

MINUTES OF MEETING SOUTH-DADE VENTURE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the South-Dade Venture Community Development District was held on Thursday, July 24, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at 1355 Waterstone Way, Homestead, Florida 33033.

Present and constituting a quorum were:

Jessica Cabrera
Mike Cruz
Curtis Cooper
Victor Valladares
Desiree Rivera

Chairman (by phone)
Vice Chairman
Supervisor
Supervisor
Supervisor

Also present was:

Scott Cochran
Paul Winkeljohn
Ben Quesada
Mayra Padilla
Several Residents

District Counsel
District Manager
Governmental Management Services
Field Manager

(PLEASE NOTE: Due to audio recording difficulties, these minutes were transcribed to the best of our ability)

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS

Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Winkeljohn called the meeting to order, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all who attended the meeting.

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes of the June 26, 2025 Meeting

Mr. Winkeljohn: Mr. Chairman we had a few small typos in the minutes that were submitted by District counsel, and so I'd ask for a motion to approve with those corrections.

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On MOTION by Mr. Cooper seconded by Ms. Rivera with all in favor, the Minutes of the June 26, 2024 Meeting with the submitted changes were approved.

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS

Public Hearing to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

A. Motion to Open the Public Hearing

Mr. Winkeljohn: Then at this time we can take a motion to open the public hearing.

On MOTION by Mr. Cruz seconded by Ms. Rivera with all in favor, opening the Public Hearing was approved.

B. Public Comment and Discussion

Ms. Cabrera: Before we go into the actual agenda, if I may, can you hear me?

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes.

Ms. Cabrera: I just wanted to thank you guys for being there, I'm sorry I'm not there in person but, I'm here on the phone and so I just wanted to say thank you again and I'll go ahead and defer the meeting to management and Mike.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Ok, thank you. So, for today's purposes we welcome public comment and discussion on the budget, and if you'd like I can give a brief introduction for all of our guests.

Mr. Cruz: Yes, if you could.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Good evening everyone, my name is Paul Winkeljohn, I'm the District manager for South Dade Venture Community Development District and if you're here for a homeowners association meeting, you're going to be terribly disappointed, that's not what we're doing. We are simply the taxing District for your community. We have proposed a fairly modest increase, and the predominant reason for this modest increase was explained in the letter but, generally speaking, the District has run into a couple of very exciting opportunities, as well as its age, you're just about 22 years old, and some of your infrastructure is getting a little expensive to repair. So, I'll lead with the best news is that the technology and the cooperation of the City of Homestead had had aligned where we have an opportunity to allow some of our three gates to become automated. The initial investment is probably about \$80,000 to \$90,000 to bring those

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gates where they can operate without a staff person, and we're very close to do that, we've invested the money, we have the permits in process, etc., and the good news is that will eventually reduce your costs. The bad news is, for the last few years you've had the labor market that most people have been dealing with, Dade County has a living wage ordinance, and that has pushed the cost of security guards that we've lived with for those 20 years significantly higher every year, the minimum wage goes up, their wage goes up. So, all that added together, your District is in excellent health, it has excellent reserves but, it was dipping into the reserves to pay the bills, and the auditors won't allow you to do that, that's against State Law to have an unbalanced budget and so that's why we're here today, we have to correct the assessment level slightly to bring it in balance, that's the rule, and that will give us the money also to keep plenty of reserves but, also upgrade our gate system like I described. Those who belong to the side of the community that participates in this clubhouse, are pool is closed right now for leaks, we've had leaks about every 3 to 5 years since the pool was built, it costs time and money to put that back together but, it's regularly inspected by a structural engineer and we believe the pool is just a maintenance headache that we'll always have. So, that's a quick overview, that's some of the actions of our Board that we can talk about that interesting which are their efforts to contain costs are highly respected, and so I think that's enough introduction but, if the Board would like, you can make comments and then we could have people give comments as well. Just a reminder for the Board, it is no a question and answer session, it is not a debate session, it is simply public information and comment portion of the hearing but, if anybody has something, or they want to learn more about or you want to hear in greater detail, our staff is all here and we can make time for you after the meeting or at another time to go through some of those, if you're really curious on how the District works, the details of the budget. We've gone through it very carefully every year for many years so we're all pretty familiar but, those of you who are not we may not be able to get into every detail tonight because of the number of people here and we do have a timeframe. So, yes, we do have a PowerPoint slide presentation, and I guess I can go to that now, to start. So, let's go to that, and I tried to verbally describe it but, pictures are better than my words. So, basically, the guardhouses which were built in 2008 and they're old enough now where they needed to be renovated basically, the materials are like a house, it's almost 20 years old, and we've

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conducted that to all three guardhouses today bringing them up to a more pleasant working environment. You all are familiar with your holiday lighting program, the Board has worked to enhance that but, they've also reduced it in the last 4 to 5 years from a much higher budget at one time and we've gotten more efficient with what makes the impression of the lighting but, a lower cost. Your sidewalks are also over 20 years old, we have excellent trees but, the bad news is trees break sidewalks and so for safety and for pleasure of people who ride or run or walk along those paths they've been repaired. Additional field maintenance, you have your ADA requirement efforts and those had to be updated, you have your banners, all the monuments signs, the lighting behind them had aged out and had to be replaced with a little more efficient system where we can do it from a remote sensor. Constantly keeping your landscaping updated, and I don't know if you know this but, you're one of the only Community Development Districts in the State of Florida who has won the national planter award for your landscaping, and I don't know if you knew that but, congratulations on that, you're 1 or 2 in the State of Florida who has ever done that but, we redecorate and reinvest quite regularly, the Board does. One of the biggest challenges we tackled this year may not be noticeable to all of you but, it was to reshape and carefully taking the dirt and leveling of the turf at the perimeter ficus trees. Ficus trees are very challenging, they have enormous and shallow roots that grow very fast, they're also very expensive to maintain when they're that old. We found a way, and I think the original estimates from multiple contractors was over \$130,000, I believe we were able to get this down to under \$50,000, it was right in that range, so we came up with some really neat techniques getting into those trees and getting them improved significantly. We always use a pressure washing program here, we pressure wash in the late summer or early fall to maximize the amount of time that it looks nice, and it's primarily for aesthetics but also for safety concerns, but we do a really good job there, we invest a lot. You have 13 lakes here and I would argue, and I manage, or my firm and my staff, we work on over 200 communities throughout Florida and all of them have lakes, yours are still by far the healthiest and the best maintained, I've not seen 13 lakes as well maintained as yours. Also, the clubhouse which is owned by the CDD but, it's jointly operated with the Master Association for phase 2 which have had the convenience of having staff here to solve and answer to your homeowner association procedures, hold meetings, etc., and the District provides a funding source for this operation, and we

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provide one person onsite for staffing, answer CDD questions, and operate the clubhouse. Your clubhouse got some new synthetic turf, the cost of mulch that is graded for a playground and also any kind of material for a playground is very expensive and it has to be replaced every year. This is a long term solution and the initial investment will return that value in 3 years, so we'll start saving some money. I mentioned the pool, we have a pool perimeter drainage system which is subject to certain impacts and vibrations and it leaks every 3 to 5 years like I said at the beginning and we're in the middle of a repair right now. The District has been proactive in its stormwater maintenance program, you have attached to all 13 of those lakes a very robust drainage system. In the system we proactively inspect and clean every year, we also have a cooperative program with about 8 or 9 of the subcommunities here where we do their drains as wells, so that we can use an economy of scale with one contractor which saves everybody a lot of money but, it also gives us the comfort of know that our drains are at peak performance during the hurricane season. We also operate an off duty police and a very cooperative relationship with Homestead Police officers, and I can give a little bit of history here. Before this CDD opened the crime rate on the eastern side of Homestead was very significant, I'll just use those words, and since this District put in an off duty patrol program, almost every community in the area has done the same thing and all of us are enjoying an excellent reduction in the relative crime rate. I operate about 87 Districts in South Florida and yours is among the best in terms of low crime. So, basically I just wanted to give you a quick history of the District, I went back as far as 2009 when the District was being fully turned over to the residents, the gates had started, we starting the roving patrol, and that set your operations and maintenance costs at about \$362, that went on until 2011, 2012 and we refinanced one of your bonds and in 2012, if you lived here then you got a slightly lower assessment because we returned some of that savings to you, and we captured some of it because it was really, we need more money for operating as you age, and you know that. So, in 2013 and 2014, we took over the clubhouse so we had to create a new assessment just for the participants of the clubhouse, it was a lesser fee than the HOA fee, so when the transfer happened, this was basically a fee reduction in the yellow highlight. After that, in 2015 we built up some reserves, those reserves served two features, one of which gives you the ability to put a roof on a building, to fix a pool, to do sidewalks and things like that but, Community

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Development Districts and governments in Florida have a peculiar challenge which is the fiscal year is October 1st and from October 1st you don't start to see that year's revenue until late November and into late December so you have an obligation to pay your bills in October, November and December with no new revenue from that year, so you are forced to carry what we call one quarter operating at all times from the prior year savings so you can pay your bills, and a little of that is why we're here today because when you start digging into that money, you run out money and you might get it back by the end of the year but, you'll be short. It's like a house budget, it's like not getting a paycheck for 3 months, and that wouldn't work well for most of us I'd bet. Another example of your assessment history, once the District added the gates and those roving patrol, the lines splits for the people who participate in their clubhouse and those who don't participate, and obviously they go up together but they are separate, if you're not in the clubhouse section you never pay anything related to this clubhouse, and that's an obligation of law, and those are large bubbles and large lines but, as finance person or a mathematician, that's been flat for almost the entire time, there's been one raise in 2020 in that entire period so that's pretty good. Then the last 10 years, and this is the 10 year history, once again, the last increase was in 2020 and it was a little bit less than \$100 of an increase. So, basically the story is, you've had very few increases, you've had excellent performance in terms of maintenance, and it's just the reality of the labor market that you have to pay the people that you have, the landscapers, the guard gates, the daily staff here, their salaries are on the market, and the economy after COVID and everyone knows what happened to the hourly wages, and the competition to get staffed, and one of the biggest axioms of higher staff down here in Homestead is the traffic, so if they don't live in this vicinity and they're in this market, their ability to travel in and out of your area, like if you worked up north from here is it's harder, you're competing for a small pool of people, so wages are very sensitive here to get good quality people with low turnover. So, I see this as a success story, and I'm very proud of this District, it's my flagship community of my entire company, and my staff dedicates an enormous amount of time and actually I trained 2 or 3 of our staff through this community at my cost and I'm proud of the things you bring to our business and I appreciate that.

Ms. Sarmiento: I have a question about the prior property taxes.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Sure.

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A resident: That's the one that was included in the letter.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes.

Ms. Sarmiento: And if you look at your 2025 taxes, it was \$1,095, but that's not the actual assessment.

Mr. Winkeljohn: That's the prior chart from the last time we raised it, that's not the one that was in the letter.

Ms. Sarmiento: It is.

Mr. Winkeljohn: No, this is the one that was in the letter.

Mr. Quesada: Correct, that's what you see in the letter as far as the increase and decrease in this current fiscal year, so it compares 2025 which we're technically still in and 2026.

Ms. Sarmiento: I have the letter I received here and it says, \$1,095.

Mr. Quesada: Just let me take a look at that.

Ms. Sarmiento: (inaudible comment)

(At this point several people were talking at one time, and no one conversation could be heard)

Mr. Quesada: She's talking about the debt assessment.

Mr. Winkeljohn: And this is it here.

Ms. Sarmiento: (inaudible comment)

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes, so your tax bill will include both numbers, the debt portion, because we have three debt borrowings that were combined together for one fee, and then we have the operations and maintenance fee. The operations and maintenance fee is equal to everyone with the exception of those not in the clubhouse area.

Ms. Sarmiento: (inaudible comment)

Mr. Winkeljohn: Ok, I appreciate your comment and I'm glad we could clarify that for you.

Ms. Sarmiento: Thank you.

Mr. Winkeljohn: So the chart in the letter on the budget includes the debt service and you can see the different columns where it says Series, each one of those are the debt, and that did not change this year and it hasn't changed, and it's only allowed to go down unless we issue new debt but, we're not doing that.

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Mr. Quesada: And just one of the things that I know comes up before we answer any more questions is, a lot of people confuse the CDD budget with a HOA budget, this is an annual assessment. So, an assessment when it's \$150 annually comes out to \$12.50 month. I know most people probably pay it with their mortgage lender through escrow, so any time that you're doing that kind of thing it's broken down to monthly installments through your lender and it would be \$12.50 a month and \$150 annually for people living in phase 1. Phase 1 consists of anybody that is part of the Waterstone Grand Clubhouse, not this clubhouse, and then phase 2 would be looking at a \$200 annual increase, \$50 additional goes towards the replumbing capital improvement project that we're assessing for the pool, we're going to replumb the entire pool once the assessment money comes in to help prevent all these constant leaks that we're experience right now. So, that would come out to \$16.67 and apologize for that typo, it was rounded up to the nearest decimal, so it's \$16.67 a month. So, folks before you each come and make your comment, we ask that you approach the Board, the table, we are recording this meeting, we have recorders and also please state your name for the record because we are transcribing the meeting, so each one of you, we just want to give everybody a chance up to 3 minutes to comment on the budget, we're happy to take your comment.

Ms. Sarmiento: My name is Miriam Sarmiento.

Mr. Quesada: Thank you.

Ms. Sarmiento: I just have a question, the increase goes to, doesn't this go to the taxes?

Mr. Quesada: Correct.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Correct, it will be on your tax bill.

Ms. Sarmiento: And so it's annually and it's part of the taxes, it's not under the HOA fee.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Correct, purely on your tax bill.

Mr. Quesada: Just to clarify, when you have an escrow account, you're typically paying your property taxes.

Mr. Winkeljohn: If you do escrow, many of them won't see it or even adjust it.

Ms. Sarmiento: Ok. (inaudible comment)

Mr. Quesada: Thank you very much for your comment.

Mr. Fernandez: (inaudible comment, resident speaking Spanish)

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Mr. Quesada: Ok.

Mr. Fernandez: My name is Alberto Fernandez, and I think for the benefit of everyone these meetings should take place in both languages, so everything in paper in this District, in Miami-Dade is in two languages. (inaudible comment) So, those who are not able to understand what you're saying, they're completely out of this meeting. (inaudible comment) So, at least from time to time explain to those who do not speak English what is happening so they can get it and better understand it.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Ok, thank you.

A resident: I did have another question.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Can we let the resident of the audience comment first, I just want to be fair.

A resident: I'm sorry.

Ms. Lorenzo: Hi, my name is Yusimay Lorenzo, and I live in Pebblebrook II, and I have a question, two questions actually, when you guys organize the assessment, do we have like a period of time that it's going to take you to recover the debt or is it indefinite?

Mr. Winkeljohn: Ok, excellent question, in the budget each assessment is identified, the ones that say Series and a date following, those are the debt assessments, those show the maturity date of it and the gates which is a small assessment, but it will expire in 2028, so you're a couple of years away on that. So, that will go away and the Board has no intent to anything with that, and the others are within 10 years after that, so you're actually at a great time where many of you living in here are within a 10 year window of all those debt expenses being zero. Now, I can't promise you that the Board in this District may not need a new one, a smaller one to cover like all of the sidewalks or all the roads, or something like that but, none of them would ever arise to the level of the initial bond.

Ms. Lorenzo: Another thing that I would like to bring to your attention is, and I walk around the community and I really love it, I've been living here since 2019 and I do see that the lakes are great, the grass is being cut, but I do have a few pointers in my community specifically, in Pebblebrook II, I have a video that I took this morning, the lake has been like forgotten, there are mosquitoes every single day, you cannot sit outside on your terrace because you're eaten alive by mosquitoes, and on my side of the lake the

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grass is this high, right next to the lake, so they cut, it's like at the end of the grass, they cut here, but they don't cut there, so it's this high and I have little kids.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Ok, and just a couple of quick comments, just so everyone has the same information, mosquitoes are governed by Dade County, they have a patrol board, they treat and it's driven by complaints believe it or not, so if you called 311 number and if everybody does that, at some point that's how they decide whether to fly and spray and treat, we have no authority to treat the mosquitoes but, we do stock the lakes with mosquito living fish, it helps a little bit. The second half of your question is the grasses, we are governed by a permit from South Florida Water Management where we have to maintain those grasses, we're not allowed to cut them or kill them, they're part of what they call the littoral shelf, so we're encouraging them to grow a certain level to create a barrier against erosion but, we'll look at it, happy to, but there is a reason why these lakes do have some grass in them, it's on purpose.

Mr. Quesada: And by the way, the easiest to spot the invasives is those yellow flowers, I am aware of some of them, and I have emails to prove it, and we're working on it, so thank you.

(At this point several people were talking at one time, and no one conversation could be heard)

Ms. Lorenzo: And another thing in my community is the playground, I love it here, it's really nice, but we have a playground over there it's been forgotten. I reported issues, like there was a little horse that moved forward and backward, and it was broken and it was removed.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes, and that playground is controlled by your HOA so they would have to address it.

Ms. Lorenzo: So, the other thing that I wanted to mention is that I was going over the budget and I know that when you look at it, it's only \$200 a year but, we have neighbors here that pay over \$10,000 in taxes every year, and we're in Homestead, we came to Homestead because it was more affordable because you can pay South Miami taxes, so it's \$10,000 for some neighbors, but half of that, the CDD, it's like \$5,000 or more. So, I was looking at the budget and you're estimating that we're going to have over \$200,000 in revenues and then I'm looking at the expenses on page 2 for the 2026

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budget, and I see \$100,000 more in increases. If we propose to take care of the gates, we're going to save around \$500,000 on sidewalk issues.

Mr. Winkeljohn: It won't go to zero, we'll still have staff required, we're hoping to reduce it about 30%.

Ms. Lorenzo: Because right now it's about \$467 for 2026.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes, so that would be about \$120,000 savings, yes.

Ms. Lorenzo: Ok but then we have increases, in enhanced security, of \$22,000, we have an increase in security gate guards, about \$10,000 we have an increase about \$40,000, and it's like everything is increasing and in total it's about \$100,000 more in expenses, and I would really like to request that the budget be maybe better analyzed to see where we can save money, and we can take into account that there are elders in our community that are retired that cannot afford the \$200 increase, and try to see how we can work it out as a community.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Thank you.

Mr. Quesada: Thank you.

Ms. Lorenzo: Thank you.

Mr. Valladares: There is a security issue, and this is something that I had called 311 and you should also call them, if we call as an entity Waterstone or the CDD at Waterstone, and complain, that's just one call, if 5 people from here, or 10 people from here call, that's 10 calls, that is more important to them than having Ben here call and say that's not Homestead, that's Miami-Dade, thank you.

Mr. Winkeljohn: And it's actually done that way statewide, that's how every county does it, it's a long story and I'll bore you another time, so thank you. Any other questions?

A resident: (inaudible comment)

Mr. Quesada: Folks, if anybody here is having language issues, we're happy to meet with them before or after the meeting and speak but, please, we need to let everybody speak individually and give everyone a chance to talk. Thank you.

A resident: (inaudible comment)

Mr. Quesada: Again, this is a government meeting and it has to be run in English for us to conduct business, so thank you.

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A resident: I have only one question about the gates, I know that we spend a lot of money for the new gates (inaudible comment) and every time that I pass by the gate I there are too many employees and they are not doing anything. Is there any way that the new system that is going to be more automatic, reduce the budget that we actually have for the employees that we have on the gates, and do you know how much?

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes, and if you don't mind I'll answer that. We're anticipating about a 30% reduction in staffing, which would be about \$120,000, we won't have that savings for another year, so we have to have the money to make the gates automatic this year, and then in a year from now, we'll have the budget process all over again and if we have that savings hopefully we can pass that.

A resident: And this savings goes back to our taxes?

Mr. Winkeljohn: We don't know, you're talking about a year from now.

A resident: Ok, so eventually it's going to be amended to our budget.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Right, and so one of the problems you have is your running your gates on a very low labor rate and because of that you're dependent on the quality of what you can afford and the performance isn't so great. So, if you could remove a third of that factor, the Board may want to consider paying a little bit more to get even higher quality services from those guards and so it's a business process, and I think the Board has been through this quite lengthy process and we've discussed this for almost 10 years how to improve economically, and not just improve but, we changed companies maybe 3 times in 18 years, so we're experts at this.

A resident: And do you know possibly when the new gates will be in or no?

Mr. Winkeljohn: Not at this time, we're still in the permitting process and anything might be altered, so it's a little bit premature but, we'll definitely tell everybody what it's going to be like as soon as we know.

A resident: And my last question is, the pool is going to be just the repairs that we need now or something else?

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes to both, it's going to be fixed, or today's repair is being tested and in the next 48 hours we should know if the leak was corrected, then the pool will be reopened but, in the next year or so we're going to do a redesign of the plumbing to prevent this type of repair and cost. It's like spend \$80,000 or spend \$5,000 every year, so it's a cost benefit decision.

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A resident: Ok, thank you very much.

Mr. Winkeljohn: My pleasure.

A resident: Can I ask a simple question?

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes, go ahead.

A resident: The police officers that are at the entrance of the community, is that paid by us or is it paid by the school?

Mr. Winkeljohn: It's a mix bag, most of it is through the school, over the years they've agreed to fund that role but, because whenever you have a patrol officer it makes sense for them to keep eyes on that where the most activity is happening and the most safety risks are. So, our patrol officer will coordinate with that role but, they separate and we don't pay for it.

A resident: Because I would think that the school should be responsible for this.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Yes, they are but I'm going to the next step which is that we do have an off duty person and they shouldn't be sitting and hiding where the business isn't happening, so they try to help if they can.

A resident: So, we have the police, and how does that work for the ones that are working inside the community?

Mr. Quesada: Again, we can't go into detail because obviously we don't want people to know the patterns and the directions but, theoretically when they do their shifts they are randomized shifts intentionally so that there's no pattern and they used a variety of marked and unmarked vehicles and they not only patrol the main roads but, they do have gate access to all the HOAs and they drive through there. We actually have a system too that when they finish their routes it sends us a report so we're able to keep tabs as far as when they bill us, anything like that, that the work was actually completed.

Mr. Winkeljohn: And we can match the patrol to the hour shift, and if the car doesn't move we can deal with that but, they like to move around. Thank you. So, my recommendation to the Board is that this sounds like it's more of just question and answer type of thing, and I think we can move pass the public comment portion and move to a Board discussion if you agree, and we can take other questions under audience comments at the end of the meeting because these sound very general, they don't sound really specific to the budget, and that's just my observation.

Mr. Quesada: And Alberto you want to say something else?

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Mr. Fernandez: Yes, so here's my proposal, if you just split the gate project, over long time, it's going to be more affordable for the people to reach the goal that you have, and at the end of the day everybody is going to be happy. (inaudible comment) So, I would like to say is this, I agree that your presentation was excellent, first class, you went point by point explaining it but, the thing that I would like to propose to you to split it, if possible, to split these projects over time, so not to do it in one year, that's it. (inaudible comment) So, that is my proposal to see if you guys can split this up.

Mr. Quesada: Thank you Alberto.

Mr. Winkeljohn: My recommendation is to close the public comment portion of today's public hearing, is there a motion?

On MOTION by Mr. Cruz seconded by Mr. Valladares with all in favor, closing the public comment and discussion was approved.

C. Consideration of Resolution #2025-07 Annual Appropriation Resolution

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, before you is resolution #2025-07 which encompasses the proposed and properly noticed increase to the assessment of \$150 and \$200 respectively. This Board, as you know, you've been through all this and I wouldn't recommend explaining it but, under the direction and advise of our auditors and our financial team, staff recommends approval by motion.

On MOTION by Mr. Cruz seconded by Ms. Rivera with all in favor, Resolution #2025-07 the Annual Appropriation Resolution was approved.

D. Consideration of Resolution #2025-08 Levy of Non Ad Valorem Assessments

Mr. Winkeljohn: Then resolution #2025-08 is the collection of that assessment level on the Non Ad Valorem Assessment procedures through Dade County, a motion to approve the collection process would be welcomed.

On MOTION by Mr. Valladares seconded by Ms. Cabrera with all in favor, Resolution #2025-07 the Annual Appropriation Resolution was approved.

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Mr. Winkeljohn: That concludes the public hearing portion of the today's meeting, is there a motion to close?

On MOTION by Mr. Cooper seconded by Mr. Valladares with all in favor, closing the Public Hearing was approved.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Just for the audience's purposes we have some other administrative procedures to go through, and if the Board would like, we could take open public comment for five minutes or so and then they could maybe enjoy some refreshments, I'm just thinking out loud because I don't think they're going to enjoy the audit selection committee procedures.

Ms. Cabrera: If I may, I would say opening up the comments section, but I would like to for the sake of everybody's time and respect of everybody's time, giving everyone equal time to speak.

EIGHTH ORDER OF BUSINESS**Supervisors Requests and Audience Comments**

Mr. Winkeljohn: Ok, so with no objections we'll suspend the orders of procedure and allow public comment at this portion of the meeting. We have to segregate just budget from general conversation, so if anyone has any other questions or comments now would be the time, thank you.

A resident: (inaudible comment)

A resident: (inaudible comment, resident speaking Spanish)

Ms. Martinez: My name is Alexandra Martinez, I heard your District manager talk a lot about the community which we are, which is why we're here but, I didn't hear anything about the people that live here. The economy is rough right now, and we're in a position thank God that were able to afford it, that the increase wouldn't affect our home but, we have neighbors, we have heard other people in parts of Homestead that can't afford it. My brother lives in Kendall in a huge house and he doesn't pay as much taxes as us. (inaudible comment) So, you're talking about the police officer, I've never seen an officer in here, and I walk the dog around the community, I've never seen any off duty

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officer in the neighborhood. (inaudible comment) All these people here, I'm here to show you guys and to tell you guys that this is affecting everybody, \$200 for somebody could be a dealbreaker, maybe that's their gas money for the year, and groceries are expensive, and some people are living paycheck to paycheck and \$200, you said oh it's minimal, it's just \$100 for you, but for somebody else that's a lot, and it adds up, so I think that when you guys are making decisions, think about the people in the community because the people are what makes the community. Thank you.

Ms. Cabrera: If I may interject for a minute. I don't know who is speaking but, I do appreciate your comment very much so thank you for coming out and thank you on behalf of the other residents. I just want to mention that everyone that sits on the Board is also a resident of the community, it affects everybody's pockets as well, it affects my pocket as well because I also have to pay the increase in taxes. Now, I understand the reason behind it because I am aware of all the operations, I'm aware of what's going on, all the increases, and we have sustained the budget as it has been for years without a single increase. The last increase was and I don't have the exact date but, I want to say like 5 or 6 years ago, meanwhile, everything has increased all around us, our contractors are increasing our contracts, the vendors are asking for more money for everything, the security guards are asking for more money, minimum wage has gone up, yet we've been able to sustain and stay the same for "X" amount of years. It gets to a point where we're no longer able to do that, and so if we were to not consider an increase and keep it as is, we would not be doing our due diligence as Board members, we would be doing the opposite, we would be failing the entire community because we are not going to be able to sustain ourselves, and then we're going to be in a huge hole, and then again we'll also be in the red. So, I completely understand trust me because it is also my pocket but, I just wanted to mention that because all the Board members, we all live here, we are all suffering the same situation with the economy. The same situations with the increase, we're all dealing with it, and so we had to keep in mind when considering what's the best option here and how little can we increase while still keeping our integrity and doing our due diligence.

Ms. Martinez: I understand that but you guys are getting paid, your fees are paid by these communities, so I get it, it affects you but, also what about the parties that you guys are doing, why not think about cutting the parties, like there has to be other places

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where you guys can cut things and maybe make it less than \$200. (inaudible comment) So, there has to be other places that you guys can cut, I'm not saying that an increase isn't necessary, it happens, I understand that everything is going up and it affects everybody but \$200, that's a lot.

Ms. Cabrera: Well, the \$100 is not a number that we just come up with randomly, it's a number that with management, along with the attorney and considering everything within the budget, that's a number that we get to when we figure in everything that needs to be paid and other stuff that we're going to be able to recuperate, so it's not a number that we just threw out there, and you make a comment about us getting paid, I don't know if you know or not, and I'm not going to get into what that even means but, to be completely honest I sure that's public record and that's something that you could possibly maybe do some more research on but, like I said, I understand 100% your perspective and how you feel about it because it was very difficult for all of us in general to come to a conclusion on what to do, what would be the right thing or the wrong thing, and it just comes down to the fact that we have to do our due diligence. If we don't do it, we will be in a very deep hole and in a very negative way and then you'd also be pointing the finger at us, so we have to do our due diligence that's why we're here to do that. You mentioned the police officers earlier as well, I don't know how long you've been in the community but I've been here since 2005 and our police program is something that we keep in very high regard, the police officers are here often and I don't know what times you go out, I don't know if you have had the opportunity to see them, I'm not sure but, we do have the Deggy system where they have to check in at certain locations throughout the day on their shifts. So, it's not like they just come in here and say oh, I did the job, or I sat in a corner and I hid, we are keeping track of them so that there's no way that they can do that. They have to be checking in to each community, and we keep of that through the system that we have in place that we've implemented, that we know that they're doing their job here. Now, we don't disclose what their shifts are for safety reasons for everybody in the community but, they are definitely here, the residents actually do see them often. So, again, I completely understand and appreciate your comments, and I'm dealing with the same consequences as well, so this is hard, but sometimes we have to make decisions that are not easy ones because we will wrath of it no matter what. I would rather side on the side of I did my due diligence rather than say,

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no, let's decrease actually and put us in a hole where in 2 years from now you'll be sitting at that table again which means looking me in the face and saying the same things.

Mr. Martinez: Good afternoon, my name is Chris Martinez, this my wife Alexandra and I just want to bring up a concern that I have. You mentioned that there's leaks every 3 to 5 years with the pool, and if we're spending money to repair leaks every 3 to 5 years, we're just digging a hole to put our money in, and there's really no benefit to that. Another point I wanted to bring up is when is our bond going to be paid off and when it's paid off, what can we expect, thank you.

Mr. Quesada: I'll just make one quick comment on the pool at least Chris, so part of the reason we're at the place where we're assessing an additional \$50 to phase 2 for the clubhouse is we're going to make a capital improvement because the band aids have not been working and this Board has taken increases very seriously to the point that to continue to go with band aid after band aid so they wouldn't have to increase the assessments but, we've known for years now, we've had the pool company and the engineers doing everything they possibly can, we even tried to anchoring some of these pipes, and I can go into a longer explanation after the meeting or privately with you if you'd like but, they tried to creative solutions within the current operating and maintenance assessment level to try to address this and nothing seems to work, and you are right there are some faulty designs which is why there's the extra \$50 that they are assessing from this phase of the clubhouse, they are literally, once the money comes in going to lift every paver out here and replumb the entire pool area, and the sediment underneath it because that's also part of the faulty design, they used beach sand instead of like gravel rock that's suppose to support it.

(At this point several people were talking at one time, and no one conversation could be heard)

Mr. Quesada: So, that's part of the thinking that's going into this. Thank you.

Ms. Curry: Good evening everyone, my name is Summer Curry, I understand the assessment costs with everything going up, and come to the meetings regularly so I kind of knew that this was coming. I think that we all have to do our due diligence and pay more attention to things that are going on around us. My only thing is with the increase if I'm paying for an increase I would want to see a change, I have residents who come in

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the gate who have never shown an ID to enter our community, the reason why I have the community in double gates is because I want to continue to have my privacy, and the gate never works. So, that is another issue, so we're constantly paying for things and we need to have some solutions instead of band aids. So, I hope we're working towards a solution within the next 10 years. (inaudible comment) So, that's what I want more than anything, and not excuses, so I think we need to come to a mutual agreement and understanding of where we are.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Thank you.

(At this point several people were talking at one time, and no one conversation could be heard)

A resident: (inaudible comment, resident speaking Spanish)

Mr. Rijos: I think the Board already made its decision, and my name is Pedro Rijos. (inaudible comment) I understand we need to do this automation on the gates because it's really out of hand, and we don't get any benefit, they don't check any ID and I've been here for about 5 years already, and I haven't seen any change. I understand that you guys went back and forth with different companies and everything like that, and I was really happy to hear that but, with the savings with the automation, I think we could have done a little better instead of raising the assessments because the problem is, once this goes on, it never comes back, and I know you mentioned that maybe we might get a savings in the future, hopefully by next year we'll see a savings but, is it the intention of the Board to come back and revisit it, and say, hey, you know what we did save money, we're going to take this amount off and reduce it. Is that something you guys are thinking or are we just going to kind of bump it up with other things, say hey, we don't have the money because other things need to be fixed. The increase was because of the gate, as I understand it, correct?

Mr. Winkeljohn: It was a mixture of things.

Mr. Rijos: Ok, so a little bit of everything, but is it the majority of the gate?

Mr. Quesada: I can just tell you, going back to the last time we did an increase in assessments was after Hurricane Irma, minimum wage has gone up, and so we're not just talking about landscaping, we're not just talking security services, everywhere, having a janitorial person, a clubhouse attendant, all that. So, we've been absorbing those increasing and maintaining assessment for years.

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Mr. Winkeljohn: One thing I didn't perhaps give enough emphasis to is in government once you elect a body and you pay for a certain service level, removing or reducing that service level is like a last option. So, I know it's not small but by most District standards where you have 2,000 units and you have nearly 24 hour security services, that's a lot, and these increases you would normally see in a District like this would be \$300 or \$400 every couple of years, you've had none in 5 years, and yes, what's going to happen a year from now, nobody wants to handcuff themselves and say, yes we're going to get back to that, but it will alleviate some of the inflationary costs. (inaudible comment)

Mr. Rijos: I understand that part but, it never goes down, you can also look for stuff to fix in other areas.

Mr. Cooper: We actually did though twice reduce, so I know you said it never goes but, I can speak for this Board since I've been on the Board the longest, I've been on since 2008, and I've resided here since 2005, I've been to these very uncomfortable meetings and it's never fun coming to an increase, or a proposal meeting, it's be a privilege but, if we did this every year, none of us would be sitting up here, and there's Homestead, which obviously they have their taxes, and then the county has their taxes, and I can't speak for those other entities and how their management is and how the county is in \$4 million debt.

Mr. Rijos: Most people feel that we have like a triple tax just for living in Homestead and it makes it even harder to swallow.

Mr. Cooper: And that's not something that we created, and that's the developer and how they decided to set it up with the CDD, we've just tried to make the most and the best of it and be fiduciarly responsible with everybody's finances over the course of this time, and it is definitely tough and we don't take it likely and any type of increase is an increase for our neighbors for our family, because I like to consider Waterstone a family. We talk about welcoming home, and when you come through the gates, and all the traffic and everything else going out there, the last thing you want to do is just be able to relax and your body feels different, you see the kids playing, like we created this environment here and Paul, I don't know if you were here before while I was talking abut like our community is one of the most sought after communities in the entire State of Florida. I mean do things that no other communities do and I know sometimes the gates obviously

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that's been a headache since I've been on the Board, it was a problem were people were not wanting it but, then it was good because realtors were wanting to come and we were selling houses because they said, oh they have these gates, but then it handcuffed us because we couldn't make them private, so we have to allow people in and that's why we have our gates. So, there's so many different things and moving parts and we try to do the best we possibly can over the years from what I've seen from the different Boards that I've had the privilege of sitting up here with but, yes, this is definitely not a meeting that easy.

Mr. Rijos: Well, I don't know, sometimes maybe before having these meetings to get the feedback from the community would be nice, not just coming after the fact because it makes people upset, and it comes off like it was already done, we're just listening to you after the fact. So, I think I the future, and it's never comfortable but it's at least better, at least we know that you guys are listening and it's not been a done deal when we showed up.

Mr. Winkeljohn: That's fine, and just so you know, and for the whole audience, if somebody could translate it afterwards that would be great, the budget process starts as early as February believe it or not. So, this Board sees a draft budget, and for staff, and I don't know it was about a \$600 increase is what I proposed, and this Board wasn't that happy so after two or three versions they said, I think we have to do \$200 or less, or \$150 or less depending on where you live but, that process was every meeting almost. So, February, March, April, May, June and July.

Mr. Rijos: Right, and the last meeting, I came to the last meeting when you guys voted on it to get the gates to go automated.

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, this is an illustration that it's not one time, it's not a done deal, it's a work in progress the whole year, and this budget as it was approved will start October 1st for the whole community through next year, so it's never a done deal.

Mr. Rijos: And I get how it's done because I'm the VP of our Board so I understand that but, I think opening it up to the floor before you guys are going to vote on it, maybe a meeting before or something like that, it allows everybody to have a say, and I know it drags it out a little bit but, a least people get a say, and you get a temperature of what people are thinking in the community, versus kind of like, it's seems like, hey this is a

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done deal already, and for a lot of people it doesn't sit well with the rest of the neighbors, so I get it, and that's all I wanted to say, thank you.

Mr. Winkeljohn: Thank you.

Mr. Valladares: Just a couple of comments. I've heard from the audience comments about maybe we should cut some of the parties so that we have more money, and it goes to that affect, let me just clarify one thing. I can tell you of two events that we do here, or we have planned to do here, they had no impact on your budge whatsoever. On August 2nd we're going to be giving 150 backpacks with supplies to needed families and children, not once cent is coming out of here, those are donations that have been presented to us. The other one is the lighting ceremony, at the end of the year, most of that if not all of the money, and I cannot tell how the dollars are going to fall but, it's not something that we pay for, those are donations, so we do take that very clearly in our minds that those things are done for the better of the community at no cost to the community, thank you.

A resident: (inaudible comment, resident speaking Spanish)

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, if you want to announce that we're finished with the public comment portion of the meeting and they're invited to refreshments, we can take a brief recess.

Mr. Cooper: I just wanted to say one other thing real quick, so the clubhouse, how many of you all are Waterstone II residents? Ok, so the reason why we're talking about this clubhouse and obviously not Waterstone Grand clubhouse is because back around 2012 when the crises hit and everybody was having to struggle with being able to pay stuff and then the HOA dues kept going up, the tax bill was the only bill that was a majority collected, so there wasn't any deficiencies. So, at that time we thought that the Waterstone II Master as well as the South Dade Venture CDD thought that would behoove us to bring it over to the CDD side because it would be cheaper in the long run and over the course of the time that we have been overseeing the clubhouse we've had very minimal increases which I was just actually just reminded of just recently now. So, to be able to manage this facility, to be able to manage the pool, and all the staffing, there's a lot of that, so it's hard to like \$50, and obviously that is \$50 but, if you're in Waterstone II we're actually probably, and I don't know if anybody in Waterstone I is here tonight but, it would be interesting to see how much your clubhouse Master assessment

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is for your side because I think we're like \$26 now per household from what I can see, so that's if you would break it down per month to equal the \$309, so I think we're a lot cheaper than that, and we're providing the services that we're providing and it's been a huge benefit over the course to have it where it's at right now, and any time down the future if it's something that we need to change we can revisit and look at it but, I just wanted to comment on that because there's a lot of new people that are here and so they may not know and understand why we're just talking about this clubhouse and not the Grand clubhouse over there.

A resident: Just one final question, when we will see the change in the monthly assessments, when does that begin?

Ms. Rivera: It's in your taxes.

Mr. Winkeljohn: There is no monthly change, that's between you and your escrow, and how you pay your property taxes, this is the property tax bill, the tax bill that goes out November 1st, and that's when you'll see the bill. So, if you look at your tax bill you'll get the notice from the county.

A resident: Ok.

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, it's a one time payment and it every year on November 1st.

A resident: Ok. (inaudible comment)

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, in your escrow they probably won't bring it up until January or February.

A resident: Ok.

Ms. Brown: I have a question, I'm sorry, I'm Shatara Brown, so we recently had an increase for our garbage, so with that, that's going to be on our tax bill as well.

Ms. Rivera: That's the city.

Ms. Brown: Wo we're going to have that increase, and also an increase in the assessments.

Mr. Valladares: That's from the city.

Ms. Brown: So, you said it was from the city, what do you mean by that?

Mr. Winkeljohn: We have nothing to do with the garbage.

Mr. Quesada: If you don't mind, so the Non Ad Valorem Tax Assessments is how we assess, so you have multiple entities, so I encourage some of you because I think some of you have brought up a larger number, in this case I think the highest number that

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anybody is paying, and I'm not diminishing the fact that it's taxes, and the amount but, of the amount that you're being taxed through the Non Ad Valorem, the most anybody here is paying combined with the debt and the operation and maintenance is \$2,200 in Waterstone in general. The highest ones are \$2,204, plus I see a \$2,219 there, so the highest community is paying \$2,219 just out of the CDD, meaning the debt and the operations and maintenance. So, you have the City of Homestead also assessing millage for their assessments and you have Miami-Dade County is also coming out of there, and now you're going to see your garbage collection. So, again, not diminishing the fact that you guys pay high taxes but, you want to keep in perspective what portion of that tax is coming from the CDD, what it's going towards, that's what we're talking about today.

Ms. Brown: That's why I'm saying, because that's going to be like two increases that's going to be on our taxes.

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, was it a direct bill before?

Ms. Brown: Yes.

Mr. Winkeljohn: They can do it either way. Thank you all. I think we need to move on with our agenda items.

FOURTH ORDER OF BUSINESS Audit Selection Committee Meeting

A. Opening the Audit Selection Committee Meeting

B. Roll Call

C. Ranking of Respondents to RFP

D. Adjournment

Mr. Winkeljohn: So, at this time I'd like to open the audit selection committee meeting and the members of the Board are the sitting member of that committee. Today is the second half of that meeting, so this is just a continuation of the previous audit selection meeting. You authorized the proposal requests as well as the ranking system, and it's not going to work out too well for ranking because you only have one respondent but, this year they expanded the amount of years that the auditor can propose. (inaudible comment) So, I just need a motion for somebody to name the #1 ranked firm which is Grau & Associates.

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On MOTION by Mr. Cooper seconded by Mr. Cruz with all in favor, ranking of respondents to RFP, ranking Grau & Associates as the #1 ranked auditing firm was approved.

Mr. Winkeljohn: With that we can adjourn that portion of today's audit selection committee meeting.

FIFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Selection of Audit Firms

Mr. Winkeljohn: Next I would ask for a motion to select Grau & Associates as the auditing firm for the District.

On MOTION by Mr. Cooper seconded by Mr. Cruz with all in favor, selecting Grau & Associates as the auditing firm for the District was approved.

SIXTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Staff Reports

Mr. Winkeljohn: I recommend we table the remaining items on the agenda under staff reports to the next meeting.

A. Attorney – Memorandum – 2025 Legislative Update

B. Engineer

C. Field Manager – Monthly Report

D. Club Manager – Monthly Report

E. Manager

1) Form 1 Financial Disclosure Due July 1, 2025

2) Reminder to Complete Annual Ethics Training by December 31, 2025

3) Consideration of Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Meeting Schedule

4) Consideration of 2025 Performance Measures and Standards as Required by Florida Statute 189.0694

(These items were tabled to be discussed at the next Board meeting)

SEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Financial Reports

A. Approval of Check Run Summary

B. Acceptance of Unaudited Financials

Mr. Winkeljohn: And I just ask for a motion to approve the financials.

On MOTION by Mr. Cooper seconded by Mr. Valladares with all in favor, accepting the Check Run Summary and the Unaudited Financials were approved.

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EIGHTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Supervisors Requests and
Audience Comments (Cont.)**

There not being any, the next item followed.

NINTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Adjournment

Mr. Winkeljohn: I just need a motion to adjourn meeting.

On MOTION by Mr. Cooper seconded by Mr. Valladares with
all in favor, the Meeting was adjourned.

DocuSigned by:

Ben Quesada

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Secretary / Assistant Secretary

Signed by:

[Signature]

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Chairman / Vice Chairman