



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT
HELD AT THE DELRAY BEACH OFFICE ON
March 12, 2025 AT 8:30 A.M.**

Board Members Present:

John I. Whitworth, III
James M. Alderman

Stephen Bedner
Carrie P. Hill

Jeffrey Phipps, Sr.

1. Call to Order

President Bedner called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Alderman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Service Award Recognition

- Ivan Carter, Equipment Operator III - 20 Years
- John I Whitworth III, Board Supervisor - 35 Years

Executive Director Tommy Strowd recognized Ivan Carter for 20 years of service at the District. The Board thanked Mr. Carter for his service and dedication.

Mr. Strowd recognized Board Supervisor John I. Whitworth, III for his 35 years of dedicated service as a board member of the Lake Worth Drainage District.

Mr. Whitworth has been an integral part of the District, offering vision, guidance, and unwavering commitment to its mission. His leadership has been crucial in advancing water management, flood control, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the District's operations.

Over the course of his tenure, Mr. Whitworth's contributions have shaped the District's success and progress. In honor of his legacy, a video was presented showcasing key moments from his years of service.

To formally recognize Mr. Whitworth's service, Assistant Executive Director Reagan Walker presented the following board proclamation:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the **LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT** is a vital political subdivision of the State of Florida, responsible for the ownership and management of more than 500 miles of drainage canals within its 200 square mile jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the **LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT** provides essential flood control, water conservation and water supply protection to nearly 1 million residents and thousands of acres of agricultural land through southeastern Palm Beach County; and

WHEREAS, **John I. Whitworth III** has honorably served as a Supervisor of the **LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT** since October 1990; demonstrating exceptional leadership, unwavering commitment, and invaluable expertise—greatly contributing to the District's reputation as a model special district in the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, **John I. Whitworth III** has been a steadfast guardian of the District's canals and rights-of-way, fiercely protecting them against encroachments and advocating for their preservation as the area transitions from agricultural to residential use. Recognizing the region's ongoing growth—new neighborhoods, expanding roadways, and an increasing population—he has remained steadfast in his commitment to ensuring flood control and water supply remain a top priority. His leadership has reinforced the vital importance of these canals, which must continue to serve future generations as a crucial safeguard against flooding; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his 35 years of dedicated service and with deep appreciation, the **LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT** and its Board of Supervisors, property owners, and employees seek to honor **John I. Whitworth III** by renaming the E-1 Equalizer Canal—the District's westernmost canal spanning the entire north-south length of the District—as the **Whitworth Canal**.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of the **LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT**, by unanimous consent, hereby adopts this proclamation, to be formally sealed and executed on this **12th day of March 2025**.

Following presentation of the proclamation, staff unveiled the new Whitworth Canal sign, officially marking the canal's new name. Attached hereto as part of the meeting record is a copy of the executed proclamation.

Ms. Walker stated that staff is planning a future celebration with all employees, family and friends to honor his 35-year service anniversary.

Mr. Whitworth thanked staff and board members for their commitment and dedication and expressed his appreciation for the honor.

Supervisor Phipps, Sr. Vice President Alderman, President Bedner, Vice President Hill, and District Counsel Mark Perry expressed their sentiments and congratulations to Mr. Whitworth.

Permitting Supervisor Nicole Smith and Receptionist Jill Cooke also expressed their sentiments and thanked Mr. Whitworth for his support to staff throughout the years.

Photos were taken with Whitworth family members, and Ms. Walker announced that refreshments would be served after the meeting.

4. Agenda Revisions – Tommy Strowd, Executive Director

Mr. Strowd stated that Agenda items #8 & #10 have been postponed.

5. Abstentions by Board Members from Items on the Agenda

There were no abstentions.

6. General Public Comment (limited to 5 minutes)

There were no public comments.

7. Approval of minutes, check register and financial statement for the previous month

A motion was made by Senior Vice President Alderman to approve the minutes, check register and financial statement for the previous month, seconded by Vice President Hill and approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION

8. Approval to surplus a portion of the L-16 Canal Right-of-Way for Fair Market Value to Journey Church Lake Worth, Inc. Location: South side of L-16 Canal; west side of Military Trail (Project #RI-25-0006) - David Bends, Right-of-Way Interest Supervisor – **ITEM POSTPONED**

9. Denial of Right-of-Way Permit application submitted by Pine Tree Golf Club requesting approval to pipe a ~260' portion of the L-25 Canal. Location: L-25 Canal, between St. Andrews Road and Lawrence Road (Project # RW-25-0049) – Nicole Smith, Permit Supervisor

Ms. Smith stated that the item currently before the Board pertains to a request from Pine Tree Golf Club for the installation of approximately 280 linear feet of culvert within the L-25 Canal, located north of Woolbright Road and east of Military Trail between Pine Tree Terrace and Lawrence Road. The purpose of the request is to replace two existing pedestrian bridges with a single continuous culvert.

She referenced a visual exhibit presented on screen, which included the proposed culvert location and an aerial image from 1968 showing the existing pedestrian bridges and a 72-inch CMP pipe already in place within the canal, that has since been removed.

Ms. Smith explained that, in accordance with recent revisions to the District's operating policies, the piping of a canal is only considered if the applicant can demonstrate a substantial hardship and provides assurances that drainage and maintenance functions will not be harmed. All such requests require Board approval.

The applicant provided assurances to meet the District's requirements including:

- Installing a culvert to dimensions and specifications as required by LWDD
- Constructing LWDD right-of-way access to design section throughout the golf course
- Exchanging necessary right-of-way to ensure contiguous, unencumbered access
- A contribution of up to \$100,000 toward repair of an existing failing pipe located adjacent to Muirfield Road within Pine Tree Country Club Estates to be paid upfront.
- Acceptance of all future maintenance and financial responsibility to operate and maintain existing piped sections within Pine Tree, except roadway culvert crossings (HOA)
- Commitment to perform five-year inspections on all culverts within Pine Tree Golf Club and Pine Tree HOA
- Permit fees:
 - Application Fee: \$2,520 (\$9.00 x 280 L.F.)
 - Use Fee: \$5,600 (\$20.00 x 280 L.F.)
 - Annual Fees: \$1,120 (\$4.00 x 280 L.F.) Adjusted every 5 years by the compounded Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- Providing a Bond for construction/installation of the proposed culvert and a Bond to ensure future maintenance of culverts

President Bedner inquired to Mr. Strowd regarding the sizing of the culverts. Mr. Strowd shared that the District's concern with pipe installations is the aggregation of additional culverts and the restriction on the flow of water. He stated that based on these concerns, the District must ensure extended pipe installations are designed for the current maximum capacity of an open channel canal, not just that of a typical design event for a typical culvert crossing. Culvert sizes to ensure this flow can be very large and expensive and can include large box culverts or multiple culverts.

Vice President Hill confirmed that District engineers will meet with the project engineers to discuss the pipe size requirement. Ms. Hill also pointed out that an 80' section of the course was previously piped; however, it has since been removed.

Sr. Vice President Alderman indicated that existing pilings located under the current bridges restrict some current flow.

Ms. Smith stated the applicant was in attendance if the Board had questions.

Mr. Robert Gillespie spoke on behalf of Pine Tree Golf Club and explained that the intent of the proposed bond or letter of credit whichever the District prefers is to ensure that financial resources would be available in the event repairs to the culvert are necessary and the club is either unable or unwilling to fulfill its responsibilities.

In such cases, the District would have the ability to call on the bond or letter of credit to cover the associated costs.

Mr. Gillespie further noted that the Club is willing to contribute funds towards repair and future maintenance of the culvert located near Pine Tree Terrace, which the District currently maintains, and is also prepared to assume long-term maintenance responsibility for that structure once it is repaired. He concluded by expressing the golf club's intent to address all concerns and thanked the Board for its consideration.

Mr. Whitworth shared some history regarding canal construction in this area.

Ms. Hill made a motion to approve the applicant's request to install ~280 L.F. Culvert within the L- 25 Canal to replace the two (2) existing Pedestrian Bridges located between Pine Tree Terrace and Lawrence Road, subject to:

- All previous assurances
- Staff approval of all plans, including but not limited to:
 - Engineering Plans
 - Contingency drainage plan during construction
 - Complete golf course renovation plans
- No additional culvert length to be approved in the future
- Removal of culvert if the Golf Course is no longer operational

Ms. Smith confirmed that Board approval only grants staff authorization to issue the requested Right-of-Way Permit; does not grant approval of the permit until all conditions met.

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

10. Approval to award bid to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the annex office space for LWDD Building "C" – Aquatics Warehouse (ITB 24-10667D.01) – Anthony LasCasas, Director of Operations & Maintenance – ITEM POSTPONED

Mr. LasCasas stated that earlier bids for item #10 were rejected due to unexpectedly high costs. The project was rebid, and three proposals were received; while pricing improved, all bids remained higher than expected and failed to meet the District's requirement that at least 75% of the work be self-performed by the contractor.

As all proposals have relied heavily on subcontracting, the District has opted to perform the work under an owner-builder model. Permit approval is pending, after which work will proceed. Inspection services will be handled by the District's engineering consultant.

Mr. LasCasas noted that overall costs are expected to fall within a range that may not require formal bidding, though limited competitive pricing may be sought for specific tasks.

STAFF REPORTS

11. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Strowd provided a weather update indicating that the region is experiencing an unusually dry season. Rainfall since mid-October has totaled approximately 6 inches, which is about half of the normal expected amount for this time of year. Portions of Palm Beach County are under severe drought conditions, with the remainder experiencing moderate drought, and these conditions are expected to continue through April and May.

Despite the dry conditions, water levels across the system remain sufficient. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and South Florida Water Management District are actively managing Lake Okeechobee, with discharges occurring into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers, as well as southward into the Everglades. The lake is currently at 13.35 feet, and it is being managed toward a target range of 11.5 to 12.5 feet by June 1st. A copy of the report has been attached hereto as part of the meeting record.

Ms. Walker invited staff to join in a cake celebration honoring Mr. Whitworth's 35 years of service on the Board of Supervisors.

12. District Counsel's Report

No additional items to report.


13. Board Reports & Comment

No additional reports or comments.

14. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:28 A.M.



President – Stephen Bedner

Recording Secretary – Sandra Acosta