



PUBLIC SUPPLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, August 8, 2023 – 1:00 PM
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Bryan Schmalz – Bay Laurel Center Community
Debra Burden – Citrus County Water Resources
Sarah Malone – City of Lakeland Water Utilities
Sheree Greer – City of St. Petersburg Utilities
Rory Jones – City of Tampa Water Department (alternate)
Alys Brockway – Hernando County Utilities
Olga Wolanin – Manatee County Utilities (alternate)
Jim Shannon – Pasco County Utilities
Richard Anderson – PRMRWSA
Eric DeHaven – Polk Regional Water Cooperative
Steve Adams – City of Punta Gorda 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

Robert Stern

Staff Members

Michael Molligan
Jennette Seachrist
Robyn Felix
Randy Smith
Jay Hoecker
Seung Park
Patrick Doty
Josh Madden
Ryan Pearson
Cassidy Hampton
Doug Leeper
Chris Zajac
Joe Quinn
Andrew Thornquest
Bob Thompson
Kaitlyn Maze

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, August 8, 2023, via Microsoft Teams.

Vice Chair Olga Wolanin called the meeting to order, and attendance was called.

Governing Board Liaison Robert Stern welcomed the committee.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

None.

3. Approval of the February 14, 2023 and May 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2023 meeting and the May 5, 2023 tour. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments

None.

5. Elections of Chair and Vice Chair

Ms. Olga Wolanin was nominated for committee Chair and Ms. Sheree Greer was nominated for Vice Chair. A motion was made and passed by the committee.

6. District Resiliency Activities

Mr. Patrick Doty, Senior Planner, gave a brief overview of the District's resiliency activities. Resiliency has been part of the District's efforts for decades and is embedded in all aspects of its core missions: flood protection, water supply, water quality, and natural systems. Mr. Doty discussed the four core missions.

- **Flood Protection:** Watershed management plans identify, prioritize, and address flood-related water resource issues within a watershed and take sea-level rise into account when planning for future conditions. The District partners with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the development of coastal flood models to better identify flood risk from storm surge. The District controls numerous water control structures such as the Tampa Bypass Canal (TBC) and the Lake Tarpon Outfall. In the most current cycle of funding for resiliency grants, the District was awarded \$1.2 million from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for Structure 160 on the TBC for saltwater protection and updating structure materials. The District is also seeking additional funding in the amount of \$1.7 million in fiscal year 2024 for gate replacements.
- **Water Supply:** The District has robust drought-resistant alternative water supply planning with Peace River Manasota Water Supply Authority, the Bill Young Reservoir, desalination plants, and reverse osmosis plants. The District participates in the Central Florida Water Initiative and leads the nation in reclaimed and reuse water. The District works closely with local governments on conservation and education measures through the Florida Water Star program and works with the St. Johns River and the South Florida water management districts to address water supply needs for future and present conditions.
- **Natural Systems:** The District has been a leader in seagrass mapping and monitoring, and maps in two-year cycles for Suncoast estuaries and four-year cycles for Springs Coast estuaries to measure seagrass in the ecosystem. We monitor minimum flows and levels (MFL) for dozens of different waterbodies and rivers in the District. Surface water improvement projects such as the Rock Ponds project were designed with tidal migration considered. It is a habitat restoration design using 20-year sea level rise projections in estuarine models to account for changes in salinity in freshwater systems' coastal vegetation zonation in MFL evaluations.
- **Water Quality:** The District has five first-magnitude springs, so it has a robust springs watershed monitoring system. The District has vast amounts of stormwater projects and monitoring networks on all aspects of water. The Freshwater Saltwater Interface monitoring system, or Isochlor, monitors chloride levels present in the upper Floridan aquifer via dozens of different monitoring wells. Numerous sources of data and mapping tools are used to make decisions on current and future projects.

The District also uses meteorological data, geohydrologic data, stream flows and levels, groundwater levels, and biological data sources which all contribute to creating resiliency. The Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan identifies how to improve the District's infrastructure and maintain it while focusing on water resource planning, land acquisition and restoration of existing projects and public works, and the operation and maintenance of our conservation lands and stormwater projects. The District partners with numerous stakeholders in local and regional efforts to ensure resiliency is in every aspect of what the District does on a daily basis. Mr. Doty concluded by mentioning that there are funds and several different types of grants available on the FDEP website. The funding portal opened on July 1 and will close on September 1.

7. Updates on the WISE Program

Mr. Josh Madden, Senior Environmental Project Manager, provided an update on the Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency (WISE) program. The strategic goal related to water conservation is to enhance efficiencies in all water use sectors to ensure beneficial use. The District promotes water conservation for two major reasons: the environmental protection of water resources, and to reduce and delay the need for more expensive alternative water supply. Conservation is promoted in many ways; one is by providing grants and cost-share funding. The Agricultural water sector is well supported through the District's Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) and Mini-FARMS programs, while the Public Supply sector has been supported through the Cooperative Funding Initiative. The WISE program provides financial support to other remaining sectors who are not well supported such as golf courses, industrial, commercial, and institutional sectors. Mr. Madden showed a pie chart and explained the size and scale of potential WISE applicants. Looking at total water use, Public Supply is the largest sector and Agriculture is the second largest.

The WISE program funds 50% of project costs and the maximum contribution per project is \$20,000. Some of the grant eligible items include hardware, installation and labor, rebates, and software subscriptions. WISE provides financial incentives to a wide variety of entities, including commercial, industrial, and institutional entities such as hotels, hospitals, golf courses, homeowner associations, apartments, schools and colleges, and government-owned facilities. The District also encourages utility-led projects to apply to the WISE program. Mr. Madden provided a few examples of the types of projects the program expects to fund. Outdoor projects include smart irrigation controllers, weather stations, and irrigation conversions. Indoor projects include high efficiency plumbing fixtures. Other items that produce water efficiency gains include cooling tower pretreatment systems, improved water control systems in industrial settings, and other components that can demonstrate water savings.

Applications are accepted year-round and need to include a water-savings estimate and a quote for the proposed project. The application review and approval process take approximately one to two months and the work may not start until the District approves the project. Once approved, the applicant has one year to complete the project and request reimbursement. Some exclusions and disqualifiers from the program include projects above cost-effectiveness with a metric of \$6 per 1,000 gallons, items required by rule or ordinance, operation and maintenance activities, projects that conserve exclusively reclaimed water, and single-family homeowners. Mr. Madden then discussed the funding caps that have been established or adjusted and the number of projects funded from 2019–2023.

Mr. Madden showed some examples of projects that are being funded including plumbing fixtures at the Riviera Apartment complex in the City of Tampa, a series of smart irrigation controllers for the Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation, a reclaimed water connection at Greyhawk Landing in Manatee County, an irrigation system upgrade in the Queens Harbor Homeowners Association in Sarasota County, and a toilet rebate utility-led project with the City of Palmetto. He gave descriptions and discussed the water savings, the total cost, the District's share, the cost effectiveness, and the completion dates for each of the projects. Mr. Madden concluded by asking for help to spread the word about the WISE program. He encouraged committee members to visit the District website and stated that he would follow up with an email and provide a link to the WISE handbook and to the application.

Ms. Wolanin mentioned that she noticed a recent interest in the program in Manatee County and asked if they had been advertising the program on social media. Mr. Madden responded that he had been speaking with a couple of different vendors in Manatee County who have been spreading the word about the program and incentives.

Ms. Debra Burden asked about the irrigation controllers for Hillsborough County and if they were actual savings or estimated. Mr. Madden responded that they were estimated at the time of

application. A calculation is done up front and there is no actual metering or monitoring. Ms. Burden also asked if the water auditor would be going to commercial sites that are traditionally difficult to work with. Mr. Madden responded that the water auditor would be going to a wide variety of facilities, but that they do not have an actual volunteer program participant yet.

Ms. Alys Brockway asked if there would be assistance with the application process and navigation through the program. Mr. Madden responded that he would be happy to provide assistance.

8. Draft 2025 Regional Water Supply Plan Projections

Ms. Cassidy Hampton, Environmental Project Manager, provided an overview of the Draft 2025 Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP). Regional water supply planning is part of the District's Strategic Plan, with a goal to identify, communicate, and promote consensus on the strategies and resources necessary to meet future and reasonable beneficial water supply needs. This goal is addressed through the RWSP, which is published in accordance with Section 373.709 Florida Statutes (F.S.). Essentially, this plan assesses projected water demands and potential sources of water to meet those demands and is required where water sources are not adequate to supply existing and future uses and sustain water resources and related natural systems. The RWSP is divided into four planning regions: Northern, Tampa, Heartland, and Southern planning regions. Pursuant to F.S., we are currently not required to develop a RWSP for the Northern region where there are currently sufficient water sources; however, the District takes a proactive approach and includes this region within the regional water supply planning process. The plan is updated every five years and covers a planning horizon of 20 years. The last update was in 2020 and covered the time period through 2040. The next update will be completed in 2025 and will cover through 2045. The plan covers five key components: resource protection criteria, demand estimates and projections, evaluation of water sources, water supply and resource development projects, and an overview of funding mechanisms.

Mr. Ryan Pearson, Senior Economist, gave an overview of the Draft 2025 Regional Water Supply Plan projections as they relate to the public supply water use sector. The methods used are the same as those used in the 2020 RWSP, but the data sources have been updated with the best available information. The base year is being updated from 2015 to 2020 and the planning horizon is being extended to 2045. The latest population projections have been incorporated from GIS Associates (2023). Demands are now a function of 2016-2020 average gross and residential per capita water use. The latest public supply demand projections have been incorporated from the Central Florida Water Initiative projections for Polk and Lake counties.

In terms of population growth, the District is projected to grow by 1.65 million people from 2020-2045, reaching 7.81 million people in 2045. In terms of water demand growth, public supply use in the District is anticipated to reach 812 million gallons a day by 2045, representing a 28 percent increase from 2020. Gross per capita water use is one percent lower than in the 2020 RWSP and the residential per capita average is the same at 68 gallons per capita per day.

Mr. Pearson concluded by summarizing the projection trends. When compared to the 2020 RWSP, the draft 2025 RWSP public supply population projections are 2.5 percent higher. In terms of water demand, the draft 2025 RWSP projections are 2.9 percent higher than the 2020 RWSP demands.

Ms. Hampton then provided an overview of the proposed RWSP timeline and next steps. The RWSP is currently in the early stages of development and will continue over the next couple of years. Ultimately, the public draft is anticipated to be released in early 2025, with the final draft to be completed by the end of 2025. Stakeholder buy-in is key to the success of the RWSP, so comments and feedback are welcomed. A draft technical memorandum is also available for review and can be provided upon request. Comments and questions may be submitted to Mr. Pearson by September 7.

Ms. Brockway asked if there was any change in the persons per household for the next five years for the planning time period. Mr. Pearson responded that the new population projections they are utilizing from GIS did incorporate the 2020 census, but that he does not have those summarized by county. He added that he can look into what the persons per household was in the previous plan for Hernando County.

Ms. Burden asked how the Citrus County Regional Water Supply Plan would be incorporated into the District's Regional Water Supply Plan. Ms. Hampton responded that the District is providing cooperative funding for the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority Plan. It is being monitored closely on updates and they will be able to incorporate the information from the Withlacoochee plan as it becomes available.

9. Proposed 2023 MFLs Priority List and Schedule

Mr. Doug Leeper, MFLs Program Lead, gave an annual minimum flows and levels (MFLs) priority list and schedule update. The District is required to annually update its minimum flows and levels priority list and schedule per Florida Statutes (F.S.). The priority list and schedule include waterbodies for which the District will establish MFLs. A minimum flow or level represents the limit or water level at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. MFLs are used for water use permitting and water supply planning programs to ensure resource protection and sustainable supplies. The priority list and schedule may also include water reservations, which are rules that exclude water from consumptive use. A reservation reserves a quantity of water at a certain time and place for the protection of fish and wildlife or public health and safety.

The District has established 203 MFLs and two water reservations which includes 12 freshwater river segments, 10 springs/spring groups, 12 estuarine river segments, nine aquifer sites, 34 wetlands and 126 lakes. The reservations include one lake/freshwater river segment and one sink/estuarine river segment.

The District's priority list and schedule meets all F.S. and FDEP rule requirements. These requirements include: the need to prioritize water bodies for at least three years, based on the importance of the waterbodies to the state or region and the potential for significant harm; inclusion of all first-magnitude and second-magnitude springs on state or federal lands acquired for conservation purposes; noting which systems and MFLs will be subjected to peer review; identifying waterbodies that may be impacted by withdrawals in other water management districts to ensure interagency coordination and the potential need for MFLs adoption by FDEP; and inclusion of planned reservations.

The District is required to submit its updated priority list and schedule to FDEP for review and approval by mid-November every year and must include the approved list in the Consolidated Annual Report the following March. Mr. Leeper noted that in addition to this presentation there would be numerous, additional opportunities for public input prior to its submission to FDEP. He indicated a similar presentation will be provided to the District's Governing Board at the August meeting. Two public workshops will subsequently be held to solicit stakeholder feedback. The first will be facilitated in late August. The second will occur in early September and is a joint effort with the South Florida and the St. Johns River water management districts to discuss the prioritized water bodies in the Central Florida Water Initiative area. The final priority list will be presented to the Governing Board for approval in October and then submitted to FDEP.

Mr. Leeper discussed the changes included in the proposed 2023 priority list relative to the current 2022 list and the waterbodies that were rescheduled, removed, or added. He then discussed the proposed 2023 priority list and schedule and listed all of the waterbodies for 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 that were new to be developed or reevaluated. Mr. Leeper concluded by reviewing the planned schedule for finalization.

Ms. Burden asked where the data acquisition is coming from and who is doing the modeling for the Withlacoochee portions that are being rescheduled. Mr. Leeper responded that the Withlacoochee River has been divided into an upper segment and a lower segment. LiDAR data was done in-house and is completed and the work for the topographic data for the upper river is ongoing. For the lower river, data collection is ongoing and planned.

Mr. Eric DeHaven asked Mr. Leeper to explain what is meant by removing lakes from the list based upon decreased priority on recent status. Mr. Leeper explained that they do an annual status assessment of the lakes which helps guide them in terms of prioritizing water bodies where they think MFLs may need reevaluation based upon application of new modeling tools and application of new criteria.

Discussion ensued.

10. Development of agenda topics for the next Public Supply Advisory Committee meeting tentatively at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 7, 2023

Ms. Singer mentioned that we keep a list of future agenda topics. She stated that the potential topic of Workplans and Comprehensive Plan Amendments Required as Part of the 2025 RWSP Projections was a request from the previous chair and that we would add it to the next agenda if there was interest. She added that staff will come up with further topics and we will put together a full agenda for the next meeting.

11. Announcements and Other Business

None.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.