

Minutes – June 23, 2025

GREEN DeWITT DRAINAGE DISTRICT

Doug Sethness, President

Larry Coppedge, Vice President

John Varela, Secretary

 E-mail: info@greenddd.com

Green DeWitt Drainage District met in REGULAR Session on the 23th of June 2025, at 10:00 A.M. in the Conference Room of the District's office at 107 N. Gonzales Street, in Cuero, Texas, with the following members present:

BOARD MEMBERS

- Doug Sethness, President
- Larry Coppedge, Vice President
- John Varela, Secretary

Staff

- David Guajardo, General Manager
 - Pat Trevino, Office Manager
 - Ignacio Granado, Foreman
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1. ANNOUNCE QUORUM & CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. MINUTES

Board discussed clarifying language in environmental sections of prior minutes. “Preliminary environmental findings” was corrected to “preliminary environmental research by the GLO” to avoid misinterpretation that findings were confirmed. Members emphasized that no discoveries have been made; the GLO refers to publicly available wildlife data. Motion to approve previous minutes was made and seconded.

MOTION: Minutes approved with recommended changes.

4. FACILITIES – MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENTS & PROJECTS

Operations Report (Presented by Foreman Ignacio Granado)

- Continued rainfall has contributed to intermittent channel flow across the system. Language revised from “sustained flow” to clarify that water movement is temporary and rain-dependent.
 - Vegetation growth vigorous; maintenance crew actively mowing and weeding—currently midway through system-wide coverage.
 - A full truckload of limbs was removed from West Lateral Channel to ensure flow capacity.
 - Herbicide spraying completed around guardrails on Aransas and Douglas Streets, and slopes near Energy Waste.
 - Heat-related safety meeting held. Staff reminded to hydrate, consume 120 oz. Gatorade daily, and take shade breaks.
 - Water flow was observed due to recent inflows; however, members noted the system does not run continuously. Observations provided from residential vantage points confirmed manageable channel capacity and no near-overflow conditions.
 - Additional monitoring encouraged during hurricane season. Members agreed to visually inspect bridges and culverts to identify potential blockages.
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5. GM REPORT

- **Hazard Mitigation Grant:** Extension request filed on May 28 following June 1 notification of grant expiration within 60 days.
- **Rights of Substitution (First National Bank of Shiner):** Agreement completed and signed to ensure funds are secured beyond FDIC coverage with collateral held by third-party.

- **Teams Meeting with GLO Environmental Team (June 5):** Requirement for high-water mark and environmental studies confirmed. GLO clarified the studies are prerequisites for progressing any project phase.
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6. ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY AND PERMITTING DISCUSSION

- Board explored phasing options but agreed environmental studies must precede physical work due to GLO stipulations.
 - Clarified system's water source is discharge from the city water treatment plant. Ephemeral nature emphasized—flow only occurs post-rain or via treated output.
 - Suggestion made to meet with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prior to GLO submission, bringing visuals and diagrams to provide firsthand context.
 - Intent is to educate Corps on system characteristics and ensure informed review of potential national environmental permit.
 - Board discussed “ephemeral stream” terminology, noting GLO team was unfamiliar. Consensus supported proactive presentation to prevent misinterpretation.
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7. INSURANCE RATE REVIEW

- Carter Insurance submitted new premium estimates:
 - Medical: +6.54%
 - Dental: +4.6%
 - Vision: +3.66%
 - Life: No change
 - Employee medical cost projected to increase from ~\$934 to ~\$971.
 - GM gathering comparisons before next meeting to present best-value options.
 - No immediate decision required; board to formally approve plan next session.
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8. TAX RATE AND BUDGET PLANNING

- Budget preparations underway; deadline remains September.
- Ad valorem projections await finalized tax rate from assessor's office.
- Spending plan will prioritize operational needs; final adjustments will be made once revenue forecast is confirmed.
- Current year-end reserve estimated between \$300,000–\$400,000.

9. ENGINEERING – FUTURE SCOPE NORTH OF HWY 72

- GM proposed engaging Southwest Engineering (local firm with office in Cuero) to study district north of Hwy 72 (outside GLO grant scope).
 - Pedro, firm representative, attended prior meetings.
 - Study would determine channel slopes, elevation benchmarks, and inform future infrastructure decisions.
 - Engineering work would be budgeted independently in future cycles.
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10. BANKING AND RIGHTS OF SUBSTITUTION

- Reaffirmed that pledged collateral from First National Bank safeguards district funds beyond FDIC coverage.
 - Discussion noted potential risks with federal bank oversight. Members recommended future review of state-chartered bank alternatives.
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11. PAYABLE SIGNATURE POLICY

- Board confirmed payroll requires single signature; other payments must be co-signed.
 - Approved **24-hour waiver** policy: If no board member is available within 24 hours, GM may sign checks to prevent payment delays.
 - Policy adjustment deemed consistent with other governmental practices.
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12. COMMUNICATION DEVICES AND TEXTING PROTOCOL

- GM raised labor-law concern with using personal phone for district business.
 - Board approved adding a **third district phone line** to protect staff from personal device liability.
 - Members encouraged checking if current computer system supports text messaging integration.
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13. PERSONNEL

Board entered **Executive Session at 11:04 a.m.** pursuant to **Section 551.074** (Personnel matters).

14. RESUME FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting resumed at **11:20 a.m.**

No action taken during Executive Session.

15. FINANCIAL REPORT

- Annual Budget: \$389,800
- Year-to-Date Expenditures: \$355,835 (approx. 60–61% utilization)
- Expenses reviewed; truck purchase in November noted as high-spending month.
- Fuel log confirmed; tank secured.
- Online fund transfers reviewed—authorized access in place.

MOTION: Financial report approved unanimously.

16. NEXT BOARD MEETING

Scheduled for **Monday, July 22 at 10:00 A.M.**

17. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Meeting adjourned at **11:28 A.M.**

Director

General Manager