

MINUTES
CITIZEN BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD

January 22, 2026

The regular meeting of the CITIZEN BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD was called to order by Chair Barnett at 6:30 PM on **Thursday, January 22, 2026**, in The Frank Art Gallery, second floor.

Present: Chair Scott Barnett, Vice Chair Frank Girardi and Members, Hugo Alvarez William Huff, Kennedy Rosario, and Carolina Veira.

Absent: Members Raul Ruiz, Maguana Jean, Brandon Carrero, and Jorge Rodriguez

Also Present: Liaison and Assistant City Manager Lisa Chong, City Attorney Samuel Goren, 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 November 17, 2025 and December 15, 2025.

- **Motion** was made by **Member Rosario**, seconded by **Member Alvarez**, to approve the board meeting minutes of November 17, 2025. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Motion** was made by **Member Alvarez**, seconded by **Chair Girardi**, to approve the board meeting minutes of December 15, 2025. **The motion passed unanimously.**

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT: In the absence of City Manager Dodge, Liaison Chong said there were no presentations. Discussion focused on prioritizing city budget planning for 2026 and departmental presentations. Chair Barnett focused on addressing departmental presentations and improving communication and efficiency in city services and facilities.

Chair Barnett said that past presentations covered several city departments, except the Procurement Department and the charter schools. He would like the board to explore those services in future meetings in 2026.

Chair Barnett invited board members to provide their comments and suggestions about matters for further exploration by the board. Board members commented on some of the past presentations in the 2025 meetings of the Citizen Budget Advisory Board.

April 28, 2025 presentation: Mayor Castillo's presentation on his expectation of the Citizen Budget Advisory Board. Chair Barnett recommended board members watch the video again to view the mayor's specific expectations about the objectives and mission of the Citizen Budget Advisory Board.

May 19, 2025 presentation – Police Department and Fire Department – Capital Costs. Board members wish to review the status of police and fire capital costs and set up a future meeting to discuss it.

June 16, 2025 presentation – The Utilities Department, Water Treatment System presented by Tim Welch, Utilities Director.

August 18, 2025 presentation – City Manager Dodge discussed the City Budget. Board members wish to explore the possibility of discussing financial relationships between the city and schools, focusing on Pembroke Pines Charter Schools, and reviewing potential budget items related to PFAS sludge disposal and its impact on the city budget.

September 22, 2025 presentation – Planning and Economic Development Department presented by Mike Stamm, with Steve Pizzillo of the Building Department. Board members wish to assess the efficiency of the permitting process and consider ways to improve customer service regarding permits and address the concerns of residents about permitting fees and problems with contractors.

October 20, 2025 presentation – Community Services Department and Community Transportation presented by Jay Shechter. Board members commented on Community Services and highlighted it as effective, but communication about offerings needed improvement for public awareness.

November 17, 2025 presentation – Recreation and Cultural Arts Department presented by Christina Goulding. Board members commented that City facilities, including parks, are underutilized despite their quality and availability for rent. From sports programs to grounds-maintenance and the use of artificial turf. Consideration of how to best utilize Club 19 as a premium asset with potential for greater revenue. The demand for recreational programs changed post-COVID, affecting facility usage but analysis of utilization and costs would be warranted

December 15, 2025 – Budget Administration Director Lesley Whyte discussed Property Taxes and impacts on City budgets. Board members wish to review the analysis of outsourced contracts versus in-house staffing costs for a future board meeting.

Members Rosario and Alvarez spoke about school closures, how the decision to close schools comes about, interactions between the city’s charter schools and the Broward School District.

Liaison Chong spoke about operating costs, school building repairs, teachers’ pay, and facility maintenance. She said further discussion on the topic of the charter schools can be undertaken when the City Manager is present. The City Manager is the superintendent of Pembroke Pines Charter Schools and can speak in greater depth about all aspects of the city’s charter schools.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Chair Barnett said the board should review the City’s Strategic Plan, and various departmental Master Plans, and make recommendations. Chair Barnett emphasized that the board needed to provide timely input on budget priorities before the City Commission’s visioning workshop. Liaison Chong said that city boards presented their recommendations in their annual reports to the City Commission in June each year. Chair Barnett said the Citizen Budget Advisory Board should highlight financial and budget impacts on the City due to pending changes in property tax legislation and homestead exemptions. The Board needed to look at past challenges in productivity during budget workshops due to lack of specific data. He and board members discussed compiling recommendations for budget discussions to streamline future meetings.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: Chair Barnett asked that an email go out to board members to send their individual items for the priority list to the board secretary who would draft a list for staff liaison to add to the agenda for discussion by members at the next board meeting.

A Procurement Department presentation with Mark Gomes will be pushed to the March board meeting to provide procurement analysis and discussion about the changes in procurement cost thresholds, length of contracts, service extensions and contract renewals.

The February 23 Citizen Advisory Board meeting would require input from all board members to come up with a list of topics for members to prioritize to create a list of recommendations to be presented to the Commission.

ABSENCES: The board excused absences.

- **Motion** was made by **Member Alvarez**, seconded by **Member Huff**, to excuse the absence of Members Jean, Carrero and Rodriguez from the January 22, 2026 board meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT:

- **Motion** was made by **Member Alvarez**, seconded by **Member Huff**, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026.

Respectfully submitted by:

Marlene Graham, Board Secretary
City of Pembroke Pines

APPROVED: 2/23/2026