



OMGitswicks finds the funny in all things Florida

IN THE 239



Naples Daily News

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2026 | NAPLESNEWS.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Collier advisory boards face scrutiny

Commissioners opt for review before making cuts

Laura Layden
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Collier County commissioners have warned that the county could do away with many of its citizen-driven advisory boards and committees.

At a meeting on Oct. 13, Commission-

er Chris Hall suggested the board direct the county attorney to take actions to “dissolve all county advisory boards/authorities/committees that are not required by federal or state law or any other binding obligation,” except for a few.

The strong wording in an executive summary by Hall prompted concerns from advisory board and committee

members — and other community and citizen activists — about the consequences of eliminating so many of them, including those representing special-purpose taxing districts and the taxpayers who live in those districts.

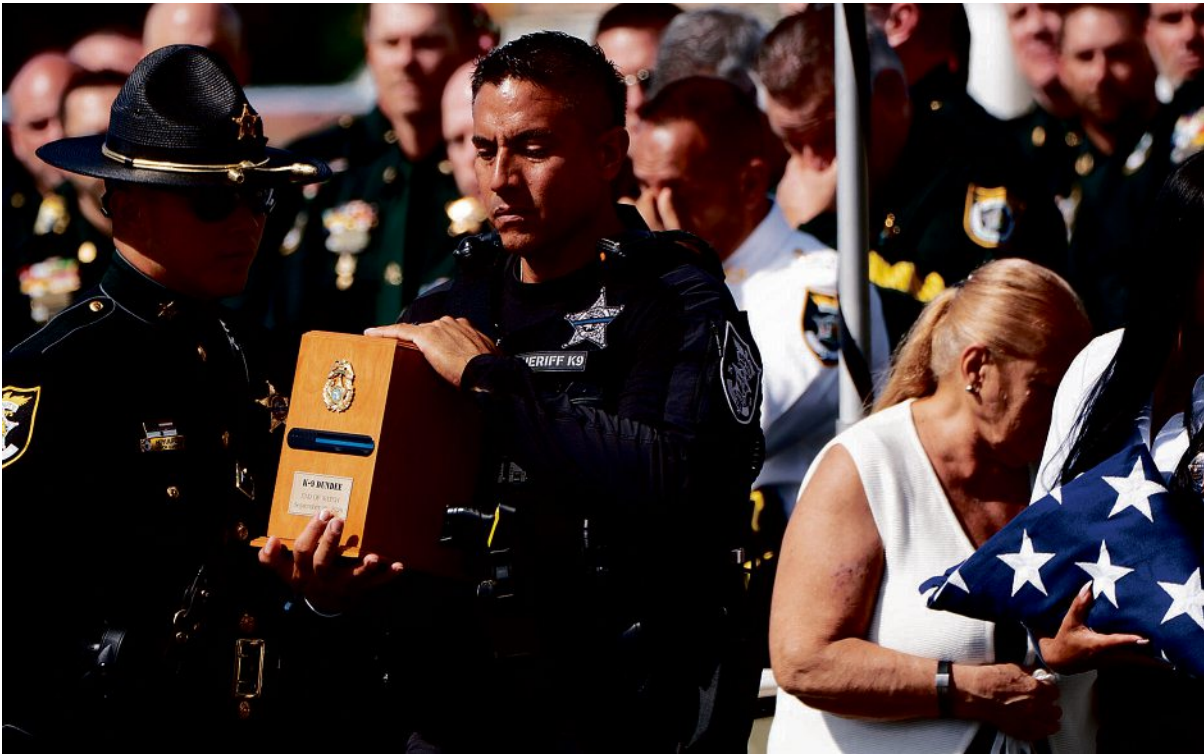
The county has more than 40 boards and committees.

Some of them are much more active than others, with some having vacant seats for a year or more and canceling

meetings often, for various reasons, Hall said.

The commissioner highlighted the burden on county staff to manage so many boards and committees and emphasized the need to determine whether they’re all necessary and functioning as they should, and whether they could operate more independently.

See BOARDS, Page 4A



Lee County Sheriff’s K-9 Deputy Julian Chala is escorted at the funeral service for K-9 Dundee at Hertz Arena in Estero on Wednesday, Oct. 14. Chala was Dundee’s handler.

ANDREW WEST/FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS & NAPLES DAILY NEWS

Dundee honored as partner, family

Hundreds gather to bid farewell to beloved K-9

Tayeba Hussein
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

A Lee County Sheriff’s Office deputy walked off the stage of Hertz Arena with tears running down his face after he gave a speech remembering Dundee, his K-9 partner that died in service.

“He taught me trust in ways I had never trusted anyone before,” LCSO Deputy Julian Chala said of Dundee, choking back on his tears.

Hundreds of law enforcement officers from several different agencies throughout the state attended Dundee’s funeral — which was held at Hertz Arena in Estero on Wed., Oct. 14 — alongside local officials including Lee County Schools Superintendent

Denise Carlin and countless community members.

The memorial service began with speeches from a local pastor, the Lee County Sheriff, a K9 Unit lieutenant and Dundee’s own handler, Deputy Julian Chala.

“We owe them a good life. We owe them an easy retirement and we owe these dogs a death with dignity,” the K9 Unit Lt., Brian Walkowiak, said to explain why such a funeral was appropriate for a K9.

Following the speeches, a gun salute and helicopter air show were performed outside as part of Dundee’s final farewell.

On Sept. 28, in the early morning hours just past midnight, Chala and 4-year-old Dundee were de-

See DUNDEE, Page 7A

\$60M NCH investment addresses local gap in cancer care

Liz Freeman
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Consultants shared a data point with officials at Naples Comprehensive Health that was eye opening.

About 35% of local patients with cancer receive their care out of county.

The nonprofit hospital system in Collier County knew it had to act; from both the perspective of patients’ need and capturing market share.

“When 35% of cancer patients leave Southwest Florida to receive care, it signals a significant unmet need in our region,” Paul Hiltz, president and chief executive officer of NCH, said.

It’s a big reason for a \$60 million investment by NCH to significantly enhance its cancer care program.

“This represents an important step in NCH’s long-term commitment to create a truly comprehensive cancer program,” Hiltz said. “We are bringing the people, technology, research and services together to give patients greater access to sophisticated cancer care here in Southwest Florida.”

NCH has developed internal patient projections but the figures are preliminary, Mags Palma, chief administrative operating officer, said in an email.

“Our focus is on building a differentiated, integrated cancer program that offers patients access to advanced, specialized care in Southwest Florida,” she said. “We believe these investments will create a program that patients throughout our region will choose for their cancer care needs.”

So far about half of the \$60 million philanthropic campaign has been

See CANCER, Page 5A

THE #1 COMMUNITY IN THE USA ~ MIROMARLAKES.COM ~ 239.425.2340 ~

• 700-Acre Lake • 3 Miles of White-Sand Beach • Beach Clubhouse • Blue Water Beach Grill • 10,000-Sq.-Ft. Zero-Edge Infinity Pool • Boating • Water Skiing • Tennis • Pickleball • Bocce • Putting Green • Wellness Spa • Fitness Center • Botanical Park • Concierge Services • Signature Championship Golf • 3 Restaurants • Wakeboarding • Kayaking • Paddleboarding • Fishing • 2 Marinas • Dynamic Social Scene ... All in one Luxurious Location

BEACH & GOLF CLUB
MIROMAR LAKES®
We are where you want to be®

101626-1180

Subscriber-only eNewspaper

The eNewspaper is an electronic copy of your print newspaper. Enjoy every page by going to naplesnews.com/enewspaper or scan this code on your mobile device. You will also find late news and sports in the bonus sections. Check it out today!



Volume 103rd | No. 82
Subscribe 800-404-7343
©2026 **\$3.49**

