

**Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2025**

Chairman Ehrhardt convened the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority Board Meeting at 6:00p.m. on October 9, 2025.

Member Attendees: Chairman Dave Ehrhardt, Vice Chairman Tommy Benton, Kevin Poe (remote) and Jim Dove.

Also Present: Attorney Paul Smart; Authority Staff - Joey Leslie (remote), Judy Smith, Mark Dudziak, Nathan Hester, Harold Garrison, Jordan Waters, Karen Long, Maggie Adams and Caleb Baughcum.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Member Dove made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2025, board meeting.

Vice Chairman Benton seconded the motion. The motion was carried with no objection, and all board members present voted.

Operating Reports

Finance Director Smith presented operating reports for August 2025, highlighting:

- Purchased 197.6 million gallons purchased; Sold 165.4 million gallons.
- 32.2 million gallons used for flushing.
- A 36% increase in billed water usage. A 24.2% increase in billed sewer usage, compared to a year ago.
- Water billing totals increased by 29.6 and sewer increased by 23.8%.
- Gain of 29 water and 36 sewer customers.
- Work orders completed - 630
- Backflow tests completed – 50
- Aging meter change outs – 97
- New installations – 40

New Business

Presentation of the 2026 JCWSA Budget

Finance Director Smith stated the 2026 Annual Budget of \$26,285,108 represents an increase of \$4,055,722, or 18.3%, compared to the FY 2025 budget. This increase reflects significant system growth, higher operating costs, and new debt obligations tied to major capital projects.

Finance Director Smith gave a detailed presentation of the proposed budget and addressed questions from the board members.

This agenda item was tabled.

Braselton Water Sales Agreement

Manager Leslie said JCWSA and the Town of Braselton entered into a three-year wholesale water sales agreement in 2022. A new draft agreement has been proposed (October 2025) for consideration. He said while the structure of the contracts is largely consistent, several important changes affect rates, terms, and reciprocal provisions.

Manager Leslie said staff recently met with Jennifer Scott, Braselton's City Manager/Clerk, to negotiate the agreement. Braselton has consistently been one of the most reliable municipalities to work with, regularly purchasing more than 22 million gallons of water per month from JCWSA. He said their steady, year-round demand helps lower the cost of water purchases from the Bear Creek Reservoir WTP and provides operational stability.

Manager Leslie said we must remain competitive with this connection, or Braselton may purchase from other municipalities, causing a significant shift in our typical operations.

Key changes to the draft are as follows:

1. Rates and Minimums

- 2022 Agreement:
 - Base rate: \$2.95 per 1,000 gallons, if Braselton purchases at least 15,000,000 gallons per month.
 - If the minimum is not met, the rate increases to \$3.25 per 1,000 gallons
- 2025 Draft Agreement:
 - Base rate: \$3.25 per 1,000 gallons, if Braselton purchases at least 22,000,000 gallons per month.
 - If the minimum is not met, the rate escalates to \$5.00 per 1,000 gallons, unless the reduced usage is caused by JCWSA.

2. Reciprocal Sales Provision

- New in 2025 Draft:
 - If Braselton sells water to JCWSA, those sales must follow the same terms, conditions, rates, and minimum purchase requirements.
 - Recently, Braselton was gracious in allowing us to purchase water from them for the relocation of piping at the Highway 60/Highway 124 roundabout. This saved us tremendous cost and happened without delay. We wish to formalize this ability to purchase from Braselton, although we anticipate this will occur infrequently.

Member Dove made a motion to approve the Braselton Wholesale Water Agreement as presented and authorize the Authority Manager to execute the documents.

Vice Chairman Benton seconded the motion. The motion carried with no objection, and all board members present voted.

Ratification of Sludge Holding Tank Cleaning Expenditure

Manager Leslie said the sludge holding tanks at the Middle Oconee Wastewater Treatment Facility had not been cleaned for an extended period, resulting in a significant accumulation of sludge. The tanks developed a thick layer of material with vegetation growing inside, creating operational and aesthetic concerns.

Manager Leslie said JCWSA wastewater staff initially attempted to perform the cleanout using internal resources, but these efforts were unsuccessful due to the volume and condition of the material.

Manager Leslie said to address this situation we received quotes from two qualified vendors. We have selected Environmental Remedies for a total cost of \$39,923.20.

Manager Leslie said this expenditure is included in the operating budget but exceeds his spending limit so it needs Board ratification.

Member Poe made a motion to approve the ratification of the sludge holding tank cleaning expenditure with Environmental Remedies in the amount of \$39,923.20 and authorize the Authority Manager to execute the documents.

Member Dove seconded the motion. The motion carried with no objection, and all board members present voted.

Department Reports

Wastewater

- MOWWTP Total gallons treated: 40.93 million Monthly Average : 1.32 mgd
Monthly Peak: 1.51 mgd
- Sewer Connections Inspected in August: 36
- Completed 330 work orders last month.

Collections Department:

- The Collections team is finishing up CMOM work in cross country lines and has turned their focus to completing right of way clearing and they are also doing rechecks on manholes in hard to access areas.

MOWWTP:

- The plant team had several issues they tackled including air locked RAS pumps and issues with the polymer feed system in dewatering. Both were resolved. Flushable wipes (RAGS) continue to cause issues inside the plant plugging up pumps and affecting our process.
- Congratulations to team member Jacob Barnett for passing his state exam and is now a certified Wastewater Collection System Operator.

Water

- 1104 total tasks
- Flushed and inspected 129 hydrants
- Repaired 22 hydrants
- Installed three meter stubs and one testing station
- Cleaned and inspected six pump stations
- Replaced CSM 11 on Cal Val at Galilee Pump Station
- Repaired 8" water main hit by contractor
- Replaced PRV at Georgia Power site

- Processed 1157 locate requests: marked 584 water and 142 wastewater

IT

- One computer left for windows switch out.
- Next Sunday will be the power shutdown for the generator installation.

Engineering Report

- Hosted Leadership Jackson.
- Parks Creek bid is \$36 million and is scheduled to begin construction at the end of this year.
- Visting Columbia County to tour several wastewater plants.
- Local GAWP starting back with the first meeting in Athens.

Manager Report

- A lot of projects under design.
- Highway 129 project out for bid soon.
- RFP for wastewater facility.

Executive Session

Member Dove made a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:55 pm.

Vice Chairman Benton seconded the motion. The motion carried with no objection, and all board members present voted.

Vice Chairman Benton made a motion come out of Executive Session at 7:13 pm.

Member Dove seconded the motion. The motion carried with no objection, and all board members present voted.

No action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Karen Long
Board Secretary