

**OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 8:00 A.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority
100 SW 5th Avenue
Okeechobee, Florida

Chairperson Nelson called the meeting to order at 8:01 A.M.

Chairperson Nelson determined the voting members and led all participating attendees and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Board Members:

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

Alternates:

Melanie Anderson

Absent:

Steve Hargraves
Glenn Sneider

***Voting Board Members**

OUA Members:

John Hayford
Greg Kennedy

Lauriston Hamilton
Jamie Mullis

Steve Conteaguero
Michelle Willoughby

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 2 ‘Welcome City and County Board Members’
Executive Director Hayford advised that the County reappointed Tabitha Trent (4-year) and Glenn Sneider (2-year) to their current positions. Executive Director Hayford advised that the City of Okeechobee reappointed John Gilliland (4-year) to his current position.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 3 ‘Glades County Representative Appointment’
Executive Director Hayford discusses that staff received one application from Melanie Anderson for the Glades County alternate position. **Motion by John Gilliland to reappoint Melanie Anderson as an alternate member for Glades County. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 4 ‘Election of Officers’ Executive Director Hayford presided over the meeting. Executive Director Hayford explained that the Board needs to elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and a 2nd Vice Chairperson. Executive Director Hayford advised that Tabitha Trent, John Gilliland and Steve Nelson can serve in the same capacity for one more year as per the Interlocal Agreement. Executive Director Hayford called for nominations for the Chairperson. **Motion by John Gilliland to appoint Steve Nelson as Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.** Executive Director Hayford relinquished meeting to

Chairperson Nelson. Chairperson Nelson called for nominations for Vice Chairperson. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to appoint John Gilliland as Vice Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.** Chairperson Nelson called for nominations for 2nd Vice Chairperson. **Motion by John Gilliland to appoint Tabitha Trent as 2nd Vice Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 5 ‘Agenda Additions or Deletions’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that there were two additions to the agenda. Item 5A, SFWMD Cost Share and Item 5B, resolution 25-03, Authorization of Series 2025 Bond.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 5A ‘SFWMD Coast Share’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that SFWMD is constructing a new field station on NW 50th Drive. The field station will require water and wastewater services provided by the OUA. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the plan designed by SFWMD called for a 10-inch watermain. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this is a diameter of piping that is not normally installed in the OUA system. The OUA intends to service other customers so a larger diameter main would be beneficial to the OUA. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the OUA requested a 12-inch main to be installed. Executive Director Hayford discussed that additional costs for both water and wastewater is \$162,646.00, which SFWMD would be reimbursed for as a cost share. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the OUA would be able to service new water and wastewater customers with this work once completed. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the additional work and cost sharing with the SFWMD in the amount of \$162,646.00. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 5B ‘Resolution 25-03, Authorization of Series 2025 Bond’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that in anticipation of the USDA loan closing on April 2, 2025, the OUA’s Bond Counsel prepared Resolution 25-03, which was initially reviewed and accepted by USDA on June 6, 2024, wherein the Board would authorize the issuance of a bond to exceed \$7,508,000.00 Utility System Capital Improvement Revenue Bond, Series 2025 for the partial payment of the construction of the SWSA Septic to Sewer Project. Board Member Trent requested that this agenda item be deferred to Agenda Item #32.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 6 ‘Consent Agenda’ Member Moldenhauer requests to pull Consent Agenda Item #15 and Consent Agenda Item #16. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Consent Agenda items 1-14 and 17-23 as presented:**

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| Consent Agenda Item No. 7 | ‘Invoice from Go Underground Utilities, LLC – SWSA Vacuum Station No. 4 Force Main in the amount of \$195,320.00’ |
| Consent Agenda Item No. 8 | ‘Invoice from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. – Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project in the amount of \$15,790.35’ |
| Consent Agenda Item No. 9 | ‘Invoice from Hinterland Group, Inc. – SWSA Project 2 Vacuum Collection System in the amount of \$382,045.53’ |
| Consent Agenda Item No. 10 | ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of \$8,865.00’ |

- Consent Agenda Item No. 11** 'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – GIS Mapping Project in the amount of \$6,220.00'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 12** 'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc – SRF for Implementation of AMI in the amount of \$1,204.00'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 13** 'Invoices from CHA – Pine Ridge Park Utility System Upgrade-SDC in the amounts of \$687.50 and \$5,079.20'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 14** 'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part E) in the amount of \$22,257.50'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 17** 'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW Wastewater Service Area Project – Vacuum Station 4 Force Main Services in the amount of \$2,205.00'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 18** 'Invoice from Lewis, Longman, & Walker, P.A. – USDA Loan Legal Services in the amount of \$332.50'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 19** 'Invoices from Nason Yeager Gerson Harris & Fumero, P.A. – Legal Services in the amounts of \$4,943.30 and \$8,725.00'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 20** 'Invoice from Conely and Conely, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$3,118.75'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 21** 'Invoice from Thorn Run Partners in the amount of \$3,500.00'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 22** 'Invoice from MacVicar Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$250.00'
- Consent Agenda Item No. 23** 'Surplus Property'

Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Consent Agenda Item No. 15 'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – Okee-Tantie Utility System Improvements' Board Member Moldenhauer discussed that the spreadsheet calculations for the projects remaining balance are incorrect. Executive Director Hayford stated that the spreadsheet formula would be reviewed and corrected as necessary. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the invoice to Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$6,473.91. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Consent Agenda Item No. 16 'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW 5th Avenue LPSS Design and Permitting' Board Member Moldenhauer discussed that the spreadsheet calculations for the projects remaining balance are incorrect. Executive Director Hayford stated that the spreadsheet formula for this item would be reviewed corrected as necessary. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the invoice to Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$39,100.80. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'Meeting Minutes from February 18, 2025' **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Meeting Minutes from February 18, 2025 as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 25 'Employee Recognition' There were no employees to recognize at this time.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 26 'Public Comments' Customer Peggy Futoye-Sterling, 1031 Lake Drive, was present to speak to the Board regarding billing due dates. Ms. Futoye-Sterling, discussed that she, like some other customers, live on a fixed budget. She would like the OUA to consider changing the due dates to coincide with Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and federal assistance disbursements.

Discussion Agenda

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 27 'City Dog Park' Executive Director Hayford discussed that the City of Okeechobee has offered up some conceptual ideas for a Dog Park at Centennial Park and is asking the OUA as to whether or not the city could utilize the vacant parcel next to the SE-2 Lift Station. City Administrator, Gary Ritter was present to answer questions from the board. Mr. Ritter discussed that the Sheriff's Office may have grant funding for the project, however the dollar amount is unknown at this time. There was a brief discussion and the board was open to the project. The board members asked the City to submit plan ideas for review by the OUA Board. This item is for informational purposes only.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 28 'Previous Meeting Agenda Items' Executive Director Hayford discussed that at the February Board Meeting, there were only three voting members present. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Interlocal Agreement requires a minimum four voting member panel to reach a quorum. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the agenda items were presented and discussed, however formal action could not be taken. Executive Director Hayford discussed that there are items that should get immediate consideration for payment or approval/disapproval. Therefore, after the meeting several agenda items were sent individually to all OUA Board members via email for their opinion as to approve or disapprove. Executive Director Hayford discussed that items considered by email were Agenda Item #3 – Consent Agenda, Agenda Item #13 – Meeting Minutes, Consent Agenda #16 – Interim Financing Draw-Down No. 6, Agenda Item #18 – SW 5th Ave, Agenda Item #21A – Finance Report, and Agenda Item #17 – Pine Ridge Park Project Closeout (Option A). Executive Director Hayford discussed that the items were approved by the Board Members and the ratification of this action would be needed. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to ratify the approval of Agenda Item #3 – Consent Agenda, Agenda Item #13 – Meeting Minutes, Consent Agenda #16 – Interim Financing Draw-Down No. 6, Agenda Item #18 – SW 5th Ave, Agenda Item #21A – Finance Report, and Agenda Item #17 – Pine Ridge Park Project Closeout (Option A).** **Secon by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 29 'Cemetery Road Wastewater Treatment Plant (CRWWTP) Fencing' Executive Director Hayford discussed that the security fencing of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was an OUA Board directive in FY24. Executive Director Hayford discussed that after review staff believe that securing the entire publicly accessible portion of the WWTP property along NE 39th Blvd is the best option. Executive Director Hayford discussed that four contractors were solicited to provide quotes. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the proposals submitted by each

contractor. Board Member discussed concerns regarding the costs for this project. Attorney Conteaguero advised the Board that installing the fence is appropriate from a liability perspective. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to accept the bid from Chase Land Services, LLC in the amount of \$60,990.00. Second by Steve Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 30 ‘Cemetery Road Wastewater Treatment Plant Maintenance Projects’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Cemetery Road Wastewater Treatment Plant requires maintenance in three separate project areas to include sand blasting, applying multiple coats of primer and finish coats of paint. Executive Director Hayford discussed that bids were obtained and Extra Mile Sand Blasting, LLC was selected as the vendor to complete the work. Executive Director Hayford discussed the costs for each project area. WWTP Supervisor, Chris Cassidy to discuss the necessary maintenance required. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by John Gilliland to approve the expenditure not to exceed \$40,000.00 to complete the necessary maintenance projects at the WWTP. Second by Harry Moldenhauer, Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 31 ‘Cemetery Road WWTF Emergency Clarifier Repair’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that as part of the repair, maintenance and operation of the WWTF, the drive assembly for clarifier (1A) is inoperable. Due to this unit being one of two clarifiers for the treatment plant, redundancy or back-up has been lost. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the WWTF Supervisor recommended repairs be done now as an emergency basis due to this loss of redundancy. Executive Director Hayford discussed the proposal from Evoqua to replace the drive assembly and associated parts at a cost of \$94,592.50. It will take approximately 6 – 8 weeks to obtain parts and schedule the work. Board Member Gilliland asked if this repair was placed in the budget. Finance Director Hamilton verified that the repairs for the clarifiers are in the budget. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by John Gilliland to approve the award the emergency repair to Evoqua in the amount of \$94,592.50 as presented. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda No. 32 ‘USDA Loan Closing’ Finance Director Hamilton discussed that on September 13, 2021, the Board voted unanimously 5-0 to accept USDA financing proposal for the Southwest Service Area Septic to Sewer Project. The established funding including a loan for \$7,508,000.00 and a grant in the amount of \$883,000.00 for a funding total of \$8,391,000.00 from the USDA. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that as outlined in the terms and conditions of the loan facility, the OUA was directed to establish and interim financing agreement with a commercial bank equal to the loan amount of \$7,508,000.00 during the construction period. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the USDA would settle the outstanding amount owing to the interim financing company and issue the OUA a forty (40) year loan at 1.37% interest rate. As of the date of this meeting the USDA loan closing is scheduled for April 2, 2025. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent confirming the current Board’s agreement to proceed with the USDA facility for the Southwest Service Area Septic to Sewer Project including loan and grant funding totaling \$8,391,000.00. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Motion by Harry Moldenhauer authorizing the Board Chairman and OUA staff to execute documentation pertaining to the closing on USDA loan application. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Finance Director Hamilton reads Resolution 25-02 by title. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to adopt Resolution 25-02 as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Finance Director Hamilton reads Resolution 25-03 by title. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to adopt Resolution 25-03 as presented. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda No. 33 “Northeast Glades County Wastewater Master Plan” Executive Director Hayford discussed that CHA Solutions which was ranked the highest in the selection process back in January 2025, submitted a proposed scope of work and fee schedule. The proposal includes 134 calendar days and \$45,600.00 in fees. This plan, once completed, would be used in support of the pending legislative appropriation or if a submittal is made for water quality grant assistance to FDEP. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to accept the proposal for CHA Solutions in an amount to not exceed \$45,600.00. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Staff Reports

Chairperson Nelson addressed Staff Reports Agenda Item No. 34 ‘Operations Director’ Operations Director Mullis gave an overview of the work being completed by staff. Executive Director Hayford informed the board that staff is sending two employees to Airvac school in Rochester, Indiana. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff will be receiving a demonstration to receive better water quality, due to hard water at the Groundwater Treatment Plant (GWTP). Executive Director Hayford discusses that with better water quality staff can put the GWTP in service.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 35A ‘Finance Report’ Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the Finance Report for period ending February 28, 2025. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Finance Report as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 36 ‘Attorney’ Attorney Conteaguero updated the board on the Hinterland Group suit.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 37 “Executive Director” Executive Director Hayford gave an update on current projects. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff are in the process of hiring an Assistance Finance Director and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 15 ‘Items from the Board’ There were none.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 9:48 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)

