

TOWN OF MICANOPY, FLORIDA

TOWN COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 8, 2026

Mayor Jiana Williams called the regular meeting of the Town Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Mayor Jiana Williams; Commissioners Galloway, Massey, and Wessberg; Town Attorney A. Derek Folds; Town Administrator Sara Samario; and Deputy Town Clerk Patty Polk. Absent with notice: Mayor Pro Tem Putansu.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Items

The Commission approved the agenda with the addition of a proclamation honoring Monica Beth Fowler and discussion of the Town's Trunk-or-Treat event.

The consent agenda included the agenda approval and the August 11, 2026, Regular Commission Meeting Minutes and Budget Workshop Minutes.

Motion: Approve the agenda with the additions.

Vote: Approved 4-0.

Guest Presentations

Representatives from the Alachua County Library District and Willie Mae Stokes Community Center provided updates on library construction and programs, community services and assistance, the food-distribution program, and upcoming events, while congressional candidate Mike Kline introduced his campaign and discussed rural community issues.

Citizens Forum

Citizens addressed Seminary Street speed-limit signage, introduced a new downtown business, and shared information about upcoming community garden activities and the memorial service for Monica Fowler.

Town Commission Liaison Reports

Florida League of Cities

Commissioners reported on their participation in the Florida League of Cities Conference in Hollywood, Florida, including sessions addressing property-tax legislation, responsible growth,

social media, artificial intelligence, emergency management, FEMA, and rural community issues.

Commissioners discussed potential financial impacts of changes to property-tax policy and the importance of evaluating future revenue sources, service fees, infrastructure needs, and municipal costs.

Commissioners also discussed artificial intelligence and data-center development, including potential municipal uses of AI and concerns about infrastructure, water resources, and taxpayer exposure.

Alachua County Children's Trust / Opioid Task Force

The Commission received an update on opioid-abuse prevention efforts, including plans to provide educational materials and resources at the Town's Trunk-or-Treat event.

Thrasher Warehouse Board

Commissioner Wessberg reported that the Thrasher Warehouse Board's next meeting is scheduled for the following Monday.

Citizen Board and Committee Reports

Planning and Historic Preservation Board

The Board held a special meeting and approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for re-roofing the historic Florida Café building.

Tree Committee

The Tree Committee met to discuss the proposed tree-protection and canopy-management ordinance, focusing on protected tree sizes, emergency removal, diseased or hazardous trees, mitigation requirements, development, property rights, and preservation of Micanopy's tree canopy.

The Commission was advised that additional Tree Committee comments are being reviewed and incorporated where appropriate, with further discussion anticipated before first reading.

Town Attorney Report

Town Attorney Folds presented the proposed renewal agreement for Town Administrator Sara Samario, effective October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2029, including compensation under the Town's adopted pay plan, a 10 percent employer retirement contribution, and 20 weeks of severance for termination other than statutory misconduct.

The Commission discussed the proposed retirement provision and severance terms.

Motion made and seconded (Galloway/Wessberg) to accept Administrator Samario's contract as written; passed 4-0

Financial Reports

Town Administrator Sara Samario presented the financial reports for the eleventh month of Fiscal Year 2026. The General Fund continues to reflect a deficit associated primarily with litigation expenses, while the Water Fund remains financially positive following the prior year's rate increase.

The Town's 2025 fiscal-year audit was completed with positive results, including increases in General Fund fund balance and overall net position.

Motion made and seconded (Massey/Galloway) to accept the financial reports for September 2026 as submitted; passed 4-0

The Commission was reminded that the final Fiscal Year 2027 budget hearing is scheduled for September 21, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Community Resource Center Project Update

The Commission received an informational update on the Community Resource Center construction project, including progress on interior work, cabinetry, site grading, and anticipated paving.

The Town continues to coordinate with Florida Commerce regarding a requested extension through December 31, 2026.

The Town has temporarily financed project expenditures because the grant is operating under a reimbursement structure, with approximately \$800,000 or more paid to contractors from Town reserves and reimbursement generally occurring within two to three weeks.

The Town has asked Florida Commerce to allow advance payments and is investigating a possible line of credit as an alternative financing mechanism.

No action was taken.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Clay Swager of EDA Consultants presented an overview of the proposed comprehensive-plan update funded through a legislative appropriation.

The project will include community outreach, public participation, workshops with the Town Commission and Planning and Historic Preservation Board, data and analysis, map and infrastructure updates, environmental and historic-preservation considerations, and preparation of draft comprehensive-plan amendments.

The project has an aggressive schedule, with community outreach beginning in fall 2026 and draft amendments anticipated in early 2027; grant deliverables must be completed by June 30, 2027.

The consultant will work with the Town Administrator to establish a detailed schedule, with the Commission emphasizing monthly milestones and incorporation of information from prior community visioning meetings.

No formal action was taken.

New Business

Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook

The Commission reviewed the proposed Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook, with discussion focused primarily on employee benefits, including unlimited sick leave and the possibility of establishing a retirement benefit.

The Commission agreed that additional time was needed to review the document and consider potential revisions.

Action: The Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook was tabled and will return as unfinished business at the October meeting.

Tree Protection and Canopy Management Ordinance

Town staff presented the proposed ordinance, which is intended to strengthen protection of Micanopy's tree canopy while addressing property rights, development needs, emergency removal, diseased or hazardous trees, and mitigation requirements.

Discussion included the proposed protected-tree diameter, mitigation options, treatment of development and residential property, and the need for clear public information explaining when a permit is required.

The Commission indicated a desire to continue working on the ordinance, with additional discussion and potential revisions before first reading.

No formal action was taken.

Proclamation Honoring Monica Beth Fowler

Mayor Williams presented a proclamation honoring the life and legacy of Monica Beth Fowler, a longtime Micanopy resident, business owner, community advocate, and supporter of downtown businesses and community organizations.

The Commission recognized Ms. Fowler's decades of service and contributions to the community and observed a moment of silence in her memory.

Trunk-or-Treat

The Commission discussed the Town's annual Trunk-or-Treat event, proposed for Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., including temporary road closures to provide a safe environment for children and families.

The Commission also discussed encouraging local merchants to participate and giving downtown residents advance notice about traffic and parking arrangements.

Motion made and seconded (Galloway/Wessberg) to approve the October 24, 2026, Trunk-or-Treat event from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. and authorize the requested street closures for the event. passed; 4-0.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Galloway thanked residents for attending and expressed appreciation for the community's efforts to honor Monica Fowler and support the upcoming Trunk-or-Treat event.

Commissioner Massey thanked residents for attending and recognized Monica Fowler's significant contributions to the community.

Commissioner Westberg thanked the Town Administrator and Town Attorney for completing the long-term lease for the former fire station and expressed appreciation for the community's efforts to honor Monica Fowler.

Mayor Williams encouraged awareness of prostate cancer and suicide prevention and reminded residents to support neighbors and community members who may need assistance.

Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:00 p.m.