

# **MINUTES**

## **Key Colony Beach Utility Board**

Tuesday, December 19th, 2023 – 9:30 am

Key Colony Inn Banquet Room, 700 W. Ocean Drive, Key Colony Beach  
& via Zoom Conferencing

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Rollcall:** The Key Colony Beach Utility Board meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Bill Fahs followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Rollcall. **Present:** Ed Carey, Donald Steamer, Bud Fernandes, Vice-Chair Bill Fahs. **Also present:** Mayor Joey Raspe, Code Officer Barry Goldman, Plant Operator Dave Evans, Administrative Assistant Tammie Anderson, City Clerk Silvia Gransee.

**Public Attendance:** 4

2. **Election of Chair/Vice-Chair:** Vice-Chair Bill Fahs asked for a nomination for Chair.

**NOMINATION:** Bud Fernandes nominated Bill Fahs for Chair. Ed Carey seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations.

**ON THE NOMINATION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval. Bill Fahs was elected Chair.

Chair Fahs asked for a nomination for Vice-Chair.

**NOMINATION:** Ed Carey nominated Bud Fernandes.

**ON THE NOMINATION:** Bud Fernandes appreciated the nomination but declined due to his current position as Treasurer.

**NOMINATION:** Bud Fernandes nominated Ed Carey for Vice-Chair.

There were no other nominations.

**ON THE NOMINATION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval. Ed Carey was elected Vice-Chair.

3. **Agenda Additions, Changes, Deletions:** Chair Fahs informed of changes in the agenda line-up. The Board agreed to all changes.

4. **Items for Discussion/Approval**

- a. **Discussion/Approval of a recommendation to the City Commission for the following new Board members:**

- i. Joseph T. Turgeon – Full Board member
- ii. Gilbert Gilbertson – Alternate Board member

Chair Fahs introduced the agenda item and asked for any questions from the Board. Chair Fahs asked about the applicants residency throughout the year. Gil Gilbertson advised on living in the city year around and Joe Turgeon stated to live in the city for about 6 month out of the year. Chair Fahs asked about the candidates preferences on membership. City Clerk Gransee advised on Board requirements and recommended for a full-time member to be a full-time resident. City Clerk Gransee further advised on Zoom and quorum requirements. Chair Fahs asked the candidates on their ability to switch their preferred memberships. Both candidates agreed.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Ed Carey to recommend the appointment of Gil Gilbertson as a full-time member and Joe Turgeon as an alternate member to the Utility Board. Donald Steamer seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

City Clerk Gransee informed for the recommendation to be presented to the City Commission at the January meeting.

**b. Discussion/Approval of Proposal by Burke Energy Solutions on Solar Energy:** Greg Galmin, Chief Operations

Officer from Burke Energy Solutions, spoke to the Board on a preliminary proposal for the Water Treatment Plant for solar power. Mr. Galmin spoke on the companies background, company, and vision, and the benefits of the use of solar in Florida. Greg Galmin spoke on the current energy consumption for the city, possible locations, and gave a preliminary analysis on energy loads and costs. Mr. Galmin spoke about the Key Largo Wastewater Plant and their implementation of solar power and gave further details on the proposal. Mr. Galmin gave details of the solar panels at the Key Largo plant and offered a site visit to the facility. Mr. Galmin informed of tax credits and how to move forward with the proposed project. Mr. Galmin gave an overview of the companies projects globally and gave details on different projects and associated challenges.

Mr. Galmin concluded his presentation and asked for questions from the Board.

Bud Fernandes asked about predictions of energy costs, savings, and possible incurring expenses for the city. Mr. Galmin explained that the proposal was drafted around the information provided by the city's engineer and informed that the data can be reviewed again. Bud Fernandes further asked on the use and ability to sell power. Greg Galmin explained the restrictions on selling power in the State of Florida and the ability to use a net metering process to store power at the Utility company for later use. Mr. Galmin talked further about battery backup systems, which were not included in the proposal due to cost. Greg Galmin talked on different options for car ports depending on space on site and the strength of the structures due to wind load requirements. Greg Galmin talked on the possible tax credit from the Federal Government and agreed to do further research on the topic. Greg Galmin confirmed the Board's ability to tour the Key Largo Plant. Mr. Galmin further suggested for the Key Largo Plant Manager to give financial insight to the Board on how the Key Largo Plant received the funding.

Mr. Galmin's Italian Associates gave further information on the ability to receive a tax credits as a non-profit entity. Greg Galmin stated to provide further documentation on the matter.

Greg Galmin stated that only electrical work is being given to subcontractors and for local contractors to be preferred if possible.

Donald Steamer gave his understanding of the proposal and asked about the ability to store power. Greg Galmin confirmed that there is a small fee for the storage of power and the possible need for the construction of a structure. Greg Galmin estimated a cost of 2 Million Dollars for the proposed project and talked on different financing options. Donald Steamer further talked on the questions on financing, storage of power, and construction. Greg Galmin confirmed there to be variables and this being a temporary study.

Bud Fernandes asked what type of paneling is being used which was clarified as being State certified and State requirements of the use of 420 watts.

Greg Galmin thanked the Board and there were no other questions.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Ed Carey to continue the discussion on the use of Solar Power next month. Bud Fernandes seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** Bud Fernandes concluded for the continuation to include a road trip to the Key Largo Plant for the Board, grant funding, and an assessment from Plant Operator Dave Evans on the condition of current buildings.

Discussion continued on the requirements on site usage. Engineer Jason Shepler suggested obtaining prior approval from the District on the placement of solar panels and possible permit requirements. Jason Shepler identified the District as the South Florida Water Management District who holds the permit over the facility. Jason Shepler recommended a trip to the Key Largo facility and a meeting with Peter Rosasco on possible grant funding. City Clerk Gransee City Clerk Gransee clarified the motion to the Board and asked the Board to follow Sunshine Law while on the fact-finding trip to Key Largo.  
**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

**c. Discussion & Recommendation of Approval of Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey (SSES) Proposal in the amount \$78,500:**

Chair Fahs introduced the agenda item and recognized Donald Steamer to speak on the matter. Donald Steamer talked on previous discussions by the Board and for the submitted proposal not being adequate.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Donald Steamer to reject the proposal for it did not satisfy the Boards bid requirements. Bill Fahs seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** Donald Steamer spoke on the last report that was provided and shared a drafted letter asking for a bid with a request for cost for a video, costs for minor repairs, and costs to prepare a bid for major repairs.

City Clerk Gransee reminded to discuss only the motion at hand and asked for rollcall.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Bud Fernandes asked to abstain from the vote. City Clerk Gransee informed on Florida Statutes regarding abstaining from a vote. Bud Fernandes explained his reasoning behind his request and agreed to a vote. Ed Carey – Yes. Donald Steamer – Yes. Bud Fernandes – No. Bill Fahs – No. The motion was tied. City Clerk Gransee informed of bringing the item back for consideration at the following month.

Donald Steamer expressed dissatisfaction with the outcome of the vote. Bud Fernandes stated the need for more information. Additional discussion followed on how to move forward.

Chair Fahs recognized Commissioner Foster on the topic.

Commissioner Foster spoke on failures in the system due to not having been inspected and suggested to look at the conditions of the system, cleaning, and seeing what repairs are needed in the future.

Bill Fahs recognized Dave Evans.

Dave Evans spoke on the prior meetings request to clean and inspect the collection system and informed what was provided with. Dave Evans recommended the rejection of the proposal from Mittauer and to prepare a bid for the cleaning, TV, and repair the entire collection system similar to what was done in 2017.

Commissioner Harding spoke on the prior bid that was completed and Dave Evans gave additional input on what is included in the bid. Commissioner Harding gave further suggestions on how to move forward and agreed with what work needs to be done.

Chair Fahs asked for a motion to put a bid package together for the evaluation and inspection of the sewer lines. Commissioner Harding suggested for the separation of the inspection and repairs for cost and time concerns. Dave Evans clarified his request on inspecting, cleaning, televising, and locating the leaks in the first step, and to address them second. Further discussion followed on cost, time, and separate contractors for inspecting and repairs.

Vice-Chair Foster asked for clarification on cleaning before inspecting, which Dave Evans confirmed. Vice-Mayor Foster recommended to put a bid together to clean, inspect, and to evaluate repairs based on severity and available funds. Discussion continued on prior companies used for the cleaning and inspection.

Chair Fahs asked for a motion.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Bud Fernandes to request a proposal for cleaning and inspecting the sewer collection system in Key Colony Beach. Ed Carey seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** Donald Steamer expressed his understanding on the current request for a proposal.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

- d. **Discussion/Approval for Mittauer Engineering to investigate drainage issues in areas of completed swales (per Commission directive from November 16th meeting):** Bill Fahs introduced the agenda item and asked for Commissioner Harding's input. Commissioner Harding spoke on the recent rain event and effects on 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Commissioner Harding explained the establishment of a database with photographic documentation for submittal to the South Florida Water Management District. Commissioner Harding explained the main concerns, being road blockage for Fire and Emergency Services and benefits of future grant influences. Commissioner Harding confirmed to continue working on the database and asked for Board members to provide additional documentation in case of future events. Bud Fernandes gave additional suggestion in factoring in the moon and tide cycles. Commissioner Harding informed on data of salinity levels in different areas of the city and the retention pond being influenced by the tide tables. Commissioner Harding confirmed for pictures to be ideal for the report.
- e. **Sewer problem on 11<sup>th</sup> Street \*\*addendum\*\*:** Chair Fahs introduced the agenda item and asked what additional information is needed for a solution. Plant Operator Evans explained that the entire collection system needs to be televised and cleaned including 11<sup>th</sup> Street which will be included in the requested proposal. Vice-Mayor Foster informed of the failure of pump stations during rain events and drainage problems of houses on the city side. Dave Evans informed on going to scope the area to identify issues.

Commissioner Harding reminded the Chair of the ability to hold an emergency meeting if needed and costs below \$5,000.00 can be authorized by the Mayor.

- f. **Discussion on the assessment and charges for the services and uses of city sewer facilities:** Chair Fahs recognized Donald Steamer. Donald Steamer spoke on the proposed method of a base fee and a fee for use and to change it from a quarterly basis to a monthly charge. Donald Steamer informed on a fee in the amount of \$1.77 per month, per bill, that was provided by FKAA to bill and collect the fees for wastewater. Donald Steamer further informed for FKAA to be responsible for delinquent users and talked on how the assessment would be calculated on the water bill. Donald Steamer explained the relation of fixed costs and a cost for use and made a motion to accept the change how the city bills wastewater.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Donald Steamer to make a recommendation to accept the change how the City bills for wastewater to the City Commission, for action to change the method which residents and commercial users are being billed for wastewater. Donald Steamer stated for this to align with every other municipality in the Keys. Ed Carey seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** Ed Carey asked about the reasoning behind the proposed change in the assessment of fees. Donald Steamer explained that the change would allow for every user to be charged for use and cost of the sewer plant would be equitably assigned to all. Bud Fernandes gave concerns on cost on third-party billing. Donald Steamer stated that the price was given to the prior City Administrator. Discussion continued on price calculations and money being used on hiring another Utility Clerk. Donald Steamer explained that administrative costs are currently incurred which would fall away if FKAA take over the billing. Bud Fernandes stated to understand the billing on usage but gave concerns on not having a designated person for the Utility Board. Bud Fernandes suggested for the city to continue the billing process with a dedicated Utility billing person. Commissioner Foster asked for City Clerk Gransee to give additional information on the subject.

City Clerk Gransee gave support for a change in assessment in fees and spoke against the hiring of a new Utility Clerk. Mayor Raspe explained that the user fee can be rolled into the billing.

City Clerk Gransee restated the motion.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Ed Carey – Yes. Donald Steamer – Yes. Bud Fernandes – No. Bill Fahs – Yes. The motion passed.

- g. Discussion/Approval of Cost for Wastewater Sampling Continuation:** Chair Fahs introduced the agenda item and asked Dave Evans to speak on the matter. Dave Evans explained for this to represent the continuation of the wastewater sampling with a cost of \$39.79 per sampling. Chair Fahs asked for a motion.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Ed Carey to continue the wastewater sampling. Bud Fernandes seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** City Clerk Gransee clarified for the approval not to include any backpay.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

- 5. Citizen Comments and Correspondence:** None.

- 6. Next Meeting Discussion:** The Committee confirmed the next meeting date of Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

- 7. Approval of Minutes:** Regular Meeting Minutes November 13th, 2023.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Ed Carey to approve the meeting minutes. Bill Fahs seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall. Unanimous approval.

- 8. Utility Clerk's Monthly Report:** City Clerk Gransee asked for any questions on the report. There were none.

Code Officer Goldman updated on the sewer inspection enforcements and informed on 15 property owners that are remaining to have the required inspections. The Board directed Code Officer Goldman to continue as usual.

- 9. City Administrator's Sewer and Storm Water Grant update**

**10. Operator's Monthly Report**

- a. November 2023**

Plant Operator Dave Evans gave his monthly report for November. Dave Evans informed that all lift stations are functioning well with some issues on 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

**10. Treasurer's Report**

**a. Approval of Wastewater Financial Reports**

**i.** Income Statement

**ii.** Balance Sheet

**iii.** Warrant No. 1123-WW in the amount of \$51,161.51

Bud Fernandes gave the November Financial Wastewater Report in his capacity as Secretary-Treasurer and asked for approval of the Wastewater warrant.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Bud Fernandes to approve the motion. Ed Carey seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

**b. Approval of Stormwater Financial Reports**

**i.** Income Statement

**ii.** Balance Sheet

iii. Warrant No. 1123-SW in the amount of \$2,000.00

Bud Fernandes gave the November Financial Stormwater Report in his capacity as Secretary-Treasurer and asked for approval of the Stormwater warrant.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Bud Fernandes to approve the warrant. Bill Fahs seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ON THE MOTION:** Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

**11. Any Other Business:** None.

**12. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:38 am.

Respectfully submitted,

*Silvia Gransee*

City Clerk

**ADOPTED: February 20, 2024**

***City Clerk***

***Silvia Gransee***