

**OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 15, 2025 8:00 A.M.
Okeechobee Utility Authority
100 SW 5th Avenue
Okeechobee, Florida

Vice Chairperson Gilliland called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland determined the voting members and determined that a quorum could not be reached. A meeting could be held but voting would be prohibited. Vice Chairperson Gilliland led all participating attendees and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 1; the following Okeechobee Utility Authority Board Members were present:

Board Members:

John Gilliland*
Steve Hargraves*
Harry Moldenhauer*

Alternates:

Melanie Anderson

Absent:

Steve Nelson*
Glenn Sneider
Tabitha Trent*

*Voting Board Members

Due to a lack of quorum there will be no votes taken at this meeting.

OUA Members:

John Hayford
Greg Kennedy

Lauriston Hamilton
Jamie Mullis

Steve Conteaguero
Michelle Willoughby

Agenda Item No. 2 ‘Agenda Additions or Deletions’ This item was not addressed.

Agenda Item No. 2A ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SR78W Watermain Improvements’ This item was not addressed.

An email to OUA Board Members was sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval or disapproval of the Agenda Item #2A – Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the “Reply” tab to send their votes. Five voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 3 ‘Consent Agenda’

Consent Agenda Item No. 4 ‘Invoice from Go Underground Utilities, LLC – SWSA Vacuum Station No. 4 Force Main in the amount of \$185,763.00’

Consent Agenda Item No. 5 ‘Invoices from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. – Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project in the amounts of \$41,543.27 and \$36,097.22’

- Consent Agenda Item No. 6** ‘Invoice from CHA – Pine Ridge Park Utility System Upgrade-SDC in the amount of \$2,522.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 7** ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part E) in the amount of \$18,842.50’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 8** ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW 5th Avenue LPSS Design and Permitting in the amount of \$22,808.80’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 9** ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW Wastewater Service Area Project – Vacuum Station 4 Force Main Services in the amount of \$1,560.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 10** ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of \$1,970.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 11** ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – GIS Mapping Project in the amount of \$3,732.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 12** ‘Invoice from Lewis, Longman, & Walker, P.A. – USDA Loan Legal Services in the amount of \$23,512.50’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 13** ‘Invoice from Nason Yeager Gerson Harris & Fumero, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$8,736.60’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 14** ‘Invoice from Conely and Conely, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$2,500.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 15** ‘Invoice from Thorn Run Partners in the amount of \$3,500.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 16** ‘Invoice from MacVicar Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$250.00’

No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

An email to OUA Board Members was sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval or disapproval of the Consent Agenda as presented. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the “Reply” tab to send their votes. Five voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 17 ‘Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2025’
No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 18 ‘Employee Recognition’ Vice Chairperson Gilliland recognized Chris Weeks for his 10 years of service to the OUA.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 19 ‘Public Comments’ There were none.

Discussion Agenda

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 20 ‘NE Glades County Wastewater Master Plan’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that the OUA received a Grant Award letter listing the NE Glades County Wastewater Master Plan as a funded project. Executive Director Hayford discussed that at

the March Board Meeting the proposal from CHA Solutions to complete the study was approved. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the RIF Grant Award agreement would need to be executed.

An email to OUA Board Members was sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval or disapproval of the Agenda Item #20 as presented. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the "Reply" tab to send their votes. Five voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 21 'Ozone Service Proposal' Executive Director Hayford discussed that the refurbishment of Ozone Unit No. 1 is complete. OUA staff requested a quote for the refurbishment of Ozone Generator No. 2. A quote was received from Beaver Ecoworks, LLC. and the work has been scheduled. This item is for informational purposes only.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 22 'Hebel Property Purchase' Executive Director Hayford discussed that this property is presented as South Site #3 for the Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project. This site represents one of six possible sites needed for the project. Executive Director Hayford explained that it has been some time to get the agreement negotiated and the appraisal completed. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the value and offer presented for the property is \$250,000.00. There was a brief discussion. No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

An email to OUA Board Members was sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval or disapproval of the purchase of the Hebel Property in the amount of \$250,000.00 as presented. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the "Reply" tab to send their votes. Four voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 23 'SR78W Phase I Watermain Improvements' Executive Director Hayford discussed that Phase I of the SR78W Watermain has been completed and piping has been placed into service and the older 6-inch water main was removed from service. Executive Director Hayford reviewed Work Director No. 1, Change Order No. 1 and the Final Pay Application submitted by PRP Construction, LLC.

An OUA Board Members were sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval Work Order No. 1 in the amount of \$13,744.00, Change Order No. 1 in the deductive amount of \$11,256.00 and Final Pay Application in the amount of \$39,705.00 OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the "Reply" tab to send their votes. Five voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'Lemkin Creek Crossing Easement' Executive Director Hayford discussed that to complete the installation of piping for the SR78W Phase II watermain improvements project, the piping has to be installed under Lemkin Creek. This installation requires an easement from the State of Florida. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the FDEP prepared the easement with the Executive Director as the executing authority for the document. FDEP was asked about changing the executing authority to the Board Chairman. FDEP indicated that the document could be changed but it would take several weeks to accomplish. Executive Director Hayford

discussed that the easement was sent to the OUA Board attorney for review. Executive Director Hayford discussed that if this item is approved, the project is ready for bidding. No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

An OUA Board Members were sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval for the execution of the easement as presented. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the "Reply" tab to send their votes. Four voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 25 'SR78W Phase II Watermain Improvement Project' Executive Director Hayford discussed that the easement previously discussed is the last item needed to complete the design and permitting for this project. This project will eliminate the 6-inch and 8-inch watermains and replace them with a 16-inch watermain. Executive Director Hayford discussed that it is expected that as with Phase I, the Lakefront Development team will cost share in this project. The latest engineering estimate is at approximately \$1,500,000.00. There was a brief discussion. No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 26 'Employee's Evaluation and Merit Payment' Executive Director Hayford discussed that included in the FY25 budget is a merit provision of 4%. The evaluation process, which staff will use to determine the amount attributable to each employee, has begun and is scheduled for completion by April 24, 2025. Executive Director Hayford discussed that once the evaluation process is completed, staff will apply the budgeted merit adjustment rate of 4% which will be effective March 28, 2025.

An OUA Board Members were sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval for issuing the employee merit adjustments as presented. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the "Reply" tab to send their votes. Five voting members responded with approval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action.

Staff Reports

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Staff Reports Agenda Item No. 27 'Operations Director' Operations Director Mullis gave an overview of the work and training that is being completed by staff. Operations Director Mullis discussed that a Safety Meeting was conducted on 3/26/2025. Executive Director Hayford discussed that since the date of the Safety Meeting there have been 3-4 for accidents, with no injures only damages to property. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Board and staff should re-evaluate the Employee Handbook as it relates to the penalties for accidents and property damages.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 28A 'Finance Report' Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the Finance Report for period ending March 31, 2025. No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 28B “Rate Studies – Large User & Five Year Financial Forecast’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that currently master meter customers are charged the full base charge per connection beyond the point of connection, along with their volumetric charge, at the same rate applicable to a single-family residence. An additional group for the large user should be created in the rate schedule where purchasers of bulk water and wastewater would be afforded a discount on the base charge since there are identifiable cost savings the Authority would gain from servicing a single account in comparison to multiple household units. Executive Director Hayford discussed that in addition to the large user study that has been proposed, it is general practice that the Authority contracts the Rate Consultant, at least, once every five years to conduct a rate study which ensures the financial viability of the Authority. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the last rate study was conducted in Fiscal Year 2021. Executive Director Hayford discussed the projected future housing developments for Okeechobee and Glades County. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that staff requested quotes from the consultant, for the provision of both studies on separate occasions. Finance Director Hamilton further discussed that in an attempt to minimize the cost, the consultant was as to provide a quote to conduct both studies at the same time while producing separate reports. The cost estimate for performing both studies at that the same time is \$67,500.00. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that while doing so would save the Authority approximately \$16,000.00. Finance Director Hamilton is committed to presenting the final reports at the August 2025 board meeting, allowing for review and inclusion in the FY26 final budget. There was a brief discussion. No action taken during this meeting due to a lack of quorum.

An OUA Board Members were sent out (4/16/2025) requesting their approval of the Rate Financial Forecast Study Analysis and a Large User Rate Study at a cost not to exceed \$67,500 to Raftelis as presented. OUA Board Members were instructed to choose the “Reply” tab to send their votes. Four voting members responded with approval, one voting with disapproval. This agenda item will be brought back at the May 2025 meeting for discussion and formal action

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 29 ‘Attorney’ Attorney Conteaguero discussed that the USDA loan closing is scheduled in two weeks. Attorney Conteaguero will review the Interlocal Agreement and develop an amendment as to who can be appointed as a representative for the City of Okeechobee.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 30 “Executive Director’ Executive Director Hayford gave an update on current projects. Executive Director Hayford discussed the funding requests that have been requested by the OUA.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 31 ‘Items from the Board’ There were none.

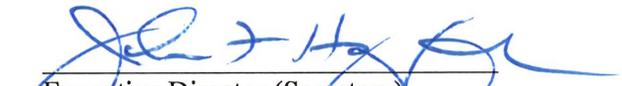
There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 8:50 A.M.

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.

Okeechobee Utility Authority
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2025



Chairperson



Executive Director (Secretary)