

**OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:00 P.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority
100 SW 5th Avenue
Okeechobee, Florida

Vice Chairperson Gilliland called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

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
Harry Moldenhauer
Tabitha Trent

Alternates:

Melanie Anderson

Absent:

Steve Hargraves
Steve Nelson
Glenn Sneider

OUA Members:

John Hayford
Lauriston Hamilton

Greg Kennedy
Michelle Willoughby

Vice Chairperson Gilliland Agenda Item No. 2 ‘FY26 Preliminary Budget Review’ Finance Director Hamilton reviews budgetary assumptions to include a proposed rate increase of 4% for water and wastewater services, adjustments to O & M expenses, and labor related expenses. Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the departmental capital expenditures that each of the departments requested. Finance Director Hamilton advised the Board that the Supervisors for Administration, Water, Wastewater and Maintenance were present to answer questions related to department requests for equipment. After each Department Supervisor spoke the board thanked them for their time. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Groundwater Treatment Plant should be coming online in the next few weeks. Executive Director Hayford discussed funding for projects as well as the funding sources available. Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the Debt Service Summary with the board.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 3 ‘Discussion of Proposed Adjustments to Preliminary Budget’ Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the total operating review includes a 4% rate adjustment for each of the approximate 10,200 billed water customer and 4,800 billed wastewater customers. The adjustments to overhead expenditures were discussed with the board. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the labor schedule was adjusted to include new hires, promotions and terminations. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that as per board recommendation a salary adjustment split of 3.5% COLA and 1.5% Merit was made. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that PRM, (OUA’s health provider) advised staff that due to OUA’s high loss ratio, the health insurance premiums would increase by 11.5% effective October 1, 2025. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that following last year’s review of OUA’s Salary and Benefits by Evergreen Solutions, LLC the board initiated a step allowance wherein, the Authority contribution was adjusted to account for the type of coverage selected

by an employee. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that in order to minimize the impact on staff, an adjustment in the health insurance stipend should be considered by the board. Finance Director Hamilton discussed although actual plan registration by staff will not be known until after open enrollment, the net estimated increase in cost is assumed at \$100,000 should staff elections remain the same.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 4 ‘Question and Answer’ Board Member Gilliland advises that he will not present at the regular board meeting on August 19, 2025. He advised the board that he was in favor of increasing the stipend for healthcare coverage.

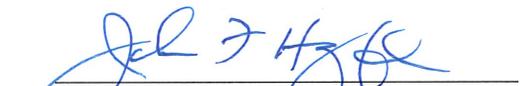
Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 11 ‘Public Comments’ There were none.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 5:49 P.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)