MINUTES

Key Colony Beach Utility Board

Tuesday, September 15, 2026 – 10:00 AM

Temporary Meeting Place for the City of Key Colony Beach

The Key Colony Inn – Back Patio, 700 W. Ocean Drive, Key Colony Beach & via Zoom Conferencing

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer, & Rollcall:** The Key Colony Beach Utility Board meeting was called to order by Chair Fred Swanson at 10:00 AM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer, and Rollcall. **Present**: Chair Fred Swanson, Gil Gilbertson, Liz Kohout Stephens, Joe Schmidt (via Zoom). **Excused**: Vice-Chair Ed Carey. **Also present:** City Administrator John Bartus, Administrative Assistant Par Darnall, City Clerk Silvia Roussin, US Water Operator Shane Ellis, Plant Operator Danny Price, Commissioner Kirk Diehl, Mayor Freddie Foster (via Zoom), Commissioner Tom Harding.

2. **Approval of Agenda** *(Additions, changes, and deletions can be made via one motion and a second to approve by majority vote)*

   There were no changes to the agenda, and Chair Swanson asked for a motion to approve.

   MOTION: Motion made by Gil Gilbertson to approve. Liz Kohout Stephens seconded the motion.
   DISCUSSION: None.
   ON THE MOTION: Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

3. **Citizen Comments and Correspondence:** None.

   City Clerk Roussin introduced Danny Price as one of the City's new Plant Operators to the Board. The Board welcomed Mr. Price and had no questions.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** 08-18-2026 Utility Board Meeting Minutes

   There were no changes to the minutes, and Chair Swanson asked for a motion to approve.

   MOTION: Motion made by Gil Gilbertson to approve. Liz Kohout Stephens seconded the motion.
   DISCUSSION: None.
   ON THE MOTION: Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

5. **Review of Sludge Hauling for August:** Chair Swanson reviewed August sludge-hauling activity. US Water Operator Shane Ellis explained that sludge hauling was low due to reduced wastewater flow from toilet and sink use and limited rainfall. There were no further questions.

6. **Items for Discussion & Recommendation of Approval**
   - **a.** Discussion/Approval of a Recommendation to Award the Lift Station Project Bid
     - **1.** Tabulations
     - **2.** Recommendation by CPH

Chair Swanson introduced the agenda item, expressed support for the recommendation, and invited questions from the Board. City Administrator Bartus explained that the City had applied for grant funding to elevate the lift stations above flood level and protect them from storm surge. He stated that the project had been advertised for bid and that CPH determined Pedro Falcon to be the lowest responsible bidder and recommended approval. City Administrator Bartus further confirmed that the bid met engineering and state requirements.

Commissioner Harding elaborated on the awarded grant funds and the need for replacement work. He advised the Board to anticipate possible change orders due to aging conduits, rusted components, and other conditions that may require additional replacement. Commissioner Harding also recalled damage from Hurricane Irma to two control panels and stated that the new stations would be elevated approximately seven to eight feet above ground. Commissioner Harding noted that the City has 15 lift stations with individual control panels; two were completed after Hurricane Irma, and the grant will cover 13 of the 15 stations.

There was no further discussion, and Chair Swanson asked for a motion to recommend approval to the City Commission.

MOTION: Motion made by Liz Kohout Stephens to approve. Gil Gilbertson seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION: City Clerk Roussin clarified that the approval is a recommendation to award the project to Pedro Falcon.
ON THE MOTION: Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval.

b. Discussion/Approval of a Wastewater Operator/Technician Position Request

Commissioner Harding discussed prior sewage spills, maintenance needs, and the importance of improved technical support and real-time monitoring. Commissioner Harding stated that the engineers were expected to provide a draft of a State-required corrective action by the end of the month and noted concerns about outdated technology, inadequate maintenance, and limited staffing coverage. Commissioner Harding explained that failures lead to additional costs, corrective actions, and potential fines, and emphasized the need for support during storm events, weekends, holidays, and heavy rain. Commissioner Harding also referenced the week of July 4th and the corresponding rain event, stating that improved maintenance, staffing at peak times, and upgrades to monitoring technology would help the City be more proactive. Commissioner Harding noted that during the interview process for Danny Price, the City found another strong candidate with wastewater and lift-station experience and recommended approving an additional Wastewater position. He said the position would support the City's case with the State, help reduce future expenses, and be brought before the City Commission if the Board recommended it. Commissioner Harding further commented that an additional employee would help provide proper weekend and vacation coverage, as well as coverage at nights and in off hours. There was no further discussion, and Chair Swanson asked for a motion to approve.

MOTION: Motion made by Chair Swanson to add a technician position. Liz Kohout Stephens seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION: None.
ON THE MOTION: Rollcall vote. Unanimous approval. **Note: Joe Schmidt had technical difficulties and did not participate in Rollcall.

City Clerk Roussin informed the Board that the recommendation will be presented to the City Commission

on Thursday.

7. **City Hall Staff Report:** The Board had no questions. Chair Swanson thanked staff for all their work.

8. **Sewer and Stormwater Grant Update:** City Administrator Bartus reported on the executed interlocal agreement for Stewardship funds and the allocation of $1.5 million per year to the City. John Bartus further informed of grant applications for the Non-Point Management Program for Stormwater improvements for outfalls on 11th and 12th Street, Alternate Water Supply grants for improvements to the Wastewater Reuse System with a grant application deadline for next February. City Administrator Bartus reported on the check presentation by State Representatives for a $475,000 appropriation to replace the wastewater plant's emergency generator. John Bartus informed on the Florida Keys Water Quality Improvement projects, a Federal Grant Program administered through the Army Corps of Engineers, with the initial grant closing out and the Army Corps currently planning the next grant cycle.

9. **Operator's Monthly Report**
   - **a.** August 2026
   - **b.** Maintenance Budget for reuse

   The Board had no questions on the report.

10. **Treasurer's Report**
    - **a. August 2026 Wastewater Financial Reports**
      - **1.** Balance Sheet
      - **2.** Income Statement
      - **3.** Discussion/Approval of Wastewater Warrant No. 0826 for $62,541.35
    - **b. August 2026 Stormwater Financial Reports**
      - **1.** Balance Sheet
      - **2.** Income Statement
      - **3.** Discussion/Approval of Stormwater Warrant No. 0826 for $359,811.71

    Gil Gilbertson commented on the increase in plant maintenance and repair costs, noting the amount was approximately 300% over budget, and suggested accounting for these costs in next year's budget. Chair Swanson suggested correcting a landscaping-related line item. City Clerk Roussin confirmed that the line item had been corrected to "Stormwater Drain Improvements." Commissioner Harding provided clarification regarding the functional use of the pervious area for parking, pedestrian access, and drainage of rainwater and stormwater surge.
    Gil Gilbertson asked about weed control and expressed concern that chemicals could not be used because they could infiltrate the water supply, creating an ongoing maintenance issue. Mayor Foster commented on the design and explained that the area consists of several feet of compacted rock beneath the surface to meet the drainage requirements for pervious pavers. Gil Gilbertson expressed disagreement and questioned whether weeds would have difficulty growing under those conditions.

    Chair Swanson asked for a motion to approve the Warrants. Gil Gilbertson commented on the cost of the paver installation, stated that he had not previously been aware of the issue, and expressed concern that the installation was not appropriate for the area.

MOTION: Motion made by Chair Swanson to approve the Wastewater Warrant for $62,541.35 and the Stormwater Warrant for $359,811.71. Liz Kohout Stephens seconded the motion.
FURTHER DISCUSSION: None.
ON THE MOTION: Liz Kohout Stephens – yes. Fred Swanson – yes. Gil Gilbertson – no. Joe Schmidt – yes. The motion passed.

11. **Any Other Business**

Chair Swanson asked for any additional comments. Gil Gilbertson commented on the cost of the pavers and expressed concern that the expense should be a burden to the City rather than the Utility Board.

City Clerk Roussin clarified that grant funding covered the cost of the pavers and that the project was intended to alleviate flooding concerns. Commissioner Harding added that the drainage issue had persisted for several years and that the State had recommended pervious pavers for stormwater drainage improvements, with State funding.

Commissioner Harding reiterated Mayor Foster's comments about the excavation depth required for the pavers and said that, regarding potential weed growth, they would have to wait and see what occurs.

Mayor Foster added that the area had previously been dirt, became muddy during rainfall, and was an eyesore. He stated that the area is now functional and that the improvements were paid for through a State grant.

Vice-Mayor Colonell commented that a permeable mat had been installed beneath the pavers to serve as a weed barrier and stated that he did not anticipate a significant weed problem in the future.

12. **Next Meeting:** October 20, 2026- 10:00 AM – The Key Colony Inn

13. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 10:33 AM.

Respectfully submitted

Silvia Roussin
City Clerk

ADOPTED: October 20, 2026
Silvia Roussin
City Clerk