

3**AGENDA ITEM
ST. JOHNS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS***Deadline for Submission - Wednesday 9 a.m. – Thirteen Days Prior to BCC Meeting***8/18/2026****BCC MEETING DATE****TO: Joy Andrews, County Administrator****DATE: July 21, 2026****FROM: Kealey West, Deputy County Attorney****PHONE: 904 209-0816****SUBJECT OR TITLE: Land Conservation General Obligation Bonds - Ballot Question****AGENDA TYPE: Business Item, Resolution****BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

At the July 21, 2026 BOCC meeting, the Board directed that a Resolution be prepared to place a Land Conservation General Obligation Bond question on the November 3, 2026 general election ballot. Article VII, Section 12 of the Florida Constitution authorizes counties to issue general obligation bonds payable from ad valorem taxation when approved by vote of the electors. Sections 100.211 and 100.342, Florida Statutes, authorize the BOCC to call a bond referendum by resolution and provide for placement of the referendum on the ballot at a general election.

1. IS FUNDING REQUIRED? No**2. IF YES, INDICATE IF BUDGETED.** No**IF FUNDING IS REQUIRED, MANDATORY OMB REVIEW IS REQUIRED:****INDICATE FUNDING SOURCE:****SUGGESTED MOTION/RECOMMENDATION/ACTION:**

Motion to adopt Resolution 2026-_____, calling a referendum to be held at the November 3, 2026 General Election for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the County the question of whether to issue general obligation bonds and to levy millage for land conservation purposes, approving the ballot title and ballot question as set forth in the resolution, directing the Clerk to transmit a certified copy of the resolution to the Supervisor of Elections, and authorizing the Chair and County officials to take all actions necessary to implement the resolution.

For Administration Use Only:**Legal: Kealey West 8/10/2026****OMB: LF 8/10/2026****Admin: JDD 8/11/2026**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, PURSUANT TO ITS AUTHORITY UNDER SECTIONS 125.01(1)(y) AND 100.211, FLORIDA STATUTES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE DULY QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY A LAND CONSERVATION REFERENDUM; MAKING FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF SURPLUS REVENUE PURSUANT TO SECTION 200.181, FLORIDA STATUTES; CALLING FOR A REFERENDUM TO BE HELD AT THE NOVEMBER 3, 2026 GENERAL ELECTION TO DETERMINE WHETHER GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS IN AN AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT EXCEEDING \$100,000,000 SHOULD BE ISSUED TO ACQUIRE, IMPROVE, RESTORE, AND MANAGE CONSERVATION LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES; PROVIDING FOR ADMINISTRATION THROUGH THE COUNTY'S LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM; PROVIDING THE BALLOT TITLE AND BALLOT QUESTION; DIRECTING THE CLERK TO FURNISH A CERTIFIED COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE ST. JOHNS COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS; PROVIDING FOR REQUIRED NOTICE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 12 of the Florida Constitution authorizes counties to issue general obligation bonds payable from ad valorem taxation when approved by vote of the electors; and

WHEREAS, Sections 100.211 and 100.342, Florida Statutes, authorize the Board of County Commissioners to call a bond referendum by resolution and provide for placement of the referendum on the ballot at a general election; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 125, Florida Statutes, grants counties broad home rule authority to acquire, improve, manage, preserve, and conserve lands and natural resources for public purposes; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County recognizes the need to plan for future growth and desires to facilitate a program to acquire and improve lands for the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, natural areas, and working forests and farms, as well as to reduce flooding and provide outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that preserving lands from development by acquiring, managing, restoring and improving natural areas for protection of water quality and

wildlife habitat; protecting working forests and farms; and providing outdoor recreation serves a public purpose and will benefit the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of St. Johns County; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners established the Land Acquisition and Management Program (LAMP) pursuant to Ordinance No. 2021-38 to identify, evaluate, acquire, restore, improve, manage, and steward environmentally significant lands within St. Johns County; and

WHEREAS, continued population growth and development within St. Johns County increase the importance of conserving lands that protect drinking water resources, rivers, lakes, creeks, wetlands, wildlife habitat, coastal resources, working farms and forests, reduce flooding, and provide outdoor recreation for present and future residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

A. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by reference as legislative findings of the Board.

B. It is desired to authorize a levy of up to 0.15 mills of voted ad valorem taxes for the payment of debt service on bonds issued for the purpose of financing the acquisition, restoration, improvement, and stewardship of conservation lands and related capital improvements through the County's Land Acquisition and Management Program, to preserve lands from development by acquiring, restoring, and improving natural areas for the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, working forests and farms, reducing flooding, and providing outdoor recreation.

C. It is further desired to apply any proceeds of such voted ad valorem tax not required to pay debt service and other costs associated with the bonds may be used for any lawful purpose solely related to the capital projects for which the voted millage is approved, including operations and maintenance, in accordance with in accordance Section 200.181, Florida Statutes.

SECTION 2. REFERENDUM CALLED. Pursuant to its authority under Section 125.01(1)(y) and Section 100.211, Florida Statutes, the Board hereby directs that a referendum election be called and held concurrent with the General Election in St. Johns County on November 3, 2026, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the County the question of whether to issue general obligation bonds in one or more series in an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$100 million, maturing within 20 years of each issuance, bearing interest not exceeding legal maximum rates, and shall be payable from an ad valorem tax on all taxable

property in the County at a rate not in excess of 0.15 mills, to finance the capital cost of preserving lands from development by acquiring, restoring, improving, managing, and stewarding lands that protect water quality, drinking water resources, coastal resources, wildlife habitat, natural areas, and working forests and farms, reduce flooding, and provide outdoor recreation.

SECTION 3. BALLOT TITLE AND SUMMARY. The ballot title and summary appearing on the ballot to be used in the election shall be in substantially the following form:

ST. JOHNS COUNTY GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS FOR LAND CONSERVATION TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY

To acquire and manage lands that protect water quality; conserve wildlife habitat, natural areas, farms and forests; provide outdoor recreation, and reduce flooding, shall St. Johns County issue general obligation bonds in one or more series in an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$100 million, maturing within 20 years of each issuance, bearing interest not exceeding legal maximum rates, payable from ad valorem property taxes levied up to 0.15 mills, providing for full public disclosure?

_____ Yes

_____ No

BONOS DE OBLIGACIÓN GENERAL DEL CONDADO DE ST. JOHNS PARA LA CONSERVACIÓN DE TIERRAS A FIN DE PROTEGER LA CALIDAD DEL AGUA

¿Para adquirir y gestionar terrenos que protejan la calidad del agua; conservar hábitats de vida silvestre, áreas naturales, granjas y bosques; proporcionar recreación al aire libre y reducir las inundaciones, debe el Condado de St. Johns emitir bonos de obligación general en una o más series por un monto principal total que no exceda los \$100 millones, con vencimiento dentro de los 20 años de cada emisión, con intereses que no excedan las tasas máximas permitidas por ley, pagaderos con impuestos ad valorem sobre la propiedad gravados hasta una tasa de 0.15 mills, con plena divulgación pública?

_____ Sí

_____ No

SECTION 4. ADMINISTRATION.

A. The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller shall promptly furnish a certified copy of this Resolution to the St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections.

B. The Supervisor of Elections is requested to include the ballot question in the November 3, 2026, General Election in accordance with applicable law.

SECTION 5. NOTICE. Pursuant Section 100.342, Florida Statutes, the Board hereby directs that at least 30 days' notice of the referendum shall be published in the *St. Augustine Record*, at least twice, once in the fifth week and once in the third week before to the week in which the referendum is to be held.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this Resolution is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, such determination shall not affect the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, this 18th day of August 2026.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: _____
Clay Murphy, Chair

ATTEST: Brandon J. Patty,
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

By: _____
Deputy Clerk