

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

### PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE TENTATIVE FISCAL YEAR 2025 MILLAGE RATE AND ANNUAL SERVICE BUDGET

#### GOVERNING BOARD SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

TAMPA, FLORIDA

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

The Governing Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District met at 5:01 p.m. on September 10, 2024, at the Tampa Office. The following persons were in attendance:

##### Board Members Present

John Mitten, Vice Chair (Acting Chair)  
Ed Armstrong, Member\*  
Kelly S. Rice, Member\*  
John Hall, Member\*  
Dustin Rowland, Member\*  
Robert Stern, Member\*  
James Holton, Member\*  
Nancy H. Watkins, Member\*

\*Attended via electronic media

##### Technical Difficulties Precluded Attendance

Jack Bispham, Secretary  
Ashley Bell Barnett, Treasurer

##### Board Members Absent

Michelle Williamson, 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  
Melisa Lowe, Bureau Chief  
Andrea Shamblin, Manager

##### Administrative Support

Virginia Singer, Manager

Approved minutes from previous meetings can be found on the District's website at [Watermatters.org](http://Watermatters.org)

#### **1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice Chair John Mitten called the meeting to order. He led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair Mitten provided information to members of the public wishing to address the Governing Board concerning any item listed on the agenda or any item that does not appear on the agenda. 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. Vice Chair Mitten also requested that several individuals wishing to speak on the same issue/topic designate a spokesperson.

Vice Chair Mitten introduced each member of the Governing Board and staff present at the dais (this served as roll call). A quorum was confirmed.

**2. Opening Comments**

Vice Chair Mitten stated the first Truth in Millage (TRIM) public hearing is for the purpose of adopting a tentative millage rate and budget for the Southwest Florida Water Management District, pursuant to Sections 373.536 and 200.065, Florida Statutes. He stated this hearing also provided an opportunity for the public to speak and ask questions prior to the Governing Board's adoption of a tentative millage rate and budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025.

Vice Chair Mitten stated the FY2025 tentative budget totals \$231.6 million compared to \$224.8 million for the FY2024 adopted budget; and continues a significant level of capital investment in our region to ensure the District's core mission is achieved. He stated these investments will continue to protect our water resources, spur the economy, and create jobs. Vice Chair Mitten stated the projects portion of the budget is \$135.1 million of the total budget for our District. Vice Chair Mitten indicated that \$76.5 million was for development of Alternative Water Supplies for existing and future reasonable and beneficial uses, \$10 million of which is from state appropriations.

Vice Chair Mitten provided a summary of the budget components that included projects, staffing, and other programs. He stated that the budget includes \$129.8 million in ad valorem property tax revenue based on the proposed millage rate equal to the rolled-back rate of 0.1909 which is lower than FY2024 millage rate of 0.2043. The rolled-back rate is the rate that would give the District the same amount of revenue as the current year plus taxes on any new construction.

Vice Chair Mitten thanked Governor DeSantis, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the legislature for state appropriations approved during this year's legislative session.

**3. Budget Overview**

Mr. Brandon Baldwin, Business and IT Services Director stated there were no changes to the FY2025 budget since the update at the July 23, 2024 Governing Board meeting.

**4. Public Announcement of the Name of the Taxing Authority, Rolled-Back Rate, Percentage of Increase Above Rolled-Back Rate, and Millage Rate to be Levied for Fiscal Year 2025**

Mr. Baldwin presented the required public announcement of the name of the taxing authority, the rolled-back rate, the percentage of increase above the rolled-back rate, and the millage rate to be levied for FY2025 and read into the record as required for the District. He stated, if adopted, this would be the thirteenth consecutive year the District has adopted a millage rate equal to or below the rolled-back rate for a cumulative reduction of 51 percent.

TAXING AUTHORITY	ROLLED-BACK RATE	PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE OVER ROLLED-BACK RATE	TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE
Southwest Florida Water Management District	0.1909 mill	0.0%	0.1909 mill

**5. Public Comments**

**a. Letters/Resolutions Received**

Vice Chair Mitten noted that letters and resolutions received regarding the tentative millage rate and budget, if any, have been compiled into an Appendix "A" to Agenda Item 5a and are hereby incorporated, by reference, into the public record of this meeting.

None were received.

**b. Persons Wishing to Address the Board**

None were present.

**6. Adopt Tentative Fiscal Year 2025 Millage Rate**

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT RESOLUTION  
NO. 24-05  
ADOPTION OF TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

This resolution is made a part of these minutes as if set forth in full, but for convenience, is filed in the permanent resolution files of the District.

**A motion was made to adopt Resolution No. 24-05, Adoption of Tentative Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2025, of 0.1909 mill, which was seconded. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:10:50)**

**7. Adopt Tentative Fiscal Year 2025 Budget**

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT RESOLUTION  
NO. 24-06  
ADOPTION OF TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

This resolution is made a part of these minutes as if set forth in full but, for convenience, is filed in the permanent resolution files of the District.

**A motion was made to adopt Resolution No. 24-06, Adoption of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2025, in the amount of \$231,606,142, which was seconded. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:12:11)**

**8. Announcement of Second and Final Public Hearing**

Vice Chair Mitten stated the second and final public hearing will be held at the Tampa Office on Tuesday, September 24, 2024, at 5:01 p.m. Final action on the FY2025 budget will be taken at that time.

**9. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Mitten adjourned the meeting at 5:14 p.m.