Keri O'Brien

From: gregory lloyd <glloyd7@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 9, 2026 7:24 AM
To: Keri O'Brien; Keri O'Brien
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Citizen Comments

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Good morning, Keri.

Is it possible to include this under Citizen Comments since it applies to 3 Agenda items? Also, if you could send to the Mayor and Commissioners, it would be greatly appreciated.

Mayor and Commissioners,

We submit this comment as formal notice regarding a series of actions currently before the City Commission which, when viewed collectively and in context, raise serious concerns related to governance, oversight, election-year restraint, and the City's good-faith response to the Monroe County Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

This comment is not directed at any single agenda item in isolation. It addresses the cumulative effect of multiple actions advanced within a compressed timeframe, including proposed amendments to the Commission's Rules of Procedure (Agenda 28), proposed expansion of the City Manager's unilateral financial and contracting authority (Agenda 32), and proposed acceleration of the City Manager's compensation and contract term (Agenda 13).

When evaluated together, these actions materially alter the City's governance structure. They reduce pre-decision oversight, narrow public participation, concentrate authority, and bind future elected officials. These effects are magnified by the fact that they are occurring during an active election year in which a materially different Commission is reasonably foreseeable.

Cumulative Governance Impact

Individually, each proposal has been characterized as administrative or efficiency-driven. Collectively, however, they reflect a discernible shift away from distributed oversight and toward centralized executive discretion. Across all three actions, the same structural changes recur: reduced public input at formative stages of decision-making, constrained Commission deliberation through procedural limits or consent placement, replacement of prior approval with post-hoc reporting, and expansion of unilateral authority without corresponding safeguards.

Oversight mechanisms are not being modernized. They are being narrowed. Accountability is not being strengthened. It is being deferred.

Conflict with Grand Jury Findings

The Monroe County Grand Jury did not identify excessive oversight as a failure of City governance. It identified the opposite: concentration of authority, insufficient scrutiny, chain-of-command pressure, delayed discovery of problems, and weak internal controls.

Proceeding with measures that centralize authority, reduce transparency, and limit early-stage review directly conflicts with both the substance and the spirit of the Grand Jury's recommendations. Public dismissal of the Grand Jury's role, combined with only cosmetic or procedural changes, raises concerns about whether the City is acting in good faith to correct the systemic failures identified.
That concern is now on the public record.

Election-Year Considerations

The election-year context materially heightens the significance of these actions. Decisions that expand executive authority, increase long-term financial exposure, and constrain future Commissions warrant the highest level of restraint and justification when voters are actively determining the City's direction. Stability achieved by pre-committing the authority and discretion of a future Commission does not strengthen democratic governance. It limits it. Actions taken now will be reviewed later with full awareness that deferral was available, alternatives existed, and voters had not yet spoken.

Process and Oversight Concerns

Several of these matters have been advanced through mechanisms that limit deliberation and public participation, including consent agendas and procedural rule changes that restrict discussion and comment. In an election year, and in the wake of documented institutional failures, such process choices create, at minimum, the appearance of avoidance of scrutiny.

Further, reliance on internal staff justifications within reporting structures where discretionary termination authority exists does not provide the independent review contemplated by the Grand Jury.

Reporting after the fact does not constitute accountability, particularly in areas historically associated with elevated risk, including contracting, procurement, budget transfers, and executive compensation.

Notice to the Commission

Should these measures proceed, the public record will reflect that Commissioners were expressly advised of their cumulative effect, their conflict with Grand Jury findings and recommendations, their election-year timing and pre-commitment of future elected officials' authority, and the foreseeable governance, financial, and institutional risks they create.

Each vote cast will therefore constitute an affirmative decision made on notice of these concerns.

Future review by successor Commissions or external oversight bodies will not evaluate these actions in isolation, but as a course of conduct undertaken despite documented objections, available alternatives, and a heightened public-interest context.

Whether or not improper intent exists is not the issue. Structural decisions that weaken safeguards create foreseeable risk, and elected officials are accountable for that risk.

Conclusion

At a moment when the City is under heightened scrutiny and actively responding to Grand Jury findings, prudence, restraint, and transparency are not optional. They are essential. The actions presently before the Commission move in the opposite direction.

We urge the Commission to pause, defer, and allow the next elected body to evaluate these matters with full authority, public engagement, and the benefit of electoral legitimacy. Proceeding otherwise places the City, its future leadership, and its taxpayers in a position that need not be created.

This comment is submitted for inclusion in the public record.

Respectfully,
Gregory and Jennifer Lloyd
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