

**OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY****MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, March 19, 2024 8:30 A.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority

100 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Okeechobee, Florida

**Chairperson Clay called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.**

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

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

**Board Members:**

Tommy Clay\*

John Gilliland\*

Harry Moldenhauer\*

Steve Nelson\*

Tabitha Trent\*

**Alternates:**

Melanie Anderson

Glenn Sneider

**Absent:**

\*Voting Board Members

**OUA Members:**

John Hayford

Lauriston Hamilton

Jamie Mullis

Tom Conely

Michelle Willoughby

**Chairperson Clay addressed Agenda Item No. 2 ‘Election of Officers’** Executive Director Hayford presided over the meeting. Executive Director Hayford explained that the Board needs to elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson. Executive Director Hayford advised that Tabitha Trent and Steve Nelson cannot serve in the same capacity as per the Interlocal Agreement. Executive Director Hayford called for nominations for the Chairperson. **Motion by Tommy Clay to appoint Steven Nelson as Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer to appoint Steven Nelson. Motion by Tabitha Trent to appoint John Gilliland as Chairperson. John Gilliland declines nomination. Motion fails for lack of second. Vote to appoint Steve Nelson as Chairperson. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.** Executive Director Hayford relinquished meeting to Chairperson Nelson. Chairperson Nelson called for nominations for Vice Chairperson. **Motion by Tommy Clay to appoint John Gilliland as Vice Chairperson. Second by Steve Nelson. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.** Chairperson Clay called for nominations for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson. **Motion by Tommy Clay to appoint Tabitha Trent as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 5 ‘Agenda Additions or Deletions’** Tabitha Trent presents Tommy Clay with a plaque for his years of service to the Okeechobee Utility Authority.

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 4 ‘Meeting Minutes from February 20, 2024.’ Motion by Tommy Clay to accept the Meeting Minutes from February 20, 2024 as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 5 ‘Department Supervisor Updates’**

SWTP: Kevin Rogers advised the board that the department is fully staffed. Board Member Gilliland asked that supervisors advise on the and time of the Department Meetings. Kevin Rogers advised that security gate is installed up by the building and that he is currently waiting on security cards to make it operational.

Maintenance: Chris Weeks gave an update on the Maintenance Department. Advised that the Maintenance Department is expecting to one employee to start on Monday. Advised that Rodney Arnold was promoted to Foreman. Advised that a few of the trucks in Maintenance are aging out and will need to be replaced.

*Glenn Sneider out at 8:56 A.M.*

Administration: Kristy Arnold advised the board that the department is fully staffed and requests that the Board still consider AMI. Advised the board the staff are looking into replacing the current billing software.

WWTP: Jamie Gamiotea advised there is a current vacancy for an Assistant Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor. Advised that this was advertised in the newspaper, social media and trade magazines.

Jamie Mullis gave an overall update of all departments.

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 6 ‘Consent Agenda’ Motion by Tommy Clay to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 7 ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part E) in the amount of \$29,560.00’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 8 ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc – SW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue LPSS Design and Permitting in the amount of \$13,033.60’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 9 ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc – Consumptive Use Permit Consulting in the amount of \$11,797.50’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 10 ‘Invoice from Anderson Andre Consulting Engineers, Inc – SWSA Project 2 Vacuum Collection System in the amount of \$4,757.50’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 11 ‘Invoice from Hinterland Group, Inc. – SWSA Project 2 Vacuum Collection System in the amount of \$391,876.52’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 12 ‘Invoice from Hinterland Group, Inc. – Pine Ridge Park Utility Improvements in the amount of \$218,221.64’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 13 ‘Invoice from CHA – Vac Station #2 Generator Replacement in the amount of \$10,323.00’**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 14 'Invoice from CHA – Pine Ridge Park Utility System Upgrade – SDC in the amount of \$4,849.22'**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 15 'Invoices from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue AC Pipe Removal in the amount of \$3,996.00'**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 16 'Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SR 78 Watermain Improvements in the amount of \$18,838.50'**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 17 'Invoice from Kimley Horn and Associates, Inc. – Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project in the amount of \$37,995.70'**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 18 'Invoice from Evergreen Solutions, LLC in the amount of \$2,925.00'**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 19 'Invoice from Thorn Run Partners in the amount of \$3,500.00'**

**Consent Agenda Item No. 20 'Invoice from MacVicar in the amount of \$250.00'**

**Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Executive Director Hayford informed the board that a request was made earlier that all agenda items requiring voting be discussed first.

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 22 '3<sup>rd</sup> Draw-Down on Interim Finance – SWSA Project 2'** Finance Director Hamilton discussed the Interim Finance Agreement with SouthState Bank. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the Interim Agreement with SouthState Bank is short term. The USDA will reimburse SouthState Bank and transfer a portion of the funds utilized to a forty-year loan. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that to date, the OUA has accessed funds totaling \$1,350,419.63 leaving an available balance of \$6,157,580.37. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that staff are requesting Board approval to submit draw-down #3 in the amount of \$1,283,335.23 to cover pay applications from Hinterland Group, Inc and Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. **Motion by Tommy Clay to approve draw-down #3 in the amount of \$1,283,335.23. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote Unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.**

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 23 'Non-Discrimination Policy'** Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the OUA was awarded federal grant funding from the EPA which will be applied toward the engineering services for the Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that a pre-condition of all federally funded grants, is for the recipients to develop and publish a Non-Discrimination policy. This policy must meet the government's Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) as listed in the Standard Title IV Nondiscrimination Assurances. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that staff has developed a draft policy from a template provided by the EPA and approved by the OUA attorney. Tom Conley advised that he revised and approved the draft policy, **Motion by Tommy Clay to adopt the Non-Discrimination Policy. Second by John Gilliland. Vote Unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.**

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'SWSA Project 2 Change Order No. 1'** Executive Director Hayford discussed Change Order No.1 from Hinterland Group, Inc for the SWSA Project 2. This change order adds \$12,020.90 to the original contract price. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this change order covers the costs of deflecting two existing water mains which were in the way of the new vacuum main being installed. The change order also covers the costs of replacing an existing storm sewer which was in the way of the new vacuum main. Executive Director Hayford advised

that that staff, engineer and the USDA have been involved in the preparation of this change order. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve Change Order No. 1 for the SWSA Project 2 in the amount of \$12,020.90. Second by Tommy Clay. Vote unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.**

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 25 ‘Meter Reader Office Expansion’** Executive Director Hayford discussed that due to a recent increase in staffing levels and as well as additional staff coming onboard in the future, the Administrative Office no longer provides adequate office space. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff have explored several options and one option is to construct a meter reader office at the existing maintenance barn. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff reached out to LBJ Architect and worked with them to design an office and bathroom. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff put together bid documents and advertised locally, social media and the newspaper, as well as direct solicitation of General Contractors in Okeechobee. Executive Director Hayford discussed that advertisements went out on February 1, 2024 with sealed bids being due on or before March 14, 2024. Staff received three bids which were opened on March 14, 2024 at 3:00 P.M. The bid tabulation is as follows: 1. Close Construction Services, LLC: \$192,540.00; 2. F-5 Builders LLC: \$170,000.00; and 3. Penrod Construction Company: \$114,550.00. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tommy Clay to approve the proposal from Penrod Construction Company in the amount of \$114,550.00. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.**

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 26 ‘Employee Merit & COLA Payment’** Executive Director Hayford discussed that at the board meeting last month Rob Williamson from Evergreen Solutions, LLC was present to discuss the salary survey. During the presentation Rob Williamson stated that the OUA had provided payroll adjustments to all employees that brought most of the employees’ individual pay rates and benefits up to an acceptable range when compared to other nearby employers. Executive Director Hayford discussed that Rob Williamson also stated that other employers have continued to offer incentives to their employees and suggested that the OUA continue with the incentive process. Executive Director Hayford discussed that in the current approved FY24 Budget there are two line items that have been delayed due to the Evergreen Solutions, LLC report. The two items were a proposed across the board \$1.00 per hour pay increase for all OUA employees and a merit pay increase adjustment totaling 2.5% of the labor budget. Finance Director Hamilton discussed that the final report is expected next month. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tommy Clay to schedule a workshop on April 11, 2024 at 1:30 P.M. to discuss this agenda item along with the employee compensation package. Second by John Gilliland. Vote unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.**

*Tommy Clay and Tabitha Trent out at 10:10 A.M.*

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 21 ‘Finance Report’** Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the Finance Report for period ending February 29, 2024.

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 27 ‘Public Comments’** There were none.

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 28 ‘Items from the Attorney’** Attorney Conley discussed that the OUA still does not have a signed Franchise Agreement with Glades County. Attorney Conley will submit an agreement similar to the Lakeport Authority Franchise Agreement to Glades County for approval. Attorney Conley to discuss the outcome with the Board at the next meeting on April 16, 2024.

*Melanie Anderson out at 10:26 A.M.*

**Chairperson Clay addressed Agenda Item No. 29 'Items from the Executive Director'** Executive Director Hayford gave an update on current projects.

**Chairperson Nelson addressed Agenda Item No. 30 'Items from the Board'** There were none.

**There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 10:30 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 CD recording of this meeting is on file in the Executive Director's office.

  
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Chairperson

  
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Executive Director (Secretary)

