

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE Final FISCAL YEAR 2025  
MILLAGE RATE AND ANNUAL SERVICE BUDGET**

**GOVERNING BOARD  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

TAMPA, FLORIDA

SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

The Governing Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District met at 6:00 p.m. on September 24,

Board Members Present

John Mitten, Vice Chair (Acting Chair)  
Jack Bispham, Secretary  
Ashley Bell Barnett, Treasurer  
Ed Armstrong, Member\*  
Kelly S. Rice, Member\*  
John Hall, Member  
Dustin Rowland, Member  
Robert Stern, Member  
James Holton, Member  
Nancy H. Watkins, Member  
Joshua Gamblin, Member

\*Attended via electronic media

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  
Lori Manuel, Administrative Coordinator

2024, at the Tampa Office. The following persons were in attendance:

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](http://WaterMatters.org).

**1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Approval of Tentative Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Service Budget Public Hearing Minutes**

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.

Vice Chair Mitten requested a motion to approve the minutes from September 10, 2024, Tentative Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Millage Rate and Annual Service Budget Public Hearing.

**A motion was made and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.** (Audio – 00:03:15)

**1. Opening Comments**

Vice Chair Mitten stated the purpose of this final Truth in Millage (TRIM) public hearing was to provide an opportunity for the public to speak and ask questions prior to the Governing Board's adoption of a final millage rate and budget for FY2025.

**2. Budget Overview**

Vice Chair Mitten stated the FY2025 budget totaled \$231.6 million compared to \$224.8 million for the fiscal year 2024 adopted budget; and continues to provide a significant level of capital investment in our region to ensure the District's core mission is achieved.

**3. 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, Business and Information Technology Services Director, 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.

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

**5. Reconciliation of Tentative to Final Fiscal Year 2025 Budget**

Mr. Baldwin stated there was a change to the FY2025 budget since the tentative budget was adopted at the first public hearing on September 10. He stated the District was awarded a \$3.7 million grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for the Surface Water Improvement Management Program Cape Haze Ecosystem Restoration project. He stated the grant increases the state, local and federal funding from \$15.2 million to \$18.9 million, and reduces the use of reserves by \$3.7 million to balance the budget. Mr. Baldwin stated this does not impact the expenditures for FY2025 as the project was approved in the tentative budget.

**6. Public Comments**

**a. Letters/Resolutions Received**

Vice Chair Mitten stated that responses to the letters received regarding the tentative millage rate and budget, and letters and resolutions received regarding the final millage rate and budget since the first public hearing, if any, have been compiled into Appendix "C" of the public hearing materials and are hereby incorporated by reference into the public record of this meeting. He stated copies of this Appendix are available upon request at the District's Brooksville Office, 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida.

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

No Request to Speak cards were received.

**7. Adopt Final Fiscal Year 2025 Millage Rate**

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NO. 24-07  
ADOPTION OF FINAL MILLAGE RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

This resolution is made as 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. 24-07 Adoption of Final Millage Rate and Certification of Levy to the County Property Appraisers for Fiscal Year 2025, of 0.1909 mill, which was seconded. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:09:35)**

**8. Adopt Final Fiscal Year 2025 Budget**

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NO. 24-08  
ADOPTION OF FINAL TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

This resolution is made as 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. 24-08, Adoption of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025, in the amount of \$231,606,142 which was seconded. The motion carried unanimously. (Audio – 00:10:02)**

**9. Introduce all Materials as Composite Exhibit**

Vice Chair Mitten stated the record will reflect all materials presented today are part of the permanent record of the public hearing.

**10. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Mitten adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.