

OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY**MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 8:00 A.M.

Okeechobee Utility Authority

100 SW 5th Avenue

Okeechobee, Florida

In the absence of Chairperson Steven Nelson, Vice Chairperson Gilliland called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland led all participating attendees and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 1 and determined the voting members. The following Okeechobee Utility Authority Board Members were present:

Board Members:

John Gilliland*

Harry Moldenhauer*

Tabitha Trent*

Alternates:

Melanie Anderson

Jamie Gamiotea***

Glenn Sneider**

Absent:

Steve Hargraves

Steven Nelson

*Voting Board Members

**Voting in Steve Hargrave's absence

***Voting in Steven Nelson's absence

OUA Members:

John Hayford

Greg Kennedy

Lauriston Hamilton

Jamie Mullis

Steve Conteaguero

Michelle Willoughby

Vice Chairperson Gilliland 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 2nd Vice Chairperson. Executive Director Hayford advised that the current Chairperson (Steven Nelson), the Vice Chairperson (John Gilliland) and 2nd Vice Chairperson (Tabitha Trent) cannot serve in the same capacity as per the Interlocal Agreement. Executive Director Hayford called for nominations for the Chairperson. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to nominate John Gilliland as Chairperson. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.** Executive Director Hayford relinquished meeting to Chairperson Gilliland. Chairperson Gilliland called for nominations for Vice Chairperson. **Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to nominate Tabitha Trent as Vice Chairperson. Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland called for nominations for 2nd Vice Chairperson. **Motion by Jamie Gamiotea to nominate Steven Nelson as 2nd Vice Chairperson. Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 3 'Agenda Additions or Deletions' Board Member Trent requests that the Finance Report be presented after the Consent Agenda.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 4 ‘Consent Agenda’. Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- Consent Agenda Item No. 5** ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – SW Wastewater Service Area Project (Part E) in the amount of \$15,565.13’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 6** ‘Invoice from Sumner Engineering & Consulting, Inc. – NW 15 Pump Station Rehabilitation in the amount of \$23,407.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 7** ‘Invoice from CHA – Vac Station #2 Generator Replacement in the amount of \$1,235.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 8** ‘Invoices from CHA – Pine Ridge Park Expansion Project in the amount of \$5,675.75’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 9** ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SR 78 Watermain Improvements in the amount of \$15,975.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 10** ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SR 78 Watermain Improvements Phase III in the amount of \$53,586.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 11** ‘Invoice from Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. – Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of \$3,570.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 12** ‘Invoice from PRP Construction LLC – Mallard Landing Gravity Sewer Expansion in the amount of \$257,922.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 13** ‘Invoice from B & B Site Development, Inc. – SR 78W Water Main Improvements, Phase 2 in the amount of \$57,690.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 14** ‘Invoice from Anderson Andre Consulting Engineers, Inc. – SWSA Project 2 Vacuum Collection System in the amount of \$1,320.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 15** ‘Invoice from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. – Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project in the amount of \$52,919.50’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 16** ‘Invoice from Raftelis in the amount of \$5,567.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 17** ‘Invoice from Nason Yeager Gerson Harris & Fumero, P.A. – Legal Services in the amounts of \$6,310.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 18** ‘Invoice from Conely and Conely, P.A. – Legal Services in the amount of \$3,118.75’
- 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 Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$250.00’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 21** ‘Congressional AMI Application’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 22** ‘Minor Project Updates’
- Consent Agenda Item No. 23** ‘Operations Director Monthly Report’

Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 24 'Meeting Minutes from February 17, 2026 Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the Meeting Minutes from February 17, 2026 as presented. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 25 'Public Comments' There were none. Motion by Tabitha Trent to close Public Comments. Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Discussion Agenda

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 26 'Mark Smith Property Closing' Executive Director Hayford discussed that the purchase of the property located at 2702 SE 47th Terrace was approved by the board at the February 17, 2026 meeting. This property will be the location of a Vacuum Pump Station for the Treasure Island Septic to Sewer Project. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this agenda item is to approve the real estate closing on the property. There was a brief discussion. Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Closing Statement for the property located at 2702 SE 47th Terrace as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland moved Agenda Item No. 36 before Agenda Item No. 27 due to Board Member early departure.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 36 'Finance Report' Finance Director Hamilton reviewed the Finance Report for period ending February 28, 2026. Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to approve the Finance Report as presented. Second by Jamie Gamiotea. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 27 'Fire Station Property Transfer' Executive Director Hayford discussed that at the February 2026 Board Meeting, Okeechobee County presented a need for a fire station in the southwest area to meet current call volumes. County staff prepared a PowerPoint presentation depicting a footprint of a building that could meet their future needs on a 2-2 ½ acre site, but requested the full 5-acre site. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the OUA Board was receptive to the donation request and directed staff to develop transfer documents for the donation of the land to include a Reverter Clause. Executive Director Hayford requested direction from the board regarding as to the number of acres to be donated, structure demolition, and the number of years in which the fire station would need to be operational before the land reverts back to OUA ownership. There was a brief discussion. Motion by Glenn Sneider to approve the transfer of property to Okeechobee County with the following clauses;

- 1. 3 acres parcel of land to be donated for the construction of Fire Station No. 5**
 - 2. Inclusive of a 7- Year Reverter Clause**
 - 3. Okeechobee County to demolish and clean up existing structures on the property**
 - 4. OUA Legal Fees paid for by Okeechobee County**
 - 5. Okeechobee County to reimburse the OUA for land survey services**
- Second by Jamie Gamiotea. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 28 ‘SR 78W Phase III Pump & Storage Tank Engineering Services Agreement’ Executive Director Hayford discussed the installation of the storage tank is part of the SR78W Phase III Watermain Improvement Project which has 16-inch piping extending from just south of Lemkin Creek crossing to just past the Big ‘O RV Park. This engineering design was approved in December 2025 and a cost sharing agreement was approved in January 2026. *Steve Conteaguero out at 9:06AM* Executive Director Hayford discussed that while the need for this tank is mostly driven by the Lakefront Estates Development, there will be improvements to the OUA system under future development requirements. *Steve Conteaguero in at 9:08AM.* Board members discussed potential cost sharing agreements that could be discussed with the Lakefront Estates developers. Board Member Sneider suggested a cost sharing with an 80/20 split, 80% being paid by the developer. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Glenn Sneider to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. in the amount of \$264,547.00 contingent upon a signed 80/20 split cost sharing agreement with the Lakefront Estates developer. Second by Harry Moldenaer for discussion.**

Vote as follows:

John Gamiotea	No
John Gilliland	Yes
Harry Moldenhauer	Yes
Glenn Sneider	Yes
Tabitha Trent	No

motion failed due to lack of super majority.

Board members discussed grant monies that have been applied for to cover the fees. **After a brief discussion a Motion by Tabitha Trent was made to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. in the amount of \$264,547.00 contingent upon a signed agreement with the Lakefront Estates developer paying 100% of the engineering services fees. Motion failed for lack of second.**

Board members discussed the cost sharing options that could be discussed with the developer for Lakefront Estates. **After a brief discussion a Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Holtz Consulting Engineers, Inc. in the amount of \$264,547.00 contingent upon the Lakefront Estates developer signing an agreement paying 100% of the engineering services fees. Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote as follows:**

Jamie Gamiotea

Yes

John Gilliland	Yes
Harry Moldenhauer	No
Glenn Sneider	Yes
Tabitha Trent	Yes

Vote (4-1), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 29 ‘Pine Ridge Park Expansion Project’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that public bids were received on March 9, 2026. Staff received six bids with Go Underground Utilities, LLC being the apparent low bidder. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the engineer has reviewed the bid content for conformance with the bid requirements and

award to Go Underground Utilities LLC in the amount of \$308,820.00 and to authorize the execution of the Notice of Award letter. Second by Jamie Gamiotea. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Motion by Harry Moldenhauer to authorize the Board Chairman and staff to execute the appropriate documents and issue the Notice to Proceed, provided that the contractor submits the required documentation. Second by Tabitha Trent. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 30 'Basswood Water Main Projects' Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff has been approached by multiple residents in the Basswood area requesting water service. Executive Director Hayford discussed that years ago the OUA would extend 2-inch water main down to serve these requests only to go back in later and upgrade to a 6-inch because of additional requests. Executive Director Hayford discussed that staff has quoted 6-inch water mains down to the terminal fire hydrants, then 2-inch poly lines to the terminal end of the road. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this work will be funded from the new water line item in the FY26 Budget. Executive Director Hayford discussed that each street as presented would require approximately \$28,000 in material costs and if approved, there would be additional funds needed to cover all of the material and labor costs. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this work is expected to bring in approximately 20 new water connections. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approved the proposed NW 33rd Avenue and NW 23rd Avenue water main improvements projects as presented. Second by Glenn Sneider. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 31 'FDOT Subordination Agreement US 441 N' Executive Director Hayford discussed that presently the OUA has a watermain installed in an easement on private property abutting the eastside US 441 North roadway. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this property is going to be developed as a truck stop/auto center and will require a turn lane in to the property off US 441 N. When constructed that turn lane will become FDOT right-of-way and the OUA watermain will end up with FDOT improvements over it. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the subordination agreement is requiring that the OUA is to repair FDOT improvements in the event of a failure of the OUA water main. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this agreement also states that should the FDOT require the OUA water main to move due to some future road project, the FDOT will pay for this work. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve and authorize the execution of the Subordination Agreement as presented. Second by Harry Moldenhauer. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 32 'NE 16th Avenue Water Main Improvements Engineering RFP' Executive Director Hayford discussed that this project is to replace old 2", 4" and 6" cast iron piping on 16th Avenue. The project is required due to the many leaks that have occurred over the last several years. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the line does go under the CSX railroad tracks which could be a tremendous liability if a substantial leak were to occur. Executive Director Hayford discussed that this project has been advertised and bids are due by April 8, 2026. OUA staff is requesting that an OUA Board Member assist staff in reviewing the submittals received, ranking the submittals and submitting this ranking to the OUA Board at the meeting on April 21, 2026. There was a brief discussion. Board Member Harry Moldenhauer volunteered to review and rank the bid submissions. No formal action taken on this Agenda Item. *Greg Kennedy out at 9:44AM.*

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 33 ‘Commerce Grant’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that a Commerce Department application for assistance in funding the SR78 W Phase III Water Main Improvements project was submitted in September 2025. *Greg Kennedy in at 9:46AM. John Gilliland out at 9:46AM.* The application requested up to \$1,000,000 to offset an expected construction cost of \$2,964,800, preliminary services, easements and engineering services have brought the total project cost to \$3,732,600. *John Gilliland in at 9:47AM.* Executive Director Hayford discussed that in December 2025, the OUA was notified that the request for assistance was approved. Board Member Trent inquired about the cost sharing agreement with the developer for Lakefront Estates. Executive Director Hayford discussed that the Board previously approved a cost sharing agreement with the developer to split the piping engineering fees on a 50/50 basis. There was a brief discussion. **Motion by Tabitha Trent to approve the design, permitting and funding for the SR 78W Phase III Water Main Improvement Project and approve the execution of the Department of Commerce Agreement D0338 and authorize the Chairman to sign. Second by Jamie Gamiotea. Vote unanimous (5-0), motion carried.**

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 34 ‘Project Update’ Executive Director Hayford provided the board with updates on the current OUA projects. Executive Director Hayford discussed the Southwest Service Area Project 2 Home Connection Projects, grant money distributions, and cost sharing payment plans with property owners. *Jamie Gamiotea out at 9:55AM.* No formal action taken on this Agenda Item.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 35 ‘Executive Director Search Update’ Executive Director Hayford discussed that OUA staff has received in excess of thirty resumes with respect to the Executive Director position. Executive Director Hayford discussed that on Monday, March 9th and search committee met to review the resumes received, to discuss them and to develop a shortlist of who was determined to be qualified applicants. Chairman Gilliland discussed the shortlist of applicants that was developed. The list consisted on Bryan Heller, Chad Rucks, Jennifer Wheeler and Xiongfei Xie. Executive Director Hayford discussed that after the March 9th meeting, two OUA employees, Greg Kennedy and Lauriston Hamilton, requested consideration for the position. *Jamie Gamiotea in at 10:00AM.* Executive Director Hayford discussed that the two internal applicants should be included in the final shortlist consideration. Board Member Moldenhauer asked if pay scales were disclosed to the applicants. Executive Director Hayford informed the Board that a pay scale was disclosed on the position advertisements. It was discussed that a workshop could be held April 6th or 7th. Staff will contact the board members when a date is set. No Board action taken on this agenda item. *Tabitha Trent out at 10:00AM*

Staff Reports

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 37 ‘Attorney’ Attorney Conteaguero provided the board with updates on the FDOT Subordination Agreement, Lakefront Estates User Agreement and potential property donation to Okeechobee County for Fire Station No. 5.

Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 38 ‘Executive Director’ Executive Director Hayford gave an update on current projects.

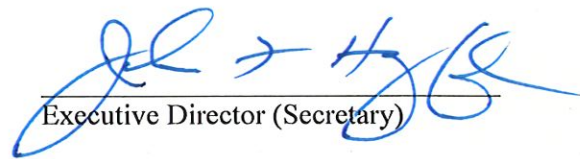
Chairperson Gilliland addressed Agenda Item No. 39 'Items from the Board' There were none.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 10:10 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.



Chairperson



Executive Director (Secretary)

