



HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

JULY 21, 2026, AT 7:30 PM

Cover Sheet

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ITEM TITLE:

Approval of resolution 2026-41 For Clarity Affirming The Town's Commitment To Government Transparency And Expressing Support For The Legal Action Taken To Enforce The Florida Sunshine Law And Protect The Historic Hungerford Property (**Councilwoman Randolph**)

TOWN COUNCIL ACTION:

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, AND PRESENTATIONS		Department: LEGISLATIVE (RANDOLPH)
PUBLIC HEARING 1ST / 2ND READING		Exhibits: N/A
CONSENT AGENDA		
COUNCIL DECISION	YES	
ADMINISTRATIVE		

REQUEST: Request is for the Town Council to approve Resolution 2026-41 for support for Government Transparency against the Orange County Public School Board regarding the open meetings lawsuit filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of the Association to Preserve The Eatonville Community, Inc.

SUMMARY: On June 16, 2026, Resolution 2026-37 and on July 7, 2026, Resolution 2026-38 was presented to the Town of Eatonville Town Council to commitment to Government Transparency to support the lawsuit on the behalf of the Association to Preserve Eatonville Community filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center. The Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc. represented by the Southern Poverty Law Center filed a lawsuit on April 1, 2026 alleges that the Orange County Public Schools Board over the planned site of the Hungerford property violated the Florida Sunshine Law by making decisions regarding the sale of the Hungerford property to Dr. Phillips Charities through closed door secret of Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law by failing to provide required public notice and open meetings in direct violation of the Florida's government in the Sunshine Law (Chapter 286, Florida Statutes) did not grant transparency concerning the disposal of town's land. The land was donated in 1899 by E.C. Hungerford for the education of black children currently owned by the Orange County Public School Board subsequently 160 years. However, under Florida Statutes 1001.43 and the State Board of Education administrative rules, the board may transfer or dispose of surplus land to other government units or private nonprofit agencies for public purposes such as the Town of Eatonville. The Orange County Public School Board circumvent the rules at some point by intentional not to include the Town of

Eatonville respectfully in the process "sit at the table." The Town Council alleges that the former Mayor Angie Gardner participated in the MOU and preliminary discussions without informing or gaining approval of the town council reflecting the views and decisions of the residents and council. On June 16, 2026, the council voted 2/3 unfavorably against Resolution (2026-37); also on July 7, 2026, the council voted 2/2 unfavorably against Resolution (2026-38) proposed by Councilwoman Wanda D. Randolph, who sought to affirm the town's commitment to transparency and support for the ongoing legal action. Councilwoman Randolph contends that the resolution does not state a filing of a lawsuit or join in the lawsuit but for support and transparency. There was nothing in Resolution 2026-37 and 2026-38 that stated that the council will join in a lawsuit or enter into a lawsuit because it has already been filed.

Another Resolution 2026-41 is being brought to the town council for a vote towards Clarity Affirming The Town's Commitment To Government Transparency And Expressing Support For The Legal Action Taken To Enforce The Florida Sunshine Law And Protect The Historic Hungerford Property

RECOMMENDATION: Recommendation is for the Town Council to approve Resolution 2026-41 for support for Government Transparency against the Orange County Public School Board regarding the open meetings lawsuit filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of the Association to Preserve The Eatonville Community, Inc.

FISCAL & EFFICIENCY DATA: N/A