



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
LAKE WORTH DRAINAGE DISTRICT
HELD AT THE DELRAY BEACH OFFICE ON
June 11, 2025 AT 8:30 A.M.**

Board Members Present:

John I. Whitworth, III
Carrie P. Hill

James M. Alderman

Jeffrey Phipps, Sr.

Board Members Present on the Phone:

Stephen Bedner

1. Call to Order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Whitworth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Service Award Recognition

- Cornell Tripp, Facilities Maintenance Technician – 20 Years

Mr. Strowd recognized Cornell Tripp for his 20 years of service at the District. The Board thanked Mr. Tripp for his dedicated service. He was presented with an engraved survey marker as a token of recognition.

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)

Mr. Whitworth commented on Mr. Alderman's recent visit to Washington, D.C., where he spoke before a special committee about the aging farming workforce. Staff requested his permission to play a video of his remarks.

Ms. Walker shared a video of Senior Vice President Alderman providing testimony in Washington DC at the Special Committee on Aging regarding farming workforces.

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

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

DISCUSSION

8. Approval of Fiscal Year 2024 Audited Financial Statements – Chris Johnson, Director of Finance

Mr. Johnson stated in accordance with Florida law, the District is required to have an annual audit conducted by an independent CPA. He introduced David Caplivski from Grau & Associates, who was present to provide the results of the Fiscal Year 2024 audit.

Mr. Caplivski presented the audit report for Fiscal Year 2024. He stated that the purpose of the financial statements is to provide an account of the District's finances for the past year, and the purpose of the audit is to verify that account. Based on the results of their procedures, Grau & Associates issued an unmodified clean opinion on the District's financial statements, which is the highest level of assurance available.

He further reported that the firm also issued an unmodified report on the District's internal control over financial reporting, with no findings. Mr. Caplivski acknowledged the cooperation of District staff and legal counsel, which facilitated the successful completion of the audit. He concluded his report by offering to answer any questions.

Staff recommended approval to accept the audited annual financial statements for the year ending September 30, 2024.

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

9. Approval to extend contract with Grau & Associates for Annual Auditing Services – Chris Johnson, Director of Finance

Mr. Johnson stated that the District received an engagement letter from Grau & Associates to extend auditing services for an additional three years. He noted that the proposed fee schedule includes an increase to \$42,500 for the Fiscal Year 2025 audit, followed by \$43,000 for FY2026, and \$43,500 for FY2027.

Staff recommended approval of a three-year extension of services for Grau & Associates.

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

10. Approval of qualified contractors to provide Tree & Vegetation Removal Services for July 2025 to June 2026 (RFQ #25-9887L.08) – Michelle Sinclair, O&M Specialist

Ms. Sinclair stated that in May 2024, the Board approved six Pre-Qualified Contractors to provide Tree and Vegetation Removal Services, as needed, from June 2024 through May 2025 for the remaining CRP Vegetation Removal projects. She noted that during the 2025–2026 period, these contractors may also be utilized for isolated tree removal following encroachment removals or to assist LWDD crews, as necessary. Respondents were required to demonstrate a minimum of five years of relevant experience with at least five references, employ trained personnel, have access to appropriate equipment, maintain good standing in the State of Florida, and carry the required insurance coverage with LWDD named as an additional insured. The Request for Pre-Qualifications (RFPQ) was broadcast on DemandStar.com on May 13, 2025, with qualification packages due by June 2, 2025.

Ms. Sinclair then provided the list of contractors determined to be pre-qualified:

- Aquatic Control Group, Inc.
- ATL Diversified.com
- Coco Tree Service Corp
- Sherlock Tree Company, Inc.
- Tetro Land Development and Construction
- Treecycle Land Clearing, Inc.

Staff recommended approval of this list to perform hazardous and exotic tree and vegetation removal services, as needed, for the one-year period from July 2025 through June 2026.

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

Senior Vice President Alderman inquired about the level of insurance required for contracted services. Staff indicated the level is currently \$1 million. The board stated that levels should be higher. They will review current requirements to ensure levels are appropriate in the future. Ms. Walker also indicated that our insurance brokers provide guidance on recommended insurance levels for project types.

11. Approval of qualified contractors to provide Aquatic Control Services for July 2025 to June 2026 (RFQ #25-9887L.09) – Michelle Sinclair, O&M Specialist

Ms. Sinclair stated that in October 2023, the Board approved three Pre-Qualified Contractors to provide Aquatic Vegetation Control Services, as needed, from October 2023 through September 2024. She noted that during the 2025–2026 period, contractor services may be utilized to assist District staff with spot treatment in designated areas to support the effective control of aquatic vegetation while

maintaining low-maintenance rights-of-way. Respondents were required to demonstrate a minimum of five years of related experience with at least five references, employ trained personnel holding aquatic pesticide licenses, have access to the necessary equipment, be in good standing in the State of Florida, and meet all required insurance coverage, including naming the District as an additional insured. The Request for Pre-Qualifications (RFPQ) was advertised on DemandStar.com on May 13, 2025, with qualification packages due by June 2, 2025.

Ms. Sinclair provided the list of contractors determined to be qualified:

- Aquatic Vegetation Control Inc.
- Southeast Land and Water Management
- Stantec

Staff recommended approval of list of Pre-Qualified Contractors to perform Aquatic Vegetation Control Services, as needed, during a one-year period from July 2025 to June 2026

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

12. Approval of Classification and Compensation Plan – Reagan Walker, Assistant Executive Director

Ms. Walker stated that she had provided the Board members with a revised compensation plan, reflecting the feedback received during the previous week's discussion at the workshop. The Board felt that the originally proposed starting wage was somewhat low and recommended an increase.

In response, staff reviewed the plan and is now recommending a minimum starting rate of \$18.25 per hour for Grade 1 positions. Ms. Walker noted that this adjustment is expected to result in an estimated \$50,000 budget impact, primarily raising current Grade 1 employees to the new minimum rate.

Additionally, she indicated that salary adjustments may also be necessary for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) positions, particularly Equipment Operator levels 1 through 3. Ms. Walker, along with Tony and Melissa, will further analyze these potential impacts and present the findings in July as part of the preliminary budget.

Staff recommended approval of the revised compensation plan so they can begin preparing for implementation of the new minimum rate and any related salary adjustments across Grades 1 to 3.

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

STAFF REPORTS

13. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Strowd reported on current and projected water supply conditions relevant to the 2025–2026 dry season. He referenced ongoing drought conditions in South Florida, with Lake Okeechobee currently near 11 feet NGVD, slightly above the Water Shortage Management Zone defined by the South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Recent operational actions taken by the USACE to lower lake stages during the 2024–2025 dry season were briefly reviewed. Forecast data from NOAA suggest a slight tendency toward above-normal rainfall for the summer months, though probabilities for below-normal rainfall remain close.

A 12-month outlook for Lake Okeechobee stages indicates levels are likely to remain near the Water Shortage Management Zone through the wet season, with a projected dry season elevation near 13.5 feet NGVD. Mr. Strowd concluded that, without significant rainfall this summer, there is a possibility of entering a declared water shortage in spring 2026.

Mr. LasCasas reported that standard dredging and routine maintenance operations are ongoing.

Ms. Walker reported that there would be no workshop in July, and the only Board meeting for the month is scheduled for July 16.

14. District Counsel's Report

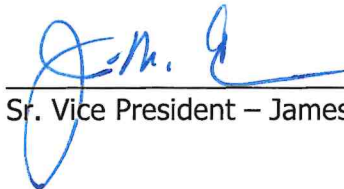
No additional items to report.

15. Board Reports & Comment

No additional reports or comments.

16. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:23 A.M.



Sr. Vice President – James Alderman



Recording Secretary – Sandra Acosta