

MEETING SUMMARY
JOINT WATER ADVISORY BOARD AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 14, 2025

A joint meeting of the Water Advisory Board and Technical Advisory Committee was held on Friday, March 14, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 430 of the Broward County Governmental Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

I. Call to Order

Senator Geller called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Roll Call Broward Water Advisory Board (WAB)

A quorum was present following Roll Call by Real Time Reporter, Bridget Rowe.

Name	Present	Virtual	Absent	Alternate	M/A
Senator Steve Geller – Chair	X				M
Mayor Sandra Welch - Vice Chair		X			M
Councilmember Jim Allbritton	X				A
Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman	X				M
Commissioner Doug Bell	X			Rob Goggin	M
Governing Board Member Ron Bergeron		ALT		Pete Kwiatkowski	M
Commissioner Kevin Biederman	X				M
Vice Mayor Mark Bogen	X				M
Commissioner Anthony Caggiano			X		M
Albert Carbon – TAC Chair	X				M
Commissioner Rhonda Eaton	X				M
Mayor Michelle J. Gomez	X				A
Vice Mayor Tom Good			X		M
Commissioner Aisha Gordon			X		A
Commissioner Denise Horland			X		M
Vacant					A
Vice Mayor Nancy Metayer-Bowen		X			A
Mark Peterson	X				M
Councilmember Susan Starkey	X				M
<i>Vacant Layperson</i>					M

III. Roll Call Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

A quorum was present following Roll Call by Real Time Reporter, Bridget Rowe.

Name	Present	Virtual	Absent	Alternate Name	M/A
Albert Carbon (Chair)	X			Chris Cappiello	
Randy Brown (Vice-Chair)		X			
Alan Garcia	X				
Allison Witoszynsky		X			
Brett Butler		X			
Commissioner Doug Bell	X			Robert Goggin IV	
Darren Badore	X				
David Walker			X		
Dawn Teetsal		ALT		Deann Von Stetina	
Giovanni Batista		X			
Heather Cuniff	X				
Isabel Cosio Carballo		X			
Jeff Jiang		X			
Dr. Jennifer Jurado	X				
Jose Lopez	X				
Luis Ochoa		X		Andrew Sobrino	
Patrick Davis	ALT			Janeen Wietgreffe	
Pete Kwiatkowski		X			
Rafael Frias	X			Irela Bague	
Renuka Mohammed		X			
Rodrigo de Castro		X			
Stephanie Pearson			X		
Steve Holmes	X				
Suzanne Mechler	X			Jon Goldman	
Talal Abi-Karam	X				

IV. Updates and Announcements

Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman of Fort Lauderdale was welcomed as a new WAB member.

V. Public Comments

Several residents and advocates raised concerns about water fluoridation, citing health risks (neurotoxicity, bone health, thyroid issues, children's IQ impacts).

Speakers requested reconsideration of fluoridation policy and a balanced scientific review.

Chair Geller clarified that the fluoride item has been withdrawn from the County Commission agenda. If reconsidered, it will not return until after the summer break.

VI. **WAB Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 10, 2025

Mayor Gomez made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 10,

2025. Commissioner Biederman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Updates and Announcements

Water Matters Day 2025: Dr. Jurado reported record attendance of 4,000+ participants and strong community engagement around water issues.

VIII. Presentations:

Vice Mayor Bogen Opening Remarks:

Emphasized concern over PFAS exposure, distrust in shifting federal standards, and need for proactive local action.

Announced outreach efforts including public mailers and educational campaigns.

a. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, also known as “Forever Chemicals”)

Dr. Erik Rosenfeldt, National Drinking Water Practice Lead, Hazen and Sawyer

- Provided technical overview of PFAS, sources, health risks, and EPA’s new drinking water standards (4 ppt for PFOA/PFOS; 10 ppt for other compounds).
- Explained treatment options: granular activated carbon (GAC), ion exchange, nanofiltration, and reverse osmosis.
- Highlighted cost challenges and long-term planning needs.
- Noted regulatory uncertainty, ongoing lawsuits, and compliance deadlines (initial reporting by 2027; enforcement by 2029).
- Outlined pros/cons of treatment technologies:
 - o GAC/Ion Exchange: moderately effective, lower cost, but limited performance in South Florida aquifers.
 - o Nanofiltration/RO: highly effective, removes nearly all PFAS, but costly and requires managing residual waste.

Key Insights

- GAC is generally not viable for South Florida aquifers.
- NF/RO are the best options for compliance, though costly.
- Treatment must balance effectiveness, cost, unintended side effects, and long-term resilience.
- Pilot studies in Miami-Dade and North Miami are testing combinations of IX, GAC, NF, and RO to optimize performance.

- Regulatory uncertainty (possible federal rollbacks) complicates local planning, but utilities may act independently to protect public health.

b. Addressing PFAS Through Planned Upgrades

Mr. Alan Garcia, Director, Broward County Water and Wastewater Services

Mr. Garcia provided a utility perspective on preparing for EPA's new PFAS standards and necessary system upgrades.

- Broward County WWS is actively conducting pilot studies on PFAS treatment options.
- NF and RO are the most reliable approaches for long-term compliance.
- Broward is considering Ion Exchange (IX) as an interim or supplemental option.

Costs:

- Meeting the 2029 federal compliance deadline will require billions in capital investment.
- Ongoing O&M costs will be substantial.
- There is great need for federal and state funding assistance to support.

Concerns:

- Disposal of PFAS residuals is of concern.
- Additional funding sources will be required.

c. Results of the Broward County Utility PFAS Survey

Dr. Gregory Mount, Assistant Chief Resilience Officer, Broward County Resilient Environment Department

Survey Purpose:

- Conducted to establish a baseline understanding of PFAS levels in Broward County's drinking water.
- Goal: assist utilities and policymakers in preparing for EPA's new PFAS regulations.

Key Findings:

- 22 out of 26 utilities submitted data
- PFAS detected in most utilities with varying concentrations, several of which exceed 4 ppt limit.
- 10 utilities are in some form of construction or design for PFAS treatment upgrades, through a variety of funding sources (grants, bonds, rate increase).
- 9 utilities currently use nanofiltration, 5 use reverse osmosis.

- Utilities will need treatment upgrades and must prepare for public concern and stricter standards in the future.
- Cost increases for PFAS filtration range from 2x – 3x original rates without.

d. Update on PFAS and the Regulatory Landscape

Ricardo Abraham, Assistant County Attorney, Broward County

Mr. Abraham explained that Broward County is legally required to comply with new EPA drinking standards of less than 4 ppt by 2029. He underscored the importance of early planning, legal preparedness, and pursuing outside funding or liability recovery.

IX. New Business

a. Topics for Discussion at Future WAB Meetings

No new business was discussed.

X. Discussion

- a.** Commissioner Biederman discussed septic to sewer conversion efforts in Hollywood and shared that proposed state legislation may soon allow water utilities to raise rates for system expansion.

b. Lake Okeechobee Water Levels: (ft-NGVD 1929)

- *This month:* 15.16
- *Last month:* 15.86
- *One year ago:* 15.89

Next scheduled Joint WAB/TAC Meeting –

May 9, 2025. Palm Beach County (with WRTF)

Next scheduled TAC Meeting –

April 18, 2025. Hybrid. GC East, Room 430

XI. ADJOURN

Chair Geller closed the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

****Requires WAB vote.**