



GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2025 – 9:00 A.M.
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604
(352) 796-7211

Board Members Present

Michelle Williamson, Chair
John Mitten, Vice Chair
Jack Bispham, Secretary
Ashley Bell Barnett, Treasurer*
Ed Armstrong, Member
Kelly Rice, Member
John Hall, Member
Dustin Rowland, Member
James Holton, Member
Robert Stern, Member
Nancy H. Watkins, Member
Josh Gamblin, Member*

Staff Members

Brian J. Armstrong, Executive Director
Amanda Rice, Assistant Executive Director
Chris Tumminia, General Counsel
Brian Werthmiller, Inspector General
Jennette Seachrist, Division Director
Michelle Hopkins, Division Director
Brian Starford, Division Director
Brandon Baldwin, Division Director
Michelle Weaver, Division Director

Board Administrative Support

Virginia Singer, Manager
Lori Manuel, Administrative Coordinator

*Attended via Electronic Media

1. Convene Public Meeting

The Governing Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) met for its regular meeting on February 25 at 9:00 a.m., at the Brooksville Office at 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida 34604. This meeting was available for live viewing through internet streaming. An attendance roster is archived in the District's permanent records. Approved minutes from meetings can be found on the District's website at WaterMatters.org.

1.1 Call to Order

Chair Michelle Williamson called the meeting to order. She noted that the Board meeting was being recorded for broadcast on government access channels, and public input would be provided in person. Chair Williamson stated that anyone wishing to address the Governing Board concerning any item listed on the agenda or any item that does not appear on the agenda should complete and submit a "Request to Speak" card. She stated that comments would be limited to three minutes per speaker, and when appropriate, exceptions to the three-minute limit may be granted by the Chair. Chair Williamson also requested that several individuals wishing to speak on the same topic designate a spokesperson. She introduced each member of the Governing Board and staff present at the dais (this served as roll call). A quorum was confirmed.

1.2 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Member Robert Stern offered the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Employee Recognition

Chair Williamson recognized the following staff for their years of service: James Ferrell, Matt Jablonski, Tim Lohner and Jim Marshall.

1.4 Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, stated there were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

1.5 Public Input for Issues Not Listed on the Published Agenda

Mr. David Ballard Geddis spoke regarding deep well injection for Lake Tarpon.

Consent Agenda

Finance/Outreach & Planning Committee

2.1 Approval of the 2025 Consolidated Annual Report

Staff recommended the Board approve the 2025 Consolidated Annual Report and its transmittal to the required agencies.

2.2 Amendment to Fiscal Year 2024 Independent Auditing Services Contract

Staff recommended the Board:

1. Approve the third amendment to the agreement to increase compensation to fund the third state single audit as required by governmental auditing standards.
2. Authorize the Executive Director or designee to execute the third amendment to the current contract with JMCO to complete the fiscal year 2023-24 auditing services.

Resource Management Committee

2.3 FARMS – B 8 Turf Co., LLC – H817 (Manatee County)

Staff recommended the Board:

1. Approve the B 8 Turf Co., LLC project for a not-to-exceed project reimbursement of \$751,229 provided by the Governing Board;
2. Authorize the transfer of \$751,229 from fund 010 H017 Governing Board FARMS Fund to the H817 B 8 Turf Co., LLC project fund;
3. Authorize the Assistant Executive Director to sign the agreement.

2.4 FARMS – Gapway Mixon CUPS, LLC – H831 (Polk County)

Staff recommended the Board:

1. Approve the Gapway Mixon CUPS, LLC project for a not-to-exceed project reimbursement of \$64,171 provided by the Governing Board;
2. Authorize the transfer of \$64,171 from fund 010 H017 Governing Board FARMS Fund to the H831 Gapway Mixon CUPS, LLC project fund;
3. Authorize the Division Director to sign the agreement.

Operations, Lands and Resource Monitoring Committee

2.5 Amendment to Easement – Sugarmill Woods 2 – SWF Parcel No. 15-020-101 (Citrus County)

Staff recommended the Board:

- Approve Amendment One to Easement 31111 and authorize the Chair and Secretary to sign on behalf of the District; and
- Authorize Staff to execute any other documents necessary to complete the transaction in accordance with the approved terms.

Regulation Committee

2.6 Water Use Permit No. 20 000742.017, City of Tarpon Spring / City of Tarpon Springs (Pinellas County)

Staff recommended the Board approve the proposed permit attached as an exhibit.

2.7 Water Use Permit No. 20 004669.11, Hudson Water Works, Inc./ Hudson Water Works (Pasco County)

Staff recommended the Board approve the proposed permit attached as an exhibit.

General Counsel's Report

2.8 Governing Board Concurrence – Authorization to Intervene in Rule Challenge Administrative Hearing – Florida Springs Council, Inc. v. Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Administrative Hearings Case No. 25-000274RP

Staff recommended the Board concur with the approval to intervene in DOAH Case No. 25-000274RP and authorize the Office of General Counsel to defend the District's interests as needed.

Executive Director's Report

2.9 Approve Governing Board Workshop Minutes – December 17, 2024

Staff recommended the Board approve the minutes as presented.

2.10 Approve Governing Board Minutes – January 28, 2025

Staff recommended the Board approve the minutes as presented.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:011:23)

Finance/Outreach and Planning Committee

Chair Michelle Williamson called the committee to order.

3.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

3.2 Budget Transfer Report

This item was presented for information only. No action was required.

Resource Management Committee

Board Member Dustin Rowland called the committee to order.

4.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

4.2 Fiscal Year 2026 Cooperative Funding Initiative Preliminary Project Evaluations

Mr. Kevin Wills, Cooperative Funding Initiative Lead, presented a summary of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding applications, project locations map, preliminary scoring, staff funding recommendations, and a timeline. He provided an evaluation summary of projects for FY2026. This included Alternative Water Supply (AWS) projects, 1A ranked projects, a Springs project, new projects and projects not recommended for funding. Mr. Wills presented preliminary rankings and information for projects in each category. He stated that staff is recommending the funding of 15 projects that total \$98,572,085. Mr. Wills asked the Board to identify any projects they would like to be presented at the April Board meeting. Board Member James Holton requested a presentation for project Q431. Chair Williamson asked if any of the 1A flood protection projects are within the Pasco County (County) areas that experienced flooding from the hurricanes. Mr. Scott Letasi, Engineering Project Management Bureau Chief, responded the 1A projects are located on the west side of the County. The areas that are still experiencing flooding right now are located on the east side of the County. Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, stated that funding for several projects on the east side of the County has been requested through a supplemental bill with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Staff responded to questions.

This item was presented for information only. No action was required.

4.3 2025 Central Florida Water Initiative Regional Water Supply Plan

Mr. Ryan Pearson, Water Supply Supervisor, presented an overview of the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI). He stated the Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) is coordinated with the St. Johns River and South Florida Water Management Districts. Mr. Pearson provided information that included the history of the CFWI, its mission, counties included, and information to determine when a regional supply plan is required. He provided an overview of the 2025 CFWIRWSP and summarized the types of water supply demands in the region. Mr. Pearson explained the criteria that were used to assess potential impacts due to groundwater withdrawals. He outlined water supply and development options that will be required to supplement groundwater sources. Projections for the year 2045 water conservation savings by use type were presented. Mr. Pearson provided a breakdown of funding options, outreach efforts that have occurred, and future outreach. Staff responded to questions.

This item was presented for information only. No action was required.

Operations, Lands and Resource Monitoring Committee

Board Member Robert Stern called the committee to order.

5.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

5.2 Hydrologic Conditions Report

Ms. Tamera McBride, P.G., Hydrologic Data Manager, presented the hydrologic conditions report. She said January is the fourth month of the eight-month dry season (October through May). The January 12-month rainfall total was above average. Hydrologic indicators have declined but many are still in the normal range. Current conditions are experiencing a weak La Niña. Ms. McBride provided information regarding rainfall, streamflow, groundwater levels, lake levels, public supply reservoirs and climate forecasts. She stated that water supply storage amounts are relatively full considering the time of year. Ms. McBride stated the near-term climate forecast indicates above-normal temperatures and below-normal precipitation. The Climate Prediction Center indicates a transition to El Niño-Southern Oscillation neutral conditions between March and May.

This item was presented for information only. No action was required.

Regulation Committee

Board Member James Holton called the committee to order.

6.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

6.2 Denials Referred to the Governing Board

No denials were presented.

General Counsel's Report

7.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

7.2 Affirm Governing Board Committee Actions

Staff recommended the Board affirm the actions taken by the Governing Board Committees.

A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:52:48)

Mr. Chris Tumminia, General Counsel, provided an update on the request for a legal opinion from the Attorney General's Office regarding quorum requirements, which were discussed during previous Board meetings. He stated the Attorney General's office sent a letter declining

to issue an opinion and indicating that it would be inappropriate to intervene after the fact since the Board action had already occurred. Mr. Tumminia stated that the Senate and Natural Resources Committee has filed a bill to define water management district quorum as a majority of the total number of seats, including vacant seats. If the bill is approved the District's policy will need to be revised. Staff will keep the Board apprised.

Mr. Tumminia gave an update regarding the District's golf course structure rehabilitation project in Citrus County. He provided background information and explained that the District terminated the construction contract and staff completed the project. In addition, the District filed a claim against the contractor's performance bond. Mr. Tumminia stated the claim has escalated to litigation. Staff will keep the Board informed of developments.

Committee/Liaison Reports

8.1 Environmental Advisory Committee

A written summary of the January 14 meeting was provided.

Executive Director's Report

9.1 Executive Director's Report

Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, stated the District received six hundred thousand dollars in resilient grant planning from the Department of Environmental Protection. He stated the funds will be used to analyze the level of services of District structures.

Mr. Armstrong reminded everyone of the upcoming workshop following the March Board meeting. He stated the workshop will address flooding concerns caused by the most recent hurricanes.

Mr. Armstrong stated that District has provided ninety-eight million dollars for funding requests from ad valorem collected to fund projects for communities within the District.

Chair's Report

10.1 Chair's Report

Chair Williamson asked if the Board had any items to be discussed at the next meeting. No items were presented.

Chair Williamson stated the next scheduled Board meeting is on Tuesday, March 25 at 9:00 a.m., in the Tampa office. A workshop is also scheduled following the meeting.

10.2 Employee Milestones

A written summary was provided.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m.