

IMMOKALEE WATER & SEWER DISTRICT

1020 Sanitation Road, Immokalee, Fl 34142

Telephone: (239) 658-3630

Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

3:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Board Members		
Title	Name	Attendance
Chair	Joseph Brister	Present
Vice-Chair	Patricia Anne Goodnight	Present
Secretary	Bonnie Keen	Present
Treasurer	Robert Halman	Present
Commissioner	Magda Ayala	Present
Commissioner	VACANT	
Commissioner	VACANT	
Staff Present	Professional Staff Present	Guests Present
Louis Brunetti	Gary Ferrante	See sign-in sheet
Jeff Carpenter	Laura Donaldson (online)	
Sarah Catala		
Hector Ramos		
Misty Smith		

I. Call to Order

Mr. Joseph Brister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

II. Preliminaries

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
Mr. Brister led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- b. Roll Call
Ms. Misty Smith, Executive Assistant, conducted roll call. A quorum was reached.
- c. Adoption of Agenda

Motion: Mr. Halman moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Ms. Keen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- d. Public Concerns
There was no public in attendance.
- e. Staff Good Cause Items
 - i. TWO 2025-01 – Feasibility Study for Serving Larger Developments
Ms. Sarah Catala, Executive Director, provided the task work order (TWO) 2025-01 handout which included a map of the District’s boundaries to show the large tracts of land lying within and outside of the current District boundary. She explained that over the last several weeks, she has been approached by landowners for development projects. In an effort to better understand future needs and how the District can provide service to larger developments, Ms. Catala recommended that Weston & Sampson conduct a study to evaluate the

feasibility for the District to serve these areas and to provide alternatives and recommendations. Ms. Catala also recommended that the Board approve the TWO and authorize the Executive Director to sign the TWO.

Motion: Ms. Goodnight made a motion to accept Task Work Order (TWO) 2025-01 – Feasibility Study for Serving Larger Developments and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the work order. Mr. Halman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

f. Board Concerns

There were no Board concerns.

g. Old Business

i. Crown Castle Lease

Ms. Laura Donaldson, District Attorney, provided a recap of previous activity relating to lease and then reported that she has recommended that rather than changing the Barron Collier Companies agreement, instead, she will provide a revised easement to Crown Castle which will include a license over Sanitation Road and a payment of \$10,000.00 will be required. Crown Castle has accepted the modification. The legal side is complete, now it is just a matter of getting the easement completed.

ii. Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Mitigation Project Updates

1. Well Access Roads

Mr. Louis Brunetti, Project Engineer, reported that the design is complete, and he is currently waiting for an exemption from Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) regarding certain stipulations in our FDEP agreement. Shortly after, the District will be ready to bid out the project.

2. 10” Water Main

Mr. Brunetti reported that a review meeting was held and a few minor changes will be made to the plans. The invitation to bid (ITB) package has been compiled and is scheduled for legal review to ensure we include language for certain requirements that need to be met.

iii. Collier County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Update

Ms. Smith reported that the District officially received the CDBG award for the clay sewer pipe project which was approved by the Collier Board of County Commissioners on September 10, 2024. Ms. Smith reported that she will schedule a meeting with the grant coordinator to go over the next steps.

iv. Local Bill Follow-up

Ms. Catala provided a recap of the request from the Board to increase the pay for District commissioners. As a follow-up to that request, Ms. Catala met with Senator Kathleen Passidomo who expressed that she would only support an increase if it were presented as a referendum to allow the public to vote on it. Following that meeting, Ms. Catala also met with Representative Lauren Melo who supported the direction of Senator Passidomo, favoring a local referendum. The Board decided that it was best to drop the matter and not pursue a payment increase for commissioners at this time.

OTHER: Ms. Anne Goodnight, Vice Chair, asked a question regarding the expansion of the District’s boundaries and whether that would need to be a local bill. Ms. Donaldson responded that the District’s charter is unique and she will

need to further research state statutes to ensure legal compliance. Because delegation meetings are scheduled for December or January in Collier County, Ms. Donaldson indicated that there is still a bit of time to prepare a request. She did specify that letters of support from landowners would be beneficial.

Ms. Catala reported that in a recent conversation with Alico, they suggested that the District speak with King Ranch and another landowner to have those conversations about boundaries and service. Ms. Catala also reported that Alico is part of the Rural Land Stewardship and therefore they do plan to develop a stewardship area which will require a local bill. Alico intends to send Ms. Catala the language for review to ensure there is no confusion about who will provide water and sewer services.

Ms. Donaldson clarified that if the District were to become a multi-county District, there would be additional requirements and complexities that would follow, such as presenting at two or more delegation meetings, public meeting notices in each county, and additional meeting requirements under Florida Statutes Chapter 120 among other things.

h. New Business

Ms. Catala took a moment to provide fresh honey to the Board and shared that the honey came from old bee boxes that have been on the District's spray field. She was not able to identify who placed them there and the state had no registration for the boxes, so instead, Ms. Catala found a local bee company who was able to harvest the honey and package it. The bee boxes remain in the spray field.

III. Consent Agenda

- a. Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes (08/21/24 Board Meeting, 08/21/24 Final Budget Hearing)
- b. Fixed Assets, Acquisitions, Disposals
- c. 2025 Holiday Schedule

Motion: Ms. Keen moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Halman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Action Agenda

- a. Auditor's Assignment Letter

Ms. Catala reported that Tuscan & Company, P.A. merged with Hughes Snell & Company P.A., now referred to as HSC/Tuscan & Company, P.A., and they will be required to complete and submit the new anti-human tracking affidavit to remain on file. Ms. Catala then recommended hiring the firm and authorizing the Executive Director to sign the agreement and submit it.

As it relates to the affidavit, Ms. Donaldson explained that here forward, any contract that the District enters into will need to comply with this new state statute requirement. If there is a contract renewal, a signed anti-human tracking affidavit shall be on file.

Motion: Ms. Goodnight made a motion to accept the Auditor's Assignment Letter. Mr. Halman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Hay Lease – *continued*

Ms. Catala is still working with Ms. Donaldson to complete the draft. She plans to have a final draft ready to present at the next board meeting.

c. Performance Measures - *continued*

Ms. Catala explained the purpose of the performance measures (state statute requirement) and explained she has developed and completed a draft; however, she has not had an opportunity to review the measures with each department to ensure they understand the measures and goals before they are to be implemented. She intends to provide the draft at the October meeting for ratification. She also reported that in addition to adding the performance measures to our website, she will add the measures to Tenziga to ensure performance measures align across the board.

V. Discussion Agenda

a. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Catala reported the following:

- The Charrette will be held on Monday, September 23, 2024, to come up with a Master Funding Plan to identify what grants on an annual basis that the District could go after. Hale Innovation would then go after (apply) for those grants.
- A District-wide training for staff will be held September 19, 2024, on public records requests and Sunshine Law which will be presented by Ms. Donaldson.

b. Finance Director's Report

Mr. Jeff Carpenter, Finance Director provided a brief financial update. Revenue is above what we budgeted, which is a positive in hitting our goal for expenses. He then reported that the District is in a good spot financially.

c. District Engineer's Report – Weston & Sampson

Mr. Gary Ferrante, District Engineer, reported that the TIGER grant is still ongoing – utility relocations in Area 5 are almost complete, Area 4 is still ongoing; Master Lift Station C bids are due October 8th; Water treatment plant process improvement negotiations with Kimley-Horn are underway; and lastly, Carson Road electrical upgrades are moving forward.

d. Project Engineer's Report

Mr. Brunetti reported that the three carports are out for bid for concrete slabs, fence and gate; wastewater treatment plant supervisors office renovation was bid out – two bids were received; and lastly, he will be issuing a purchase order (PO) to the winning bidder for the Carson Road electrical upgrade - a construction contract has been executed.

e. District Attorney's Report

Ms. Donaldson reported that she will be working with staff to draft the cost-share agreement with RCMA for Master Lift Station C. She will also be working on getting the District's claims submitted related to the TYCO and BASF settlement for PFAS. Part of the issue is that there are many unknowns surrounding flows and level quantities which means we are being compared to everyone else within the settlement.

Mr. Brister commented that if we were to receive settlement funds, the board would further discuss how to utilize those funds and on which specific project(s).

f. Executive Assistant's Report

Ms. Smith reported that she sent out staff surveys regarding employee recognition and the annual dinner. The surveys closed on September 18th. The surveys will be reviewed with the Executive Director first and it is her intent to bring back recommendations on the plans for an annual dinner date, time and location along with information on a length of service program, at the next board meeting.

Ms. Catala complimented Ms. Smith on her work of building the District website which yielded compliments by at least two outside public relations firms who found our website to be relatable and nice and not a typical, conventional website for a government entity.

VI. Other Public Interests

There was no public in attendance.

VII. Adjournment

The Board meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.