

**TAXPAYER RED ALERT: Collier County Taxpayers on Hook for \$11.6 Million in Polluted Railroad Dirt — Plus Another \$10.3 Million in Hidden Cleanup and Construction Costs! Deadline to rescind contract to buy Rail Road Corridor July 13, 2026**

The last scheduled meeting of Collier County Commissioners before the July 13, 2026 deadline for them to reject the purchase agreement they previously approved is June 23, 2026. For more information about public comments at a Collier County Board Meeting, call (239) 252-8999

**The July 13 Deadline**

According to the documents reviewed, Section 6 of the agreement provides a due-diligence and inspection period ending July 13, 2026, during which the county may still terminate the transaction.

That means taxpayers still have an opportunity to demand answers before millions of public dollars are committed.

Questions that deserve public discussion include:

1. Why is the county paying 111 times the assessed value?
2. What environmental liabilities are taxpayers inheriting?
3. How much will the full project actually cost?
4. Why are revenue-producing assets excluded?
5. What protections exist if rail service is reactivated?
6. Why hasn't a project of this magnitude been placed before voters?

**CONTACT YOUR COLLIER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS NOW!**

**THE DEADLINE TO BLOCK THIS DESTRUCTIVE DEAL IS JULY 13, 2026**

Collier County taxpayers have exactly **32 days remaining** to stop a massive, multi-million-dollar corporate welfare scheme before the contract locks us into permanent liability. The Board of County Commissioners signed a contract to pay a staggering **\$11,642,069** of our hard-earned money to purchase a mere 1.5 miles of abandoned railroad track—a property the Property Appraiser values at just **\$104,688**.

Worse, Section 5 contractually forces Collier County to buy this segment "**AS IS, WHERE IS, AND WITH ALL FAULTS.**" This transfers 100% of the financial burden to clean up 100 years of toxic industrial pollution, arsenic, and diesel spills straight to local taxpayers. When you factor in track removal, paving, and mandatory pedestrian overpasses over Old 41 and the planned Veterans Road expansion, the true cost explodes by an **estimated secondary \$10.3 million in layout**.

With major property tax cut proposals on the ballot this coming November likely to slash county funding, we cannot afford to exhaust precious capital reserves on frivolous bike trails. The Board of Commissioners should have put this project to the voters for approval. **Follow the fiscally conservative lead of Lee County, which**

**explicitly refused to touch these contaminated rail beds in order to prioritize critical road construction instead.**

** HOW TO TAKE ACTION TODAY**

Under Section 6 of the agreement, Collier County has a **90-day Inspection Period** to terminate this contract with zero penalty—but written notice must be submitted by **July 13, 2026**.

**Call or Email your County Commissioners immediately.** Demand that they vote to **REJECT** the contract under the Section 6 inspection window, protect our budget ahead of the November tax cuts, and prioritize roads over corporate bailouts.

** Collier County Board of County Commissioners Contact Directory**

**Main Commission Office Line:** (239) 252-8097

**Email to all 5 Collier County Commissioners:** [BCC@colliercountyfl.gov](mailto:BCC@colliercountyfl.gov)

**Contact your individual Commissioner directly:**

**District 1: Rick LoCastro**

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** SAMPLE EMAIL / PHONE SCRIPT TO COPY AND SEND**

**Subject:** REJECT the Rail Trail Acquisition Contract / Protect Taxpayers

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to demand that Collier County immediately use the Section 6 contract window to reject the \$11.64 million purchase agreement for the 1.5-mile railroad corridor before the July 13, 2026 deadline.

Paying a 11,000% premium above the Property Appraiser's assessed value for a private company's asset is a blatant corporate welfare bailout. Accepting this land 'As-Is' sticks taxpayers with a hidden secondary bill of over \$10.3 million to clean up a century of industrial pollution, remove old tracks, and construct expensive overpasses over Old 41 and the Veterans Road expansion. Taking \$11.6 Million from Conservation Collier, diverting taxpayer funds meant for pristine wilderness to purchase 1.5 Miles of polluted industrial railroad dirt is a violation of voters' intent and possibly illegal.

With significant property tax cut proposals on the ballot this November likely to slash county revenues, the Board should be safeguarding essential funds and prioritizing real public road construction, not funding a frivolous bike trail that the railroad can legally reactivate and take back anyway. If this project is so worthwhile, it should have been put to a vote of the people.

Please follow Lee County's fiscally conservative precedent: reject this toxic contract by July 13 and focus our tax dollars on roads, not corporate bailouts.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name] [Your Address ] Your Phone Number

Link to All 5 Collier Commissioners contact information, Meeting Minutes, find your District's Commissioner and Meetings Calendar:

<https://www.collier.gov/Collier-County/Board-of-County-Commissioners>

Individuals who would like to participate in Commissioners meetings remotely should register at

<https://www.collier.gov/Calendar-Events-directory/Board-of-County-Commissioners-Meeting>



**LEE COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION** 

**Exposing Public Corruption and Wasteful Spending**

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