

**OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 8:30 A.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority
100 SW 5th Avenue
Okeechobee, Florida

Vice Chairperson Trent called the meeting to order at 8:31 A.M.

Vice Chairperson Trent determined the voting members and led all participating attendees and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 1, the following Okeechobee Utility Authority Board Members were present:

Board Members:

John Gilliland*
Harry Moldenhauer*
Tabitha Trent*

Alternates:

Melanie Anderson
Glenn Sneider**

Absent:

Tommy Clay
Steven Nelson

*Voting Board Members

** Voting in Tommy Clay's absence

OUA Members:

John Hayford
Lauriston Hamilton
Jamie Mullis

Tom Conely
Michelle Willoughby

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 2 'Agenda Additions or Deletions' Executive Director Hayford discusses that Agenda Item No. 14 has an error. The last line of the item should read "Staff recommends approval of this invoice in the amount of \$25,688.60 to Kimley Horn and Associates, Inc. "

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 3 'Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2023'. Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to accept the Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2023 as presented. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 4 'Department Supervisor Updates'

Maintenance: Jess Manson gave an update on the Maintenance Department. Advised that the Maintenance Department is fully staffed at this time. *Steven Nelson in at 8:33AM.* Jess Manson discusses that staff morale is high at this time. Board Member Nelson asked about cleaning and painting fire hydrants. Jess Manson discusses what the colors of the hydrants means (i.e. Green, highest pressure)

SWTP: Kevin Rogers advises the board that the department is fully staffed. Advises that presently one operator needs to pass testing. Advises that other employees still need to meet time requirements to take

certification test. Kevin Rogers advises the board that he is stilling working on a chiller system for Ozone. Advises the board that a quote was received the night before and it needs to be reviewed.

WWTP: Jamie Gamiotea gave an update of the WWTP. Advised that one employee left to take employment with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. This employee is staying on part time to work weekends.

Administration: Kristy Arnold was not present

Jamie Mullis gave an overall update of all departments.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 5 ‘Consent Agenda’ Motion by Steven Nelson to approve the Consent Agenda as corrected:

- Consent Agenda Item No. 6 ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part B & C) in the amount of \$4,922.88’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 7 ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part E) in the amount of \$25,475.00’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 8 ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc – Okee-Tantie Utility System Improvements in the amount of \$17,695.35’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 9 ‘Invoice from Anderson Andre Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SWSA Project 2 Vacuum Collection System in the amount of \$3,735.50’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 10 ‘Invoice from CHA – Vacuum Station Number 2 Generator Replacement in the amount of \$7,526.95’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 11 ‘Invoice from Hinterland Group, Inc. – SWSA Project 2 in the amount of \$590,564.39’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 12 ‘Invoice from Hinterland Group, Inc – Pine Ridge Park Utility Improvements in the amount of \$244,524.16’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 13 ‘Invoice from Lewis Longman Walker in the amounts of \$3,467.50’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 14 ‘Invoice from Kimley Horn and Associates, Inc. – Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project in the amount of \$25,688.60’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 15 ‘Invoice from Evergreen Solutions, LLC in the amount of \$4,875.00’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 16 ‘Invoice from Thorn Run Partners in the amount of \$3,500.00’**
- Consent Agenda Item No. 17 ‘Invoice from MacVicar in the amount of \$250.00’**

Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Trent Addresses Consent Agenda No. 18 “Customer - Dupelle’ Executive Director Hayford discusses that Mr. Dupelle of 2515 SW 8th Street had a high water read over the July – September 2023 reading period. He used 9,142 gallons during the first month and 47,602 gallons during the second month. Executive Director Hayford discusses that the usage indicates a leak started late in the July-August read period and continued daily into the Aug-September read period. His typical normal bill is in the 3,000 gallon per month range. Executive Director Hayford discusses that a normal monthly bill

is approximately \$35-\$40 per month. The customers August billing went up to approximately \$80 while the September billing is nearly \$350.00. Executive Director Hayford discusses that Mr. Dupelle is present to speak with the OUA Board requesting some consideration for the higher-than-expected bill. Mr. Dupelle speaks to the board about the bills that were higher than he expected. Mr. Dupelle asks the Board to waive all or some of the bill. There was brief discussion. **Motion by Steven Nelson to settle the account for \$175.00. Second by Glenn Sneider.** There was a brief discussion. Steven Nelson withdraws Motion. Glenn Sneider withdraws the second. There was further discussion by other Board members not in favor of reducing the bill. Board Member Sneider suggests that staff reach out to the customer to offer a payment plan for the high bill. No Action Taken

Chairperson Clay addressed Agenda Item No. 19 ‘Finance Report’ Finance Director Hamilton reviews the Finance Report for period ending September 30, 2023. **Motion by Steven Nelson to accept the Finance Report as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.** *Melanie Anderson out at 9:27 AM.*

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 20 “Commencement of SouthState Bank Interim Finance Agreement’ Executive Director Hayford discusses that at last month’s board meeting, the Board approved the Authority’s establishment of an Interim Financial Agreement with SouthState Bank, which acts as a bridge loan until the formalization/conclusion of USDA loan agreement for the construction of South West Service Area – Septic to Sewer Project. The Authority’s first draw down of \$145,652.87 was also approved by SouthState and was credited to the OUA account on October 12, 2023. Attorney Conley suggests ratification of the execution of the loan documentation by the 2nd Vice Chairperson and approval of the first drawn down. **Motion by Glenn Sneider to ratify the approval of the execution of the loan documentation by the 2nd Vice Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Tabitha Trent elected to abstain from voting as a potential conflict of interest. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Motion by Glenn Sneider to approve the first draw in the amount of \$145,652.87. Second by John Gilliland. Tabitha Trent elected to abstain from voting as a potential conflict of interest. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 21 ‘Training Incentive Program Reimbursement’ Executive Director Hayford discusses that the the Safety Committee meets quarterly. The Safety Committee is comprised of selected employees from each department. Executive Director Hayford discusses that to compliment the work of the Safety Committee, the Authority’s insurance company (Preferred Governmental Insurance Trust – PGIT) provides an annual cash incentive up to \$5,000 for safety expenditures incurred above \$10,000 in a given policy year. Executive Director Hayford discusses that during the recent concluded policy year, OUA was credited with checks totaling \$5,047.53 as recognition of safety measures implemented along with the total spent on safety expenditures. Executive Director Hayford discusses that in recognition of staff participation in the safety measures at work, the Board has historically made reimbursements from PGIT available to staff by issuing gift cards to the sum of the refund. **Motion by Steven Nelson allocate the reimbursement to staff including the OUA contribution of \$82.47. Second by Harry Moldenhauer.** *Glenn Sneider out at 9:40 AM.* Board Member Gilliland asks what do the employees do to earn the reimbursement beyond their daily duties. Executive Director Hayford discusses the training experiences that are offered to staff. Board Member Trent discusses that the reimbursement should be utilized for staff training. Board Member Gilliland asks that staff discuss how the reimbursement could be used towards staff training. Executive Director

Hayford discusses that this issue can be discussed at a Safety Committee Meeting and recommendation can be brought back to the board. Steven Nelson withdraws Motion. Harry Moldenhauer withdraws the second. No Action Taken

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 22 'OUA Proposed Employee Bonus Program'

Executive Director Hayford discusses that consistently over the past years, the OUA has paid a bonus to staff at the Christmas Luncheon. Executive Director Hayford discusses that previous review of Florida State Statute as it relates to payment of bonus, the Authority developed a policy which provides a guide for future bonus payment in order to ensure conformity with F.S. 215.425 Executive Director Hayford discusses that the OUA policy as it pertains to the bonus payment. Executive Director Hayford discusses that given the logistics of coordinating the evaluations of staff members with their supervisors, prior to any such payment, staff is seeking the Board decision on whether a bonus payment will be extended to staff this Christmas. Executive Director Hayford discusses that a provision of 1.5% of employee's basic salary was included in FY24 budget for the payment. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Steven Nelson to approve the employee bonus payment for FY24. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Motion by Steven Nelson to extend bonus payment of 1.5%. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 23 'Salary Analysis & Benefits Survey – Evergreen Solutions'

Executive Director Hayford discusses that Evergreen Solutions provided a draft report. There was an internal meeting with OUA staff and a board representation to discuss the draft report. There were some questions and concerns raised during the internal meeting. Executive Director Hayford discusses a second meeting in the form of a conference call was subsequently held on Wednesday October 11th where additional questions for clarification were presented to Evergreen which now necessitates further analysis of the working progress file. There was a brief discussion. This is for informational purposes only.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'Surplus Vehicles' Executive Director Hayford discusses the board recently approved the purchase of vehicles for the meter reading, water plant and maintenance departments. Executive Director Hayford discusses that staff have received five of the seven units. Executive Director Hayford requests that three vehicles (2006 Ford F250, 2015 Ford F150 and 1999 GMC) be deemed as surplus. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to declare the three vehicles presented as surplus and authorize staff to sell vehicles. Second by Steven Nelson. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.**

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 25 'Public Comments' There were none.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 26 'Items from the Attorney' Attorney Conley discusses that he is still missing OUA Board Evaluations of the Executive Director. Attorney Conley advises the board that the Franchise Agreement with Glades County has been submitted to Glades County for review.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 27 'Items from the Executive Director' Executive Director Hayford gave an update on current projects.

Vice Chairperson Trent addressed Agenda Item No. 28 'Items from the Board' Board Member

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Moldenhauer asks staff about the allocation of water from Lake Okeechobee. Executive Director Hayford discusses that staff is working on data research for reporting that needs to be submitted to SFWMD.

Board Member Nelson advises the board that he is following up with Connie Vanassche about funding for the AMI system and the home to street connections for scheduled projects.

Motion by Steven Nelson to adjourn meeting at 10:10 A.M. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (4-0), motion carried.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 10:10 A.M.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE AND BE ADVISED that if a person decided to appeal any decision made by the Okeechobee Utility Authority with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, he/she may need to ensure that verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. A video recording of this meeting is on file in the Executive Director's office.

Chairperson



Executive Director (Secretary)



