



August 18, 2026
Strategic Planning Session
Rusty Branson, Chairman

Call to Order

The Marion County Hospital District Strategic Planning Session was called to order by Rusty Branson on August 18, 2026, with a quorum present at 11:00 AM at 2547 E. Silver Springs Blvd. Ocala, FL.

11:00 AM Roll Call

Upon roll call the following Board Members were present in the office: Teresa Stephens, Rusty Branson, Loretha Tolbert-Rich, Harvey Vandeven, Stephanie Harrell, Mark Ortolani arrived at 11:15 AM

Absent

Ken Kirkpatrick

Other Present in Office

Curt Bromund, Debra Velez, Matt White, Jessica Cole, Crystal Pfriendr, Brenda Rabadan, Jessie Driggers, Dayana Bouey, Shayna Colyer, Sarah Ostreicher, Brandi Glover, Kimberly Glancy

Invocation

The meeting opened with invocation by Rusty Branson.

Public Comment (3 Minutes)

None.

Strategic Planning Workshop

- Curt Bromund opened the workshop with an overview of the agenda.
- Jessica Cole discussed the Active Marion Project (AMP), Fitness and Nutrition in Schools (FANS), and the Community Home Project (CHP) funding recommendations as provided in the packet
- The FANS 2026–27 budget will need to be approved at the August Board Meeting.
- Crystal Pfriendr discussed Health Projects funding recommendations as provided in the packet.
- **First Rescue Alliance**



Debra spoke about the First Rescue Alliance and how the program first started. Staff is recommending we keep the current level of funding for next fiscal year. The current First Rescue Alliance model has focused heavily on traditional talk therapy which has strayed from the intent of the program. While therapy remains an important component, our goal is to develop a more comprehensive continuum of care that can stabilize immediate behavioral health needs, respond effectively following traumatic events, build sustainable coping and resiliency skills, and connect first responders to the appropriate level of care when more intensive services are needed. Therefore, staff has been exploring opportunities to bring additional evidence-based resources to Marion County, including potential services through UF Behavioral Health and/or UCF RESTORES who administer evidence-based program focused on first responders. These resources could expand the program beyond traditional counseling to include specialized trauma treatment, resiliency, recovery, and other interventions specifically designed for first responders.

- **Alzheimer's Study**

Curt Bromund discussed the large population in Marion County that is at risk for age-related cognitive decline and shared that he has been researching innovative opportunities the Marion County Hospital District could bring to the county to address Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Curt noted that, at this time, there are limited interventions that prevent or slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease or dementia, and care is primarily focused on managing symptoms and providing supportive and palliative care. Curt connected with the McKnight Brain Institute in Gainesville and met with the Institute's director and researchers to learn more about promising translational research and interventions for Alzheimer's.

Trustees requested that representatives from the McKnight Brain Institute attend an upcoming Board meeting to provide an overview of their research and proposed study partnership with MCHD.

- **Budget Review**

Matt White reviewed the budget commitments for FY 2026–2027 and presented projected program costs.

No formal actions were taken during this workshop.

Rusty Branson adjourned the meeting at 2:07 PM.