



**GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2024
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604
(352) 796-7211**

MINUTES

Board Members Present

Michelle Williamson, Chair
John Mitten, Vice Chair
Jack Bispham, Secretary
Ashley Bell Barnett, Treasurer
Kelly Rice, Member
Joel Schleicher, 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
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

Board Members Absent

Ed Armstrong, Member

Chair Michelle Williamson called the workshop to order at 10:50 a.m. No public comments were taken during the workshop and no board actions occurred. This workshop was to provide feedback and direction for staff.

Mr. Brian Starford, Operations, Lands and Resource Monitoring Division Director, presented updated information regarding water control structure Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He explained how the plan relates to the District's long-term funding plan. Mr. Starford stated that because the District is required to maintain structures, this capital improvement plan is a District initiative and is prioritized above the District's Cooperative Funding Initiative. He presented a map outlining the 84 water control structures located in 10 of the District's 16 counties. Mr. Starford stated 16 of these structures are flood control structures and the remainder are considered water conservation structures. He provided an overview of the District Asset Management Program and the MVP Plant computerized maintenance management system. Information was provided that outlined asset management planning that began in 2017. Mr. Starford presented a capital improvement plan timeline and provided an overview of capital activities for FY2026 through FY2029. Mr. Starford presented a capital budget forecast through FY2044. Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions.

Ms. Jennette Seachrist, Resource Management Division Director, provided increased growth demand projections from FY2015 through FY2040 in all District regions. She stated that staff are seeing similar growth trends for demand through FY2045. Ms. Seachrist stated that Alternative Water Supplies (AWS) will be required to meet most of the projected increases due to the availability of limited traditional groundwater supplies. She explained through the District's Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) Policy the District has historically utilized incentive-based funding to encourage the development of AWS. The District also prioritizes funding for AWS projects that are owned and operated by a regional water supply authority. Ms. Seachrist provided an overview of prioritized regional water supply projects. Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions.

Mr. Brandon Baldwin, Business and Information Technology Services Division Director, provided information regarding the District's long-term funding plan. He presented a long-term funding plan from FY2026 through FY2045. Mr. Baldwin summarized the assumptions used to determine the projections for each category of expenditure. These categories included the operating budget, District initiatives, cooperative funding projects and project reserves. He provided information regarding the proposed use of long-term funding for potable reuse projects from FY2029 through FY2038.

Ms. Seachrist provided a history and an overview of the benefits of potable reuse. She explained the difference between direct and indirect potable reuse and provided examples of facilities in the United States. Ms. Seachrist summarized District potable reuse pilot projects. She specifically addressed a potable reuse pilot project in Plant City (City). She stated that although this project does not meet two of the CFI policy requirements, the District is supportive of this project and would encourage approval of a one-time exception if the project is submitted to the District next year for funding consideration. Ms. Seachrist presented a long-term funding scenario if the Board was to consider using funding reserves for this City project. She responded to questions. Ms. Lynn Spivey, Plant City Director of Utilities, provided information regarding this project. Mr. Armstrong explained that the District approached the City to consider requesting CFI funding based on the merits of the project.

Mr. Baldwin presented information regarding budget metrics that are used for guidance and budget development. These metrics included projects budget, salaries/benefits budget and operating budget. He stated that staff propose retiring two of the metrics: projects and salaries/benefits. Mr. Baldwin explained that the projects metric is projected not to be achieved within the next five years. This is due to the implementation of the District's long-term financial planning model, which prioritizes funding for large-scale water supply development and three regional water supply authorities and will result in the spend-down of reserves. He explained that because salaries and benefits have been included within the operating budget, this metric is no longer considered beneficial. Mr. Baldwin stated that the metric that tracks the operating budget will still be utilized and will include the salaries/benefits information. A graph was presented from FY2014 through FY2035 with this information. Board discussion ensued regarding the possibility of eliminating metrics.

Mr. Chris Tumminia, General Counsel, stated if the Board approves to eliminate these two metrics, the Executive Director's contract will need to be revised as these metrics are mentioned in that contract. He reminded the Board that in the past the Chair was authorized by the Board to negotiate the contract with the executive director.

Chair Williamson asked if the Board had any other items to discuss. Board Member Nancy Watkins asked about a reference from a public comment that was made at the beginning of this Board meeting regarding the Weeki Wachee River (River) and dredge project. Board Member Watkins asked staff to respond to the earlier comment. Mr. Tumminia responded that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) oversees water quality standards. The dredge permit that was issued by DEP requires water quality monitoring on a regular basis, and no testing supports the earlier public

comment. Mr. Armstrong reaffirmed this. Board Member Watkins asked if damage was occurring, what enforcement action could be taken. Mr. Tumminia responded that it would be determined by the agency that has that statutory jurisdiction.

The workshop ended at 12:56 p.m.