



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT
HELD AT THE DELRAY BEACH OFFICE ON
March 11, 2026 AT 9:00 A.M.**

Board Members Present:

John I. Whitworth, III
James Alderman

Jeffrey Phipps, Sr.
Stephen Bedner

Board Members Attending By Phone:

Carrie P. Hill

1. Call to Order

President Bedner called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. and confirmed the quorum.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Sr. Vice President Alderman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Agenda Revisions – Tommy Strowd, Executive Director

Mr. Strowd announced two agenda updates.

Agenda Item 14, a bid award, has been pulled and will be re-solicited. Additional information will be provided under Agenda Item 13.

Agenda Item 11, regarding a petition from the City of Delray Beach, has been postponed at the City's request. The City's comments regarding the postponement are provided under Agenda Item 11.

4. Abstentions by Board Members from Items on the Agenda

There were no abstentions.

5. General Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes)

Ms. Deborah Ciampi, 10571 Green Trail Drive South, Boynton Beach, expressed concern regarding the recent land swap with Pine Tree Golf Course associated with the golf course redesign project. She also expressed concern regarding the potential filling of an existing low-lying area behind her home, stating that the area currently collects and conveys stormwater runoff, and its removal could negatively impact

drainage during heavy rain events. She also raised concerns regarding ongoing maintenance and drainage management by the golf course.

Residents Frances Donadio, 10595 Green Trail Dr. S, and Jim Wack, 10579 Green Trail Drive S, were also in attendance to support Ms. Ciampi's comments.

Mr. Strowd stated that the District no longer needed the property for canal operations and that the transfer ensures each party is responsible for its respective drainage functions.

Sr. Vice President Alderman stated that the golf course's redevelopment plans should address existing drainage issues through the permitting process with the South Florida Water Management District and advised residents to bring their concerns directly to that agency for review.

Ms. Walker noted that staff would share the residents' concerns with the golf course.

CONSENT

- 6. Board comment or request to pull items from the Consent Agenda**
- 7. Approval of minutes, check register and financial statement for the previous month**
- 8. Approval to surplus and dispose of designated items – Chris Johnson, Director of Finance**
- 9. Approval to issue a right-of-way permit to Palm Beach County to install mast arms within the L-18 Canal right-of-way. Location: L-18 Canal; southwest and southeast quadrants of Military Trail and Hypoluxo Road (Project #RW-21-0258) – Shawn Mitchell, Permit Coordinator**
- 10. Board vote on Consent Agenda**

A motion was made by Sr. Vice President Alderman to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Supervisor Whitworth and approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION

- 11. Request by the City of Delray Beach for consideration to rescind the Board's previous action taken on February 11, 2026, denying Application #RW-26-0011 to permit an existing tree to remain within the E-4 Canal right-of-way adjacent to the Delray Beach Municipal Golf Course – **POSTPONED****

Ms. Lynn Gelin, Delray Beach City Attorney, addressed the Board accompanied by Delray Beach Mayor Carney, Deputy Vice Mayor Burns, Commissioner Markert, City Manager Moore, and Ms. Missie Barletto.

Ms. Gelin thanked the Board for considering the City's request for reconsideration regarding the previously denied application. Ms. Gelin explained that the City is requesting additional time to allow completion of an independent geotechnical

assessment and related supporting documentation to further justify the request to retain the tree within the canal right-of-way.

She noted that the City has also obtained a tree pruning and maintenance plan and intends to present both the technical assessment and maintenance strategy to provide a comprehensive overview of the proposal. Ms. Gelin requested an additional 30-day extension to allow sufficient time to complete and present this information to the Board for further consideration.

Sr. Vice President Alderman requested clarification on the City's request. Ms. Walker explained that the City of Delray Beach is requesting a postponement of its presentation to the next meeting. She stated that the item had been placed on the agenda to allow the City an opportunity to provide additional information following the Board's prior decision, but the City has since requested additional time to complete further analysis and prepare its presentation for both the Board and District review.

During discussion, President Bedner asked the City what additional information it anticipated presenting that would support reconsideration of the Board's previous decision.

Ms. Gelin explained that the City is requesting reconsideration based on additional technical information addressing the Board's concerns about liability and the condition of the tree. She stated the City will provide updated assessments, including arborist and geotechnical information, to show that the tree can be safely maintained in place.

She also noted the City will submit a formal maintenance and emergency contingency plan. This plan would include routine maintenance and significant pruning to reduce the tree's canopy and root impact, with the goal of lowering risk and maintaining clearance from the canal over time.

Sr. Vice President Alderman expressed concern about emergency response times if the tree were to fall into the canal and cause a blockage. He noted that delays in obtaining outside contractors could worsen flooding impacts and emphasized the importance of immediate response capability during emergencies.

Ms. Gelin responded that the proposed pruning and maintenance plan is intended to reduce the likelihood of the tree falling into the canal and to mitigate flooding risks by reducing overhang and root encroachment.

Vice President Hill commented that she understood the City intended to develop and present an engineering plan in response to the District's engineering concerns. She noted that, based on the District's engineering report, additional measures may be necessary to address the risk associated with the tree and the potential for it to fall into the canal without sufficient response time.

She stated her understanding that the City would require additional time to prepare and present this engineering plan, if one is being developed. Vice President Hill indicated she would be willing to support a postponement to allow the City time to complete and present the engineering analysis.

Ms. Barletto addressed two key points regarding the City's future proposal. She stated that, according to the arborist report, the plan includes removing trees and roots within approximately 30 feet of the canal bank and reconstructing the bank to District standards.

She also noted that the City has coordinated with a national debris removal contractor for emergency response support. The contractor would stage equipment nearby to allow for rapid removal of the tree if needed, once conditions allow safe access. She added that while verbal agreements are in place, the City is working to formalize the plan in writing for Board review.

A motion was made by Vice President Hill to allow the City of Delray to postpone the item to the next Board meeting on April 15, 2026, seconded by Sr. Vice President Alderman and approved unanimously.

12. Denial of permit application by homeowner Robert Seguso requesting a variance of permitting policies to allow encroachments to remain within the E-4 Canal right-of-way. Location: E-4 Canal, north of Lake Ida Road; 770 Enfield Court (Project #RW-25-0277) – Nicole Smith, Permit Supervisor

Ms. Smith presented the item regarding the property located at 770 Enfield Court along the north side of Lake Ida Road at the end of Enfield Court adjacent to the E4 Canal and Lake Ida Park. She stated the property is within the District's right-of-way and summarized that a permit was issued in March 2023 for a bulkhead installation with conditions prohibiting unauthorized encroachments within the right-of-way. She noted that in August 2025 the District issued a notice of violation identifying unpermitted encroachments including fencing, hedging, trees, and drainage improvements, and that drainage and some vegetation have since been removed. She further explained that in November 2025 the property owner submitted an application requesting to retain remaining encroachments consisting of a portion of fence, hedging, and one remaining tree. Ms. Smith also provided a description of the site and reviewed photographs showing the bulkhead, encroachments, and District access infrastructure.

Mr. Seguso stated he purchased the property in 2022 and obtained permits for improvements including a seawall. He described the canal area as previously overgrown and filled with debris. He explained that vegetation and debris were removed to allow seawall construction. He stated that hedging was installed to provide privacy due to proximity to the park and canal activity and that one existing tree was retained. He indicated that removal of the hedge would reduce privacy and stated he would not have fully cleared the area had he understood the maintenance obligations differently.

The Board discussed site conditions, District access requirements, safety considerations along the canal, and the property owner's privacy concerns. Staff recommended denial of the request as submitted. Following discussion, the Board considered a limited approval allowing only the existing hedge to remain under an encroachment permit, with all other encroachments required to be removed and conditions in place to preserve District access and maintenance rights. The Board

further noted that any approval would be site-specific and not intended as precedent for other properties within the right-of-way.

Ms. Hill made a motion to approve an encroachment permit allowing the property owner to install and maintain a Podocarpus hedge only within the District right-of-way, subject to payment of applicable annual encroachment fees and a maximum hedge height of 10 feet. The motion specified that no other encroachments would be authorized under the permit. The motion was seconded by Mr. Phipps. The motion passed with a vote of 4-1 with a dissenting vote from Supervisor Whitworth.

13. Approval to award a contract to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for fabrication of a submersible electric pump for Control Structure #12. Location: L-38 Canal, east of the E-3 Canal, west of Military Trail (ITB #26-9381L.05) – Anthony LasCasas, Director of Operations & Maintenance

Mr. LasCasas presented an item to add a second pump to Control Structure 12, stating that the contract requires the selected contractor to fabricate, assemble, test, and deliver a submersible electric pump and associated components. He outlined the Invitation to Bid (ITB) schedule, noting that the ITB was broadcast on February 9, with questions and clarifications due February 23, bids received on March 5, and Board approval anticipated on March 11. He reported that the contractor will be required to deliver the pump no later than July 10, 2026, and that bidders were requested to propose alternate delivery dates if the deadline could not be met. He further noted that two bids were received in response to the solicitation, and that the Board-approved budget for this phase, which includes engineering, the pump, and Variable Frequency Drive, is \$675,000. He stated that installation is planned for Fiscal Year 2027, and that the lowest responsive bid received was \$172,663.

Supervisor Alderman inquired about purchase of a generator in the event of an emergency. Mr. LasCasas indicated a generator was being purchased in the current Fiscal Year as approved in the budget.

Staff recommended approval to award a bid to the lowest responsive and responsible contractor, MWI Pumps, for \$172,663.00.

A motion was made by Sr. Vice President Alderman to approve staff recommendation, was seconded by Supervisor Whitworth and approved unanimously.

14. Approval to award a contract to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the purchase of a variable frequency drive for the Control Structure #12 pump. Location: L-38 Canal, east of the E-3 Canal, west of Military Trail (ITB #26-9381L.06) – Anthony LasCasas, Director of Operations & Maintenance – POSTPONED

Mr. LasCasas stated that no bids were received for the variable frequency drive. The bid will be resolicited and recommendation for award will be presented at a future board meeting.

STAFF REPORTS

15. Executive Director's Report

- Future Maintenance Restoration Project Briefing – L-42 Canal (MRP 8370) & E-1 Canal (MRP 1260)

Mr. LasCasas provided a briefing on the Future Maintenance Restoration Project – L-42 Canal & E-1 Canal. He explained that this large-scale initiative represents the next phase of canal rehabilitation following prior tree removal efforts and is intended to establish a long-term, sustainable solution to recurring maintenance issues. He noted that the project spans approximately two miles and will directly and indirectly impact numerous residential properties. Existing conditions include erosion, structural encroachments, and ineffective or outdated drainage features that differ from original design conditions. Mr. LasCasas emphasized the significant scope and complexity of the project, including engineering challenges, right-of-way limitations, and the need for coordination with adjacent property owners. He indicated that resident cooperation will be necessary, particularly regarding access and restoration considerations. He stated that the project will be implemented in phases over an estimated two to three-year period and will require substantial funding. Coordination with community representatives and residents will continue as planning progresses to resolve outstanding design and access issues prior to construction.

Ms. Walker reported on a recent incident involving a downed tree in the E-4 Canal following severe weather. She noted that the event occurred after weekend storms and required a coordinated response for removal. A video of the removal was shared with the Board. Mr. LasCasas added that the situation highlighted site constraints, including limited right-of-way and existing structural features, which contributed to the complexity of the response. He emphasized that the removal effort required significant coordination and staff resources and recognized staff involved in the cleanup efforts. The update was provided for informational purposes to illustrate operational challenges under normal conditions. During a heavy rain event, tree removal becomes much more cumbersome.

Mr. Strowd reported on a mid-dry season water conditions update from the South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He advised that current conditions show a continued rainfall deficit, with trends indicating worsening dry conditions. He noted that while regional conditions are not yet as severe as other areas, water levels in Lake Okeechobee are declining and could approach levels that may impact water supply. Projections indicate that, if dry conditions persist, there is an increased likelihood of a water shortage declaration in the coming months. Mr. Strowd explained that, although some water reserves remain available in conservation areas, reliance on these sources and potential operational adjustments may be necessary if conditions worsen. He also indicated that agencies are monitoring the situation closely but have not finalized a response plan. He further reported that coordination efforts are underway among local and regional entities to assess risks and discuss potential actions.

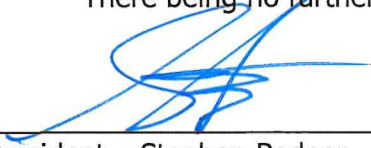
Mr. LasCasas reported that the budgeted project to construct an annex building adjacent to the Aquatics warehouse continues to run into challenges with permitting. Staff does not plan to move forward with the project at this time.

16. Board Reports & Comment

There were no additional board comments or reports.

17. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:44 A.M.



President – Stephen Bedner



Recording Secretary – Sandra Acosta