

**St. Lucie West Services District
Workshop Meeting
May 5, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.**

(Please note: These minutes are not verbatim. A CD recording of the Workshop Meeting is available on file.)

Board Members Present

Dominick Graci – Chairman – in-person
Gregg Ney – Vice Chairman – in-person
Rose Carvelli – Supervisor – in-person (who arrived at 9:08 a.m.)
Kevin Dolan – Supervisor – in-person

Staff Present

Josh Miller, District Manager, St. Lucie West Services District ("SLWSD") – in-person
Gerard Rouse, Public Works Director/Assistant District Manager, SLWSD – in-person
Maddie Maldonado – Director of Office Administration, SLWSD – in-person
Searg Davidian, Assistant Public Works Director, SLWSD – in-person
Jason Pierman, Special District Services, Inc. ("SDS") – in-person
Laura Archer, Recording Secretary, SDS – via phone
Stephanie Brown, SDS – in-person

Also present were: Steve Conteaguero, Nason, Yeager, Gerson, Harris & Fumero, P.A.; Donna Rhoden of the City of Port St. Lucie; Aimee Willis of Hydro Designs LLC (via phone); and Deane Piekara, a District resident.

Guests Present (Sign-In Sheet Attached)

A. Call to Order

The Workshop Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call

It was noted that Secretary Diane Haseltine was absent.

D. Approval of Minutes

- 1. April 7, 2025, Workshop**
- 2. April 8, 2025, Regular Board Meeting**

Vice Chairman Ney requested the addition of more details regarding his comments concerning the rebate program concerning water conservation.

His request was acknowledged.

E. Public Comment

Mr. Piekara, referring to the Interlocal Utility Oversight and Maintenance Agreement between the District and The Reserve CDD, commented on the costs being reflected and that the District should mark up items in the agreement.

Mr. Piekara also noted that the job descriptions under Item DM 4 did not indicate whether they were part or full-time, in office or remote or the physical requirements.

**F. District Attorney
DA 1 – Status Report/Updates**

Mr. Miller presented Ms. Holmes' report indicating that Item 4 – the indemnification language revisions were preparing for the next project with the City.

Mr. Miller indicated that Item 3 was an e-mail from the Supervisor of Elections' office regarding the number of electors in the District.

Supervisor Dolan asked about Item 2 being the Centennial project to which Mr. Rouse noted that it was behind Centennial High School and was necessary in order to maintain the drainage easement.

**G. District Engineer
DE 1 – Status Report/Updates**

Mr. Miller noted concerning Item 7 that the Reserve was going out to bid for construction and design work for water main and force main interconnect because the ISS proposal was too high.

Chairman Graci suggested tracking the Reserve to ensure things get done timely.

Mr. Miller also noted that Item 8f, Stormwater Control Structures Evaluation would be prepared by the District's Engineer.

**H. District Manager
Actions Items**

DM 1 – Consider Interlocal Utility Oversight and Maintenance Agreement with the Reserve CDD

Mr. Miller reminded the Board that this item was previously presented for consideration at last month's meeting but was tabled for revisions. He noted that those revisions had been made and that it would require the hiring of an additional person for this work.

Discussion ensued regarding several items within the Agreement, including the termination clause, oversight and Administrative charges.

That concluded discussion regarding this item.

DM 2 – Consider Nason, Yeager, Gerson, Harris & Fumero, P.A. for District Legal Services

Mr. Miller presented the item, indicating that the Committee had selected this firm over the other 4 firms that had submitted their qualifications. Mr. Miller indicated that they had negotiated several parts of the agreement and that staff was happy with the results.

Mr. Conteaguero was present to answer several questions of the Board Members.

DM 3 – 2024 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Mr. Miller presented the report and indicated that it was a requirement of the State Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). He furthered that FDEP had reviewed the report and approved its content for distribution to District customers. Mr. Miller indicated that the report was scheduled to be included in the monthly billing of June 17, 2025.

Discussion ensued regarding the clause stating, "...fluoride is added to help prevent tooth decay..." noting that the sampling date was May of 2023 and that there will be no fluoride in next year's report.

Supervisor Dolan asked if residents could bring in water for testing to which Mr. Miller indicated they could, but for lead testing only.

DM 4 – Consider Request to Advertise Public Hearings to Consider (1) Adopting Revised Employee Job Descriptions, and (2) Amending Chapter A-III, Rules of the District Regarding Positions, Qualification, Compensation, Employment and Termination of District Employees

Mr. Miller explained that these Public Hearings were necessary in order to shore up a succession plan for Administration and eliminating "high ranking employees" because it is not needed anymore, which will make the District Manager's job more efficient. Mr. Miller noted that it was added when the union was present but is no longer needed.

Discussion ensued.

Chairman Graci requested an updated org chart with the proposed positions. Mr. Miller also noted that he would look at the suggestions made by District resident, Deane Piekara.

DM 5 – Consider Proposal from Hydro Designs for Construction and Engineering Services for Injection Well #2

Mr. Miller advised that this project was advertised as RFP 2025-01 on the District's website and in the newspaper. He then presented the only proposal received from Hydro Designs in the amount of \$394,000, which was substantially lower than original cost projections.

Mr. Miller reminded the Board that Youngquist Brothers LLC was awarded the construction of a new injection well (IW-2) at the April 9, 2025, Board Meeting and noted that FDEP requires engineering testing, monitoring and reporting throughout the project.

There was no discussion regarding this item.

DM 6 – Fiscal Year Ending 2026 Budget Workshop

Mr. Miller advised that the Board was sent the proposed budget the Friday before the Workshop and that Chairman Graci had made a list of questions/observations, which was distributed to the other Board Members and staff.

Mr. Miller presented Chairman Graci's list of questions regarding the budget and went over them. Chairman Graci noted that the rates should have been increased incrementally for the last 10 years. It was Mr. Miller's belief that they should have increased over the last 20 years.

If questioned why the increase was necessary, the following should be taken in account: hiring a Public Information Officer, HR Assistant, inflation and infrastructure costs in R&R.

Discussion ensued and Mr. Miller advised that more information regarding this budget would be presented at the June meeting when the Rate Consultant would make his presentation.

DM 7 –Other Items

Mr. Miller advised that he would provide a Physician's Summary regarding his ability to perform his job, as per his employment requirements.

Mr. Miller stated that the 2 lines for the Reserve CDD had been designed and the next step was to send it out for bid.

Mr. Miller reiterated that the Rate Study would be presented at the June meeting.

Mr. Miller noted that he had worked with Mr. Rouse to implement an Employee of the Year distinction, which would bring up morale.

Mr. Miller reminded the Board that their Forms 1 were due by July 1st and would only be accepted online.

Mr. Miller noted that last year's in-person Ethics Training was very costly and suggested taking advantage of Special District Services' online options at no charge. He further noted that completion of the training was required to be completed by December 31st.

Mr. Miller indicated he would have a walk-on item tomorrow regarding a private utility easement abandonment request from Edwards Cohen on behalf of Somerset Academy. Mr. Miller advised that this easement was on the property located just east of the District's Administrative Offices. The easement travels easterly from the District's east fence line traveling towards SW Bethany Drive. He went on to explain that this was a private utility easement that was platted in 1989 and does not have a utility purveyor designation defined in Plat #15. Mr. Miller indicated that the suspicion was that this easement was placed in this location by FPL.

After investigation of the future needs of the plant site, the District completed a "No Obligation Letter," as it was determined that this easement was not needed and would not be in the future. The Letter was completed and distributed to the owner of the property.

Discussion ensued regarding setting precedent, as it is believed that there are many more just like this.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Conteaguero agreed that Somerset Academy was encroaching and that this documents it very solidly. He furthered that the District could go in and do maintenance, as required.

A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Miller then advised that the District was recently notified that they had won a Safety Programs Award after being nominated by EGIS, over 460 other nominations. The District previously received a similar award from PGIT.

Vice Chairman Ney expressed delight and suggested plastering the award all over. Mr. Miller advised that it would be noted on the District's website. Vice Chairman Ney suggested plastering it on the front page of the *St. Lucie News Tribune* to which Mr. Bomjardim indicated he would try to make that happen.

That concluded Mr. Miller's updates.

I. Consent Agenda

CA 1 – Monthly Report on Public Works

CA 2 – Monthly Report on Utilities Operations

CA 3 – Monthly Report on Capital Improvement Projects

CA 4 – Monthly Report on Billing and Customer Service

CA 5 – Public Information Officer Monthly Report

CA 6 – Financial Statements for March 2025

CA 7 – Consider Transfer of Funds for the R&R, WCF & WWCF Accounts

CA 8 – Surplus Items

Mr. Miller presented Consent Agenda Items CA 1 through CA 8 and asked if there were any questions.

There were no questions from the Board Members.

J. Supervisor Requests

Supervisor Carvelli apologized for being late to today's Workshop indicating she had a transportation issue. She also noted that she was ill regarding her previous absences and indicated she was glad to be here today.

Vice Chairman Ney echoed Supervisor Carvelli's point of being glad to be here today.

Supervisor Dolan noted his pleasure in seeing both Supervisor Carvelli and Vice Chairman Ney's presence at today's Workshop. He also requested that the District consider making a presentation at the Men's Club at Kings Isle regarding what we do, noting that he would like to participate along with someone else from the District.

Mr. Miller indicated that Mr. Bomjardim would be at tomorrow's meeting and would make an official presentation of a District video overview.

Mr. Miller directed the Board's attention to Page 126 of the meeting booklet, Item CA 7, wherein you can see the \$1 Million transfer (\$500,000 from both the Water Capacity Trust Account and the Wastewater Capacity Trust Account) in reference to the Reserve CDD.

Supervisor Dolan had questions regarding Section 5 of the Interlocal Utility Oversight & Maintenance Agreement concerning the language under E-Verify, asking if it was standard to which Mr. Miller indicated it was.

Chairman Graci noted his delight in having both Supervisor Carvelli and Vice Chairman Ney present, otherwise there would not be a quorum.

He also reminded the Board of the costs associated with the in-person ethics training last year, suggesting that Board Members utilize the free online options presented by Special District Services.

Chairman Graci they noted his agreement with the Employee of the Month/Year Program and thought it would give employees a boost. He also reiterated his suggestion for a Cost Reduction Savings Program, indicating that if an employee offers an option for a cheaper, more efficient way to do something, that employee should benefit from the savings, as the District will. Mr. Miller noted that they were working on the details of such a program and that they were almost ready to make a presentation.

There were no further Supervisor Requests.

K. Adjournment

There being no further items to be addressed, the Workshop Meeting was adjourned at 10:24 a.m. There were no objections.

Workshop Meeting Minutes Signature Page


Chairman/Vice Chairman


Secretary/Assistant Secretary

Date Approved 06/03/25