OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 18, 2026 8:00 A.M.
Okeechobee Utility Authority
100 SW 5th Avenue
Okeechobee, Florida

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

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

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

<u>**Board Members:**</u>	<u>**Alternates:**</u>	<u>**Absent:**</u>
John Gilliland*	Melanie Anderson	Steve Hargraves
Harry Moldenhauer*	Jamie Gamiotea	
Steven Nelson*		
Tabitha Trent*		

*Voting Board Members

<u>**OUA Members:**</u>

Greg Kennedy	Lauriston Hamilton	Steve Conteaguero
Jamie Mullis	Michelle Willoughby	

Glenn Sneider in at 8:02 A.M.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 2 'Agenda Additions and Deletions'

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 3 'Consent Agenda' Board Member Moldenhauer discusses that Item No. 7 has a mathematical error in the spreadsheet calculation that was included. Executive Director Kennedy acknowledged the error and stated it would be corrected, but that the invoice amount was correct. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the Consent Agenda as with mathematical correction as discussed to Item No. 7:**

Consent Agenda Item No. 4	**'Invoice from Marmer Construction, Inc. – SW 5th Avenue Vacuum Sewer Project Phase I in the amount of 25,110.05'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 5	**'Invoice from CHA Solutions – Pine Ridge Park Expansion Project in the amount of $7,523.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 6	**'Invoice from CHA Solutions – Vac Station #2 Generator Replacement in the amount of $2,743.50'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 7	**'Invoice from CHA Solutions – SWTP Ozone System Upgrade in the amount of $8,676.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 8	**'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. - Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of $595.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 9	**'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – State Road 78 Water Main Phase III in the amount of $21,434.40'**

Consent Agenda Item No. 10	**'Invoice grom Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SR 78 Water Main Improvements Phase III – Booster Pump Station in the amount of $6,785.40'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 11	**'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – NW 15 Rehabilitation in the amount of $5,698.88'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 12	**'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW 5th Avenue Vacuum Sewer Phase I in the amount of $20,234.36'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 13	**'Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SWSA Septic to Sewer Connections Phase III Lots (Groups J through AA) in the amount of $15,980.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 14	**'Invoice from Nason Yeager Harris & Fumero, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of $8,200.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 15	**'Invoice form Conely and Conely, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of $2,500.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 16	**'Invoice from Thorn Run Partners in the amount of $3,500'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 17	**'Invoice from MacVicar in the amount of $250.00'**
Consent Agenda Item No. 18	**'Operations Director Monthly Report'**

Second by Steven Nelson Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 19 'Meeting Minutes from July 21, 2026' Motion by Steven Nelson to approve the meeting minutes from June 21, 2026 as presented. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 20 'Public Comments' Motion by Steven Nelson to open Public Comments. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous, (4-0), motion carried. There were none. **Motion by Steven Nelson to close Public Comments. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous, (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 21 'Customer – D. Desai' Executive Director Kennedy discussed that at the July 21st board Meeting staff was directed to verify the terms of the FDEP grant. Executive Director Kennedy discussed the options by which a property owner could accomplish connection of the residence to the centralized sewer collection system. Executive Director Kennedy reviewed the grant terms and the bid that was received from Fehl Safe Water Systems for the connection and septic abandonment for Mr. Desai's property. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve that the OUA is to complete the piping connection, site restoration, associated permitting only as the homeowner has completed the septic abandonment. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 22 'Finance Report' Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the Finance Report for period ending July 31, 2026. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Finance Report as presented. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 23 'Proposed Changes to Purchasing Manual' Executive Director Kennedy reviewed the proposed changes to the Purchasing Manual. *Glenn Sneider out at 8:45 A.M.* There was a brief discussion. The board made recommendation to further amend the Purchasing Manual as follows:

1. The Board authorizes the Executive Director to sign all procurement documents up to a value of Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00)

2. All Directors (except for the Executive Director) classifying as an exempt employee are authorized to sign purchase orders up to a value of Ten Thousand Dollars ($10,000.00).

3. Purchases of approved budgetary operating expenses do not require additional approval from the board except in circumstances where the amount expended exceeds the budget. Likewise, equipment already approved in the adopted budget do not require board approval before purchasing <u>except</u> where the purchase exceeds 5% of the approved budgeted value.

Motion By Tabitha Trent to approve the Purchasing Manual as amended. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote Unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'Computer Purchases' Executive Director Kennedy discussed that included in both the FY26 and FY27 budget are provisions for the replacement of aged computers and the upgrading of Microsoft Office software. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the software upgrade is necessary due to Microsoft ceasing support and updates for the current software that installed on the OUA computers. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the purchase of 15 computers and 22 Microsoft Office 2024 licenses from ICS computers at a total cost of $15,793.00. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous, (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 25 'SWSA Project 2 – Septic to Sewer Connections W, X, and V' Executive Director Kennedy discussed that on July 17th, bids were received and opened for three (W and X) groups within VPS #5. On August 6th, bids were received and opened for one (V) group within VPS #5. Executive Director Kennedy discussed the grant coverage for each of the groups. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to award the contracts for VPS #5 Groups W, X, and V to Meeks Plumbing Inc., the low bidder, for a total of $268,283.31, and to authorize the issuance of the Notice of Award and required paperwork upon receipt of all necessary documentation. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0); motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 26 'NW 15 Improvements – Direct Purchase of Pumps and Controls Package' Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the project engineer, Jeff Sumner, P.E. advised that Florida Utility Systems (FUS) holds an Annual Resale Certificate and therefore, may purchase materials for resale to OUA without paying sales tax, subject to applicable Florida sales tax requirements. Following discussion regarding FUS purchasing the pumps and controls package from Hydra Services, Inc., Hydra Services offered OUA a 1.5% discount if OUA purchases the package directly. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that a direct purchase from Hydra Services, Inc. would result in a 1.5% discount, reducing the purchase price to $452,898.00 and providing a savings of $6,897.00. The direct purchase would also require a deductive change order to the FUS contract in the amount of $459,795.00 to remove the pumps and controls package from FUS's scope of work. Motion by **Steven Nelson to approve the direct purchase of the pumps and controls package from Hydra Services, Inc. in the amount of $452,898.00, and authorize the corresponding $459,795.00 deductive change order to the Florida Utility Solutions contract for the removal of this equipment package from the project scope. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 27 'Vacuum Pump Station #2 Generator Replacement' Executive Director Kennedy reviewed Engineering Scope Revision No. 2 for the Vacuum Pump Station #2 generator replacement project. This engineering scope revision is being submitted to increase the budget for Engineering Services During Construction (SDC) due to the extended construction duration. Contractor, Eau Gallie Electric, Inc., has exceeded the originally approved contract time. Due to the Contractor's ongoing efforts to obtain an approved generator with subbase tank in accordance with the Contract Requirements. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the engineer of record, CHA Consulting, Inc. anticipates that the approved SDC fee will be insufficient to provide the necessary engineering services through the anticipated Final Completion Date. This Engineering Scope Revision increases the authorized man-hours and reimbursable expenses for SDC services. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Steven Nelson to approve Engineering Scope Revision No. 2 with an increase of $10,000.00 for additional Engineering Services During Construction. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 28 'Kings Bay Monthly Maintenance Charge' Executive Director Kennedy reviewed the analysis of the Authority's operation and cost structure associated with the maintenance of the wastewater system at King's Bay subdivision during the period July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, a maintenance charge of $13.33 per month is recommended for each metered unit for the coming period FY27 starting October 1, 2026. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Steven Nelson to approve setting the monthly maintenance cost at $13.33 for the King's Bay accounts. Second by harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 29 'Chlorination Building Rehabilitation' Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the chlorination building at the WWTP Cemetery Road facility has deteriorated since it was constructed approximately 20 years ago and is in need of rehabilitation. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the repair to the chlorination building is included in FY26 Budget. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that quotes were requested from four Dean Metal Building Contractors with only three contractors responding. The apparent low bidder was L. Cobb Construction, Inc. in the amount of $25,667.23. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to accept the low bid of $ 25,667.23 from L. Cobb Construction Inc. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 30 'SWTP Lab Cabinet Replacement' Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the cabinets and countertops in the Lab at the SWTP are approximately 30 plus years old and in need of replacement. Staff reached out to cabinet vendors, obtained pricing and decided to go with chemical resistant epoxy countertops for durability. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that quotes were requested from four cabinet companies for replacement of all cabinets and countertops in the lab with the countertops being chemical resistant epoxy countertops. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that two of the four companies did not quote chemical resistant epoxy countertops. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to accept the low bid of $22,375.00 from Jeanettes Interiors. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 31 'Short-Term Disability Health Benefit' Executive Director Kennedy presented a proposal to add Short-Term Disability (STD) insurance coverage to the employee benefits package offered by the OUA. Executive Director Kennedy explained that the addition of STD coverage would assist in aligning OUA's benefits package with those of peer organizations, enhance the Authority's ability to attract qualified employees, and support employee retention. Executive Director Kennedy further explained that OUA currently provides Long-Term Disability (LTD) coverage to all employees. Due to the six-month qualifying period associated with LTD coverage, Staff noted that employees experiencing an illness or disability may face financial challenges during the period before LTD benefits become available. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the proposed STD benefit would provide coverage after 14 consecutive days of absence due to illness or disability, with a benefit of up to 60% of weekly pre-disability earnings, subject to a maximum weekly benefit of $1,000, for a maximum period of 13 weeks. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the addition of short-Term Disability insurance coverage through Public Risk Management to the**

benefits offered to OUA employees effective October 1, 2026. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (4-0). Motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliand addressed Agenda Item No. 32 '2027-2028 Legislative Priorities Selections' Executive Director Kennedy presented a proposed list of OUA priority projects for consideration by the Okeechobee County Legislative Delegation in advance of the Fall 2026 Legislative Delegation Hearing. Executive Director Kennedy discussed that the proposed priorities included the Cemetery Road WWTF Advanced Wastewater Treatment Project, Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), SW 5th Avenue Septic to Sewer Project, Ozone Rehabilitation Project, and Basswood Water Main Expansion Project, with additional projects identified as honorable mentions. Following a brief discussion, the Board established the following priority ranking: 1. Cemetery Road WWTF Advanced Wastewater Treatment Project; 2. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); and 3. SW 5th Avenue Septic to Sewer Project. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the priority ranking established by the Board for submission to the Okeechobee County Legislative Delegation as follows: 1. Cemetery Road WWTF Advanced Wastewater Treatment Project; 2. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); and 3. SW 5th Avenue Septic to Sewer Project. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Tabitha Trent out at 10:03 A.M.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 33 'Attorney' Attorney Conteaguero provided updates on Park Street Okeechobee and Okee-Tantie.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 34 'Executive Director' Executive Director Kennedy gave an update on current projects.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 35 'Items from the Board' There were none.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 10:20 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 video recording of this meeting is on file in the Executive Director's office.

Chairperson

Executive Director (Secretary)