

IMMOKALEE WATER & SEWER DISTRICT

1020 Sanitation Road, Immokalee, Fl 34142

Telephone: (239) 658-3630

Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting

Wednesday, July 23, 2025

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		
Misty Smith		

I. Call to Order

Mr. Joseph Brister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:31 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. Ms. Goodnight seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- d. Public Concerns
There were no public concerns.
- e. Staff Good Cause Items
 - i. Check Presentation – HealthCare Network SWFL
Ms. Sarah Catala, Executive Director, and Mr. Brister, welcomed Ms. Gabrielle O’Boyle and Mr. Antonello Castaldi from HealthCare Network SWFL who were present to accept a check on behalf of the organization. The donation to HealthCare Network SWFL was made based on the District’s decision to remove fluoride from the drinking water system resulting in \$8,000 of cost savings that the Board requested to be applied toward dental services in Immokalee. The Board along with staff took a photo to commemorate the occasion.

- f. Board Concerns
There were no Board Concerns.
- g. Old Business
 - i. Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Mitigation Project Updates
 - 1. Well Access Roads
Ms. Louis Brunetti, Project Engineer, reported that construction began last week and has been moving along steadily. The project is expected to be completed by the end of August.
 - 2. 10" Water Main
Ms. Brunetti reported that the project has been completed, however, a sign-off from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is required before the project can be closed out.
- h. New Business
There was no new business.

III. Consent Agenda

- a. Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes (06/03/25 Impact Fee Study Workshop, 06/11/25 WWTP Operational Efficiency Assessment Workshop, 06/11/25 Regular Board Meeting, and 06/25/25 Connection Fee Hearing)
- b. Fixed Assets, Acquisitions, Disposals – *none to report*

Motion: Ms. Goodnight made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Halman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Action Agenda

- a. Resolution 2025-07 Procurement
Ms. Catala reported that the revised documents will be presented at the August Board meeting.
- b. Date for Rate Study Workshop (August 18 at 2:30pm) and Public Hearing (August 20) along with Budget Hearings (August/September)
Ms. Catala explained that in the past the District has held a workshop leading up to a rate study hearing. Based on schedules, staff requested that the Rate Study Workshop be held on August 18 at 2:30pm and that the Rate Study Public Hearing be held on August 20 at 5:05pm immediately following the regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Additionally, staff requested that the First Budget Hearing be held on September 3 at 3:30pm and that the Final Budget Hearing be held on September 17 at 5:01pm immediately following the regularly scheduled Board meeting.

There was unanimous consent amongst the Board to approve the dates as requested. There were no motions made.

V. Discussion Agenda

- a. Executive Director's Report
 - i. Water Distribution Line Relocation – Boston Ave – Casa San Juan Diego
Ms. Catala provided an explanation of the situation that has occurred with the multi-family development by the Diocese of Venice. Essentially, there is a requirement from the funding source that requires them to make the private portion of Boston Ave. into a public area. There are water and sewer lines located within the right-of-way. There is an easement for the water line, however, Collier County has asked the District to subordinate the easement to relocate the water

line. Ms. Catala has been working with Ms. Laura Donaldson, District Attorney, and with Collier County staff regarding the subordination of easement. Ms. Catala continued explaining the situation. Several alternatives have been proposed to the County. More discussions are still needed, and any final negotiations will be brought back to the Board. Ms. Donaldson provided a legal explanation. No questions were asked.

ii. 2026 Legislative Priorities Discussion

Ms. Catala reported the following:

- The Collier County Delegation Committee has sent a notification indicating that forms are due soon. Ms. Catala provided recommendations for legislative priorities. A discussion ensued.
 - Mr. Brister polled the Board to find out if they agree with the recommendations.
 - The Board agreed to request appropriations for a new administration building and the water softening project rather than the water reuse project.
- The District will be applying for State Revolving Funds (SRF) for the remaining amount of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project and intends to apply for USDA funding for the new treatment plants.
- Recommendations for State and Federal priorities were made:
 - On the state level, she would like to work with other utilities to help push for the inclusion of transmission/ distribution lines and pipes into the critical infrastructure definition, indicating that getting the definition modified would ensure protection of distribution staff if they were assaulted.
 - On the federal level, she can circle back with elected officials on the definition of “special district” to open up the possibility of allowing special districts to apply for certain grants or funding.
 - The Board supported the priorities and would like Ms. Catala to bring back information on the language and a plan of action on how to go about assisting to see these changes implemented.
- The Department of Commerce has advertised the Rural Infrastructure Fund, and the District is working alongside Hale Innovation to see which projects are eligible for funding. Staff is also working on applying for hurricane Helene and Milton funding to address the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) headworks & lift station K1, the reject tank for reuse, and two lift stations (P and M) that have had significant issues during hurricanes and heavy storm events.
- The Airport Water Treatment Plant (WTP) lease needs to be renegotiated. She would like to explore the possibility of getting a permanent easement rather than leasing the property.

iii. Highlights from the Florida Environmental Network Summer Permitting School

Ms. Catala planned to provide PowerPoint presentations from the event, however, the Sched app was down, and she could not pull copies from the app.

b. Finance Director’s Report

i. New General Ledger (GL) Accounts

Mr. Jeff Carpenter, Finance Director, reported that the number of accounts will increase significantly due to more detailed account categories to better track expenses and assets.

Mr. Carpenter also reported that no complaints have been received from customers regarding the change in lobby hours.

Lastly, Mr. Carpenter reported on the current financial position and shared that he has put a preliminary budget together for the new fiscal year.

c. District Engineer's Report – Weston & Sampson

Mr. Gary Ferrante, District Engineer, reported the following: utility relocations are occurring on S. 9th Street and near Eden Park, the Master Lift Station C is ongoing (all force main pipe has been installed) and additional equipment is on order, the feasibility study updated report has been provided for the northwest quadrant water plant, raw water softening sampling results are pending, preliminary plans for the Lift Station P upgrades have been submitted and are pending review, and lastly, the carport signed and sealed plans have been received from the manufacturer for the concrete slabs, however, quotes are still needed.

Mr. Brister asked for an update on the fire hydrants out at Eden Park. Ms. Catala reported that she will circle back with the Immokalee Fire Control District to meet them on the site on Friday.

d. Project Engineer's Report

Mr. Brunetti reported the following: he explained that he has split the project list into two pages to make it a bit easier to read. He reported that the WWTP conference room and office renovations have been completed, and the final invoice is pending. He also reported that a 95% design meeting was held for the water reuse facility. The next step is to finalize the Invitation to Bid (ITB) package and have it ready to solicit soon.

e. District Attorney's Report

Ms. Donaldson reported that she is working on the Radio Fiesta lease, she is reviewing the Limble contract, and she is highly involved in the Boston Ave. easement situation and the RCMA lift station situation.

f. Executive Assistant's Report

i. Save the Date: Annual Celebration & Staff Awards Ceremony – Saturday, October 4, 2025

Ms. Smith shared the date for the “annual date” event and asked the Board to save the date.

VI. Other Public Interests

There was no public in attendance.

VII. Adjournment

The Board meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.