



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT
HELD AT THE DELRAY BEACH OFFICE ON
May 14, 2025 AT 8:30 A.M.**

Board Members Present:

John I. Whitworth, III
Carrie P. Hill

Stephen Bedner

Jeffrey Phipps, Sr.

Board Members Absent:

James M. Alderman

1. Call to Order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Hill led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Employee Retirement Recognition

- Armando Pereda, Tree Crew Leader

Mr. Strowd recognized Armando Pereda, who will retire in June after 32 years of dedicated service to the District. The Board thanked Armando for his contributions, leadership, and steadfast commitment to the District. He was presented with an engraved survey marker in recognition of his service and dedication.

4. Agenda Revisions – Tommy Strowd, Executive Director

There were no revisions.

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.

Supervisor Whitworth extended his thanks to the Board and staff for hosting the recent special event to recognize his 35 years of service on the LWDD Board of Supervisors.

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

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

DISCUSSION

8. **Denial of variance request by Palm Beach County to install two proposed Mast Arm Poles within the L-27 Canal right-of-way. Location: East of Jog Road & Cascade Isles Boulevard; west bank of the L-27 Canal. (Project #RW-24 -0296) – Shawn Mitchell, Permit Coordinator**

Mr. Mitchell stated that the project is part of Palm Beach County's One-Penny Sales Surtax program to upgrade traffic signals by replacing existing concrete poles with mast arms.

On February 4, 2025, the County submitted a permit application to LWDD requesting to install two mast arm signal poles and conduits within the west maintenance berm of the L-27 Canal Right-of-Way at Jog Road and Cascade Isle Boulevard.

LWDD responded on February 20, 2025, noting that mast arms proposed within LWDD right-of-way require Board approval and may not encroach more than five feet from the right-of-way line. Staff also advised that the existing poles, permitted under LWDD Permit No. 00-23U.82, were limited to a five-foot encroachment.

The new plans proposed mast arm foundations encroaching approximately 13.5 feet into the berm, leaving only 12 feet to the canal bank.

On May 9, 2025, LWDD staff met onsite with the County and its consultants. The County proposed an alternative design using a single dual-arm pole, citing design constraints, utility conflicts, and safety standards. However, the revised concept still exceeded LWDD's encroachment limits.

Staff recommended denial of the request due to the following: the proposed encroachment is within the heavy maintenance berm; LWDD requires unimpeded access for large maintenance equipment; the location is not at a designated crossing or major intersection; the berm is already below the standard width, and further encroachment would hinder maintenance access.

Anna Lai from Simmons & White spoke on behalf of Palm Beach County. Ms. Lai reiterated that the existing span-wire signal poles, installed in 2000, no longer satisfy current wind-load criteria and must be replaced with mast arms designed to withstand hurricane-force winds. She noted that the close proximity of the poles to Florida Power & Light (FPL) infrastructure creates lengthy repair delays; OSHA therefore requires a 10-foot horizontal clearance for ongoing maintenance and worker safety.

If the requested variance is denied, Ms. Lai stated the County's next option would be to ask FPL to relocate its facilities, an approach that would require de-energizing the lines, entail significant neighborhood disruptions, and roughly double the overall project cost. Shifting the installation westward into the roadway is also infeasible because of safety concerns and conflicts with buried water and force-main utilities. In light of public safety needs and fiscal responsibility to taxpayers, the County believes the requested variance is the most practical solution.

Mr. Strowd commented and recognized the cost and practicality of placing the mast arm within the right-of-way; however, the encroachment is not permissible within this section of the right-of-way.

Supervisor Whitworth commented regarding his strong opposition to permitting the encroachment within the right-of-way.

A motion was made by Supervisor Whitworth to approve staff recommendation to deny Palm Beach County's request, seconded by Supervisor Phipps and approved unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

9. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Strowd reported that the District made another delivery from the C-51 Reservoir to support supplemental water deliveries to Miami-Dade and Broward County.

He provided an update on the litigation between EAA farmers and the Corps of Engineers related to the EAA A-2 Reservoir and STA operations manual, noting that both district and appellate courts have ruled against the plaintiffs, though future legal action remains possible depending on demonstrated impacts. The agency had previously submitted an amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs' concerns.

Mr. Strowd then discussed a recently released flood protection level of service analysis conducted by the South Florida Water Management District. The study assessed flood risk based on multiple stressors, including sea level rise and urban development. He noted that while coastal counties to the south were identified as high priority due to elevation concerns, the study now includes parts of central Palm Beach County, where the LWDD operates. Hydrologic modeling from the study indicates that our infrastructure will continue to perform and meet the level of service intended even with increased intensity and amount of rainfall events. Mr. Strowd emphasized that the agency's priority remains preserving hydraulic capacity in its canals. The District is completing its more detailed model and will present it to the board in the coming months to further analyze canal-specific performance.

Mr. Johnson provided a quarterly investment update, noting that as of March 31st, the core portfolio stood at approximately \$36 million. The portfolio earned a three-month return of 1.54%, slightly trailing the benchmark return of 1.59%. However, the one-year return was 5.48%, modestly outperforming the benchmark. Earnings totaled roughly \$400,000 for the quarter and approximately \$1.6 million for the year.

Mr. Johnson expressed satisfaction with the current performance and the services provided by the investment manager. He concluded by noting that the audit report will be presented at next month's board meeting, along with the initial discussions for the FY26 budget.

Ms. Walker provided several brief updates. She reminded the board of the upcoming June 3rd workshop, which is expected to be lengthy and will include a budget discussion and other key topics.

Ms. Walker extended her appreciation to the Bedner family for their support in organizing the recent anniversary event for Supervisor Whitworth. She also thanked staff and gave special recognition to Margie Illsley for her significant contributions to the event's planning. Ms. Walker presented a poem to Supervisor Whitworth written by Ms. Illsley. She also presented to him a framed photo with a signature of all attendees.

She also highlighted the success of the recent Take Your Kids to Work Day held on April 24th. The event included 23 children and was supported by multiple departments. Staff coordinated hands-on demonstrations, including equipment operation, science experiments, and interactive presentations. She noted the event was well-received and set a high standard for future years. A short video showcasing highlights from the day was shared with the board. The Board expressed their support and commented regarding the importance of continuing such events.

10. District Counsel's Report

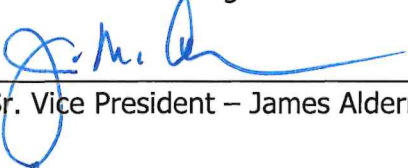
No additional items to report.

11. Board Reports & Comment

No additional reports or comments.

12. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:34 A.M.



Sr. Vice President – James Alderman



Recording Secretary – Sandra Acosta