

OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 8:00 A.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority

100 SW 5th Avenue

Okeechobee, Florida

Vice Chairperson Gilliland called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland led all participating attendees and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 1 determined the voting members. The following Okeechobee Utility Authority Board Members were present:

Board Members:

John Gilliland*
Steve Hargraves*
Harry Moldenhauer*
Tabitha Trent*

Alternates:

Glenn Sneider
Jamie Gamiotea**
Melanie Anderson

Absent:

Steve Nelson

*Voting Board Members

** Voting in Steve Nelson's absence

OUA Members:

John Hayford
Greg Kennedy

Lauriston Hamilton
Jamie Mullis

Steve Conteaguero
Michelle Willoughby

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 2 'Agenda Additions or Deletions'

Executive Director Hayford discussed that there was one addition to the agenda. Item 2A, Invoice from Thorn Run Partners.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 2A. 'Thorn Run Partners' Executive Director Hayford discussed that Thorn Run Partners had submitted the invoice on Sunday, February 15, 2026; therefore, it did not make the board package before it was distributed. There was a brief discussion.

Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve payment of the invoice from Thorn Run Partners in the amount of \$3,500.00. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 3 'Updated FY26 Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges'

Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to open the Public Hearing 8:03 A.M. Second by Steve Hargraves. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Executive Director Hayford discussed that at the January Board Meeting, the Board voted to accept option four from the consultant's water and wastewater recovery pricing mechanism for large users Rate, Fees and Charges. Executive Director Hayford discussed that Large Users are defined by the consultant, Raftelis, as customers which utilize a minimum of 250,000 gallons per day, have a written agreement with the OUA and are regulated by the Florida Public Service Commission. There was a brief discussion. **Vice Chairperson Gilliland called for comments from the Public. There was none.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland called for comments from the Board. There were none.
Motion by Tabitha Trent to close the Public Hearing at 8:07 A.M. Second by Harry Moldenhauer
Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Executive Director Hayford reads Resolution 26-01 by title. Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to
adopt Resolution 26-01 as presented. Second by Steve Hargraves. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion
carried.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 4 'Consent Agenda' Motion by Jamie
Gamiotea to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

Consent Agenda Item No. 5	'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part E) in the amount of \$44,238.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 6	'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – NW 15 Pump Station Rehabilitation in the amount of \$4,488.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 7	'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW 5 th Avenue LPSS Design and Permitting in the amount of \$13,986.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 8	'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SWSA Septic to Sewer Connections – Phase 3 Lots in the amount of \$4,645.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 9	'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SR 78 Watermain Improvements in the amount of \$15,975.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 10	'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of \$3,570.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 11	'Invoice from CHA Consulting, Inc. - Vac Station #2 Generator Replacement in the amount of \$2,060.50'
Consent Agenda Item No. 12	'Invoice from CHA Consulting, Inc. – Pine Ridge Parlk Expansion Project in the amount of \$16,310.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 13	'Invoice from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. – Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project in the amount of \$44,152.20'
Consent Agenda Item No. 14	'Invoice from PRP Construction, LLC – Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of \$66,798.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 15	'Invoice from Nason Yeager Gerson Harris & Fumero, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$6,289.50'
Consent Agenda Item No. 16	'Invoice from Conely and Conely, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$2,775.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 17	'Invoice from MacVicar Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$250.00'
Consent Agenda Item No. 18	'Operations Director Monthly Report'

Second by Steve Hargraves. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 19 'Meeting Minutes from January 20, 2026.' Motion by Jamie Gamiotea to approve the Meeting Minutes from January 20, 2026 as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote Unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 20 'Public Comments' There were none.

Discussion Agenda

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 21 'OUA Customer – Gispert De Armas' Executive Director Hayford discussed that a resident of Pine Ridge Park, Mr. Gispert De Armas was present to speak to the Board concerning a previous family member which owned the property, and due to failing health, the family member did not sign up for the previously reduced connection fees. Mr. Gispert's and his nephew were present to speak to the board. Mr. Gispert's nephew, Angel provided a history on the family, the property and why a reduction in fees was being requested. There was a brief discussion. No action was taken by the board for this agenda item.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 22 'Okeechobee County – Justin Nelson' Executive Director Hayford discussed Justin Nelson, Assistant County Administrator was present to address the Board. Mr. Justin Nelson discussed that Okeechobee County is planning on construction a new fire station, to be called Fire Station No. 5. Okeechobee County has received one million dollars in appropriations for the 2025/2026 budget year for the assistance for Fire Station No. 5. Fire Chief Wooten reviewed the fire and rescue call volume and "hot spots". Mr. Justin Nelson discussed that the OUA owns a property at 875 Highway 78 West which would fall right in line with the needs for the fire station. The property size, location, and water and sewer availability. Mr. Justin Nelson discussed that County is asking the OUA to donate the property to allow the county to stay within the project budget. Executive Director Hayford discussed that a commercial property appraisal was completed with a value indicated as \$575,000. Board Members directed staff to develop the transfer documents to include a reverter clause. *Glenn Sneider out at 8:55 A.M.* **Motion by Steve Hargraves to donate the property located at 875 Highway 78 West to Okeechobee County for the purpose of constructing Fire Station #5 with a 10-year Reverter Clause. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 23. 'Mark Smith Property Purchase' Executive Director Hayford discussed that the property being presented is for the Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project. This property represents the location of South Site #1 Vacuum Pump Station. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this property is the final vacuum pump station site needed for the project. Executive Director Hayford discussed that an Appraisal was completed January 29, 2026, offering and Opinion of Value of \$79,000. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the project engineer has confirmed that the is site acceptable for the purpose of a vacuum pump station. Board Member Trent asked about the costs for clearing the property. Assistant Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the projected costs to clear the site are approximately \$10,000. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the purchase of the Smith property for \$85,000.00. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'CAS Governmental Services, LLC Annual Contract Renewal' Executive Director Hayford discussed that CAS Governmental Services LLC (CAS) has been the primary lobbyist for the OUA for many years. They have been instrumental in securing grants and monitoring proposed changes to statutes that impact the OUA services. Executive Director Hayford discusses the proposed agreement from CAS. Executive Director Hayford discusses that this contract will automatically renew unless terminated by either party or if changes to the contract are required. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to accept the proposed contract and authorize the execution of the annual contract with CAS Governmental Servies, LLC in the amount of \$50,000.00. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 25 '24-Inch Emergency Water Main Repair' Executive Director Hayford discusses that the water main at 1253 State Road 78 West experienced a leak under the edge of the payment. Executive Director Hayford discussed that during the

repair planning it was determined that an existing 24-inch valve was damaged at SW 16th Ave and State Road 78. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff contacted PRP Construction who was already

in town working on another OUA project to assist with the repairs. Executive Director Hayford discussed staff has used the contractor in the past for Emergency Repairs. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the PRP Construction and OUA staff repaired the leak and replaced the 24-inch damaged valve on February 9, 2026. Executive Director Hayford reviewed the pricing for labor and materials. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Emergency Water Main Repair in the amount of \$60,068.29 to PRP Construction. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 26 'Florida Job Growth Grant Fund' Executive Director Hayford discussed that at a previous meeting the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund was presented to the board. Executive Director Hayford discussed that if approved by the Commerce Department, the OUA would receive up to \$5,000,000 for the construction of the fourth and final phase of the 16-inch water main serving Glades County. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the OUA board directed the OUA Attorney to develop a letter of understanding that would commit the Lakefront Estates Developer to provide the jobs and data to the OUA. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve moving forward with the Florida Job Growth Grant Application and execution of the MOU as discussed. Second by Jamie Gamiotea. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 27 'Executive Director' Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff has received multiple resumes with respect to the Executive Director position. Executive Director Hayford discussed that advertisements were placed with the Palm Beach Post, Okeechobee News, professional journals and social media outlets. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff required direction from the board on how to proceed. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the OUA Board could elect to set a workshop date or pick a committee to review, discuss and prepare a short list of candidates. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Jamie Gamiotea to establish a review Committee consisting of 1 Board Member, Human Resources, Executive Director and up to 2 community members. Community Members must be determined by Close of Business on February 20, 2026. Second by Steve Hargraves. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Gilliland advised that Agenda Item No. 28 would be discussed after items that required voting due to the departure of voting members.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 29 'January 2026 Report' It was determined that due to two board members departing early Agenda Items No. 29 and No. 30 would be combined and voted on. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to accept the Finance Reports for periods ending December 31, 2025 and January 31, 2026 as presented. Second by Steve Hargraves. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Tabitha Trent and Steve Hargraves out at 10:00 AM

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 28 'Project Update' Executive Director Hayford discussed that bids have been advertised for the SW 5th Avenue Septic to Sewer, NW15 Pump Station Rehabilitation, SWSA Project 2 VPS #5 Group G Home Connections and Pine Ridge Park Expansion Projects. Executive Hayford discussed grant funding for OUA projects. This item is for informational purposes only, no action taken.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 31 'Investment Report' Finance Director reviewed the Investment Report. This item is for informational purposes only, no action taken.

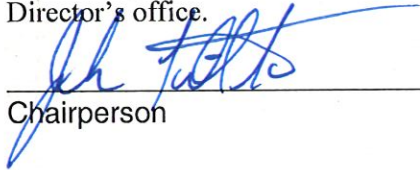
Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 32 ‘Attorney’ Attorney Conteaguero provided the board with updates regarding Lakefront Estates Main User Agreement, Job Growth Grant and FDOT’s subordination documentation.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 33 ‘Executive Director’ Executive Director Hayford gave an update on current projects.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 34 ‘Items from the Board’ There was none.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 10:17 A.M.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE AND BE ADVISED that if a person decided to appeal any decision made by the Okeechobee Utility Authority with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, he/she may need to ensure that verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. A CD recording of this meeting is on file in the Executive Director’s office.



Chairperson



Executive Director (Secretary)

