



INDUSTRIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, November 5, 2024 – 10:00 AM
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

James Morris – CEMEX (Chair)
Ilia Balcom – Duke Energy Florida
Rachel McGraw – Duke Energy Florida (alternate)
Keith Nadaskay – Mosaic Fertilizer LLC (alternate)
Michael Lee – Seminole Electric Cooperative
(alternate)
Brandon Wren – Standard Sand and Silica
Nick Fletcher – Tampa Electric Company (alternate)
Suchi Daniels – University of South Florida
Max Levine – Publix

Staff Members

Adrienne Vining
April Breton
Brian Starford
Candice Harris
Jay Hoecker
Jeremy McKay
Jordan Miller
Josh Madden
Robyn Felix
Ryan Pearson
Seung Park
Taylor Greenan
Ted Gates

Board Administrative Support

Virginia Singer
Barbara Matrone

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The Industrial Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) met for its regular meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, via Microsoft Teams.

Chair James Morris called the meeting to order, and attendance was called.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

None.

3. Approval of the February 13, 2024 and May 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes from February 13, 2024 and May 10, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments

None.

5. Advancing Water Reuse Within the Beverage Industry White Paper

Mr. Steve Lohman and Mr. Paul Bowen from GHD presented an update on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Reuse Action Plan (WRAP) within the beverage industry. The National WRAP is orchestrated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

and is a collaborative initiative with over 100 action leaders and partners and is a joint effort between academia, non-government organizations, water associations, international partnerships and state and local governments. Their actions are focused on technical, institutional, and financial issues related to water reuse.

Action 5.7 identifies opportunities to implement water reuse within the beverage industry. Water is used in every facet of the beverage industry. Food and beverages are the third largest water user behind power energy and oil and gas. A lot of water is used to make the food we eat. From irrigating and cultivating the ingredients to making the raw materials to processing the beverages themselves and dispensing and serving the beverages to consumers. Without sufficient water, beverage companies cannot produce their products. The goal of the WRAP was to identify opportunities within the beverage industry that would help maintain a clean water supply of the right quality and meet the demands that will help the industry survive. Water reuse offers compelling opportunities for manufacturers to reuse water in their processes. The goal is to optimize water demand and wastewater production, elevate operational efficiencies and reduce costs, and achieve sustainability goals.

The objective of WRAP was to develop a white paper that could be shared across the industry to help understand and to drive stakeholder engagement understand the regulatory environment as well as issues related to water reuse within the beverage industry. Through this they wanted to identify hurdles and near, medium, and long-term solutions to advance water reuse practices at beverage manufacturing plants. If able to implement the near-term solutions, then manufacturers may be able to advance water recycling strategies at their facilities in due course. WRAP was initiated in 2022. They connected with action partners and met with subcommittees in 2023 and then published the white paper in 2024.

Defining what it means to reuse water in the beverage industry is to understand the drivers and the benefits. EPA looked at the history of water reuse and how it has progressed and shared some successful papers. The white paper helps to establish a framework to advance water reuse by stakeholder engagement, regulatory environment and the treatment and different technologies that are available. There were several challenges that came up and need to be addressed and there are recommended actions that go along with them. The white paper can be accessed on the GHD website, the WaterReuse Association website, or there are links on the USEPA WRAP website, as well as connecting with some of the action leaders and partners.

In conclusion, Mr. Lohman discussed the five priority challenges as a result of the work that was done over the two-year period and the recommended actions and tactics for each. He also discussed the Go-Forward planning and plans to expand how they look at water reuse for the entire food and beverage industry. GHD will conduct several meetings involving a consortium of food and beverage producers, water industry experts, and regulatory authorities. The primary objectives are to address regulatory requirements, source identification, water quality, treatment processes, and application challenges associated with water reuse and to develop a comprehensive process flow to guide producers through key decision-making criteria and to create demonstration project case studies or takeaways based on real-world producer experiences. GHD welcomes any feedback and interest in collaborating with them to drive water reuse in the food and beverage industry.

6. Introduction to the WISE Program

Mr. Josh Madden, Senior Environmental Project Manager, introduced the Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency (WISE) Program. The District is facing several challenges in water resources management. The groundwater and surface water sources are limited, and overpumping of groundwater can lead to saltwater intrusion and low water levels in wetlands, lakes and rivers. Extending current water supplies is the most cost-effective means of servicing new population growth. It can defer and reduce the need for more expensive alternative water supply projects. Reducing water use saves money on water bills, and if there are sustainability goals implementing a water conservation project could be a great way to help meet those goals and show progress.

The District has a Strategic Plan with a goal related to water conservation which is to enhance efficiencies in all water use sectors to ensure beneficial use. The District promotes water conservation in a lot of different ways including irrigation restrictions, water use permitting, education and outreach to the public, and by providing grants. Cost-share grants for conservation projects were well established for the two major water use sectors. The Agricultural sector has FARMS and Mini-FARMS, Public Supply has the Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI), but some remaining sectors are not well supported by CFI. WISE offers financial support to these other sectors such as Landscape and Recreation, Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional use sectors for smaller scale projects that are on a shorter time frame. This allows the District to better meet its strategic goal of supporting conservation in all sectors.

The purpose of WISE is to financially incentivize water conservation projects with a large variety of water users. Many of the eligible entities decide to do or not do projects based on the return on investment (ROI) of the project. Generally, the ROI of two years or less is ideal. By the District paying for half of a project, it makes a four-year ROI look like a two-year ROI. This encourages more projects to be implemented, thus more water savings.

The WISE program covers up to 50% of project costs. The max payout is \$20,000 of District funds per project. Many funds are eligible including hardware, installation, rebates, and software subscriptions, and staff can help with the application. A few examples of the types of items that we expect to fund for outdoor water use are smart irrigation controllers and irrigation conversions for weather data. For indoor water use, they fund a lot of high efficiency toilets and showerheads and replace equipment with more efficient versions. Other items that produce water efficiency gains, such as cooling tower pretreatment systems, improved water control systems in industrial settings, and other components that can demonstrate water savings.

Applications are accepted year-round. The application needs to include a couple of components including a water savings estimate and a quote for the project costs. District staff can help develop the application/project and water savings calculations. Up to three quotes may be required, depending on the total project costs, and the applicant still decides who they want to hire. The review and approval process takes approximately two months, and it is critical to wait to start or make any purchases until after the District gives funding approval. Then the applicant has one year to complete the project.

The District has a cost effectiveness metric of \$6 per 1,000 gallons where they compare savings to the total cost of the project. Projects that cost a lot and only save a tiny amount of water are typically not fundable. Items that are required by rule or ordinance, things that are operation and maintenance, and projects that conserve exclusively reclaimed water are typically not fundable. Single-family homeowners and agricultural entities are not eligible to apply to the program.

Mr. Madden discussed some project examples of plumbing fixtures at an apartment complex in Oldsmar with 50% water savings. The water bill went from \$60,000 per month to \$30,000 per month. He also discussed some completed project examples for smart controllers in Hillsborough County. Rainbird IQ computer-controlled irrigation timers connect all controllers to the internet, so they can be accessed anytime anywhere and weather data incorporated automatically for a 15% water savings on well water. Mr. Madden also highlighted a project example of a reclaimed water connection in Greyhawk Landing to connect a community irrigation system to Manatee County reclaimed water system with a 600-foot pipe.

The District is actively seeking applications and is planning some future outreach to homeowner communities. A mail out to water use permit holders is planned, offering facilities water audits to help generate projects. Mr. Madden requested help with spreading the word about the WISE program at your organization and added that he will email the WISE handbooks out.

Chair Morris asked if there was an available pamphlet of information about the WISE program. Mr. Madden responded that he does have a one-page flier that gives a high-level overview and added that the WISE applicant handbook was also available which provides the application as well.

7. Sunshine Law

Ms. Taylor Greenan, Attorney, gave a presentation on the Sunshine Law. The Florida Sunshine Law provides a basic right of public access to governmental proceedings at both the state and local levels and is recognized in the Florida Constitution. It also applies to any board, commission, or advisory committee of any state agency, county, municipal corporation, or political subdivision. The Sunshine Law prohibits committee members from engaging in private discussions with each other about District business either in person, by electronic communication or by social media. Additionally, committee members may not use non-members as a liaison to communicate information between members. The three basic requirements of the Sunshine Law are that meetings must be open to the public, reasonable notice of meetings must be given to the public, and minutes for committee meetings must be taken and promptly recorded.

Ms. Greenan then discussed the requirement of meetings needing to be open to the public. A meeting under the Sunshine Law is any communication between two or more committee members regarding some matter that will foreseeably come before the District's Governing Board for action and does not require any physical presence. A meeting under Sunshine Law can be any form of communication such as speaking, whispering, writing, texting, emailing, electronically communicating, or signing a document. A one-way communication does not qualify as a meeting. Committee members should make their best judgement on matters relating to District business and that will likely come before the Board.

Sunshine law violations are treated as non-criminal infractions and can be fined up to \$500 unless a person is knowingly in violation. In that case a person may be charged with a second-degree misdemeanor, can be sentenced to a term of imprisonment for up to 60 days in a county jail, and fined up to \$500. Additionally, the Sunshine Law violation could subject the District to civil lawsuit in which case both the District and committee members would be liable for attorney's fees, and anyone convicted may be suspended or removed from their position. Any action taken by the Board in violation of the Sunshine Law is invalid. If there has been a Sunshine Law violation, and a subsequent vote resulting in agency action, the violations may be "cured." The Board must engage in a fully open, public discussion on the matter and arrive at an independent collective opinion.

There are some implications when it comes to social media. Committee members may post about one-way comments or opinions about District business on social media, but these posts may become Sunshine Law violations if they evolve into online discussions on matters that will foreseeably come before the Board for action. Some examples of those violations would be communicating about District business over the phone or via text, discussing District business during a recess of an advisory committee meeting, or an inaudible discussion while sitting at the dais during an advisory committee meeting. If a member posts a comment on either their personal Facebook page or the District's Facebook page about District business, that is not in violation because it is a one-way communication, but if a member comments, "likes" or shares the post, that would be considered in violation of the Sunshine Law.

In conclusion, Ms. Greenan stated that advisory committee members are subject to the Sunshine Law and must not discuss District business with other committee members except at a public meeting, and refrain from using social media as a forum for discussing District business.

8. Advisory Committee Survey Results

Ms. Virginia Singer, Board and Executive Services Manager, provided the results of the 2024 Advisory Committee Engagement Survey. There are four advisory committees: Agricultural and

Green Industry, Environmental, Public Supply and the Industrial Advisory Committee (IAC). This is the third survey that has been conducted. Previous surveys were conducted in 2014 and 2020. The 2024 survey was conducted from March 25 through April 5, 2024. There were 48 surveys submitted resulting in a 74% response rate. Ten members of the IAC took the survey, which made up 21% of the overall responses.

To gauge satisfaction and approval, a series of satisfaction questions and agreement questions were asked. Looking at the overall survey results for all four committees, the average satisfaction rating of very satisfied and satisfied for all statements in the survey was 84%. This rating has stayed about the same from the previous year's results of 83% in 2014 and 85% in 2020. The overall average agreement rating of strongly agree and agree for all statements in the survey was 76%. It was 66% in 2014 and 80% in 2020, so the number fell in the middle.

The IAC has a good mix of experience among its members with 20% reporting they have been on the committee for more than five years, 10% have been on the committee for four to five years, 50% have been on the committee for one to three years, and 20% have been on the committee for less than a year. In terms of meeting logistics, 70% said they preferred to meet four times a year, 80% said they preferred having hybrid meetings, and 60% said they preferred to have one of the meetings each year be a tour of a site or operation.

Ms. Singer discussed the satisfaction ratings to statements in the survey by the IAC members compared to the previous surveys in 2014 and 2020. Survey results showed that 80% of the committee members said that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the topics presented, the quality of the presentations made, the timeliness of the presentations and the role the advisory committee plays in the overall function of the District.

Ms. Singer then discussed the ratings of agreement for the IAC members who responded strongly agree or agree: 70% strongly agree or agree that the District values the feedback provided by the committee (30% were neutral); 60% strongly agree or agree that the committee feedback is used by the Governing Board and the District to shape policies and practices (40% were neutral); 60% strongly agree or agree that the advisory committee feedback is used by the District staff to shape policies and practices (40% were neutral); 70% strongly agree or agree that they regularly share information they receive at committee meetings with the industries they represent (20% were neutral); 80% strongly agreed or agreed that the makeup of the committee provides appropriate representation (10% were neutral). Almost all committee members strongly agreed or agreed that the meetings are valuable for members as well as their organization with 80% and 70%, respectively.

Ms. Singer concluded by stating that they did receive some good open-ended feedback for topics that committee members would like to see at future meetings.

9. Development of Agenda Topics

Chair Morris requested hydrologic conditions update for a future meeting. Ms. Ilia Balcom requested a lessons learned session to share hurricane experiences. Ms. Singer invited committee members to join the Public Supply Advisory committee meeting at 1:00 p.m. to hear the presentation on hurricane response efforts.

10. Announcements and Other Business

Chair Morris mentioned possibly joining the Public Supply Advisory committee to tour either the Manatee County Wastewater Treatment Plant or the Tampa Bay Water Desalination Plant for February. Ms. Singer stated that a survey would be sent out to decide which date works best for everyone.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.