



**GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024 – 9:00 AM
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FL 34604
(352) 796-7211**

MINUTES

Board Members Present

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

*Attended via electronic media

Board Members Absent

Ed Armstrong, Chair
Joel Schleicher, 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 at 9:00 a.m., May 21, 2024, at the Brooksville Office, 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

Acting 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 wishing 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 Ashley Bell Barnett offered the invocation and 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 John Hall made a motion to nominate a slate of officers as follows: Chair, Michelle Williamson; Vice Chair, John Mitten; Secretary, Jack Bispham and Treasurer, Ashley Bell Barnett. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

1.4 Employee Recognition

Chair Mitten recognized Ms. Jennette Seachrist for 20 years of service and Mr. Don Everson for 30 years of service.

1.5 Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, stated there were not additions or deletions to the agenda.

Treasurer Jack Bispham requested that the following item be moved to Discussion:

Regulation Committee

2.6 Water Use Permit No. 20 007846.032, Schroeder-Manatee Ranch, Inc. / Schroeder – Manatee Ranch, Inc. (Manatee, Sarasota Counties)

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

1.6 Public Input for Issues Not Listed on the Published Agenda

Mr. David Ballard Geddes, Jr., spoke regarding reclaimed water.

Consent Agenda

2.1 Water Reuse Week

Staff recommended the Board approve and execute Resolution No. 24-02 declaring May 19-25, 2024 as “Water Reuse Week.”

2.2 Approve the Chassahowitzka River Watershed Management Plan Floodplain Information for Regulatory Use and to Update Flood Insurance Rate Maps in Citrus County (N873)

Staff recommended the Board approve use of the Chassahowitzka River Watershed Management Plan floodplain information for best information available by the District ERP program and to update Flood Insurance Rate Maps in Citrus County.

2.3 Approve the South Creek Watershed Management Plan Floodplain Information for Regulatory Use and to Update Flood Insurance Rate Maps in Pinellas County (N970)

Staff recommended the Board approve use of the South Creek Watershed Management Plan floodplain information for best information available by the District ERP program and to update Flood Insurance Rate Maps in Pinellas County.

2.4 FARMS – McClure Properties, LTD (H823) Manatee County

Staff recommended the Board:

1. Approve the McClure Properties, LTD project for a not-to-exceed project reimbursement of \$215,162 provided by the Governing Board;
2. Authorize the transfer of \$215,162 from fund 010 H017 Governing Board FARMS Fund to the H823 McClure Properties, LTD project fund;
3. Authorize the Assistant Executive Director to sign the agreement.

2.5 Perpetual Easement - Lake Mabel CFWI Well Site, SWF Parcel No. 20-020-138

Staff recommended the Board:

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

~~2.6 Water Use Permit No. 20 007846.032, Schroeder Manatee Ranch, Inc. / Schroeder – Manatee Ranch, Inc. (Manatee, Sarasota Counties)~~

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

2.7 Water Use Permit No. 20 008036.010, Leffie M. Carlton Jr Family LLLP / Grange Hall Loop Berries (Hillsborough County)

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

2.8 Water Use Permit No. 20 011639.007, Buckhorn Nursery, Ltd. / Buckhorn Nursery (Hardee County)

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

2.9 Water Use Permit No. 20 021115.000, TerraNova Preserves, LLC / Old Miakka Golf Course (Manatee County)

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

2.10 Approve Governing Board Minutes – April 23, 2024

Staff recommended the Board approve minutes as presented.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio –00:13:48)

Finance/Outreach and Planning Committee

Treasurer Jack Bispham called the committee to order.

3.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

3.2 Budget Transfer Report

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

Resource Management Committee

Board Member Ashley Bell Barnett called the committee to order.

4.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion – None

4.2 Initiation and Approval of Rulemaking to Amend Rule 40D-8.624, Florida Administrative Code, to Adopt Revised Minimum Levels for Lake Tulane and Lake Verona in Highlands County and Accept the Final Draft Reports

Mr. Doug Leeper, Minimum Flows and Levels Program Lead, outlined the criteria, legal directives and adaptive management processes that are used to develop and implement Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs).

Mr. Leeper provided a timeline of activities associated with the reevaluation of MFLs currently established for Lakes Tulane and Verona and summarized the processes, criteria, standards, and hydrologic modeling that were used for the re-evaluation. He described the peer-reviewed standards, including the Xeric Wetland Offset Standard, that were used for development of re-evaluated, proposed MFLs for each lake. Mr. Leeper also summarized screening information that was assessed for the lakes to ensure all relevant environmental values were considered for development of the proposed MFLs. Mr. Leeper responded to questions.

Staff recommended the Board:

- A. Accept the report entitled, "Reevaluation of Minimum Levels for Lake Tulane in Highlands County, Florida, March 1, 2024."
- B. Accept the report entitled "Reevaluation of Minimum Levels for Lake Verona in Highlands County, Florida, March 1, 2024."
- C. Authorize staff to make any necessary minor clarifying edits that may result from the rulemaking process and to complete report finalization.
- D. Initiate rulemaking and approve the proposed rule language to amend Rule 40D-8.624, F.A.C., to replace the previously approved minimum levels with the proposed minimum levels for Lakes Tulane and Verona in Highlands County, as shown in the Exhibit.

A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion passed unanimously. (Audio – 00:49:56)

Operations, Lands and Resource Monitoring Committee

Board Member John Hall called the committee to order.

5.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion - None

5.2 2024 Hurricane Season Preparedness

Mr. Dave Dickens, General Services Bureau Chief, presented the District's 2024 hurricane season preparedness activities.

He explained the role of the District's Emergency Coordinating Officer and alternates. Mr. Dickens provided the 2024 Atlantic Basin Hurricane Forecast and a recap of the 2023 storm season. Mr. Dickens outlined the primary responsibilities of the District during emergency operations stating the District is a member of the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) and is not a first responder but provides support to the missions of the State Emergency Operations Center. Mr. Dickens outlined the activities the District practices for emergency preparedness, including updating plans, conducting exercises and coordination with outside agencies. Mr. Dickens informed the Board that the District's Emergency Operations Center is prepared for the upcoming hurricane season.

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

Regulation Committee

Board Member Dustin Rowland called the committee to order.

6.1 Consent Item(s) Moved to Discussion

2.6 Water Use Permit No. 20 007846.032, Schroeder-Manatee Ranch, Inc. / Schroeder – Manatee Ranch, Inc. (Manatee, Sarasota Counties)

Treasurer Jack Bispham requested this item be moved to Discussion.

Mr. Darrin Herbst, Water Use Permitting Bureau Chief, presented information regarding the Water Use Permit (WUP). Treasurer Bispham expressed concerns regarding diminishing permitted water quantities related to expired agricultural WUPs. Board Member Ashley Barnett reaffirmed those concerns. Mr. Herbst responded to questions.

Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, explained the rule criteria related to issuing WUPs.

Board Member Kelly Rice discussed the development of alternative water supplies.

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

A motion was made and seconded to approve staff's recommendation. The motion passed unanimously. (Audio – 01:15:55)

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 passed unanimously. (Audio –01:16:38)

Committee/Liaison Reports

8.1 Environmental Advisory Committee

A written summary of the April 9 meeting was provided.

Executive Director's Report

9.1 Executive Director's Report

Mr. Brian Armstrong, Executive Director, congratulated the newly elected Governing Board officers.

Chair's Report

10.1 Chair's Report

Chair Mitten stated the next meeting is scheduled for June 25 at 9:00 a.m., in the Brooksville office.

10.2 Employee Milestones

A written summary was provided.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.