

**November 19, 2025**  
**POLK REGIONAL WATER COOPERATIVE**  
**Lake Myrtle Sport Complex**

**Member Governments in Attendance:**

**Member Government**

**Representative**

City of Auburndale	Commissioner Alex Cam
City of Bartow	Commissioner Trish Pfeiffer (Absent)
City of Davenport	Commissioner Tom Fellows
City of Dundee	Commissioner Bert Goddard (Absent)
City of Eagle Lake	Commissioner Randy Billings (Absent)
City of Fort Meade	Commissioner James Watts
City of Frostproof	Mayor Mike Hutto (Absent)
City of Haines City	Commissioner Vernel Smith
City of Lake Alfred	Mayor Mac Fuller (Secretary/Treasurer)
Town of Lake Hamilton	Commissioner Phyllis Hall
City of Lake Wales	Commissioner Keith Thompson
City of Lakeland	Mayor Bill Mutz (Chairman)
City of Mulberry	Commissioner Kathy Barsotti
City of Polk City	Mayor Joe LaCasia
City of Winter Haven	Mayor Nathaniel Birdsong (Vice Chairman)
Polk County	Commissioner Becky Troutman (via TEAMS)
PRWC	Eric DeHaven

**A. Call To Order – Chairman Mutz** called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

**B. Recognition of new primary/alternate appointees of members**

**Chairman Mutz** welcomed the Board members and noted that Vernel Smith and Alex Cam are in attendance as alternates. He noted that this would have been Keith Cowie's last meeting and recognized Keith for his service to the PRWC. Chairman Mutz also noted that this would be David Bayhan's last meeting serving as the City of Lakeland Utility Director. He is on his way to work with Wharton Smith in a new role.

**C. Agenda Revisions**

**Chairman Mutz** noted that there was one agenda revision which is item F.5 on the Regular Board agenda. This item mimics item H.2.

**D. Public Comments (Limited to 3 minutes)**

**Chairman Mutz** asked if there was any public comment. **Commissioner Fellows** mentioned this is the last meeting for **Mayor Mutz** and asked for a round of applause.

**Mr. DeHaven** noted that the PRWC will be recognizing **Chairman Mutz** at the end of the meeting. **Chairman Mutz** noted that this is a wonderful Board to work with and the topics are imperative to the future of Polk County. He noted it was a privilege to serve on this Board.

### **E. Consent Items**

**Chairman Mutz** noted there were several items on the consent agenda and asked **Mr. DeHaven** if there were any items he wished to provide an overview on. **Mr. DeHaven** indicated that there were no specific items to note to the Board but he can answer any questions the Board might have on these items.

E.1. Approve September 2025 BOD Regular Meeting Minutes (Action)

E.2. Approve the PRWC Board of Directors Meeting Schedule for 2026 (Action)

E.3. Approve Change Order 002 (Deductive) to Guaranteed Maximum Price GMP-3 with Florida Water Partners for the Southeast Wellfield Water Production Facility (Action)

E.4. Approve Change Order 001 (Deductive) to Guaranteed Maximum Price GMP-5 with Florida Water Partners for the Southeast Wellfield Transmission Main (Action)

E.5. Approve the Easement Agreement with Duke Energy Florida, LLC for the installation, operation and maintenance of Electric and Communication Lines on the site of the Southeast Water Production Facility (Action)

E.6. Approve Amendment 4 to FDEP Standard Agreement LPA0212 for Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act Grant Funding (Action)

*Motion to approve consent items E1-E6 in the entirety was made by **Mayor Birdsong** seconded by **Commissioner Watts**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

### **F. Regular BOD Items**

F.1. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary for the PRWC Regular Board of Directors - FY2026 (Action)

**Chairman Mutz** asked if there was a motion for officers for FY2026. **Mayor LaCascia** nominated Mayor Nathaniel Birdsong as Chairman, Mayor Mac Fuller as Vice-Chairman, and Commissioner Becky Troutman as Secretary/Treasurer.

*Motion to approve BOD to elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer for FY2026 was made by **Mayor LaCascia** seconded by **Commissioner Watts**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

F.2. Approve Resolution 2025-33 to Amend Resolution 2023-08 for the PRWC Investment Policy (Action)

**Julie Santamaria** with PFM Financial Advisors stated that we have an investment policy which was put together in 2023 with the establishment of the Truist interim loan financing. It is based on Tampa Bay Waters policy and the PRWC would like to simplify the policy due to our small level of surplus funds, capital expenditures and small staff. The policy remains in accordance with state statutes.

**Chairman Mutz** noted this item was on page 48 of the packet and asked for questions and a motion.

*Motion to approve Resolution 2025-33 to Amend Resolution 2023-08 for the PRWC Investment Policy was made by **Mayor Birdsong** seconded by **Commissioner Cam**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

F.3. Approve the Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act Annual Comprehensive Water Resources Report FY2026-2027 (Action)

**Mary Thomas** of TeamOne reviewed the Heartland Headwaters Annual Act which prioritizes water resources in this area and funding for water resources projects in Polk County. The PRWC prepares a report each year to submit to the state that requests grant funding under the Heartland Headwaters act. She provided an overview of past funding noting that the PRWC and members have received appropriations of \$41.5M in funding to date. She reviewed the process for funding and it was recommended to do joint lobbying for Heartland funds with priority for member receiving facilities, conservation and the Southeast Wellfield Project. Everyone was reminded of the importance of a unified voice in requesting funds.

The total request is for \$40.7M and she reviewed a list of the projects submitted for funding. **Chairman Mutz** noted the need to have unity on this program in our requests for funding. He asked for a motion.

*Motion to approve the Heartland Annual Comprehensive Water Resources Report and Authorize submission to the Governor, Florida Senate, Florida House of Representatives, Florida DEP, and the SWFWMD by December 1, 2025, was made by **Commissioner Fellows** seconded by **Commissioner Smith**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

F.4. Member Demand Projections for January 2026 Business Plan (Information)

**Robert Beltran** noted we are on our typical schedule of updating the Business Plan so members know how much to budget for the PRWC in Fy2027. He began by talking about updated demonstrated 2025 demands and how they were calculated. He then provided a series of graphs that showed the alternative water supply demand needs into the future. He noted that by 2075 there will be a total demand of 153 MGD and noted that we will need to have about 33 MGD of other alternative water sources beyond the lower Florida Aquifer projects.

He noted that there are individual graphs prepared for each member and showed the example of Winter Haven. He also showed bar graphs of how future needs might be met. This information was provided by members.

**Mr. Beltran** then reviewed a graphic that demonstrates a deficit in alternative water supply that the PRWC and members will need to fill. **Commissioner Watts** asked about Fort Meade's water use data. **Mr. Beltran** indicated that data came from the water management district as opposed to the utility.

**Mr. Beltran** provided a graphic of 2024 actual water use by members and noted that about 81.5 MGD of water was used in 2024. This information is the basis for each member budget amount to the PRWC. He indicated that the CFWI has some per capita goals and provided a graphic that showed how each member was progressing to meet these goals. Finally, he provided a graphic for the Southeast and West Polk projects that showed which members were expected to have excess alternative water and which had a deficit. This would allow members to potentially swap water with each other.

**Mayor Mutz** noted that we will need to bring on future alternative water supplies. **Mr. DeHaven** provided additional comments on future need for AWS and that this was first year we have looked out beyond 20 years and our 50 year projections show we need to pursue additional sources. **Commissioner Troutman** asked what was used for the 50-year projection. **Mr. Beltran** answered it was a liner interpretation based on the 20-year demands. **Commissioner Thompson** asked about how PRWC accounts for variability in growth rate. **Mr. Beltran** mentioned we try to account for that as best we can using information available through the state and local government. **Mayor LaCascia** asked about future alternative water supply sources. **Mr. DeHaven** noted we could go deeper within the lower Floridan aquifer as well as the Peace and Alafia Rivers. He noted the Peace Creek does not appear to be a feasible source. He also noted direct/indirect potable reuse as an option as well as regional interconnects.

**F.5 (Add-On Agenda Item)** Approve Resolution 2025-34 for the SRF Construction Loan Agreement DW532003 for Construction of the Southeast Wellfield Project

**Chairman Mutz** indicated this item has been added to the Regular Board agenda and will also be considered by the Southeast Board of Directors under item H.2. **Mr. DeHaven** indicated both Boards need to approve this item.

**Julie Santamaria** noted that primarily due to increased costs the PRWC needed to obtain additional funds for construction of the Southeast Wellfield. The PRWC reviewed several options and determined that SRF funding provides the best benefit to members. The PRWC has now obtained an SRF loan in the amount of \$44M with \$6.5M of principal forgiveness. The loan terms are 1.85% for 25 years. This resolution approves the use of the SRF construction loan funding for the Southeast Project.

**Chairman Mutz** asked for a motion.

*Motion to approve Resolution 2025-34 for the SRF Construction Loan DW532003 was made by **Mayor Birdsong** seconded by **Commissioner Smith**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

## **G. Recess Regular BOD/Commence Combined Projects BOD**

G.1. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary for the PRWC Combined Projects Board of Directors - FY2026 (Action)

**Chairman Mutz** asked for nominees for officer positions. **Mayor LaCascia** renominated for Chairman as Mayor Nathaniel Birdsong, Vice Chairman Mayor Mac Fuller, and Secretary/Treasurer Commissioner Becky Troutman.

*Motion to approve the Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary for the PRWC Combined Projects Board of Directors FY2026 was made by **Mayor Birdsong** seconded by **Commissioner Fellows**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

G.2. Alafia River Alternative Water Supply Project Update (Information)

**Eric DeHaven** provided an update on the Alafia River project. There are two parts the PRWC is pursuing. The first is the PRWC water use permit application which continues to be reviewed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District. The second is the permit challenge filed by the PRWC on September 30. An administrative law judge has been appointed, and the hearing has been set for March 4-11, 2026.

**Mayor LaCascia** asked what the legal basis is for the challenge. **Mr. de la Parte** indicated that the basis is that Tampa Bay Water does not need the water and they are not using all their capacity. In order to get a permit, you need to have a need for the water and since they have excess capacity they do not need the Alafia quantities. **Mr. de la Parte** also indicated that there were several other aspects that we are raising in the petition. **Mayor Birdsong** asked what happens if we lose the case. **Mr. de la Parte** indicated we can appeal and noted the Water management District has final say in the decision. **Mayor LaCascia** indicated it would be better to work with them and **Chairman Mutz** indicated that is a very possible outcome. **Commissioner Fellows** asked why the District was so quick to issue them a permit and **Mr. DeHaven** indicated that was a reason for the challenge. **Commissioner Watts** indicated that he feels Polk County is not being treated fairly by the District.

G.3. Combined Projects Future Budget (Information)

**Mr. DeHaven** indicated the current FY 2026 Combined Projects budget contains funding for West Polk Test Production Well 2 and repayment of the SRF design loans for Southeast and West Polk projects. He would like the PRWC to budget additional dollars in the combined projects budget to assist with funding future water resource investigations associated with new projects. Some existing and new water supply

opportunities needing future funding include: the Peace River Mosaic Reservoir option, the PRMRWSA Settlement Agreement permit application, TECO Polk Power Station Supply, and Regional Water Supply Planning. He provided a summary of each of these projects. **Commissioner Watts** asked where the approximate area of the Peace River reservoir would be located. **Mr. DeHaven** pointed out the location of the possible reservoir. The approximate funding to be included in the preliminary budget in July 2026 is anticipated to be approximately \$1M for funding these projects.

**Commissioner Watts** asked if the proposed \$1M in funding would cover all the items discussed. **Mr. DeHaven** indicated it likely would for FY2027 but funds would also be needed in future fiscal years.

#### G.4. Update on the Development of Minimum Flows for the Upper Peace River and Request to Use Funds for PRWC Technical Review (Action)

**Mr. DeHaven** indicated this ties-in to the previous item discussed as the PRWC needs to collect funds from members for review of the proposed upper Peace River minimum flows proposed by the District. The District and PRWC agreed to end the Upper Peace River feasibility project early due to the development of the revised minimum flows. The Water Management District is in the process of developing new revised minimum flows. Those revised flows would reduce the amount of water the PRWC could take from the Peace River by about 11 MGD – from 28,0 MGD down to about 17 MGD. To make sure the new proposed minimum flows are technically correct, the PRWC would like to hire a consultant from TeamOne for \$49,828 to work with WMD on the peer review of the proposed minimum flows. As a result, members will be billed for these costs by end of FY2026.

**Commissioner Thompson** asked how the peer review process works. **Mr. DeHaven** provided an overview summarizing that our expert is in the room to assist in making final decisions on the proposed minimum flows. **Mayor Birdsong** asked how much water the Authority takes from the River and **Mr. de la Parte** responded.

*Motion to approve the TeamOne Scope- of-Services-Change Order 9 for review of the revised Upper Peace River minimum flow and amend the Combined Projects budget by \$49,828 to cover costs was made by **Mayor Birdsong** seconded by **Commissioner Watts**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

**Chairman Mutz** recessed the Combined Project Board of Directors meeting and turned the gavel over to **Chairman Birdsong** for the Southeast Wellfield Project Board of Directors meeting.

#### H. Recess Combined Projects BOD/Commence Southeast Wellfield BOD

H.1. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary for the PRWC Southeast Wellfield Project Board of Directors for FY2026 (Action)

**Mr. DeHaven** provided an overview of the officers for the Southeast Board of Directors. The election period to serve in these offices is December 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026. **Chairman Birdsong** and **Vice-Chairman Cowie** have served 2 consecutive terms, and Secretary/Treasurer Pfeiffer can rotate to a new position.

**Mayor Birdsong** offered up Trish Pfeiffer as Chairman, Becky Troutman as the Vice Chairman, and Morris West as the Secretary/Treasurer for the PRWC Southeast Wellfield Project Board of Directors FY2026.

*Motion to approve the Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary for the PRWC Southeast Wellfield Project Board of Directors FY2026 was made by **Commissioner Fellows** seconded by **Commissioner Watts**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

H.2. Approve Resolution 2025-34 for the SRF Construction Loan Agreement DW532003 for Construction of the Southeast Wellfield Project (Action)

**Mr. DeHaven** indicated that **Julie Santamaria** presented this item to the PRWC Regular Board of Directors earlier today so we are sampling looking for a motion to approve.

*Motion to approve Resolution 2025-34 for the SRF Construction Loan Agreement DW532003 for the Southeast Wellfield Project was made by **Commissioner Cam** seconded by **Commissioner Fellows**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

H.3. Update on Southeast Wellfield Project (Information)

**Mark Addison** provided an update on final design, bidding and construction, land acquisition, and permitting. The water production facility design is complete, and ongoing pipeline design refinements are in progress. GMP's 1-5 have been approved by the board and are in various stages of construction. GMP 6 will be brought before the board in January 2026, and the BPS and Metering Stations will be brought before the board in Spring 2026.

Regarding well construction, PW-9 drilling is underway, PW-10 drilling is complete, and PW-11 is complete, mobilization is planned for December 2025 for PW-14. The Water Production Facility construction continues and substantial completion is scheduled for Fall 2028.

Land acquisition settlements have been reached on 238 parcels, totaling nearly \$11.7M. Work continues to acquire the final easements necessary for the project. Land acquisition is the critical path currently on the project timeline. All permits for plant and raw water main have been issued.

**Chairman Birdsong** indicate this was an information item and asked if there were any questions. **Mr. DeHaven** indicated that we are available for member tours.

**Mayor Mutz** asked for **Mr. Addison's** opinion on construction progress. **Mr. Addison** indicated that we are in good shape on construction and and acquisition has been the challenge. He indicated he was confident we would finish on time and members should be ready to receive water. **Commissioner Fellows** asked how many production wells were needed for Phase 1. **Mr. Addison** indicated five wells were needed and we are beginning construction on the final well.

H.4. Adopt Resolution 2025-35 to Amend Resolution 2024-43 Parcel Resolution of Necessity to Replace the Sketch and Legal Description for Parcel 1011 to Implement the Southeast Lower Floridan Aquifer Water Production Facility and Southeast Transmission Line Projects (Action)

**Mark Addison** provided an overview and showed a location map for parcel 1011. He indicated we were replacing a sketch and legal description to reduce the area of the PRWC temporary construction easement due to a change in construction technique to directional bore.

*Motion to Adopt Resolution 2025-35 to Amend Resolution 2024-43 Parcel Resolution of Necessity to Replace the Sketches and Legal Description for Parcel 1011-PE and TCE was made by **Commissioner Fellows** seconded by **Commissioner Cam**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

H.5. Approve the Mediated Settlement with Korosh and Christiane Kiandost for PRWC Parcel Number 5074 Permanent and Temporary Construction Easements (Action)

**Mr. DeHaven** indicated that on October 7, 2025, the PRWC completed a mediated session with the owner and reached a monetary settlement. He provided a map showing the parcel location. The PRWC appraisal amount was \$32,200 and the property owner wanted \$359,080 to settle. The settlement was reached at \$135,000 with statutory attorney fees of \$25,410 and expert fees of \$40,000. This results in a total easement cost of \$200,410.

The PRWC will receive easements over 0.99 acres and a jury trial was avoided.

*Motion to approve the Mediated Settlement with Kiandost's for PRWC Parcel Number 5074 PE and TCE was made by **Mayor LaCascia** seconded by **Mayor Mutz**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

H.6. Approve the Purchase Agreement with Collany LLC for the Acquisition of PRWC Southeast Wellfield Site 14 and Negotiated Settlement for Parcel 11000 Permanent and Temporary Construction Easements for the Southeast Wellfield Project (Action)

Mr. DeHaven noted that in October 2025 discussions with the property owner, Collany LLC, on Well Site 14 and the transmission main easement were held. In November 2025, an agreement was reached, and the easement was completed. The well site will be purchased by the PRWC. Maps were provided that showed the well site and

easement. The appraisal amount offered was \$130,850. The owner countered at \$325,000 and a settlement was reached at \$226,150 with no statutory attorney fees or expert costs.

PRWC receives ownership on 1.11 acres and easements over 0.91 acres. The PRWC will begin construction on the well site in January 2026.

*Motion to approve the Purchase Agreement with Collany LLC for the acquisition of Southeast Wellfield Well Site 14 and permanent and temporary easements for PRWC parcel 11000 was made by **Commissioner Fellows** seconded by **Commissioner Camm**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

**Chairman Birdsong** concluded the Southeast Wellfield Board of Directors meeting and passed the gavel back to **Chairman Mutz** for the West Polk Board of Directors meeting.

### **I. Recess Southeast Wellfield BOD/Commence West Polk BOD**

I.1. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary for the PRWC West Polk Wellfield Project Board of Directors for FY2026 (Action)

**Chairman Mutz** proposed that Commissioner Mike Musik step into the primary role as Chairman, Mayor Joe LaCascia as Vice-Chairman and Commissioner Alex Cam for Secretary/Treasurer for West Polk Wellfield.

*Motion to request the BOD to elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer for FY2026 was made by **Mayor Birdsong** seconded by **Mayor Fuller**. Motion was unanimously approved.*

I.2. Update on the West Polk Wellfield Project (Information)

**Mary Thomas** provided an overview of the West Polk Project. She stated the Test Production Well and Injection Well Construction are in progress. Water delivery is anticipated in 2032, and we are kicking off design of the water production facility in the Summer of 2026. The construction team will be reviewing the 30% design documents. Acquisition is ongoing and Heartland appropriations have been set aside to be used for purchases.

### **J. Recess West Polk BOD/Commence Regular BOD**

### **K. Open Discussion**

Chairman Mutz asked if there were any topics that Board members wished to bring up.

### **L. Chair / Executive Director Report**

**Eric DeHaven** and **Mayor Birdsong** acknowledged Mayor Mutz for his time with PRWC and presented him with a rendering of the West Polk Water Production Facility. **Mayor**

**Birdsong** noted how important the contributions have been by Mayor Mutz. The Board members had continued discussion thanking Mayor Mutz for his leadership.

**Mayor Mutz** noted the collaboration amongst all the members and has really enjoyed his time on the Board.

**M. Adjournment** Meeting was adjourned at 3:39PM.

**In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact the Polk County Communications Office not later than forty-eight hours prior to the proceeding. Their offices are located in the Neil Combee Administration Building, 330 West Church Street in Bartow. Telephone (863) 534-6090, TDD (863) 534-7777 or 1-800-955-8771, Voice Impaired 1-800-955-8770 via Florida Relay Service.**

**If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.**