

**OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:00 A.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority
100 SW 5th Avenue
Okeechobee, Florida

Chairperson Nelson called the meeting to order at 8:02 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
Steve Hargraves*
Harry Moldenhauer
Steven Nelson*

Alternates:

Glenn Sneider**

Absent:

Melanie Anderson
Tabitha Trent

*Voting Board Members

**Voting in Tabitha Trent's absence

OUA Members:

John Hayford
Greg Kennedy

Lauriston Hamilton
Jamie Mullis

Steve Conteaguero
Michelle Willoughby

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 2 'Agenda Additions or Deletions' There were none.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 3 'FY25 Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges' Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to open the Public Hearing 8:03 A.M. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Board had unanimously decided to allow the FY24 discounted rate on connection fees to sunset on September 30, 2024. Due to a number of complaints from rate payers about the removal of the discount, the Board took action to extend the 75% discount (on new connections) on two subsequent occasions, retroactive to October 1, 2024. Executive Director Hayford discussed that following the full charge on new connections taking effect on January 1, 2025, the Board received additional requests from rate payers to consider an extension of the 75% discount.

Chairperson Nelson called for comments from the Public.

Bradley Goodbread, 1575 SR 70 East, requested that the Board consider approving an extension of the discounted rates until April 1, 2025. Mr. Goodbread discussed ensuring customers are notified of the reduction of rates, social media posts and newspaper notices. Chairperson Nelson discussed that the Board could consider extending the rate reduction until April 30, 2025.

Frank DeCarlo, 405 SW 2nd Street, asked about information regarding the grants that have been applied for by the OUA. Executive Director Hayford discussed that OUA staff will not know the outcome of those requests until around June 2025. Mr. DeCarlo requested that OUA staff ensure letters are going to the property owner and not tenants for those rental properties.

David Hazellief requests that OUA staff send paper letters to property owners, especially to those that receive communication via email or are enrolled in Direct Debit.

Raia Black, 1521 SW 7th Avenue, inquired about the sewer connection fees increasing from \$1476.00 to \$1565.00. Board Member Moldenhauer explained that the increase was based on the 6% rate increase that went into effect October 1, 2024.

Chairperson Nelson called for comments from the Board. There were none.

Motion by Glenn Sneider to close the Public Hearing at 8:27 A.M. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Motion by John Gilliland to adopt Resolution 25-01 as presented. Second by Steve Hargraves. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 4 ‘Consent Agenda’ Motion by Glenn Sneider approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- Consent Agenda Item No. 5 ‘Invoice from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc – Lakeview Estates Permit Renewal the amount of \$900.00’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 6 ‘Invoice from Andersen Andre Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SWSA Project 2 Vacuum Collection System in the amount of \$5,985.00’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 7 ‘Invoice from CHA – Pine Ridge Park Utility System Upgrade – SDC in the amount of \$3,264.14’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 8 ‘Invoices from Locher Environmental Technology, LLC – SCADA in the amounts of \$37,246.40 and \$47,797.00’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 9 ‘Invoices from Nason, Yeager Gerson Harris & Fumero, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$6,936.68’**

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

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 10 ‘Meeting Minutes from January 21, 2025.’

Motion by Steve Hargraves to approve the Meeting Minutes from January 21, 2025 Meeting as presented. Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 11 ‘Public Comments’ There were none

Discussion Agenda

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 12 ‘Finance Report’ Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the Finance Report for period ending December 31, 2024 was presented at the last board meeting on January 21, 2024. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that at the time of the presentation there was not a quorum to approve the report at that time. Finance Director Hamilton asked the Board if

they wished to have the report represented. **Motion by Glenn Sneider to accept the Finance Report as presented on January 21, 2025. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 13 ‘FY25 Vehicle Request’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Board approved the purchase of 3 vehicles at the January 21, 2025 meeting. Gilbert provided bids after the Board Meeting but prior to purchase orders being generated. Executive Director Hayford discussed that when the Gilbert quotes were received, they were sent to Board Members listing the local options and were asked if the new information would change the direction given. Executive Director Hayford discussed that six Board Members responded asking to the change the purchase to Gilbert. **Motion by Glenn Sneider to rescind the January 21, 2025 motions directing the purchase of the Ford Maverick from Mullinax Ford for \$32,380.00, the purchase of the two 1-ton utility trucks from Alan Jay Automotive Chevrolet for \$61,523.00, to ratify the pre-approved purchase of the Ford Maverick from Gilbert Ford for \$27,544.00 and the two 1-ton utility trucks from Gilbert Chevrolet for \$60,836.40. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 14 ‘Attorney’ There were none.

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

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 8:40 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)

