GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026 – 9:00 A.M.
7601 U.S. HIGHWAY 301 NORTH, TAMPA, FLORIDA 33637
(813) 985-7481

Board Members Present
John Mitten, Chair
Jack Bispham, Vice Chair
Ashley Bell Barnett, Secretary
John Hall, Treasurer*
Kelly Rice, Member
Dustin Rowland, Member
James Holton, Member
Robert Stern, Member
Nancy H. Watkins, Member*
Josh Gamblin, Member*
James Turner, Member
Brian Aungst, Jr., Member

*Attended via Electronic Media

Board Members Absent
Michelle Williamson, 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

1. Convene Public Meeting

The Governing Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) met for its regular meeting on May 19 at 9:00 a.m., in the Tampa office at 7601 U.S. Highway 301 North, Tampa, Florida 33637. 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 John Mitten called the meeting to order. He noted that the Board meeting was being recorded for broadcast on government access channels, and public input would be provided in person. Chair Mitten 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. He 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 Mitten also requested that several individuals requesting to speak on the same topic designate a spokesperson. He 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 Brian Aungst offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Election of Governing Board Officers
Mr. Chris Tumminia, General Counsel, outlined the process for the election of officers.

Board Member Kelly Rice made a motion to nominate a slate of officers as follows: Chair, Jack Bispham; Vice Chair, Ashley Bell Barnett; Secretary, John Hall and Treasurer, Dustin Rowland. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

1.4 Employee Recognition
Chair Mitten recognized Chaz LaRiche, Catherine Wolden and Jim Desruisseaux for their milestone years of service with the District.

1.5 Additions/Deletions to Agenda
Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, stated the following item was being removed from Discussion:

Finance/Outreach and Planning Committee
3.3 Office of Inspector General Audit Activity – Quality Assurance Review

There was good cause to amend the published agenda as allowed by Section 120.525, Florida Statutes.

1.6 Public Input for Issues Not Listed on the Published Agenda
Mr. David Ballard Geddis, Jr., spoke regarding the ownership of water.

Mr. David Gore spoke regarding the use of science associated with hydrogeology.

Consent Agenda
Finance/Outreach and Planning Committee
2.1 Water Reuse Week
Staff recommended the Board approve and execute Resolution No. 26-02 declaring May 17-23, 2026, as “Water Reuse Week.”

Resource Management Committee
2.2 FARMS – Four Mile Grade LLC – H847 (DeSoto County)
Staff recommended the Board:
1. Approve the Four Mile Grade LLC project for a not-to-exceed project reimbursement of $689,392 provided by the Governing Board;
2. Authorize the transfer of $689,392 from fund 010 H017 Governing Board FARMS Fund to the H847 Four Mile Grade LLC project fund;
3. Authorize the Assistant Executive Director to sign the agreement.

2.3 FARMS – Mathis Farms, Inc. – Palm Lake – H849 (Hillsborough County)
Staff recommended the Board:
1. Approve the Mathis Farms, Inc. – Palm Lake project for a not-to-exceed project reimbursement of $495,927 provided by the Governing Board;

2. Authorize the transfer of $495,927 from fund 010 H017 Governing Board FARMS Fund to the H849 Mathis Farms, Inc. – Palm Lake project fund;
3. Authorize the Assistant Executive Director to sign the agreement.

Operations, Lands & Resource Monitoring Committee

2.4 Amendment to Cattle Lease Agreement – Cypress Creek SWF No. 13-500-402X (Pasco County)

Staff recommended the Board:

- Approve the Amendment to the Lease between the District and Karli Properties, LLC; and
- Authorize the Governing Board Chair to execute the Amendment on behalf of the District; and
- Authorize staff to make minor changes or corrections to conform documents or correct scrivener's errors; any substantive changes will be subject to Governing Board review and approval; and
- Authorize staff to execute any other documents necessary to complete the transaction in accordance with the approved terms.

2.5 Amendment One to Easement Agreement – Inverness DOT Replacement Well Site – SWF Parcel No. 19-020-129 (Citrus County)

Staff recommended the Board:

- Approve Amendment One to Easement Number 33643 and authorize the Chair and Secretary to sign on behalf of the District.
- Authorize staff to execute any other documents necessary to complete the transaction in accordance with the approved terms.

General Counsel's Report

2.6 Approval of Amended Well Construction Permitting Delegation Agreement between the Southwest Florida Water Management District and Sarasota County

Staff recommended the Board approve the amended Well Construction Permitting Agreement between the District and Sarasota County, Florida which shall be in effect from June 1, 2026 until May 31, 2031.

Executive Director's Report

2.7 Approve Governing Board Minutes – April 28, 2026

Staff recommended the Board approve the minutes as presented.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the amended Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:18:28)

Discussion

Finance/Outreach and Planning Committee

Chair John Mitten called the committee to order.

3.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

3.2 Fiscal Year 2024-25 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

Mr. James Halleran, CPA, James Moore & Company, provided an overview of the independent audit for the year ending September 30, 2025. He summarized the financial statements provided by the District and the audit reports prepared by James Moore & Company. Mr. Halleran presented an overview of the report, the requirements associated and confirmed James Moore & Company is current with their peer review requirements. He stated that in addition to meeting its statutory requirements, the District also provided additional information that makes it eligible to receive the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association. Mr. Halleran affirmed the District received an unmodified opinion which is the highest opinion offered. He stated that an "Emphasis of matter" paragraph was added and explained this was associated with the implementation of a new accounting standard. Mr. Halleran provided a summary of what was implemented. He summarized any changes that occurred in the District's General Fund, Florida Forever Capital Project Fund and Capital Projects. A general fund balance comparison table from FY2023 through FY2025 was presented. Mr. Halleran provided information concerning pensions and other post-employment benefits.

Staff recommended the Board accept and place on file the District's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report pursuant to Chapter 10.550, Rules of the Auditor General. The report also includes the Management Letter and Independent Accountants' Report for fiscal year ended September 30, 2025.

A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:30:13)

~~**3.3 Office of Inspector General Audit Activity – Quality Assurance Review**~~
~~This item was for the Board's information only, and no action was required.~~

3.4 Budget Transfer Report
This item was for the Board's information only, and no action was required.

Operations, Lands and Resource Monitoring Committee
Board Member Robert Stern called the committee to order.

4.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion – None

4.2 Surplus Lands 2026 Biennial Assessment
Ms. Ellen Morrison, Land Resources Bureau Chief, provided a history of the surplus assessments lands, the review criteria, the evaluation process and staff recommendation.

Ms. Morrison stated that there were no lands that met the criteria to recommend for surplus. However, Tampa Bypass Canal-16 parcel was identified to be removed from surplus declaration. She provided information explaining this recommendation. Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions. Mr. Brian Starford, Operations, Land and Resource Monitoring Division Director, stated this parcel is being considered for the staging of equipment and storage of dredge materials associated with the future maintenance of the Tampa Bypass Canal. Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions. Suggest adding Brian Armstrong's summary of the Board discussion.

Staff recommended the Board:
- Accept the 2026 Surplus Lands Biennial Assessment conducted in accordance with Governing Board Policy.
- Approve, by a two-thirds majority vote, removal of the declaration of surplus for TBC-16.

A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:54:50)

4.3 Hydrologic Conditions Report
A Request-to-Speak card was presented.

Mr. David Gore spoke regarding data used for the protection of natural resources.

Ms. Tamera McBride, P.G., Hydrologic Data Manager, presented the Hydrologic Conditions report. May is the last month of the eight-month dry season. Districtwide rainfall for April was below average, as was the 12-month rainfall total. Currently, the rainfall deficit is 11.4 inches below average. Information was presented regarding rainfall, streamflow, groundwater levels, lake levels, public supply reservoirs and climate forecasts. She stated that stored water supplies are in use to offset dry conditions. The Climate Prediction Center's near-term climate forecast for May, June and July indicated chances of above-normal temperatures and precipitation. According to the National Weather Service, the current dry conditions are the most significant the state has experienced since 2012. Staff responded to questions.

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

Resource Management Committee
No Items were presented.

5.1 <u>Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion</u> - None

Regulation Committee
No items were presented.

6.1 <u>Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion</u> - None

General Counsel's Report
7.1 <u>Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion</u> - None

7.2 <u>Consideration of Final Order – Polk Regional Water Cooperative v. Tampa Bay Water and Southwest Florida Water Management District (and Mosaic Fertilizer, LLC (Intervenor) – Water Use Permit No. 20011794.003 – Division of Administrative Hearings Case No. 25-5480</u>
Mr. Chris Tumminia, General Counsel, presented information that summarized historical details. He provided an overview of the settlement agreement and the process associated with finalization. Mr. Tumminia summarized the modifications to the Water Use Permit as a result of the agreement.

Staff recommended the Board:
- Approve and enter the Final Order.
- Authorize the General Counsel to execute all documents necessary to implement the Settlement Agreement and to make minor clarifying or technical revisions as needed to correct errors or ensure consistency with the terms of the Agreement.

A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 01:09:34)

7.3 <u>Affirm Governing Board Committee Actions</u>
A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 01:09:58)

Committee/Liaison Reports
8.1 <u>Environmental Advisory Committee</u>
A written summary of the March 27 meeting was provided.

Executive Director's Report

9.1 Executive Director's Report

Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, stated that based on the discussion associated with item 4.2, it would be beneficial for staff to solicit Board Members regarding the creation of a committee to review the policies associated with criteria in determining how surplus lands are selected.

Mr. Armstrong acknowledged the upcoming Memorial Day.

Chair's Report

10.1 Chair's Report

Chair Mitten provided an overview of accomplishments during his tenure as Chair. He conveyed his gratitude to the Board and staff. Chair Mitten congratulated the incoming officers.

The Board expressed their appreciation to Chair Mitten for his leadership.

Chair Mitten asked if the Board had any matters which they would like to present. None were presented.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23 at 9:00 a.m., at the Brooksville office.

10.2 Employee Milestones

A written summary was provided.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.