

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
ENGLEWOOD WATER DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
201 SELMA AVENUE, ENGLEWOOD, FL 34223
September 11, 2025 @ 8:30 A.M.**

Board of Supervisors:

Lani Gaver, Chair
Taylor Meals, Vice-Chair
Robert C. Stern, Jr.
Sydney B. Crampton
Tony Babington

Staff:

Keith R. Ledford, Jr., P.E., Administrator
Robert H. Berntsson, District Counsel
Dewey Futch, Water Operations Manager -absent
David Larson, Wastewater Operations Manager
Lisa Hawkins, Finance Director
Ashley Aguiar, Executive Assistant

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & ROLL CALL
2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** – Additions or Deletions – None
3. **PUBLIC INPUT** – None
4. **PRESENTATIONS** –
 - 4a. Certificate of Appreciation
 - Wastewater Plant Operator, William Skidmore – 20 years
 - Administrator, Keith Ledford, Jr. – 10 years
 - Wastewater Collections Maintenance Technician, Brian Rutan – 5 years
 - Engineer in Training, John Sedlock – 5 years
5. **CONSENT SECTION** Chair Gaver called for a motion to approve. Mr. Stern moved, “to approve the consent agenda as presented,” seconded by Mr. Meals.
 - 5a. Minutes of the Public Hearing dated August 14, 2025
Recommended Action: Approve the meeting minutes.
 - 5b. Minutes of the Regular Meeting dated August 14, 2025
Recommended Action: Approve the meeting minutes.
 - 5c. Big W Law Invoice dated September 1, 2025.
Recommended Action: Approve the attorney’s invoice in the amount of \$3,525.00.
 - 5d. Oertel, Fernandez, Bryant & Atkinson Invoice dated August 31, 2025
Recommended Action: Approve the attorney’s invoice in the amount of \$30,790.00
 - 5e. Henderson/Franklin Attorney’s Invoices dated September 2, 2025
Recommended Action: Approve the attorney’s invoice in the amount of \$255.00
 - 5f. Audit Examination Engagement Letters

UNANIMOUS

CS 25-09-11 A-F

6. **DISCUSSION**

6a. PFAS – Mr. Ledford led the discussion. PFAS was brought back for discussion following the receipt of additional information that was reviewed and discussed. The issue remains widespread across the country, including locally, and public awareness continues to grow. After the last board meeting, a contractor approached Mr. Ledford

regarding PFAS and a potential settlement offer they anticipate receiving. Mr. Meals acknowledged that while there is no guarantee of outcome, he believes it would be beneficial to proceed. Attorney Berntsson compared the situation to the BP litigation and agreed that moving forward would be in the board's best interest. In response to Ms. Gaver's inquiry regarding the firm's experience, the attorney explained that he has previously worked with the attorney who brought this matter to his attention and is both familiar with and confident in their capabilities in handling this matter.

Mr. Meals moved, "**to approve,**" seconded by Mr. Sterns.

UNANIMOUS

25-09-11 A

Full motion read: "Motion to proceed with the Agreement as prepared and authorize its execution by the Administrator."

7. ACTION ITEMS

7a. FY26 Employee Handbook – Updates – Mr. Ledford led the discussion regarding the Englewood Water District Employee Handbook, which was initially reviewed and approved by the Board of Supervisors, effective April 1, 2025, under Resolution No. CS-25-3-13D. He noted that the handbook is subject to annual review at the beginning of each fiscal year to evaluate and incorporate any necessary updates. For the upcoming fiscal year, several revisions have been proposed for the Board's consideration. These include clarifying that supervisors may require medical certification for both illness and fitness to return to work following absences of three or more days; specifying that new hires will be paid at least the minimum wage for their position as defined in the wage matrix; requiring completion of a 90-day introductory period before employees may access accrued leave; and introducing clear guidelines for the accrual, use, and payout of compensatory time in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. These updates are intended to improve clarity, ensure consistency, and align the handbook with the District's current operational practices.

Mr. Stern moved, "**to approve,**" seconded by Mr. Babington.

UNANIMOUS

25-09-11 B

Full motion read: "To accept the proposed updates and approve the Englewood Water District Employee Handbook, effective October 1, 2025."

7b. FY26 Procurements for Board Approval – Mr. Ledford led the discussion, explaining that in order to ensure a smooth transition into the new fiscal year, staff is requesting pre-approval from the Board for vendor procurements exceeding \$50,000—amounts that fall outside the Administrator's approval authority. He noted that all procurement methods for these requisitions are in full compliance with the District's Procurement & Inventory Control Policy, as outlined in Resolution No. 24-08-15 B. The amounts presented reflect estimated expenditures for Fiscal Year 2026.

Mr. Stern moved, "**to approve,**" seconded by Ms. Crampton.

UNANIMOUS

25-09-11 C

Full motion read: “To authorize the Administrator to procure services/goods up to the listed amounts for the various vendors. Purchases will not be made all at once, but per the needs of the various departments, throughout the fiscal year.”

7c. FY26 Customer Rules & Regulations - Mr. Ledford led the discussion regarding the proposed revisions to the Customer Rules and Regulations. He explained that the updates reflect changes resulting from the recently implemented Rate Study, as well as minor wording and formatting adjustments intended to improve clarity and consistency. Notable revisions include updates to Service Fees and Charges, the introduction of a Credit Card Processing Fee, and an updated definition of “Tampering” to better align with current operational practices and enforcement standards. Additionally, a new Payment Schedule provision has been added to provide greater flexibility for qualifying customers. All changes have been presented in redline format for the Board’s review. Staff is requesting Board approval to formally adopt the updated Customer Rules and Regulations, effective October 1, 2025.

Mr. Babington moved, “**to approve,**” seconded by Mr. Meals.

UNANIMOUS

25-09-11 D

Full motion read: “To approve the updated FY26 Customer Rules and Regulations, as presented in redline format, and to adopt the revisions effective October 1, 2025.”

8. ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT – Keith R. Ledford, Jr., P.E.

Ethics Course Deadline & Scheduling:

The Ethics Course is required to be completed by year-end. Tentative scheduling will begin in early October to align with the start of the new fiscal year and to allow adequate time for completion before the holiday season. Once registered, participants will have 45 days to complete the course. Please coordinate scheduling with Ms. Aguiar.

Staffing Updates:

Mr. Ledford will be out of the country from September 12 through Tuesday, September 16. During this period, Ms. Hawkins will serve as the interim administrator in Mr. Ledford’s absence. Mr. Pollack has been hired as the new GIS Specialist. All positions are currently filled, except for the Technical Support Manager role, which remains open.

8a. WATER OPERATIONS MANAGER – Dewey Futch - Matt Core served as the interim substitute during Mr. Futch’s absence.

Production

- Total water sent out for August 2025 was 76.32 million gallons (mg), compared to 75.41 mg in August 2024.
- The average daily send-out was 2.46 million gallons per day (mgd), slightly higher than the 2024 average of 2.43 mgd.
- The peak daily send-out reached 3.0 mgd, compared to a high of 2.86 mgd in 2024.
- Rainfall for August 2025 measured 7.64 inches, significantly less than the 22.73 inches recorded in August 2024.
- Operators have been performing routine maintenance and normal operations.

- Crom has been onsite throughout the month; the drain line has been replaced, and the concrete floor has been poured. The crew will return once the concrete has adequately cured to complete the floor grouting.

Distribution

- There were no incidents reported during the month.
- A hydrant on San Casa Drive was replaced, followed by two days of bacteriological testing before returning to service.
- The remainder of the month focused on valve and hydrant maintenance activities.

In August, new meter installations included:

- 16 single-family meter sets (16 ERCs)
- 157 radio heads replaced
- 11 customer requests for service shut-offs
- 16 customer requests for service turn-ons

8b. WASTEWATER OPERATIONS MANAGER – David Larson

WRF

- MADF – August 2025: 1.569 MGD
- MADF – August 2024: 2.440 MGD
- Peak Flow: 2.058 MG
- Normal operations and maintenance

Collections

- Completed 87 work orders during August
- Performed 9 sewer service cap-offs
- Repaired 14 cleanouts and 5 vents
- Coordinated with Charlotte County to relocate an air release as part of bridge construction activities
- Repaired a 4" vacuum main on Eileen Place in V6
- Completed start-up of two lift stations:
 - Lift Station #125 – upgraded facility at Beachwalk
 - Lift Station #123 – new installation at Shores of Stillwater

8c. TECHNICAL SUPPORT MANAGER – Keith R. Ledford Jr., P.E.

- **Hurricane Milton I&I** – Manhole repairs have been completed by the Hinterland Group.
- **South WRF Expansion Improvements** – The RFQ for Engineering Services will be posted September 9, 2025, with proposals due October 9. A pre-proposal meeting is set for September 23, and the selection process will conclude with Board consideration on December 11.
- **Letters to Developers** – Notices of upcoming rate changes have been issued. Developers completing projects before October 1 will retain current rates.
- **Beachwalk by Manasota Key Phase 3** – Utilities are installed; lift station start-up is scheduled for September 12, after which certification will proceed.

- **Esplanade Wellen Park** – Water main installation along River Road is underway. An emergency interconnect agreement with the City of North Port is under review, with approval targeted for December.
- **Shores of Still Water** – Phase 1A is in service as of August 29; Phase 1B utility installation is ongoing.
- **Beachwalk by Manasota Key Phase 4** – Payment and agreement are expected within the next two days.
- **Publix at Merchant's Crossing** – Plans are ready for approval. The Developer's Agreement is finalized, and demolition is scheduled later this month.

8d. FINANCE DIRECTOR – Lisa Hawkins

Financial Statements

Operating revenues through August totaled \$20.9 million, an increase of \$683,000 compared to last August. Operating expenses were \$15.9 million, reflecting a \$72,000 increase from the prior year. This resulted in an operating surplus of approximately \$5 million year-to-date. In addition, EWD received \$265,000 in capital fees from Shores at Stillwater this month, recorded under Capital Contributions.

Investment Summary

As of the end of August, EWD held \$18.6 million invested with RBC and \$5.8 million at Centennial Bank, for a combined Cash and Investments balance of \$24.4 million.

9. **ATTORNEY'S REPORT** – **Robert H. Berntsson** - Attorney Berntsson stated there's nothing significant to report at this time; the legal process is proceeding as expected. Mr. Meals inquired about the procedure for holding an Executive Committee meeting, and it was noted that the Sunshine Law outlines specific criteria that must be met in order to convene an Executive Session. The attorney also briefly provided an overview of that process, should it be needed at a later date.
10. **OLD BUSINESS** – None
11. **NEW BUSINESS** – None
12. **PUBLIC COMMENT – ANY TOPIC** – None
13. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** – Mr. Stern expressed his satisfaction upon hearing that the Public Rate Hearing was successful. Mr. Meals noted that he will be unable to attend the December Board meeting or the Employee Appreciation Celebration. Chair Gaver appreciated the update to the Customer Rules & Regulations and commended the team for their hard work on the revisions.
14. **ADJOURN @ 9:09am.**


 Taylor Meals - Vice Chair

APPROVED/aa