



CITY OF COCONUT CREEK CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MINUTES

Government Center
4800 W. Copans Road
Coconut Creek, Florida

Date: January 22, 2026
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Meeting No. 2026-0122WS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jacqueline Railey called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

PRESENT UPON ROLL CALL:

Mayor Jacqueline Railey
Vice Mayor Jeffrey R. Wasserman
Commissioner Sandra L. Welch
Commissioner Joshua Rydell
Commissioner John A. Brodie
City Manager Sheila N. Rose
City Attorney Terrill C. Pyburn
City Clerk Joseph J. Kavanagh

Mayor Railey asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. She noted that the meeting was being conducted live with a quorum physically present and broadcast live.

DISCUSSION – CHARITABLE DONATION PROCESS

City Manager Rose opened the discussion, providing a brief overview of the workshop agenda. City Attorney Pyburn asked the Commission to state for the record whether they were affiliated with any 501(c) organization located in Coconut Creek that had received funding from the City. She clarified that this was not being raised as a conflict of interest but to ensure full disclosure and transparency. The following disclosures were made:

- Commissioner Welch stated that she had been a member of The Women's Club of Coconut Creek since 1997 and that she assisted the organization in obtaining its 501(c)(3) status.
- Commissioner Brodie stated that he sits on the board of Tomorrow's Rainbow as a volunteer.
- Mayor Railey stated that she was a member of The Women's Club of Coconut Creek.

City Manager Rose introduced Deputy City Manager Scott Stoudenmire, who presented on alternative strategies for handling nonprofit funding requests. He explained that evaluating these options was increasingly important as the City approached budget season. In response to prior Commission direction, he advised that staff researched the Coral Springs Community Chest model and reviewed how other cities administer nonprofit funding. Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire noted that the purpose of the presentation was to share staff's findings and provide a forum for discussion to help the Commission determine a preferred approach. He reviewed the following options.

Option 1 – Continue the current process.

Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire explained Option 1 would maintain the existing method of allocating funds through the annual budget process. He noted that last year approximately \$124,410 was distributed

to 21 organizations. He summarized benefits of Option 1, including the straightforward process, familiarity, and no startup costs. He noted staff concerns about limited performance metrics and accountability compared to the City's former reimbursement-based system, which required documentation and receipts to track how funds were spent.

Option 2 – Community Chest model or partnership with the Community Foundation of Broward.

Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire explained that Option 2 would establish a separate nonprofit, similar to the Coral Springs Community Chest, or create an endowment or charitable fund administered by the Community Foundation of Broward. He summarized benefits, including increased community engagement, fundraising opportunities, and diversified funding sources. He further explained the Coral Springs model, noting that the City contributed annual seed funding, while the nonprofit independently raised additional funds and operated through a volunteer board. Continuing, he summarized challenges, including the significant startup effort, need for volunteers and board development, and initial staff involvement. Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire described this as a long-term approach that could take time to become self-sustaining. He explained the Community Foundation model used by several cities, which involved investing an initial contribution and using a percentage of annual earnings for grants. He shared that the Community Foundation of Broward offered to present to the City if this option were considered.

Option 3 – Consultant-administered competitive grant program.

Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire advised that Option 3 would use an outside consultant to manage the nonprofit grant cycle, as done in Pompano Beach and Deerfield Beach. He summarized the benefits, noting this option was an independent, transparent, and structured approach. He noted the primary drawback was cost, as consultant contracts typically exceed \$50,000, which staff indicated may not be cost-effective relative to the City's total annual nonprofit allocation.

Option 4 – Suspend or reduce general nonprofit funding and shift to CDBG and targeted support.

Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire explained that Option 4 would suspend all or part of general nonprofit funding for the upcoming year, while maximizing use of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, of which up to fifteen percent (15%) could be used for eligible nonprofit activities. He noted that CDBG funds came with strict federal requirements and significant monitoring responsibilities, adding that Broward County currently administers the program for the City. He noted that if the City assumed more control, staff workload would increase. Past experience showed such programs were worthwhile but labor-intensive. Staff also suggested the possibility of increasing funding to the Seminole Coconut Creek Education Foundation, an existing nonprofit focused on scholarships and education for local students, though its mission was more limited.

Deputy City Manager Stoudenmire emphasized that the Commission could choose one option, a combination of options, or maintain the current method. He commented that consideration of broader financial factors, including potential impacts of property tax reform, was also noted as part of the overall discussion.

Vice Mayor Wasserman thanked staff for the presentation and asked about the status of pending state legislation that could limit or prohibit cities from providing funding to nonprofits. City Manager Rose indicated there was a House bill but no known companion Senate bill at this time related to the topic.

Vice Mayor Wasserman expressed concern about financial uncertainty facing municipalities, particularly related to potential property tax changes and advancing legislation. He stated that, given the unknown impacts on City revenues and services, he was hesitant to continue nonprofit funding without a clear financial outlook. He voiced support for suspending nonprofit funding for Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) and

revisiting the issue later, potentially after any related ballot measures or legislative actions were resolved.

Commissioner Brodie commented that the alternative options were more complicated, more costly, and would not adequately support nonprofits. He stressed that local nonprofits provided services the City did not and the funding amount was small in the overall budget but had a large impact on organizations serving residents. He noted that the City previously had both a grant and donation program and that funding levels have remained essentially the same. While open to a temporary reduction for fiscal responsibility, he opposed eliminating funding altogether. He also suggested prioritizing nonprofits located within the City to ensure taxpayer dollars primarily benefit local organizations and said it was the Commission's responsibility to continue supporting them.

Commissioner Rydell stated that he saw merit on both sides. He noted that some nonprofits serve countywide needs, such as Women in Distress, and could be harmed if municipalities stop funding them, while other organizations are locally-based in Coconut Creek and directly serve City residents. He emphasized the historic value of nonprofit partnerships and recalled that funding levels were significantly higher in past years, at times nearing \$200,000. At the same time, he stressed the financial uncertainty facing the City and said that if budget cuts impacted core services and programs, nonprofit funding could also be impacted. He commented that he did not believe the Commission should make a decision at this time. He urged that the matter be tabled until after the legislative session, when there would be more clarity on property tax and budget issues. He expressed personal support for many of the charities and said the discussion risked dividing the community at a time when unity was needed, concluding that it was premature to reach consensus.

Commissioner Welch emphasized that the main issue was the donation process, not the nonprofits themselves. She commented that the current method for determining funding was not effective and that the Commission should establish a clear process now — whether the program is continued or paused — with budget and strategic planning meetings approaching. She reminded everyone that both the Commission and staff expected a better system moving forward. She acknowledged the uncertainty surrounding property tax reform and future City revenues, noting that recent cost-cutting decisions show the City was already being cautious. She pointed out that many of the alternative models involved additional administrative costs, which may not be practical. She urged the Commission to agree on a structured path forward for how nonprofit funding would be handled, with the decision on pausing or continuing funding to follow within that framework.

Commissioner Rydell clarified that the nonprofit funding being discussed would impact FY27, suggesting that no immediate dollars were affected by this policy conversation. He added that all nonprofit funds previously approved were scheduled to be paid in 2026. He emphasized there was no urgency tied to current expenditures and that decisions about 2027 funding should not be made now based on legislative uncertainty. He suggested it would be more appropriate to evaluate funding following the legislative session with clearer financial direction. Commissioner Rydell noted that although he had previously been interested in the Community Chest concept, staff's research changed his perspective. He reiterated his preference to revisit the matter at a later time.

Mayor Railey acknowledged the difficulty of the discussion, emphasizing the vital role nonprofits play in the City and the value of their services to residents. She expressed concern about using funds to pay a consultant to administer nonprofit funding. She suggested exploring an independent, unbiased committee or trustee group to make funding decisions and remove the decision-making from the Commission. She agreed with Commissioner Rydell that 2027 funding decisions could wait until after legislative outcomes were clear.

Commissioner Welch added that utilizing Option 2—the Community Foundation model—could be a fair and objective approach. She suggested investing a set dollar amount and distributing a percentage of

returns after strategic sessions, which would remove staff and the Commission to ensure an equitable and transparent process for nonprofits.

Vice Mayor Wasserman expressed appreciation for the discussion and acknowledged Commissioner Rydell's perspective on delaying decisions due to pending legislation and ballot uncertainty. He noted caution with the Community Chest option, citing concerns it could become politically influenced or favor certain groups. Vice Mayor Wasserman requested additional education on the Community Foundation of Broward, including how a charitable endowment fund would work. Staff explained that cities could enter into an agreement with the Foundation, investing a set dollar amount that generates annual returns, with five percent (5%) of the balance allocated for local nonprofit grants. The funds were managed by the Foundation, which would also oversee applications and investments. It was noted that this was a long-term approach, and the grant amounts in the first few years may be modest. Vice Mayor Wasserman indicated he would need further information before forming an opinion.

Commissioner Brodie recommended tabling the discussion on nonprofit funding options until the Commission could receive a presentation from the Community Foundation of Broward and further vet the alternatives. He emphasized the need for a more structured plan rather than continuing to throw out ideas and see what sticks. He requested consensus from the Commission to table the item and suggested establishing a date for the follow-up discussion.

Mayor Railey opened the discussion to public comment.

Abby Mosher, Tomorrow's Rainbow, thanked the Commission for their financial support and belief in the organization's mission. She noted that the City's grant funding was not merely a budget line item but a meaningful investment in the emotional well-being of children and families in Coconut Creek. She shared that, in 2025, Tomorrow's Rainbow supported twenty-six (26) children through its bereavement program and three (3) children in its family trauma program, including several children from families meeting federal poverty guidelines. Ms. Mosher emphasized the cost of providing these services—over \$40,000 in 2025—and highlighted that the City's \$5,000 grant played a vital role in ensuring children had access to mental health support. She noted that other municipalities, such as Boca Raton, Coral Springs, and Hollywood, also support similar programs, and she expressed gratitude for the City's partnership and trust.

Laura McDermott Matheric, President of The Women's Club of Coconut Creek, addressed the Commission to clarify the organization's activities. She emphasized that the Women's Club exclusively served Coconut Creek residents and operated with a \$25,000 budget, of which \$15,000 covered overhead and \$10,000 was allocated to scholarships, grants, and teacher support programs. Ms. Matheric highlighted additional initiatives, including assisting students unable to pay for school lunches. She stressed that the City's \$7,000 donation directly supported these community-focused efforts. She urged those ignorant to how non-profits work to engage with the organization and attend events to better understand the impact on the community. She expressed a desire for more inclusion in decision-making discussions and the opportunity to dispel misconceptions.

Craig Valvo, 5122 Northwest 74 Court, Coconut Creek, emphasized the important role nonprofits play in serving needs that government cannot, and encouraged Commissioners to carefully weigh both the pros and cons of funding or not funding these organizations. Mr. Valvo noted the uncertainty surrounding pending state legislation on property taxes and its potential impact on nonprofits and community foundations. He suggested that the City consider funding nonprofits for the next budget year once more information was available, allowing for informed decisions based on how the situation unfolded. He expressed appreciation for the Commissioners' service and for the nonprofits' contributions to the community.

Valerie Rosenzweig, Coconut Creek resident and Director of Philanthropy for The Women's Club of

Coconut Creek, outlined the volunteer-run events the Club organized, including the Fall Vendor Fair, Santa Carnival, Light Up Creek, Hearts and Crafts Show, Easter Bunny visits, and Mother’s Day Craft Show, all of which support residents, local vendors, high school seniors, and teachers. Ms. Rosenzweig emphasized that the organization was entirely volunteer-based, did not pay salaries, and reinvests funds into programs and operating expenses. She asked the Commission to keep this in mind when considering funding for local nonprofits.

Mayor Railey closed public comment.

There was a motion by Commissioner Brodie and consensus of the Commission to table the discussion until the first budget meeting scheduled for March 12, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Joseph J. Kavanagh, MMC
City Clerk

Date