

# TAYLOR COASTAL WATER & SEWER DISTRICT

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## MINUTES OF REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

June 16, 2023

1. The meeting was held at the District Building at 6:00 PM on June 16, 2023. Commissioners Mike Hunter, Michael Lynn, Jan Walker, Gayle Lundy, and Randy Hathcock were present. TCWSD Staff present were Kristi Hathcock and Lynette Senter.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Vice-Chairman Hathcock led us in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
3. There were five guests, Glenn Senter, Willi Huxford, LaWanda Pemberton, Dan Cassel, and Matt Piotrowski. There were no comments from the public for non-agenda items.
4. Update on the Water Improvements Project – Ms. Kaylene Wheeler from Dewberry called in and let the Board know that they were working on the specifications for the automated meter portion of the project at this time and still moving forward on the rest of the specifications.
5. Mr. Dan Cassel, the Taylor County Fire Chief – Mr. Cassel spoke to the Board about the fire hydrants that the District currently has. He also explained that while he was aware that those fire hydrants are not currently available for service, he collected data to assist with planning future needs. He explained that within the District area, water is drawn from the canals and Gulf and used for fighting fires. The District can help refill tanker trucks under the supervision of Mr. Bennett in emergencies. Ms. Lawanda Pemberton, the County Manager, also spoke about the need for this information for planning.
6. Approval of the Minutes from the May 18, 2023 Board Meeting. **Commissioner Hathcock made a motion to approve the Minutes for May 18, 2023. Commissioner Lynn offered a second. Chairman Hunter asked for further discussion. By unanimous vote, the motion was approved.**
7. Consent Items – **Commissioner Lundy made a motion to approve the Consent Items. Commissioner Hathcock offered a second. Chairman Hunter asked for further discussion. By unanimous vote, the motion was approved.**
8. Other District Manager Items – Lynette Senter
  - a. Backflow Device Inspection – Each year we are required by DEP to have our backflow devices at the Wastewater Plant, and the two lift stations inspected. The company we have used for several years has closed due to illness and they declined to suggest an alternative company. We contacted Florida Rural Water to ask for recommendations and they suggested George Edmonds from Cross City. Mr. Edmonds has given me a quote for \$100.00 per device for the inspection and if any repairs are needed we will be contacted and given a cost.

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This is comparable to what we have been paying each year for the past several years. However, because he is the husband of an employee, Ms. Anna Edmonds, Ms. Senter wanted to discuss this with the Board to make sure they are okay with hiring Mr. Edmonds to do this. We did contact other inspectors located in Lake City, Jacksonville, and Tampa. We found out that they charge mileage and travel time in addition to the inspection and possible repair fees. Vice-Chairman Hathcock suggested that we check with anyone locally as well. Ms. Senter said she had called two local people who had not returned her calls.

- b. Updated Asset Management Plan – Commissioner Hathcock requested a copy of the District’s Asset Management Plan. Ms. Senter is working with Florida Rural Water to have an updated plan completed for us and it will be available at the July 2023 meeting.
- c. Leak Finder Rewards – At a previous Board Meeting there was some discussion about rewarding anyone who found and reported a leak. Ms. Senter suggested that gift cards be used. The Board after some discussion, decided not to pursue this.
- d. Spraying License – Ms. Senter confirmed with the mowing company that they are obtaining their spray license and should have it shortly.

9. New Business

- a. Auditor Services – Ms. Senter discussed the possibility of bidding out our audit services. She explained to the Board that Powell & Jones had been doing the District’s audit and financial report since 2006 and provided a breakdown of the annual fees. Ms. Senter told the Board that each year our financial reports are reviewed by the State of Florida Auditor General and because we receive federal financial assistance, our financial reports are reviewed by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Protection. She also explained that during our recent loan refinancing, Co-Bank, our current loan carrier, also reviewed the past five years of reports before offering their financing. The Board discussed putting the services out to bid but decided to keep Powell & Jones as the District’s auditor at this time.
- b. Future Planning – Ms. Senter provided the Board with an overview of future employee planning. Mr. Bennett who is our Field Manager and dual-licensed water and wastewater operator has indicated he will be retiring on September 30, 2024. The Board discussed the plan to continue to encourage and pay for our field staff to obtain their water and sewer licenses and move those licensed employees into the open water and wastewater operator positions upon Mr. Bennett’s retirement. We will then hire new field staff to continue this succession planning. Mr. Bennett’s Field Manager position will be discussed at a future time to determine the duties and plans for filling that position. Ms. Senter suggested that the employees receive a bonus of \$100.00 upon completion of each training test, and another bonus of \$1,000.00 upon receiving their water or wastewater license. The Board agreed that this bonus would be appropriate and asked Ms. Senter to apply it when warranted.

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- c. Budget – Ms. Senter and Commissioner Walker met and are working together to begin the Budget process. Ms. Senter provided the Board with some basic information that will be used to build the budget for the next fiscal year. She suggested that the District implement a 2.5% rate increase to help offset the increases the District will incur over the next year. There are some anticipated increases for property and casualty insurance, employee salary increases, equipment replacement, and the creation of a reserve account for the Water Improvements Project loan repayment. The Board reviewed and discussed some of these items and Ms. Senter explained that she will meet again with Commissioner Walker and they will have a preliminary budget to present at our next meeting. The Board expressed concern with our anticipated insurance premium increase and asked Ms. Senter to prepare an RFP for property and casualty insurance.

10. Old Business

- a. The Water Audit for May showed a loss rate of 9.22%. Ms. Senter explained that leaks had been found and repaired including two at the Booster Station. The staff is continuing to search for and repair leaks to try and bring our loss percentage even lower.

11. Closing Remarks Commissioners/Staff

- a. Chairman Hunter asked Ms. Senter to contact Mr. Stephen Flum who owns property at Dekle Beach and discuss boring under Dekle Beach Road to get sewer service to his property. Ms. Senter said she would call him next week to answer his questions.

12. Motion to Adjourn

**Chairman Hunter requested a Motion to Adjourn. Commissioner Hathcock made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lundy offered a second. The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.**

Board Actions:

- 1. Approval of the minutes for May 18, 2023
- 2. Approval of the motion for the Consent Items



BY: Lynette Taylor Senter, Board Secretary  
Taylor Coastal Water and Sewer District