INDUSTRIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025 – 10:00 AM
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604

MINUTES

Committee Members Present
Ilia Balcom – Duke Energy Florida
Rachel McGraw – Duke Energy Florida (alternate)
Keith Nadaskay – Mosaic Fertilizer LLC (alternate)
Michael Lee – Seminole Electric Cooperative (alternate)
Terry Eastley – Tampa Electric Company
Suchi Daniels – University of South Florida
Jeffrey Nassif – PepsiCo
Max Levine – Publix
Dave Lazarus – Publix (alternate)

Staff Members
Adrienne Vining
Bob Thompson
Brian Starford
Cassidy Hampton
Dave Dickens
Devon Villareal
Jay Hoecker
Jennette Seachrist
Jeremy McKay
Mandi Rice
Michelle Weaver
Reed Putnall
Robyn Felix
Ryan Pearson

Interested Parties
Michele Duggan, Pinellas Co. Utilities

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, May 6, 2025, via Microsoft Teams.

   Ms. Ilia Balcom called the meeting to order, and attendance was called.

2. **Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**
   None.

3. **Approval of November 5, 2024, and February 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes**
   A motion was made to approve the minutes from the November 5, 2024, and February 28, 2025 meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Public Comments**
   None.

5. **Hurricane Season Lessons Learned**
   Mr. Dave Dickens, General Services Bureau Chief, presented on the District's emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts from the 2024 hurricane season. The District utilizes an all-hazards incident management approach for many potential hazards, including

wildfires, pandemics, tropical, and cyber-events. After each hurricane season District staff work to implement corrections from the after-action reports and lessons learned in order to strengthen resiliency and improve responses. Each year District staff update their planning documentation, attend trainings and conferences to learn new skills to improve capabilities and conduct preparedness checklists to ensure they are prepared for the upcoming season.

Mr. Dickens compared the 2024 forecasted storms versus the actual 18 named storms, 11 hurricanes and five major hurricanes. The National Hurricane Center's prediction of the number of hurricanes and major hurricanes was extremely accurate for the 2024 season.

Hurricane Debby made landfall near Steinhatchee, on August 5 as a Category 1 hurricane with a maximum wind speed of 80 miles per hour (mph) and soaked much of the western coast of Florida. Hurricane Helene made landfall in the Big Bend area on September 26 as a Category 4 hurricane with a maximum wind speed of 140 mph. It did not produce as much rainfall, but did cause extreme storm surge flooding. Hurricane Milton made landfall near Siesta Key on October 9 as a Category 3 hurricane, and inundated much of central and western Florida with a maximum wind speed of 180 mph. The District averaged over eight inches of rainfall in September, with many areas receiving upwards of 10 inches. Above average rainfall in July, August and September set the stage for a perfect storm when Milton hit in October because the landscape was already saturated.

The District averages 53 inches of rainfall a year and most of it occurs in a four-month period. Throughout the year and over time, different areas will receive varying amounts of rain based on meteorological conditions that we have no control over. Portions of Northeast Hillsborough County received over 70 inches of rainfall last year. Zephyrhills was another area significantly impacted by flooding this past year. Many homes and businesses were affected by floodwater. Residents had been dealing with flooding since Debby in early August through September and then Milton brought an additional 6-9 inches of rainfall overnight.

Post Milton, staff conducted helicopter flights of the impacted areas to document the flooding conditions. Staff also logged flooding complaints through the District's flood hotline. The data collected during these events can assist with future events.

During these tropical events one of the most critical roles of the emergency management team is the communication of factual and relevant information. During Hurricane Milton alone, the District's Public Information Officer distributed 12 news releases and facilitated 34 interviews and media inquiries. The District received more than 600 comments, questions and messages through social media channels, including Facebook, X, Instagram and Nextdoor. Additionally, the District's communication team combated misinformation about Hurricane Milton's post-storm response by providing updates on key actions by the District, responding to questions from the public in a timely manner and shutting down false information circulating across social media. Statements, photos, videos and graphics were posted to help set the record straight.

According to the National Disaster Recovery Framework, we are currently moving out of the intermediate recovery and into long-term recovery and working towards mitigation efforts. The District's Emergency Management staff are concurrently beginning preparations and working with partners and cooperators for the upcoming hurricane season. The District is preparing for the next event that will be coming, and there is a hurricane exercise planned in the next couple of weeks.

In conclusion, Mr. Dickens discussed the real time flood forecasting tool. It is based on existing watershed models and rainfall and surge forecasts are used. The tool uses already known predictions to predict what the rainfall impact may be on District lands.

6. **Hurricane Season Lessons Learned Open Discussion**

Ms. Balcom discussed Duke Energy's hurricane efforts as a result of the 2024 storms. There was a total of 5.5 million power outages. Since Duke Energy also covers North and South Carolina they responded to those states as well causing a strain on their resources. Duke Energy was able to restore 90% of the power outages within 24 hours after Hurricane Debby, 95% within 74 hours after Hurricane Helene, and 95% after four days following Hurricane Milton. Lessons learned were to conduct storm drills and have good communication ahead of time to be able to anticipate the worst-case scenarios, and to think about the staff and first responders to make sure they get proper rest during these storm events.

Mr. Michael Lee mentioned the importance of taking preventative measures to stormwater ponds and general maintenance items like making sure pipes are clear and pumps are working properly to avoid potential overflow situations, especially in an active rainy season.

Mr. Terry Eastley discussed the Tampa Electric Company's (TECO's) efforts. They had 600,000 TECO customers offline and the majority were restored within five to six days. One thing they did not anticipate was the underground utilities that were inundated due to the storm surge. The saltwater caused a lot of damage to the electrical equipment which took a long time to replace. Lessons learned were to look at all underground facilities that are close to the water to keep this scenario from recurring.

Mr. Max Levine reiterated the point about preventative maintenance and making sure that ponds and inlets are all functional and free of sediment. Publix started a maintenance program a couple of years ago at many of their locations and they have had a lot of success with very limited flooding and impact on operations.

7. **Prioritized AWS Projects and Potable Reuse Overview**

Mr. Jay Hoecker, Water Resources Bureau Chief, provided an update on the District's prioritized large-scale alternative water supply (AWS) projects. Projecting water supply needs is one of the District's primary responsibilities and is part of the Regional Water Supply Planning (RWSP) process. In the draft 2025 RWSP, the demand was expected to increase by 215.4 mgd through 2045, with 145 mgd or 70% of that being for public supply. District staff will be presenting the draft 2025 RWSP at the May Governing Board meeting. AWS will be required to meet most of the projected increases because there are limited traditional groundwater supplies available. The District has historically utilized incentive-based funding to encourage the development of fully integrated, multijurisdictional water supply systems composed of diverse sources. Through the Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) Policy, the District has prioritized funding for AWS projects that are owned and operated by a Regional Water Supply Authority.

Mr. Hoecker discussed the demand growth by planning region and how the net increase of 215 mgd growth is spread across the four planning regions. Most of the growth is in the Tampa Bay Planning Region, but while it is expected to experience the most growth on an mgd basis, percentage wise, the Northern Planning Region is expected to experience the largest growth.

The draft 2025 plan will be posted to the District's website following the May Governing Board meeting, and from June through August there will be a public comment period along with stakeholder outreach. It will also be presented to the Industrial and Public Supply advisory committees in August as a part of the stakeholder outreach. The final plan will be brought to the Governing Board in December for approval. The District's continued support of alternative water supply development includes over $600 million of committed funding for seven prioritized regional AWS projects. Over the last 10 years, the average CFI program budget has been about $50 million per year. With the Board's prioritization of these seven AWS projects, $78 million was set aside in FY2025 and that level is expected to continue for about seven years.

Mr. Hoecker then provided additional information on each of the prioritized projects.

1. The Polk Regional Water Cooperative's (PRWC) Southeast Wellfield Water Treatment Facility project includes a Lower Floridan Aquifer (LFA) brackish wellfield, reverse osmosis facility to treat the LFA groundwater, and concentrate disposal wells.
2. The Southeast Wellfield Regional Transmission will connect the Southeast Water Treatment Facility to multiple municipalities along the US 27 and Highway 60 corridors in Polk County. Construction of the 60-mile pipeline has commenced and will be ready to deliver AWS in 2028.
3. PRWC's West Polk project includes an LFA brackish wellfield, reverse osmosis facility to treat the LFA groundwater, a concentrate disposal well and finished water transmission mains.
4. The Tampa Bay Water (TBW) Southern Hillsborough transmission project includes approximately 26-mile pipelines and is expected to have a maximum daily capacity of 65 mgd.
5. The Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority's (PRMRWSA) 9 billion-gallon Peace River Reservoir Number Three project includes a new river intake pump station, new reservoir pump station, and conveyance pipelines to transport water from the Peace River intake to the reservoir and treatment facility.
6. The PRMRWSA Regional Integrated Loop System Phase 2B project will extend the existing transmission system further south in Charlotte County.
7. The PRMRWSA 3C Regional Integrated Loop System project will extend the Authority's existing transmission system further north in Sarasota County from Clark Road to Fruitville Road.

Mr. Hoecker then gave an update on the FY2026 CFI cycle. The District received 35 applications requesting nearly $197 million. Through the evaluation process, District staff recommend 15 projects to be awarded with FY26 CFI funding including the six prioritized AWS projects, three ongoing 1A projects, one springs project and five new projects. For the prioritized AWS funding, FY26 funding was aligned with the District's Long Term Funding Plan. In total, more than $98 million dollars was recommended. He then shared some updates regarding potable reuse and discussed the beneficial reuse stats within the District, state and national potable reuse programs as well as the cooperatively funded potable reuse projects.

Plant City initially began their potable reuse feasibility with a goal to develop an indirect potable reuse project. However, after a positive evaluation, the City switched to pilot testing a direct potable reuse (DPR) system. The pilot was initially planned for one year to collect testing data, but it was extended by three additional months to provide operator training opportunities and public outreach. The City was able to successfully complete the pilot test utilizing advanced technologies consisting of membrane filtration, reverse osmosis, and ultraviolet advanced oxidation. The treatment processes were continuously monitored and finished water was thoroughly examined for chemical pollutants and pathogens. The pilot testing demonstrated full compliance with existing and proposed Florida Department of Environmental Protection drinking water requirements for potable water reuse with over 450 regulated and unregulated contaminants being analyzed through multiple sampling events. The City also embarked on an extensive public engagement program with the pilot test to promote awareness of existing water supply conditions, projected water supply needs, and potential solutions through branding, educational materials, facility tours, promotional videos, and a partnership with a farm-to-table restaurant/brewery event. Feedback from the community has indicated strong support for the project and the City's commission approved $1.2 million to prepare a 60% design for a full-scale DPR project.

Mr. Hoecker concluded by stating that the District will not be able to meet the 75% reuse goal without implementation of potable reuse. The alternative water supply, including DPR will be a critical part of closing the gap in projected water supply demands over the next decade. District

staff anticipate evaluating future projects to fully realize resource potential and to ensure long-term, regional sustainable water supply.

Ms. Balcom asked if any more pilot projects were on the horizon and what the future holds for projects that have been in pilot status for a while. Mr. Hoecker responded that it depended on the long-term planning of what their next source may be. As far as other entities that have evaluation, he was not aware of any more outside of what was listed on the map.

8. **Overview of the Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP)**

Mr. Reed Putnall, Hydrogeologist, provided an overview of the Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP). There are two statutes in the Florida Administrative Code that cover artesian wells. The Florida Statute (F.S.) 373.206 requires landowners to control discharge from flowing artesian wells and plug wells that are a detriment to water resources. Section 373.207, F.S., requires water management districts to develop a work plan to ensure all known abandoned artesian wells are properly plugged. The District started a well plugging program in the 1970s that was funded 100% by the Peace River Basin, but by 2009 QWIP reimbursements increased to $6,000 per well and $18,000 yearly per landowner. The QWIP funding assistance initiative was approved by the Governing Board in 1994 and is a cost-share program that incentivizes landowners to properly plug abandoned artesian wells.

The benefits of QWIP are that it maintains and improves aquifer water quality and protects water supplies which eliminates interconnection of aquifers and stops uncontrolled flow. It provides an opportunity to fill in data gaps by the collection of borehole geophysical logs and water quality samples that are formally collected.

Mr. Putnall discussed how properly abandoned wells improve water quality and the upward mobility of groundwater from areas of poor to good quality. He explained the four criteria needed to qualify and the reimbursement schedule. The four basic steps of the QWIP process are that staff confirm subject well eligibility, fill out the reimbursement claim form, the landowner hires Florida licensed water well contractors to properly abandon the well, and then the landowner submits the paperwork to QWIP staff, and the reimbursement is issued.

Mr. Putnall showed a map of wells that have been historically funded by QWIP. The District has either performed or reimbursed just under 7,000 well-pluggings since the inception of QWIP. QWIP has only reimbursed well-plugging in its current form since 1994. He also displayed a map of the wells plugged annually which showed a spike in 1994. On average 200 wells are funded annually.

Mr. Putnall concluded by discussing program improvements. In the future, the application will be a PDF that can be submitted online instead of by email and geophysical logs will be available to the public. Mr. Putnall encouraged everyone to visit the website at www.watermatters.org/quip.

9. **Development of Agenda Topics**

Ms. Balcom requested a hydrologic conditions update. Ms. Virginia Singer stated that she would add that to the list as a presentation for the next meeting.

10. **Announcements and Other Business**

Robyn Felix announced that the Industrial Water Solutions conference will be held on June 23-25 in Columbus, Ohio and to visit the website www.waterreuse.org for more information. She also shared that the WateReuse Advancing Water Reuse Act was introduced in congress on April 17, and that the bill proposed an investment tax credit for industrial water reuse.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.