

**MINUTES OF THE TENTATIVE BUDGET HEARING  
of the  
LAKE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY  
September 12, 2018**

The Tentative Budget Hearing of the Board of Trustees of the Lake County Water Authority was held at 5:05 p.m. on Wednesday, September 12, 2018 in the Lake County Administration Building, County Commissioners Chambers at 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

**Members Present-District #**

Doug Bryant, Chairman (#4)  
Amy Stone, Vice Chairman (#5)  
Peggy Cox, (#1)  
Keith A. Farner, (At Large)  
Adam Dufresne, (At Large)

**Staff Present**

Michael J. Perry, Executive Director  
Ron Hart, Water Resources Director  
Dr. Jason Danaher, Water Res. Project Manager  
Biago Gugliotti, Land Resources Director  
Ben Garcia, IT Manager  
Christina Rider, Executive Office Manager  
Anna Ely, Recording Secretary

A list of others present that signed the attendance roster is filed in the permanent files of the Water Authority.

**1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Bryant called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm and stated, “*The Tentative Budget Hearing for the Lake County Water Authority is now called to order.*” Everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. OPENING REMARKS**

Chairman Bryant stated, “*This first public budget hearing is for the purpose of adopting and amending if necessary the tentative budget, recomputing the proposed millage rate, if necessary, publicly announcing the percent by which the recomputed proposed millage is above or below the rolled-back rate, and if applicable, discussion of the specific purposes for which ad valorem tax revenues are being increased.*”

**3. FY 2017-2018 TENTATIVE BUDGET AND MILLAGE ADOPTION**

- a. Announce Proposed Millage Rate - 0.4900 mills

Chairman Bryant announced the proposed millage rate stating, “*The proposed millage rate is 0.4900 mills.*”

- b. Announce Proposed Millage Rate is 102.90% above the Rolled-Back Rate of 0.2415 mills

Chairman Bryant stated, “*The proposed millage rate of 0.4900 is 102.90% above the rolled-back rate of 0.2415 mills.*”

c. Purposes for Which Ad Valorem Tax Revenues Are Being Increased

Chairman Bryant stated, *“The purpose of the increase in the tax revenue for FY 2018-2019 is to keep up with the increasing costs of the Authority’s water resource protection programs that are the result of continued county growth.”*

He explained that Hurricane Irma has depleted Water Authority reserves and stated that the Water Authority is looking at three major projects totaling approximately six million dollars that are the reason for the increase.

He explained that they are looking at purchasing the Lake Denham Muck Farm, which is the single highest pollutant to the Harris Chain of Lakes with an approximate cost of two million dollars.

He stated that the second project the Water Authority is looking at is possible alum treatments of Lake Yale, which is one of the most polluted lakes in the County and State and that the third project is 1.5 million dollars for funding of supplemental treatments for hydrilla to augment or supplement the work being done by Fish and Wildlife.

He stated that most likely there would be no increase in millage without those projects.

d. Public Comments and Questions

Linda Moss addressed the Board and suggested that they reallocate funds to dredge the Tammi Drive and Lois Drive Canals.

Chairman Bryant reminded her that she need to keep her remarks on the topic of the budget. He asked how she was suggesting they reallocate the money.

Ms. Moss stated that she would suggest that they allocate \$179,000, which was the approximate cost of the extra dredge that the Board decided not to purchase.

Vance Jochim addressed the Board and stated that he would recommend that as part of the ordinance raising the millage, that they be specific that they are going to roll back the rate to .2415 in one year.

He suggested that instead of doubling the millage, that the Water Authority look at disposing of some of their passive land, in order to concentrate more fully on the water. He also suggested disposing of Hickory Point Park to another agency.

He stated that the Water Authority also needed to have aggressive lobbying efforts to gain assistance from the Legislature in requiring the assistance of other agencies, such as the City of Apopka, etc. in cleaning up the water coming into our system from theirs. He also suggested that the Water Authority post a chart on their website as to which Agency is responsible for doing what when it comes to water.

Mr. Farner stated that the Board is trying to work with the Legislative Delegation.

Ms. Moss asked what the plan for the muck farm is after it has been purchased and it was explained that once it was purchased and the muck farm was no longer active, the flow of water from the muck

farm is stopped, and the phosphorous would stay on the muck farm and not flow into the Harris Chain.

Jim LaGrone, Pine Hills in the Villages, stated that he moved here from Washington DC area, and was surprised to hear that hydrilla was such an issue here in Florida.

Mr. Farner explained that the lakes here are shallow, not deep like in the north, and the hydrilla is very aggressive and it is a continuing battle to prevent it from overtaking the lakes.

Vice Chair Stone also explained that there is a huge environmental difference between north and south. She stated that here in Florida there are no four seasons and no die off of the plants in the winter.

Ms. Cox explained that here in Florida, hydrilla is a navigational problem. She noted that there have been lakes where agencies have tried to keep it confined, but as it is so aggressive, the cost to keep it contained costs millions of dollars. She stated that as the number of boaters and fisherman have greatly increased, so has the transference of hydrilla from lake to lake from careless boating.

Mr. LaGrone asked why the can't muck farm be dealt with legislatively and asked whether there were any laws or rules to keep that sort of thing from happening.

Mr. Perry explained that in Florida, agricultural uses are exempt from a lot of the normal legislative rules. He stated that unfortunately Lake Apopka is an example of high nutrient levels that are discharged from muck farms can do to a lake. He explained that Lake Apopka became a green slimy mess and Orange County and the State of Florida stepped in and acquired several acres of muck farms in an attempt to control the discharge of nutrients into the lake.

Ms. Cox stated that she was heavily involved with the Audubon in 1998 when the project began, and it has taken twenty years to return the muck farm lands to marsh and wildlife sanctuary.

Mr. Perry explained that Water Authority Board members are hoping to restore the Lake Denham Muck Farm land back to marsh and its natural state.

Mr. Farner explained that in the past, parts of Lake Apopka were drained off to create farms on the rich soil underneath. He stated that it has been a long process to restore the property and the reclamation is still ongoing.

It was noted that the Water Authority is not interested in spending money uselessly or to make somebody money, and that its purpose is to conserve and manage our natural resources, which is an issue that will continue to be more important.

Brock Falicenstine stated that it takes communities and business getting together to solve the problem, not the legislature. He stated that it takes the public wanting clean water and clean land to get the job done. He suggested networking with other areas with successful programs in place for ideas.

Don Bozick, Pine Hills in the Villages, talked about the difference between millage in Sumter County and the millage in Lake County. He stated that they would just like some assurance that the

millage will not continue to rise, but instead will be lowered to what it was once these projects are completed.

He also stated that the Water Authority should feel free to reach out to the community if they want help with the legislature. He noted that there are many retirees that would be happy to advocate for the Water Authority.

John Mobilian asked why the Water Authority didn't impose an ad valorem tax, and noted that once the millage is increased, it usually isn't reduced back to what it was.

Mr. Perry explained that it is all the Water Authority is legislatively allowed to do.

e. Consider Amendments to Tentative Budget

Mr. Perry explained that one of changes to the budget were the recalculation of the commissions to the Property Appraiser and the Tax Collector. He stated that the amount was increased for the Property Appraiser and was reduced for the Tax Collector.

He also explained that the Lake Norris Project with the Department of Environmental Protection will not be completed before the end of this fiscal year and has been added into the budget and put in the Cash Carry Forward.

He noted that the last change was a reduction in the amount being budgeted for the Lake Yale Whole Lake Alum Treatment Project to allow for the increase in commissions.

f. Adopt Tentative Millage Rate - 0.4900 mills

**MS. COX MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE TENTATIVE MILLAGE OF 0.4900 MILLS.**

Mr. Dufresne seconded the motion.

**Motion approved 5-0.**

g. Adopt Tentative Budget

**MS. COX MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE TENTATIVE BUDGET IN THE AMOUNT OF \$16,954,728.** Vice Chair Stone seconded the motion.

**Motion approved 5-0.**

**4. ANNOUNCE TIME, DATE, & LOCATION FOR FINAL BUDGET HEARING**

Chairman Bryant stated, *“The final budget hearing for the Lake County Water Authority will be held on September 26, 2018, at 5:05 p.m. in the Lake County Administration Building, Lake County Board of County Commission Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, FL.”*

**5. ADJOURNMENT OF FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 TENTATIVE BUDGET HEARING**

Chairman Bryant stated, “*The Tentative Budget Hearing for the Lake County Water Authority is now adjourned.*”

Meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Anna Ely, Recording Secretary

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Gary Cooney, Secretary-Treasurer

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Doug Bryant, Chairman