

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - 12

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, APPROVING ASSESS TO CHILDCARE PROGRAMS, ISSUES, AND BARRIERS TO ASSIST FAMILIES AND PROVIDERS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, access to high quality childcare and early education in a safe and nurturing environment positively impacts the brain development of young children and helps children develop skills, learn, and grow, to be fully prepared for kindergarten and beyond; and

WHEREAS, access to affordable, high-quality childcare can be a key driver of economic growth and mobility by enabling families of all income levels to participate in the workforce, and

WHEREAS, access to affordable childcare is a central detriment to whether and how reliably parents and caregivers can participate in the labor force; and

WHEREAS, according to Census data 20% of the City's population is under the age of 18; and

WHEREAS, previous workforce initiatives across Hendry County have identified childcare issues as a barrier to workforce entry; and

WHEREAS, according to Census data, employment in the childcare industry is trending downward within the city; and

WHEREAS, the draft update of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of LaBelle identifies childcare as an economic development priority; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Commission wish to identify existing programs and proposed expand childcare availability; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor believes that current childcare providers may provide important recommendations for actions the city could take and therefore wish to receive feedback from providers regarding childcare operations and challenges to lower costs and expand availability.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Charge: The City's Childcare Working Group is charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. Interview/survey existing childcare providers in or near The City of LaBelle to identify what changes they believe would expand access, help lower costs, and encourage workforce participation.
- B. Interview/survey parents and caregivers in the Greater LaBelle region to assess the childcare needs.
- C. Research federal, state, county, and non-profit programs and reports that may assist families to access and afford childcare.
- D. Provide updates as needed to the Council and provide a report on the other findings before September 2026.

Section 2. Authorization and Approval. The City Commission of the City of LaBelle hereby adopts, authorizes, and approves access to “Childcare Programs.”

Section 3. Authority of the Mayor. The Mayor is hereby authorized to take all necessary and expedient action to effectuate the intent of this Resolution.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage and adoption.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 11th day of June, 2026.

Julie C. Wilkins, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tijauna Warner, MPA, MMC, Deputy City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:**

Derek Rooney, Esq.
City Attorney

Moved by: _____

Seconded by: _____

VOTE:

Commissioner Holland	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Vice Mayor Ratica	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Commissioner Spratt	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Commissioner Vargas	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Mayor Wilkins	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)