PUBLIC SUPPLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, February 14, 2023 – 1:00 PM
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604

MINUTES

Committee Members Present
Bryan Schmalz – Bay Laurel Center Community
Devon Villareal-Dabbs – Citrus County (alternate)
Sarah Malone – City of Lakeland Water Utilities
Jennifer Desrosiers – City of North Port Utilities
Lynn Spivey – City of Plant City Utilities
Sheree Greer – City of St. Petersburg Utilities
Ryan Smith – City of Tampa Water Department
Thomas Kiger – City of Tarpon Springs Utilities
Alys Brockway – Hernando County Utilities
David Glicksberg – Hillsborough County Utilities
Olga Wolanin – Manatee County Utilities (alternate)
Richard Anderson – PRMRWSA
Andrew Greenbaum – PRMRWSA (alternate)
Joel Brown – Pinellas County Utilities
Stoney Pope – Sarasota County Utilities
Brian Fagan – Sarasota County Utilities (alternate)
Erin Hayes – Tampa Bay Water (alternate)
Trey Arnett – The Villages
Suzannah Folsom - WRWSA

Governing Board Liaison
Ed Armstrong

Staff Members
Mandi Rice
Michael Molligan
Jennette Seachrist
Robyn Felix
Randy Smith
Jay Hoecker
Chris Zajac
Melissa Gulvin
Seung Park
April Breton
Doug Leeper
Robin Grantham
Danielle Rogers
Bob Thompson
Kristina Deak
Jordan Miller
Jill Qi
Joe Quinn
Kevin Vought
Yonas Ghile
Jeremy McKay

Board Administrative Support
Virginia Singer
Barbara Matrone

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**
   The Public Supply Advisory Committee (PSAC) of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) met for its regular meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, via Microsoft Teams.

   Chair Jennifer Desrosiers called the meeting to order, and attendance was called.

   Governing Board Liaison Ed Armstrong welcomed the committee.

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

3. **Approval of the August 9, 2022, Meeting Minutes**
   A motion was made to approve the minutes from the August 9, 2022 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Public Comments**
None.

5. **SWUCA Five-Year Assessment**
Mr. Randy Smith, Natural Systems and Restoration Bureau Chief, provided an overview of the Five-Year Assessment of the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA). The SWUCA is a 5,100-square-mile area which includes all or part of eight counties and is essentially the southern half of the District. The SWUCA was established by the Governing Board in 1992 due to long-term declines in aquifer levels. In 2006 the Governing Board approved the SWUCA Recovery Strategy due to the minimum flows and minimum water levels not being achieved. On January 1, 2007, the Recovery Strategy became effective by rule which required annual assessments to be provided to the Governing Board as well as five-year reviews to assess progress. The first five-year assessment was completed for the 2007-2011 period and the second assessment was completed for the 2012-2016 period. The third assessment is in the final draft phase for the period of 2017-2021. There are four Recovery Strategy goals to achieve by 2025: 1) Restore minimum levels to priority lakes in the Ridge area; 2) Restore minimum flows to the upper Peace River; 3) Reduce the rate of saltwater intrusion in coastal Hillsborough, Manatee and Sarasota counties by achieving the saltwater intrusion minimum aquifer level (SWIMAL); and 4) Ensure that there are sufficient water supplies for all existing and projected reasonable beneficial uses.

The six major elements needed to accomplish these goals are development of a regional water supply plan, the use of existing rules, enhancements to the existing rules, providing financial incentives for conservation and development of alternative water supplies, the development and implementation of water resource projects to aid in meeting minimum flows to rivers and enhance recharge, and for resource monitoring, reporting and cumulative impact analysis.

Mr. Smith discussed each goal and gave the status and recommendations for each.

- Goal one is to restore minimum levels to priority lakes by 2025. During the first assessment of the 2007-2011 period, there were 27 lakes with adopted minimum lake levels (MLL) and 11 of the 27 were being met (41%). In the second assessment of the 2012-2016 period, there were 28 lakes with adopted MLL with 12 of the 28 were being met (43%). For the current assessment period of 2017-2021, there are 32 lakes with adopted MLL with 23 of the 32 being met (72%). Eight of the nine lakes that are not currently meeting their MLL have moved closer to being met. The recommendations for goal one are to continue implementation of previously identified options, including conservation and Alternative Water Supply (AWS) development, continue to support the Lake Eva Aquifer Recharge Project, enhance and continue monitoring, and complete future lake MLL reevaluations. District staff recently completed peer review of the new xeric wetland/lake standard and will use this new information to reevaluate the 9 lakes that are not currently achieving their MLL over the next few years. This will ensure the MLLs are set based on the best available information and the outcomes of the reevaluations will help guide the determination of any additional lake recovery projects.
- Goal two is to restore minimum flows in the upper Peace River by 2025. During the first assessment of the 2007-2011 period, MFLs were not being met. For the second assessment of the 2012-2016 period, MFLs were not met however in 2015 the Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project became operational. The Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project is a large water resource development project completed by the District. It involved constructing a new water control structure on Lake Hancock raising the lake level by approximately 1.5 feet, allowing more water to be stored during the wet season that could be strategically released during the dry season to meet the minimum low flows in the Upper peace river. For the current assessment period of 2017 – 2021, the upper Peace river MFLs were met and achieved in 2020. For the upper Peace River MFLs to be considered met they had to be achieved for three consecutive years. Achievement of this goal can largely be attributed to the Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project, which was a major element of the recovery strategy and was operational throughout the

current status assessment period. District staff continued collecting data and monitoring during this assessment period. The Governing Board adopted Lake Hancock/lower Saddle Creek Reservation. District staff continued to refine operational protocols for the Lake Hancock project. District staff are currently working on the development of medium and high flows MFLs for the upper Peace River along with the reevaluation of the currently adopted low flow minimum level which are both scheduled to be completed in 2025. The recommendations for goal two are to continue operation and monitoring of Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification and Outfall Treatment projects, continue to establish medium and high flow MFLs and reevaluate the low flow MFL and the Lake Hancock Reservation, continue to refine operational protocols for Lake Hancock, and to continue the adaptive management approach.

- Goal three is to reduce the rate of saltwater intrusion by 2025 by achieving the SWIMAL. During the first assessment of the 2007-2011 period, the SWIMAL was not met, and groundwater usage was declining. In the second assessment of the 2012-2016 period, the SWIMAL was not met, there was a continuation of declining groundwater use in the region, and aquifer levels were trending up and within 0.5 feet of the SWIMAL. For the current assessment period of 2017-2021, the SWIMAL is not met, there is a continuation of declining groundwater use in the region, the 10-year moving average has been above the SWIMAL for four consecutive years, and it is anticipated that the SWIMAL will be met when the 2022 status assessment is completed later this year. For the SWIMAL to be considered met it must be achieved five consecutive years. The recommendations for goal three are to continue expansion of coastal monitoring network, continue support for aquifer recharge projects, and continue conservation efforts through FARMS, regulation and Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) funding for AWS projects.
- Goal four is to ensure sufficient water supplies. Since 2007, the District has made significant efforts to ensure a sustainable and sufficient water supply for the region. This included a substantial investment, by the District, in the development of regional alternative water supplies (AWS), beneficial reclaimed water projects, conservation and FARMS projects that have resulted in significantly offsetting the use of traditional groundwater sources within the SWUCA. These projects and their resulting water supply and conservation savings have included: Between 2007-2011 46 million gallons a day (mgd) was made available through AWS conservation and FARMS projects. From 2012-2016, 51 mgd was made available through AWS conservation and FARMS projects. For the current assessment period of 2017-2021, 18 mgd was made available through AWS conservation and FARMS projects. This goal continues to be met as the District and its partners have been able to meet all reasonable and beneficial uses since 2007. The District aims to invest more than $600 million for AWS projects in the SWUCA including up to 9 mgd from ongoing CFI and District initiative projects by 2025. Recommendations for goal four are to continue support of regional water supply entities and regional water supply development initiatives, continue conservation efforts through FARMS, Mini-FARMS, CFI and WISE programs, regulation, and outreach efforts such as Florida Water Star, prioritize development of AWS projects, maintain participation in the CFWI, and continue regional water supply planning efforts.

In summary, the District continues to make progress toward achieving the four SWUCA Recovery Strategy goals. Two of the four SWUCA Recovery goals are currently being met and achievement of an additional goal is anticipated later this year when the 2022 status assessment for the SWIMAL is completed.

Mr. David Glicksberg asked if there had been a reduction in nutrients in the upper Peace River.

Mr. Smith responded that they have seen some improvements in the actual water quality in Lake Hancock just by raising the lake level. And added that even with the improvements, the water quality in the lake remains poor, but the wetland treatment project is doing well in reducing nitrogen.

Chair Desrosiers asked if the improvement in the water quality in the Peace River also included the Myakka River.

Mr. Smith responded that the project is only removing nutrients that are discharging to the Peace River, so it does not really have anything to do with the Myakka but that they both discharge in close proximity to each other into Charlotte Harbor.

6. Lake MFL Methodology

Mr. Doug Leeper, Minimum Flows and Levels Program Lead, summarized recent revisions and improvements to the District's methodology for developing Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) for lakes. Mr. Leeper began by defining a minimum level as the water level at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. He noted that in 1999, MFL standards were developed and peer reviewed for lakes with 0.5 acres of fringing cypress wetlands, which were referred to as either category one or two lakes. In 2001, standards were developed and peer reviewed for category three lakes, i.e., lakes without at least 0.5 acre of fringing cypress wetlands. In 2007, a wetland offset was developed for use on category three lakes. In 2021, lake categories and methods were removed from District rules to allow use of MFLs methods that best address site-specific characteristics. In 2022, staff completed a multiyear review of hydrologic modeling and environmental criteria for lake MFLs development that included two independent expert panels and an independent, scientific peer review.

Mr. Leeper noted that as a result of the methods review, substantial improvements were made to the water budget modeling processes used for lakes. In addition, updated and new environmental criteria were identified, and partitioned into standards and screenings. The standards include a Cypress Offset, Mesic Wetland Offset, Xeric Wetland Offset, and a Species Richness Standard. The screenings are associated with potential changes in aquatic habitats, aesthetics, basin connectivity, and dock use. When developing MFLs for a lake, all appropriate standards are evaluated, and the most sensitive standard is used for the proposed MFLs. The proposed MFLs are further assessed with screenings to ensure that they are protective of all relevant water resource values. The proposed MFLs may be adjusted based on results of the screenings. In summary, Mr. Leeper noted that staff has recently reviewed, updated, and documented all lake MFLs methods used by the District. He added that the new methods will allow greater flexibility in addressing lake-specific characteristics and will be used for currently prioritized and future lake MFL evaluations and reevaluations, and that the wetland-based standards included in the lake methods will be used for future wetland MFLs development.

Mr. Glicksberg asked if all screenings are passed except for one, should we assume that the minimum lake level would be adjusted until all the screenings are passed?

Mr. Leeper responded that the screenings will serve as a check for the proposed MFLs. He added that screenings that are not "passed" will be evaluated by District staff on a case-by-case basis and used to determine whether the proposed MFLs level require adjustment.

7. Florida Water Star Polk Ordinances

Ms. Robin Grantham, Lead Communications Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the Florida Water Star (FWS) program and the process involved for writing Florida Water Star criteria into a local ordinance. FWS is a voluntary program that began in 2006 by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and focuses on water efficient construction and residential commercial developments. There are three specific areas in which the new construction must meet water efficiency standards: irrigation systems, landscape designs and inside homes or commercial buildings. Ms. Grantham focused on residential, single-family homes and stated that inside the home they are looking for fixtures such as showerheads, toilets and faucets with a Water Sense label, and appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers with an Energy Star label on their products. Outside of the home, the main criteria that allows the builder the most flexibility but also offers the

most potential for water savings is a maximum of 60% sprinkler irrigation. They are mainly looking for sprinklers that include spray heads and rotor heads that you traditionally see on turfgrass. The remaining 40% can have either unirrigated turfgrass or expanded plant beds. Also, within the irrigation system they are looking for pressure regulations to make sure that the irrigation components are meeting the manufacturers specifications, check valves to keep spray heads from leaking, and micro-irrigation which uses less gallons of water per minute on plant beds and provides water to the root of the plant. They also look at landscape design which includes plant selection and will ensure that there are not any invasive or exotic species, that the plants are selected based on the site condition, and ensure the right plants are selected for hydrozones. The SJRWMD partnered with the University of Florida and did some real-world tests to compare water savings resulting from FWS. On average, a home that is FWS certified uses about 48,000 gallons less per year compared to a traditionally designed home and saves approximately $530 a year on utility bills. Ms. Grantham then named several cities requiring a FWS certificate and discussed the differences between water star certification versus the affidavit. She also discussed the typical ordinance process for obtaining FWS certification and showed an example of an ordinance flier with options outlined before issuance of a certificate of occupancy can be given. There are rebates available within the Tampa Bay Water Wise Rebate program. To date there are 11,650 rebates available through Tampa Bay Water totaling $11,941,250. Ms. Grantham announced that they have just launched an online social media campaign and encouraged members to like and share Florida Water Star on Facebook. It offers information as to when cities have written FWS into ordinance and offers different training opportunities.

Chair Desrosiers asked if the water savings are based on potable water prices.

Ms. Grantham responded that they are all potable.

Mr. Glicksberg asked if the affidavit is related to the irrigation system design, and if the builder must sign anything about the items used inside the house.

Ms. Grantham responded that items used inside the house are not included on the affidavit, but the builder is made aware of that.

Chair Desrosiers asked if it was possible to obtain the template used for the ordinance.

Ms. Grantham responded that she would have the draft ordinance sent to her.

8. **Field Trip Discussion**
   Chair Desrosiers opened the floor for suggestions and asked if there was any interest in a field trip to replace the May 9 meeting. Lynn Spivey offered to host a tour of the Plant City One Water Demonstration Facility. A poll will be taken to choose a good date for the field trip.

9. **Development of agenda topics for the next Public Supply Advisory Committee meeting tentatively at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 9, 2023**
   None.

10. **Announcements and Other Business**
    None.

11. **Adjournment**
    Meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.