

MINUTES CITIZEN BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD

March 16, 2026

The regular meeting of the CITIZEN BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD was called to order by Chair Barnett at 6:30 PM on **Monday, March 16, 2026**, in The Frank Art Gallery, second floor.

Present: Chair Scott Barnett, Vice Chair Frank Girardi and Members, Hugo Alvarez, Kennedy Rosario, Maguana Jean, Brandon Carrero, and Jorge Rodriguez.

Absent: Members William Huff, Raul Ruiz Carolina Veira.

Also Present: City Manager Charles Dodge, Liaison and Assistant City Manager Lisa Chong, Assistant City Manager Jonathan Bonilla, Assistant City Attorney Quentin Morgan, and Board Secretary Marlene Graham.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Barnett called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

ROLL CALL: The Board Secretary called the roll and declared a quorum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The board approved the meeting minutes of February 23, 2026.

- **Motion** was made by **Member Alvarez**, seconded by **Member Jean**, to approve the board meeting minutes of February 23, 2026. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Barnett opened the discussion by introducing Assistant City Manager Jonathan Bonilla, who presented an overview of the City of Pembroke Pines Charter Schools budget. Mr. Bonilla began with a summary of the history and organizational structure of the city's charter school system.

The Pembroke Pines charter schools were established in response to significant overcrowding resulting from population growth in the 1990s. Unlike traditional public schools, these charter schools are operated as a municipal department by the city. Mr. Bonilla explained the organizational chart, which includes oversight from the City

Commission and City Manager, as well as input from Parent Advisory Boards and school principals.

For the 2025-2026 school year, City charter schools have a budget of approximately \$87 million. This budget supports more than 640 employees across five campuses. Admission to the schools is managed through a lottery system, ensuring a fair and random selection of students. All school facilities are owned by the City of Pembroke Pines.

The presentation included a discussion on property tax allocation and the complexities involved in funding distribution for schools. Charter schools receive funding based on full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment. In Broward County, public schools have experienced decreased revenue due to declining student numbers, while the charter schools in Pembroke Pines continue to operate at full capacity.

Member Rosario inquired about enrollment trends, particularly in the context of low enrollment and closures affecting some district schools. Mr. Bonilla clarified that Pembroke Pines charter schools do not face low enrollment; instead, there is a high demand with many students on waiting lists. Member Carrero raised questions regarding revenues and the proportion of property taxes that support the schools. Member Rodriguez asked about the cost per student and expenditure details. Mr. Bonilla addressed these inquiries by referencing legislation on student funding, noting components such as the base student allocation and local capital improvement dollars, and highlighted the city's ongoing efforts to secure adequate funding.

City Manager Dodge responded to questions about the revenue bonds used for the construction of school facilities. He provided updates on the status of these bonds and addressed related concerns raised by Chair Barnett and other members.

OLD BUSINESS: Member Carrero Prepared to present findings and options related to the Municipal Insurance Program to the commission for further consideration. He discussed the idea of producing a policy directive using best- and worst-case scenarios as a basis for the board to communicate its recommendations for action to the

Commission. The City could explore the proposed Municipal Insurance Program as a potential solution to address property tax issues. He said he wanted his plan vetted by staff and Legal.

Assistant City Attorney Quentin Morgan commented on Member Carrero's presentation. Chair Barnett wanted to know if this municipal insurance plan had been implemented anywhere else before to see how it has worked in other jurisdictions.

NEW BUSINESS:

Member Jean asked about the City's succession planning. Chair Barnett responded to her question, saying the City Commission makes decisions on succession planning based on the City's Charter.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA:

Chair Barnett spoke about a department presentation at the upcoming meeting: The Procurement Department will be on the April 20 agenda, presented by Procurement Director Mark Gomes.

ABSENCES:

The board excused the absences of Members William Huff, Raul Ruiz and Carolina Veira.

- **Motion** was made by **Member Rosario**, seconded by **Member Alvarez**, to excuse the absence of Members Huff, Raul Ruiz, and Carolina Veira from the March 16, 2026 meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Barnett adjourned the Citizen Budget Advisory Board meeting at 8:03 PM.

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2026.

Respectfully submitted by:

Marlene Graham, Board Secretary
City of Pembroke Pines

APPROVED: 4/20/2026