



The Abrams Agenda

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Palm Beach County Commissioner

Steven Abrams



Suicide Prevention

In response to the recent spike of high-profile suicides, it's an important to know that there is help available! Suicide is a serious public-health problem and there is a concerted effort by local and national organizations to increase prevention awareness and overcome the stigma associated with mental health illnesses.

In Palm Beach County, the 211 Helpline is the only 24/7 nationally accredited suicide and community hotline that provides free and confidential crisis intervention, information assessment and referrals to community services.

Reports indicate that individuals who contemplate suicide do not see how their decision will impact others. On average, they will leave behind seven people as survivors, struggling in the aftermath. It's the 9th leading cause of death in Florida

and the 10th in the United States.

If you are concerned about yourself or someone you know, dial or text 2-1-1.

Common warning signs and ways to help someone who might be contemplating suicide:

- Talking about suicide – for example, making statements such as “I’m going to kill myself,” “I wish I were dead,” or “I wish I hadn’t been born.”
- Obtaining the means to commit suicide, such as buying a gun or stockpiling pills.
- Withdrawing from social contact and wanting to be left alone.
- Exhibiting mood swings, such as being exuberant one day and depressed the next.
- Being preoccupied with death, dying or violence.
- Expressing feelings of being trapped or hopeless.
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs.
- Changing normal routines, including eating or sleeping patterns.
- Engaging in risky or self-destructive behavior, such as using drugs or driving recklessly.
- Giving away belongings or taking steps to get one’s affairs in order.
- Saying goodbye to people in a manner that suggests they won’t be seen again.
- Displaying personality changes or extreme anxiety, particularly when exhibiting some of the warning signs listed above.

What you can do:

If you suspect that a friend or loved one is contemplating suicide, the following actions are recommended:

- Encourage the person to seek treatment. Ideally, the individual should consult a doctor or mental-health provider. But, if he or she is unwilling to do so, suggest reaching out to a support group, crisis center or faith community. Locally dial 2-1-1 or reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
- Help the person get assistance. For example, you can research treatment options, make phone calls, review health insurance benefit information or take the person to an appointment.
- Facilitate open communication. Be supportive and understanding. Also, listen attentively and avoid interrupting.
- Be respectful of the person's feelings. Even though someone who is suicidal isn't thinking logically, the emotions are real. Not acknowledging how the person feels can curtail communication.
- Don't be patronizing or judgmental. Instead of contending that "things could be worse" or "you have so much to live for," ask questions such as, "What would make you feel better?" or "How can I help?"
- Never promise to keep someone's suicidal feelings a secret. The reason is simple. If you think that the person's life is in danger, you'll have to get help.
- Offer reassurance. Emphasize that, with appropriate treatment, he or she will feel better about life.
- Encourage the person to avoid alcohol and drugs. Using drugs or alcohol can lead to reckless behavior and increase depression.

Take Action

If you think that someone is in danger of committing suicide or has actually made a suicide attempt:

- Trust your instincts even though you may worry that you're overreacting. When someone's life is potentially at stake, that's a risk worth taking.
- Don't leave the person alone.

- Try to find out if he or she is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or may have taken an overdose.
- Call 911.
- If these options above aren't possible, dial 2-1-1 locally or contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.

Suicide has no social or economic boundaries. Most suicidal people desperately want to live; they are just unable to see alternatives to their problem. The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) reports that:

- For the U.S. population as a whole, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death.
- On average, one suicide occurs every 11.7 minutes in the United States.
- Nationally we lose approximately 123 individuals to suicide a day.
- For teens and young adults, suicide is the second leading cause of death (behind accidents that are first, and homicides that are third)

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These disturbing facts are real. Please use this information and seek help for yourself or someone you may know who may be in danger of committing suicide.

The above information was obtained at www.211palmbeach.org where you will find more information on suicide prevention, crisis intervention, elder crisis outreach, health advocacy and so much more.

Pet Adoption Fees Waived

The Palm Beach County Animal Care & Control shelter is at critical capacity with no empty kennels available for new pets coming in.

In an effort to save more lives and place more animals into loving homes, the shelter has waived the adoption fee for all adult cats and adult dogs weighing 40 pounds and up. Kittens and small breed dogs can be adopted through the “name your price” promotion, where adopters get to pick their own adoption fee. This promotion will run through the end of June.

Approved adopters will receive a lifetime of unconditional love and much more. All pets adopted from the shelter are spayed or neutered, current on vaccinations, microchipped, have a current county license tag, and are sent home with a free bag of Science Diet pet food. In addition, pet owners receive a health care certificate worth \$500 in savings for their new pet.

Stop by today to meet your new best friend. The Animal Care and Control shelter is located at 7100 Belvedere Road, West Palm Beach.

Adoption Hours:

Monday – Friday	11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday	11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information or to view pictures of adoptable animals online, please visit www.pbcgov.com/animal or call 561-233-1200.





Carlos (2 month-old male)



Ella (2 year-old female)



Cherise (2 year-old female)

BCC Briefs

At the June 19, 2018, Board of County Commissioners meeting, the board took the following action:

Transit Village – approved a two-year extension to an agreement with Transit Village, LLC (TV). The original agreement required TV close by August 13, 2018. This extends the closing date to August 2020, on the condition a kickoff meeting is held by August 13, 2018.

Property Appraiser – received a presentation from Palm Beach County Property Appraiser Dorothy Jacks on property values in Palm Beach County.

Revenue bonds – authorized the issuance of up to \$13 million in county revenue bonds for the Benjamin Private School and to conduct a Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibilities Act (TEFRA) public hearing. No county funds nor its faith, credit or taxing power are involved.

Surplus property – approved the conveyance of the county's interest in three small parcels of surplus property with reservation of mineral and petroleum rights, but without rights of entry and exploration: .13 acre in Pahokee to Larence Ford for \$861.43; .14 acre on Edham Drive in West Palm Beach to Tiger Real Estate Development, LLC for \$5,000; and .21 acre improved with a 1,232-square-foot manufactured home to the city of Belle Glade.

Ag Reserve – approved the extension of three lease agreements to 2053 for county-owned property located in the Agricultural Reserve: a 10-year extension on 262 acres with Bedner Farms; a 22-year extension on 195 acres with T&D Cattle Company and Exotics; and a 28-year extension on 938 acres with Bowman Growers. These properties are currently leased back at a rate of \$500 per acre per year to continue farming operations and will be periodically adjusted to fair market value as determined by appraisal.

Roads – approved on preliminary reading and to advertise for public hearing on July 10 mid-year modifications to the county’s five-year road program.

Fire Rescue – adopted an ordinance authorizing the levy and collection of a special assessment for charges billed to the county by the city of Riviera Beach for maintenance of fire hydrants located in unincorporated areas of the city.

Utility easements – continued to the August 14 meeting approval of utility easements for FPL, AT&T Florida, Comcast and the city of Boca Raton over a 24-foot-wide portion of the Canary Palm Drive right of way in the Golf Vista PUD.

Palm Tran – approved the filing of an FY-2017 grant application with the Federal Transit Administration for capital funds in the amount of \$16.158 million. This is a cost reimbursable agreement with an anticipated start date of October 1, 2017, and an anticipated end date of April 10, 2022. An upward budget amendment of \$519,364 was approved to reconcile the adopted budget to the grant award.

Financially Assisted Agencies – approved FY-2019 funding allocations of \$1.615 million for the Domestic Abuse/Sheltering and Homelessness service category and \$11.255 million for the Behavioral Health and Special Needs/Developmental Disability, Economic Stability/Poverty, Senior Services, and non-competitive service categories under the Financially Assisted Agencies

program.

Water Utilities – authorized consultant services in the amount of \$142,220 with Urban Design Studio for the Water Treatment Plant 8 expansion project to provide for the combining and re-zoning of seven contiguous county-owned parcels totaling 58.62 acres. The approvals will allow for future development of a membrane treatment facility at the plant, incorporate the existing drainage of Jog Road, and allow for the development of a county-owned neighborhood park adjacent to Cam Estates. Commissioners agreed to name the new park in honor of Commissioner Paulette Burdick.

Service Awards – recognized and congratulated 216 county employees for their long-term service to the county. Honorees included County Administrator Verdenia Baker, 30 years, and Palm Tran bus operator Thomas Romano, 40 years.





If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact my office at 561-355-2204 or email sabrams@pbcgov.org.

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