compensation for all employees from FY 19-20 to present.

Request No. 2: All rules, procedures, and guidance at the department-wide level or above regarding promotions, step or level increases, or bonuses from FY 2019-20 to the present.

Request No. 3: A list of all decisions to provide department-wide or county-wide salary increases or bonuses from FY 2019-2020 to the present.

Request No. 4: For all decisions responsive to Request No. 3, any analysis conducted of the costs of such increases, alternatives, and projections of future associated costs and how such costs would be paid.

Request No. 5: Individuals with appropriate expertise to discuss your jurisdiction's performance management systems and their use in promotions, pay increases, and bonuses.

Request No. 6: Data at the department level or above regarding the extent to which staff meet or exceed performance targets.

Request No. 7: Policies regarding the accrual of leave and payout of leave on separation

Request No. 8: Access to the systems used for tracking leave accrual.

Request No. 9: Records of all leave payouts on separation exceeding 25% of the annual salary of the separating individual from FY 19-20 to the present.

Request No. 10: Access to the systems used for tracking overtime.

Request No. 11: Records of all personnel recording more than 25% of their hours as overtime.

Property Management

Request No. 1: Records of all inventories of tangible personal property, including:

- a) the date of the most recent inventory performed to date]
- b) the reconciliation of that inventory to property records
- c) records of disposal between inventories
- d) identification of attractive personal property items

Request No. 2: For any county-owned property leased to another entity, private or public:

- a) the amount of the lease
- b) the terms of the lease
- c) any assessment of the fair market value of the property
- d) the basis and determination that such lease constitutes the best use of the property.

Request No. 3: For the recently-announced purchase of an additional building for the county government (at a reported price of \$24 million), the following:

- a) All assessments of the county government's need for space along with any underlying assumptions about those needs
- b) A list of all alternative options, and any analysis of those alternatives, considered to satisfy the county's need for space

- c) All consideration of a “no expansion” or “no new space” option
- d) The most recent appraisal of the property being purchased
- e) All assessments of operating costs associated with the new building and the existing administration building
- f) All assessments of projected costs for maintaining, operating, repairing, or replacing the parking garage associated with the existing administration building

Request No. 4: For any purchase or sale of public-owned property other than the one in Request No. 3, the most recent appraisal made prior to such purchase or sale.

Request No. 5: All expenditures on renovations to the existing county administration building since January 1, 2019;

Request No. 6: If not included in the response to Request No. 5, all expenditures on furnishings, furniture, window treatments, and décor in the existing county administration building since January 1, 2023.

Request No. 7: For the potential purchase of the Mixon Farms property:

- a) All reports and analyses of the county’s purchase of this property, or a “no purchase” option
- b) For all intended uses of the property, all consideration of alternatives, including any previous plans by the county for such use
- c) All assessments of capital costs for county plans for the property
- d) All assessments of operating costs associated with county ownership of the property
- e) All information provided to the county by the current owners in connection with the potential purchase, including revenue and expense information for the business, visitor attendance, maintenance and operating costs, and disclosures about the physical condition of the property, drainage, criminal activity, or other matters

Utilities System

Request No. 1: All rate studies or utilized to determine rates since January 1, 2019.

Request No. 2: Methodology used to determine transfers of funds between the utilities system and other government funds, including the general fund.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Request No. 1: Since January 1, 2020, all jobs with the responsibility to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, or so-called anti-racism.

Request No. 2: The current positions and activities of any person who previously had such responsibilities and is still employed by Manatee County.

Request No. 3: Since January 1, 2020, the titles, dates of administration, and duration for any scheduled training for County personnel, or made available by the County to others (including but not limited to contractors, grant recipients, or members of the public) that included diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism as a topic or subject.

Request No. 4: The titles of any unscheduled or self-service training for County personnel, or made available by the County to others (including but not limited to contractors, grant recipients, or members of the public) that included diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism as a topic or subject.

Request No. 5: For any training responsive to Request No. 3 or Request No. 4, a copy of all training materials used, provided to participants, or made available for participants to obtain voluntarily.

Request No. 6: For any training responsive to Request No. 3 or Request No. 4, the identities and qualifications of those conducting the training.

Request No. 7: For any training responsive to Request No. 3 or Request No. 4, the names and positions of those attending the training.

Request No. 8: For any training responsive to Request No. 3 or Request No. 4, the identities and qualifications of those conducting the training.

Request No. 9: For any training responsive to Request No. 3 or Request No. 4, all costs and expenses associated with the training.

Request No. 10: For any training responsive to Request No. 3 or Request No. 4, if the training was conducted by a contractor or other external entity, all documents related to the qualifications, selection, and payment of such individual, contractor or entity.

Request No. 11: If not included above, any actions taken to carry out the steps described in Manatee County's 2020 "Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis," including, but not limited to: (1) "ensur[ing] antiracism principles across county leadership, staffing, and contracting"; (2) "support[ing] local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism"; and (3) "[s]upport[ing] community efforts to amplify issues of racism."

Request No. 12: Any program operated by the county on the basis of an individual's race, ethnicity, or gender, or targeted to a specific group based on the group's racial, ethnic, or gender characteristics.

Request No. 13: Any grant made by the county to an organization that operates on the basis of, or for the benefit of, individuals of a specified race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity other than male or female, or that targets a specific group or set of groups based on race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Request No. 14: Any communication sent to all county staff, or to all staff within a county department, between January 1, 2019 and the present, regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, DEI, or so-called anti-racism.

Green New Deal

Request No. 1: Documentation related to the adoption of any climate change, emissions reduction or carbon reduction target, including:

- a) consideration of alternatives to such target;
- b) any cost-benefit analysis undertaken in support of such target, including any analysis conducted or estimate made of the impact of adopting the goal on global climate;
- c) all assessments of capital and operating expenses associated with such target.
- d) all actual expenses to date associated with such target.

Request No. 2: If not included in the response to Request No. 1 above, any purchases or other expenses for the lease or acquisition of battery-electric vehicles (EVs), EV infrastructure, energy purchases associated with EV infrastructure, solar power systems, carbon credits, carbon charges, or other emissions reduction mechanisms, and for each such expense, provide any records, assessments, or analysis of:

- a) Any alternative purchase option, including but not limited to, no-purchase options, purchase or lease of internal combustion engine powered vehicles, power generated from other sources;
- b) any analysis of the impact of the action on global climate;
- c) records of the reliability of any EV, EV infrastructure, or solar power system in use by the county during the time period from January 1, 2019 to present;

Request No. 3: Records of all training related to the topic of climate change, battery-electric vehicles, or solar power, including the justifications, content, and attendance records for such training, and the location and costs (including travel costs) of such training.

Request No. 4: Since January 1, 2020, information on the incorporation of LEED standards into any project funded by the county, including the justification for the use of LEED standards, any analysis of the costs associated with doing so and alternatives to doing so, and any post-construction analysis or assessment of the costs and benefits.

Grants and Other Spending

Request No. 1: Policies, procedures, rules, and legal requirements for grants made to external entities such as NGOs, and for all such grants made since January 1, 2023:

- a) records of all such grants made
- b) records of all payments made pursuant to such grants
- c) Procedures for monitoring of spending and performance by recipients of grants
- d) all records of the monitoring, performance, and other oversight of such grants, including the allocation of staff time to such oversight

Request No. 2: For all grants received by the county other than those made by a state agency, in partnership with a state agency, or administered by a state agency:

- a) the matching requirements for such grants, if any
- b) the source of funding for the match
- c) records of the decision to pursue such grant
- d) analysis of the impact of the grant, including any assumptions made in support of the analysis.

Request No. 3: All rules, policies, and procedures governing the use of county funds to purchase or reimburse the purchase of clothing or uniforms for employees, and;

- a) A list of all employees for whom such clothing was purchased or reimbursed, their job title and function, and the justification for the purchase;
- b) A design, drawing, photograph, or illustration of the clothing purchased, including any printing or embroidery

Request No. 4: All rules, policies, and procedures governing vehicle allowances, and the names and titles of all recipients of a vehicle allowance;

Request No. 5: All rules, policies, and procedures governing take-home vehicles, a list of the names and titles of all persons making use of a take-home vehicle, and records of all mileage and expenses associated with those take-home vehicles, including repairs and calculations of the associated taxable income;

Request No. 6: Since January 1, 2023, all consulting contracts ongoing or entered into by the county, including costs, deliverables, assessments of performance, and copies of any reports or recommendations generated as a result of the contract.

Request No. 7: All planning, analysis, and justifications related to the creation of a Government Relations department, its mission, the organization chart for this department, all job descriptions and formal or informal descriptions of responsibilities for the department, future planned hiring, and all expenditures to date on goods, services, grants, or travel by the department.

Request No. 8: All expenditures on the repainting, decorating, or “wrapping” of county vehicles for purposes of identifying, communicating, or marketing, descriptions of the purpose and any analysis associated with the up-front costs, ongoing or future costs, and return on investment.

Transportation

Request No. 1: All recommendations to the County Commission by County staff and MPO staff regarding proposed transportation projects and expenditures since January 1, 2023

Request No. 2: For all transportation capital projects begun, ongoing, or completed since January 1, 2023, a description of the project, any cost estimates, the amount budgeted, and the actual expense, including any cost overruns or savings to date

Request No. 3: For the Bradenton to Anna Maria Water Taxi:

- a) Planning documents and any consideration of alternatives associated with its establishment
- b) All consideration of options for operating hours and days
- c) All capital and operating costs to date, including costs associated with the Riverwalk and Bridge Street Piers
- d) the sources of funding for the water taxi
- e) ridership projections by day of week, month, and year
- f) actual ridership by day of week, month, and year

Request No. 4: Since January 1, 2023, for all installations of traffic calming devices, included but not limited to speed tables, speed humps, raised intersections, curb extensions, and chokers, the following information:

- a) the location, capital, planned lifecycle, and expected annual maintenance costs
- b) the basis for the installation, including any plan, analysis, or recommendation
- c) information related to the consideration of any alternatives

Request No. 5: For all traffic calming devices not included in Request No. 4, the planned lifecycle and expected annual maintenance costs

Request No. 6: Since January 1, 2023, all projects to install new grass or landscaping on county roads and rights-of-way, or those of municipalities within the county, including installation and maintenance cost estimates, actual costs, and analyses and justification for the project.

Homeless Services

Request No. 1: Direct spending by Manatee County on programs related to the homeless.

Request No. 2: Grants to other entities, including NGOs, related to homeless services.

Request No. 3: Manatee County's efforts to measure the effectiveness of these programs.