

**In The Matter Of:**  
*Central Florida Tourism Oversight District*

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*Board of Supervisors Meeting*  
*January 24, 2024*

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*Legal Realtime Reporting*  
*622 E. Washington Street*  
*Suite 200*  
*Orlando, Florida 32801*

CENTRAL FLORIDA TOURISM OVERSIGHT DISTRICT

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

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LOCATION: Central Florida Tourism Oversight  
District  
1900 Hotel Plaza Boulevard  
Lake Buena Vista, Florida 32830

DATE TAKEN: January 24, 2024

TIME: 9:37 a.m. - 11:01 a.m.

REPORTED BY: SANDRA D. BROWN, FPR,  
Court Reporter and Notary Public  
State of Florida at Large

**PRESENT:**

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Martin Garcia, Chairman; Charbel Barakat, Vice Chairman; Brian Aungst, Jr.; Ron Peri; and Bridget Ziegler

**SPEAKERS:** Pastor Hezekiah Bradford, St. Luke Full Gospel Baptist of Zellwood, Florida; Eddie Fernandez, CFTOD Operational Safety Consultant; Brandon Johnson; Ernest DuBose, DuCon, LLC; Michael D. Young, ACY Contractors, LLC; Debie McDonald; Dr. Annette Khaled, UCF; Marjorie Guzman, Topaz Clinical Research; Chris Wills, Disney Defenders; Nicholas Maldonado, Disney Cast Member; Jennifer Johnson, American Cancer Society; Susan Shaw, American Cancer Society; Yamile Rivera, American Cancer Society; Joey Rodriguez, Chief Building Inspector and Interim Building Official; Eric Ferrari, Acting Fire Chief; Craig Sandt, Principal Construction Manager; Christine Ferraro, Director - RCES; Ray Crooks, Director of Utility Business Affairs

**CFTOD STAFF:** Glenton Gilzean, Jr., District Administrator; Paula Hoisington, Deputy District Administrator of Administration; Mike Crikis, Deputy District Administrator of Operations; Daniel Langley, Acting Counsel for CFTOD; Kurt Ardaman, Acting Counsel for CFTOD; Eddie Fernandez, Internal Risk Manager; Eric Ferrari, Acting Fire Chief; Alycia Mills, Executive Assistant to Mr. Gilzean; Matthew Oberly, External Affairs Director; Rocky Haag, External Affairs Coordinator; Tanya Naylor, Director of Security and Emergency Management; Ron Zupa, IT Service Delivery Manager; Samarth Thomas, Systems Administrator; Katherine Luetzow, Planning & Engineering Manager; Michele Dicus, Human Resources Director; Craig Sandt, Principal Construction Manager, Facilities; Kenny Locke, Chief Technical Inspector/Interim Manager; Tiffany Kimball, Contracting Officer; Erin O'Donnell, Town Clerk and Public Records Administrator; Jessica Kelleher, Public Records Associate, Communications; Daniel Bollone, GIS Administrator; Nicole Seipp, HR Generalist; Andrew Heithaus; Yenni Hernandez, Chief Information Officer; Jason Herrick, Manager Gas Water & Wastewater Resources; Anthony Kasper, Manager RCES Engineering and Programs; Andrea Osinski, Senior Procurement Analyst; Joel Edwards, Deputy Fire Chief; Heidi Powell, Manager - Financial Reporting Analysis; Susan Higginbotham, Director of Finance; Joey Rodriguez, Chief Building Inspector and Interim Building Official; Ray Crooks, Director of Utility Business Affairs; Christine Ferraro, Director - RCES; Ella Hickey, Building & Safety; Lance Kochen, Fleet; Dwight Sweeting, Building & Safety

## P R O C E E D I N G S

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2  
3 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. We're going to call the  
4 meeting to order. Welcome, everybody. Thank you  
5 for being here, thank you for your interest in the  
6 work of this Board and thank you for the  
7 interest -- your interest in the work of this  
8 district.

9 For the invocation, I'll turn it over to  
10 Mr. Gilzean.

11 MR. GILZEAN: At this time, I'd like to  
12 introduce Senior Pastor Hezekiah Bradford of  
13 St. Luke Full Gospel Baptist of Zellwood, Florida.  
14 Pastor Bradford finds joy in raising up leaders,  
15 individuals who use their influence, in addition to  
16 God's power, to create a world that impacts God's  
17 Kingdom.

18 He is an advocate and voice for the community,  
19 and, additionally, Pastor serves as the president  
20 of the Apopka Ministerial Alliance where he  
21 challenges those around him while modeling change  
22 before them. Pastor Bradford finds fulfillment  
23 spending time with his wife, Pastor Veronica  
24 Bradford, his children and grandchildren.

25 Pastor, will you lead us in prayer?

1           PASTOR BRADFORD: Thank you, Glen, and to the  
2 Board. We are pleased to be with you here today.  
3 Let us pray.

4           Father, we thank you, first of all, for your  
5 divine presence for your omnipresent. We thank you  
6 for your omniscience because you know everything  
7 that we are going to discuss today in this meeting.  
8 You're omnipotent, you have all power, which means  
9 you change the hearts of men.

10           We thank you God because we know as it was in  
11 the days of Issachar, he declared that, God, I need  
12 you for wisdom. To discern the times in which we  
13 are living, we pray, God, that you would supply  
14 this Board, the leaders, and all of them, O God,  
15 with a spirit to discern the things that are needed  
16 throughout the District.

17           We pray for them in a great and a mighty way  
18 because we understand that nothing can be done  
19 except you give us the wisdom, the knowledge, and  
20 the understanding. Thank you for collaboration  
21 with partners that we continue to do the things, O  
22 God, that will be pleasing in your sight, that  
23 would manifest itself in the growth of this  
24 community, the surrounding areas, those, O God,  
25 that will participate so we glorify you in that.

1 But least but not all that we could even begin to  
2 ask or thank or say, we want to thank you for that  
3 which you have already done, for you have raised up  
4 great men, this amazing Board, and those, O God,  
5 that are connected.

6 So we pray that you continue to lead them  
7 giving adversity in every area of life, but at the  
8 same time blessing us to see you in the midst of  
9 all that we are doing, wisdom, knowledge, and  
10 understanding, leadership, and guidance, we give  
11 you glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

12 ATTENDEES: Amen.

13 CHAIR GARCIA: Pastor, thank you for your  
14 blessings, and thank you for sharing your wisdom  
15 with us here today.

16 And let's honor this great nation by saying  
17 the pledge of allegiance. Please rise.

18 ATTENDEES: I pledge allegiance to the flag of  
19 the United States of America, and to the Republic,  
20 for which it stands, one nation, under God,  
21 indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

22 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. Let's go over our safety  
23 procedures, please.

24 MR. FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and  
25 thank you to the Board for allowing a moment to

1 share some important safety information with our  
2 visitors here today.

3 We'd like everyone to know that in the event  
4 we need a first-aid kit or an automatic external  
5 defibrillator, an AED, we have both of those at the  
6 front desk by the security, so we can pull those  
7 and use them as needed.

8 We'd also like everyone to know that in the  
9 event of an evacuation, please gather your  
10 belongings, exit in an orderly fashion outside of  
11 one of the two exits. The primary exit to your  
12 right if you're facing the front of the room where  
13 you entered the front of the building, but there's  
14 also one past these double doors to your left that  
15 will take you outside the rear of the building.

16 Our employees, in the event of an evacuation,  
17 are instructed to meet at the ends of the parking  
18 lot, so please join them at the ends of the parking  
19 lot until emergency responders arrive and give us  
20 further instructions. Thank you very much and  
21 enjoy the meeting.

22 CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you very much. We will  
23 now hear public comments. First, Brandon Johnson.  
24 Please state your name for the record, and if  
25 you're here in a representative capacity, please

1 tell us, sir, who you represent.

2 MR. JOHNSON: Good morning. Thank you for  
3 allowing me to be here. First, let me say I  
4 apologize to my mom, who is watching live. I did  
5 not give her a fair warning until three minutes  
6 ago. I am here because it was brought to my  
7 attention that you-all are doing something amazing  
8 in terms of Relay for Life.

9 I don't have time to give you the full story,  
10 but I'll give you a brief of it. Junior year in  
11 high school, my grandmother was informed that my  
12 aunt had breast cancer. And because, at the time,  
13 I was taking FCAT, I was not informed until weeks  
14 later.

15 That took our family down a long line of  
16 tests, biopsies, chemotherapy, radiation,  
17 ultimately, remission, which we're excited about,  
18 and then, ultimately, in my freshman year of  
19 college at Florida A&M University, the cancer  
20 returned for my aunt.

21 The reason why I'm so passionate about Relay  
22 for Life, and why I'm so excited to be here to talk  
23 to you about it and your support about it, is  
24 because on April 17th, 2015, that was the last  
25 thing I could do for my aunt. As a senator at



1 Florida A&M University in student government, I  
2 held Relay for Life on the campus of Florida A&M  
3 University, and on April 17th, I stood on a  
4 platform and talked about her story. Eleven days  
5 later, my aunt transitioned from cancer.

6 And so when I talk about Relay for Life, it's  
7 from a real personal place. Thank you-all so much  
8 for bringing that back to this area. Those funds  
9 are so needed, and, particularly, your policy last  
10 year when it comes to indemnity payments, topping  
11 all that off with those who qualify, and the  
12 short-term disability.

13 As somebody who has been a recipient through  
14 my aunt, and our family dealing with that and the  
15 financial loss of that, that is a huge stress  
16 relief for those who, ultimately, are at the hands  
17 and needs of that family who is going through that.  
18 So thank you-all so much for that. Again, it's  
19 well needed, and I look forward to supporting any  
20 way that I can, and thank you-all so much for your  
21 time today.

22 CHAIR GARCIA: Well, Mr. Johnson, thank you  
23 for sharing your personal story today, and thank  
24 you for your public comment.

25 Next, Ernest DuBose, and please state your

1 name for the record, and if you're here in a  
2 representative capacity, sir, please tell us who  
3 you represent.

4 MR. DUBOSE: Good morning to the Board. Thank  
5 you for allowing me to be here to speak. And I'm  
6 the CEO of DuCon, and DuCon Plumbing. We're a  
7 local regional business, general contractor, and  
8 plumbing company. I'm here to speak on behalf of  
9 the efforts for local businesses. In particular,  
10 doing business with the District. I just want to  
11 speak to the impact of providing opportunities and  
12 contracts to local and regional businesses, small  
13 businesses; that is, the impact not only on those  
14 businesses but the impact to the community.

15 What it does, particularly in our industry now  
16 with the lack of -- with the baby boomers retiring  
17 and shutting down businesses, it provides work  
18 force development within the community. It  
19 provides opportunity to future entrepreneurs. It  
20 provides incentive for young people to enter the  
21 trades and enter entrepreneurship, which we're  
22 really lacking now.

23 And so what we determined, we've done local  
24 impact projects throughout the state of Florida,  
25 particularly, Central Florida, and what we found is

1 when we put an emphasis on local, small business  
2 contracts and local work force hiring is, number  
3 one, it uplifts the community as a whole. Number  
4 two, it provides training and work force  
5 opportunities for the local work force.

6 It provides us incentives to go into -- and  
7 opportunities to go into the middle schools and the  
8 high schools and incentivize and promote these  
9 projects that promote these opportunities to young  
10 people, which is what our industry is in dire need  
11 of doing now.

12 It also instills a sense of pride,  
13 particularly, with district and public entity  
14 projects. When people work on those projects  
15 within those communities, we found that those  
16 facilities, those properties, are better  
17 maintained, they're better used, and there's more  
18 pride within those facilities and properties.

19 So I'm here again just to speak on behalf of  
20 my companies and behalf of other local small  
21 businesses that we're thankful for initiatives to  
22 focus on small and local businesses, and we  
23 appreciate any opportunities in the -- in the  
24 future. Thank you.

25 CHAIR GARCIA: Mr. DuBose, thank you for your

1           comments. And, you know, as a public agency, we  
2           have constituents and constituent issues, and one  
3           of them is that we are here to serve the local  
4           economy, and we're here to give opportunities to  
5           businesses and entrepreneurs like Mr. DuBose, and  
6           this Board is deeply grateful to Mr. Gilzean for  
7           opening up the District to more small businesses  
8           because for a long time the District was closed to  
9           people like Mr. DuBose and entrepreneurs like him.

10                   And so we greatly appreciate your comments.  
11           Thank you for being here, and thank you, again,  
12           Mr. Gilzean, for opening up the District to  
13           businesses like Mr. DuBose's.

14                   Next, Michael Young. Mr. Young, please state  
15           your name for the record, and if you're here in a  
16           representative capacity, please tell us who you  
17           represent.

18                   MR. YOUNG: Good morning to the Board and all  
19           those in attendance. My name is Michael D. Young,  
20           president and CEO of ACY Contractors, established  
21           in 2004. I will piggyback on the words shared by  
22           my friend, and I also say spiritual brother, Ernie  
23           DuBose. We are commercial general contractors. We  
24           have experience in K through 12, higher ed,  
25           aviation, health care, institutional office, and

1 entertainment.

2 As a former board member of the  
3 African-American Chamber of Commerce of Central  
4 Florida, and a current board member of the National  
5 Association of Minority Contractors of Central  
6 Florida, I believe that we all must be involved  
7 with improving our communities. I'm a proud  
8 graduate of the University of Florida.

9 ATTENDEES: Go Gators.

10 MR. YOUNG: And the 2018 number one ranked  
11 fastest growing Gator alumni. After experiencing  
12 rapid growth leading up to the devastating impacts  
13 from the pandemic, I decided to forge a new path  
14 for my business. I wanted to work with those that  
15 wanted to work with me.

16 So I'm itching to create my own opportunities  
17 when others are reluctant to create opportunities  
18 for me. I decided to create a mentorship program  
19 to teach other contractors how to win  
20 million-dollar contracts because others were  
21 reluctant to. We need those that will honor  
22 fairness in a mutually beneficial relationship.

23 There's a publishing out there I suggest you  
24 look at: The Racial Wealth Divide, published by  
25 Prosperity Now in January 2023. It illustrates the

1 economic disparities in black and brown  
2 communities. We attribute our growth, ACY, to,  
3 first, God, to strategy, perseverance, but most  
4 significantly, we attribute our success to the  
5 opportunities and programs that were intentionally  
6 provided to give an open door, whether through  
7 mentorship or diversity initiatives.

8 So could we have grown to be ranked as the  
9 number one fastest growing Gator alumni without  
10 these programs? Maybe, but it would have taken  
11 twice as long.

12 So I ask this Board to consider ways to  
13 increase opportunities for contracts for folks like  
14 me so I can continue to do my part with stimulating  
15 economic change in our community. Thank you.

16 CHAIR GARCIA: Mr. Young, thank you for your  
17 comments, and in terms of the Board's initiatives  
18 to open the door, as you said, to opportunities  
19 like your businesses and Mr. DuBose, that's why we  
20 hired Mr. Gilzean, and he's done just that, and  
21 we're very proud of that. So thank you for your  
22 comments.

23 Debie McDonald. Good morning, Debie. Welcome  
24 back. We all know who you are, but for those who  
25 are here maybe for the first time, please state

1 your name for the record.

2 MS. MCDONALD: Good morning, my name is Debie  
3 McDonald -- one second, I came up fast. I thought  
4 I was number 12. I see on the agenda you have the  
5 proclamation for the American Cancer Society and  
6 the Relay for Life, which is one of my favorite  
7 things in the world for people that are going  
8 through what they are.

9 I wanted to share a story today about a little  
10 girl named Annabelle. On January 4th, Sophie and  
11 Blake took their daughter to Epcot to see Anna and  
12 Elsa. She was a huge part of their daughter's  
13 life, and a huge part of her world.

14 Annabelle -- Annabelle had been struggling  
15 with Down syndrome and deafness since birth and her  
16 leukemia had come back. Although, the queue to see  
17 the princesses in Norway was very long, Anna and  
18 Elsa, the Disney cast members, shut it down and  
19 shared a special time privately with Annabelle as  
20 whispers went down the long line of guests. And  
21 they all immediately understood that this was  
22 important.

23 As they said good-bye to this sweet girl, Elsa  
24 pulled the mom in and whispered thanking the  
25 parents for letting her love them and letting them

1 love on Annabelle in return. That's what cast  
2 members do without hesitation or pause, they give  
3 magic.

4 Whatever you are envisioning Disney to be, it  
5 is not. What you are fighting is simply wrong. I  
6 ask you, again, to look at the joy and the love  
7 these cast members give every day without  
8 hesitation and stop your fight with Reedy Creek and  
9 Disney and our surrounding communities.

10 Nine days after the Disney cast members, Elsa  
11 and Anna, made a special memory for Annabelle, on  
12 January 13th, 2004 -- '24, just 11 days ago, at the  
13 sweet age of seven, Annabelle left this earth, and  
14 her beloved family began planning her memorial  
15 service. The song her daddy chose to accompany the  
16 ceremony was from Dumbo called, "Baby of Mine."  
17 "Baby of mine, don't you cry, baby of mine, dry  
18 your eyes. Rest your head close to my heart, never  
19 depart, baby of mine. Little one when you play  
20 don't you mind what they say, let those eyes  
21 sparkle and shine, never a tear, baby of mine."

22 We live in a beautiful world that we have the  
23 opportunity to give to others and to change lives.  
24 At its core that's what I see with Disney and Reedy  
25 Creek cast members and employees: giving, caring,



1 and making a difference to little girls and boys  
2 all over the world.

3 To the Central Florida Tourism Oversight  
4 Board, I ask you, again, to reconsider dismantling  
5 this fine organization, and in the words of one  
6 strong Princess Elsa, let it go. Thank you.

7 CHAIR GARCIA: Debie, thank you for sharing  
8 that very sweet story and God bless that little  
9 girl and God bless those cast members that you  
10 referred to. Thank you, again, for those public  
11 comments.

12 Next, Annette Khaled. I probably pronounced  
13 that the wrong way, and I apologize, but please  
14 state your name for the record, and tell us if  
15 you're here in a representative capacity.

16 DR. KHALED: I'm kind of short here. It's an  
17 honor to be here today. My name is Annette Khaled.  
18 I'm a professor at UCF. I'm also a cancer  
19 researcher, and it's really important for me to  
20 tell you a little bit about why I'm a cancer  
21 researcher.

22 And some facts you may not be aware of.  
23 You've heard personal stories, but did you know  
24 that one in two individuals in the U.S. may be  
25 affected by cancer? At the same time, 90 percent

1 of cancer drugs fail, so you have those two facts  
2 that, you know, we have to deal with. And that's  
3 what we do in our research labs. I head the cancer  
4 research division in the Burnett School of  
5 Biomedical Sciences. I'm based at Lake Nona, and  
6 that's where I have my research lab, and we've been  
7 working for many years to develop new drugs and new  
8 therapeutics.

9 So I'm here today because the Relay for Life  
10 is very important to bring awareness to the things  
11 that we do in the research world because it's not  
12 just, you know, having the money to do the  
13 research, it's letting people know what we do and  
14 why we do it.

15 So that's why I'm here today just to thank  
16 you-all for what you're doing, to appreciate that  
17 the District is looking at the Relay for Life, and  
18 to let you know that we're working really hard at  
19 UCF in all our cancer research labs. I had 11  
20 different cancer researchers, and we're developing  
21 new treatments and new drugs, and, hopefully, we'll  
22 start to make a dent in those statistics that I  
23 just mentioned a few minutes ago. Thank you very  
24 much for your attention.

25 CHAIR GARCIA: Well, professor, thank you for

1 your comments. I imagine how busy you are, and the  
2 Board is deeply grateful for your taking time out  
3 of your busy day to come here and express your  
4 gratitude for that. Thank you so much, professor.

5 Next, Marjorie Gorman (sic). Please state  
6 your name for the record, and if you're here in a  
7 representative capacity, please tell us who you  
8 represent this morning.

9 MS. GUZMAN: Good morning. I'm going to read  
10 my notes here. Good morning, I'm Marjorie Guzman,  
11 the owner and CEO of Topaz Clinical Research, a  
12 service-disabled, veteran-owned business located in  
13 Apopka, Florida.

14 At Topaz Clinical Research, we contract with  
15 pharmaceutical companies to conduct clinical  
16 trials. Our trials range from pediatric to  
17 geriatric, and we work with several physicians in  
18 many therapeutic areas throughout Central Florida.

19 Our daily goal is to educate physicians and  
20 patients on the importance of clinical research and  
21 how we can be an addition and an alternative to  
22 health care.

23 Additionally, we are contracting with an  
24 out-of-state company to provide physical exams for  
25 the Department of Defense employees at our clinic,

1 and we're interested in growing this part of our  
2 business.

3 I come before you today to give praise to  
4 Mr. Gilzean, his open door policy. Mr. Gilzean  
5 presented last week, Thursday, at the Apopka  
6 Chamber -- Chamber of Commerce on his new policies  
7 to assist small businesses and veteran-owned  
8 businesses. After his presentation, I introduced  
9 myself to him, and I described the contract work  
10 that we were performing at Topaz Clinical Research,  
11 and Mr. Gilzean immediately invited me to meet with  
12 him at his office that same afternoon.

13 Mr. Gilzean added me to his busy schedule and  
14 introduced me to team members. He made many phone  
15 calls and literally brainstormed with me for over  
16 an hour on potential health care opportunities for  
17 us.

18 Mr. Gilzean has been in close contact with me  
19 since then, and his team has called me, emailed me,  
20 connected with me, and, you know, contacted -- you  
21 know, connect me with other members. He has been  
22 very supportive -- been very supportive and has  
23 truly opened his doors to many possible  
24 opportunities for us.

25 Mr. Gilzean has been very welcoming, and I

1 encourage other entrepreneurs to reach out to the  
2 Central Florida Tourism Oversight District, and I'm  
3 very excited to grow my business and to provide for  
4 the needs of our community through education,  
5 employment, and entrepreneurship with Mr. Gilzean  
6 by our side. Thank you.

7 CHAIR GARCIA: Well, thank you. Those are  
8 powerful comments, and we're anxious to see you  
9 grow your business and grow it here in the  
10 District.

11 MS. GUZMAN: Thank you.

12 CHAIR GARCIA: Thanks, again.

13 Next, Chris Wills. Chris, state your full  
14 name for the record and tell us here who you --  
15 tell us who you represent. And welcome -- welcome  
16 back, Chris.

17 MR. WILLS: Thank you very much, Chairman, and  
18 I also want to thank Debie for sharing that  
19 amazingly heartwarming story, and our prayers go  
20 out to that family.

21 As has become a tradition, I have some  
22 documents to present to the Board. I would  
23 appreciate it if they can be passed out, but I'll  
24 describe them anyways.

25 So my name is Chris Wills. I'm here on behalf

1 of Disney Defenders, which is the political action  
2 committee, that is working to amend Florida's  
3 constitution to restore Reedy Creek and to prohibit  
4 political retaliation. And thank you for passing  
5 those out. I appreciate it.

6 I'm here before you for -- to discuss the two  
7 documents that are being handed out to you-all.  
8 The first reason for me coming before you-all -- I  
9 did present five. I'm sorry, I don't know why --

10 MS. ZIEGLER: It's okay.

11 MR. WILLS: Anyways, the first document is  
12 related to what everybody across the state of  
13 Florida is talking about, which is our governor  
14 exiting the presidential campaign. And why that's  
15 pertinent to this Board is because, as you'll see  
16 in the first document that I presented to you-all,  
17 in the aggregate of polling, Governor DeSantis'  
18 polling numbers began a precipitous drop literally  
19 the day he signed the law that created this Board  
20 and retaliated against Disney.

21 And I think it's important for Governor  
22 DeSantis and everybody on this Board to recognize  
23 that, that the American public, and certainly  
24 Floridians across the state, are disgusted with  
25 what has happened over the past year, and they're

1 very concerned about the precedent that's being set  
2 for political retaliation.

3 I do want to report, and for the members of  
4 the press, that Governor DeSantis has been very  
5 successful in one thing, and that's re-writing  
6 history. He has changed the narrative because we  
7 are coming across a lot of Floridians that believe  
8 that he has won in this issue when there is a  
9 federal lawsuit, a state lawsuit pending, but he  
10 continues to repeat that he beat Disney. This is  
11 long but over, especially, before we, the citizens  
12 of the United States and the State of Florida, have  
13 our say when we amend the constitution.

14 And then, lastly, I wanted to present to  
15 you-all -- I know that you-all went through a  
16 process to re-brand Reedy Creek, as you have the  
17 map up there -- oh, you did change it to Central  
18 Florida Tourism Oversight District, but what it has  
19 come to symbolize to so many here in Florida and  
20 across the country is what we put together in this  
21 new logo for you-all, right.

22 So you-all designed that logo. We're  
23 proposing that this should be adopted as your new  
24 logo, and that the Board should go by the corrupt  
25 failure tyrannical overreach district because that

1 is -- that is what we are hearing from Floridians,  
2 and why it's urgent that everyone go online to  
3 disneydefenders.com, sign our petitions so that we  
4 can undo this, and we can get back to this District  
5 being run in the spectacular way that it was run  
6 prior to this chaos and corruption. So thank you  
7 very much.

8 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. Chris, thank you very  
9 much for your public comments.

10 MR. WILLS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 CHAIR GARCIA: And next, Nicholas Maldonado.  
12 Please state your name for the record, and if  
13 you're here in a representative capacity, tell  
14 us -- tell us who you represent, sir.

15 MR. MALDONADO: So to the Board and to the  
16 Chair, thank you so much for having me speak today.  
17 So my name is Nicholas Maldonado, and I'm a current  
18 Walt Disney World cast member. So I've been with  
19 the company since 2018, and so since moving here to  
20 Florida from Southern California, where I  
21 transferred out of Disneyland to Walt Disney World.

22 It's been a stressful move, but I'm here, and  
23 so I'm loving what everything that Florida has  
24 offered. But what has set me back in working with  
25 the company, and hearing Debie's comments, and to



1 Annabelle, she's in my thoughts and prayers. But  
2 it has -- that's what we, as cast members, do every  
3 single day. We bring the magic every day. And we  
4 bring magic to all backgrounds, all walks of life,  
5 sexual orientations, to all families that come  
6 through our gates, we welcome them with open arms,  
7 treating them as if they are our own family here at  
8 the company.

9 But with this District and what Ron DeSantis  
10 has done, and, "Don't Say DeSantis," I was one of  
11 the ones to have participated in the Disney  
12 walkout, and what I'm seeing what's coming on this  
13 Board is nothing but chaos and corruption. And  
14 what they're trying to brand the company as is just  
15 diminishing what Disney achieves and what they have  
16 achieved with Reedy Creek.

17 And I stand with Disney Defenders, and I stand  
18 with Chris, and I stand with all those elected  
19 officials that are trying to bring back Reedy Creek  
20 and bring back the Board that has stood with  
21 Disney, that has stood to bringing that magic  
22 across the property, and -- but what Ron DeSantis  
23 has been doing, the reason why he's down in the  
24 poll numbers is because of what he has done to  
25 diminish Disney and to -- and what Disney has done

1 is brought so many jobs to the state of Florida,  
2 and I think that's what this Board has lost sight  
3 of. Thank you.

4 CHAIR GARCIA: And thank you for the good work  
5 that you do as a cast member in the District and  
6 the magic that you bring to the District. That's  
7 an important function, and thank you for your  
8 public comments, sir.

9 Next -- that concludes public comments  
10 today -- is the consent agenda. Is there a motion?

11 MR. AUNGST: Move to approve the consent  
12 agenda.

13 CHAIR GARCIA: Is there a second?

14 MR. PERI: Second.

15 CHAIR GARCIA: All -- any discussion? All in  
16 favor, indicate by saying aye.

17 THE BOARD: Aye.

18 CHAIR GARCIA: Any oppose? Let the record  
19 reflect the motion passes unanimously. We will now  
20 move to reports, and, first, management report,  
21 Mr. Gilzean.

22 MR. GILZEAN: First, I would like to thank  
23 Jennifer Johnson, the District's permit tech lead  
24 for being a driving force in successfully bringing  
25 Relay for Life of Lake Buena Vista to the Central

1 Florida Tourism Oversight District after a  
2 four-year absence. Jennifer serves as the Central  
3 Florida and North Florida area lead and is the  
4 point person within the District.

5 Earlier this month, I was honored to attend  
6 the first lap at CFTOD's Maxwell Field with  
7 Jennifer, Yamile Rivera, and Ms. Susan Shaw, who  
8 are all here with us today, and you will hear from  
9 them shortly.

10 This year's theme is called "homecoming." The  
11 District is expected to support these efforts, and  
12 I applaud again Ms. Johnson, who is actually a  
13 cancer survivor herself, for her dedication to our  
14 community. Over 600,000 individuals die from  
15 cancer each and every year here in the United  
16 States. This number should be zero, and Relay for  
17 Life of Lake Buena Vista and the Central Florida  
18 community will make a dent in that number.

19 Before they discuss the Relay for Life of Lake  
20 Buena Vista with us, I would like to formally  
21 introduce Ms. Rivera and Ms. Shaw. Ms. Yamile has  
22 volunteered with the American Cancer Society for  
23 over 24 years. She serves as the National Making  
24 Strides Against Breast Cancer volunteer lead and is  
25 also the co-lead with Ms. Johnson.

1           Finally, I'd like to introduce Ms. Susan Shaw,  
2           executive director of the American Cancer Society.  
3           Susan, thank you for being here with us. Together  
4           this dream team has made an impact within our  
5           region and beyond. Thank you for coming to discuss  
6           Relay for Life. Come join -- if you guys can join  
7           us at the podium and do your presentation.

8           MS. JOHNSON: Good morning. I'm Jennifer  
9           Johnson. Thank you so much for the opportunity to  
10          be here today. I had this memorized, but now I  
11          don't remember anything, so forgive me as I read  
12          from my little card I made.

13          We are very grateful for the opportunity to  
14          bring Relay back to the District. It was a dream  
15          that we've shared ever since COVID kind of shut it  
16          all down. So we're very excited for the  
17          opportunity and grateful to Glen and the Board and  
18          everyone for allowing this to happen and  
19          participating and supporting. The support so far  
20          is overwhelming. Today I -- all these surprises I  
21          didn't know were going to be here, so I'm so  
22          excited.

23          Relay for Life is a community event where  
24          participants can unite to celebrate survivors,  
25          remember loved ones we've lost. Also, fight back

1           against this disease that's touched everyone. The  
2           District is making it possible for this community  
3           to come back to the track here, and we join  
4           together with the other members of our community to  
5           make a difference towards cancer.

6           Through our teamwork, our community support  
7           and fundraising, we will be able to help fund more  
8           research and patient support services that help  
9           provide rides, and Susan is going to share in a few  
10          minutes some other things that our money that we  
11          raise here within the District is going to  
12          contribute to for this cause.

13          These -- sorry. Together we're going to bring  
14          hope and healing hopefully to the community and to  
15          everyone touched by cancer. So, at this time, I'm  
16          going to turn it over to Susan so she can share  
17          some things with you.

18          MS. SHAW: Good morning. Thank you, Jennifer,  
19          and thank you to the Board, the District, and to  
20          Glen, and, as I mentioned, to Jennifer. I am Susan  
21          Shaw. I'm the senior executive director for North  
22          and Central Florida for the American Cancer  
23          Society. I've been with the society for 12 years,  
24          and I'm proud to say and support the work that we  
25          do. At the society, our mission is to end cancer

1 for everyone as we know it.

2 How do we do that? Through a variety of  
3 things. One of the ways is the impact through the  
4 communities. Relay for Life being one of those  
5 events. Relay for Life has been around a very long  
6 time. Last year alone nationwide Relay for Life  
7 raised \$61 million in the fight against cancer, and  
8 that's because of communities such as yourself.

9 Bringing the community together to fight, to  
10 create awareness, raise awareness, to educate, and  
11 to raise funds. We want to ensure at the American  
12 Cancer Society that everyone has the opportunity to  
13 treat, protect, survive cancer.

14 This year alone you'll be surprised to hear  
15 that over two million cases will be diagnosed of  
16 cancer. Relay is one of the ways that we bring  
17 hope, as Jennifer mentioned, to the community.

18 So I thank you for your continued support and  
19 look forward to celebrating and walking the track  
20 with all of you.

21 MS. RIVERA: Hi, everyone, I'm Yamile Rivera,  
22 and I'd like to thank you all for your support. It  
23 has been, like Jennifer said, overwhelming. One of  
24 the reasons -- I think the most important reason I  
25 need to share today is my why, and my why is my mom

1 got diagnosed about 15 years ago with mantle cell  
2 lymphoma. And when we went to Moffitt Center to  
3 get her -- start her diagnosis treatment, she was  
4 told she only had nine months to live.

5 So my mom being the spunky, Hispanic, Latina  
6 that she is said, no way, we have to fight this,  
7 and I immediately -- I had been a volunteer for the  
8 American Cancer Society. It's the first time  
9 anyone in my family had been diagnosed.

10 And so I clung to cancer.org. If you don't  
11 have that on your phone, please put it on there.  
12 It's going to give you relief when anybody asks you  
13 what to do when you hear those words. And we went  
14 to Moffitt Center and immediately started  
15 treatment, and her oncologist said had it not been  
16 for the research that had been done by the American  
17 Cancer Society, and the funding they had received  
18 at Moffitt from that treatment, my mom would not  
19 have survived, and she lived with us for ten whole  
20 years, so I got to spoil her for ten years.

21 So I feel it's my duty to continue to support  
22 the American Cancer Society because I know it  
23 works. So we ask you for your support, and how you  
24 support is not only in money, but coming out on  
25 April 27th to our track and joining us. And if you

1 can flip that slide, I want us to see what this  
2 district has done for the American Cancer Society.

3 When we had our very first walk in 2007, we  
4 raised \$37,000, and that was just the hotels in  
5 this community. Then we reached out, and we went  
6 all the way up to 133,000 in 2016, and even during  
7 COVID year, we raised \$54,000. And that was  
8 stuff -- doing bake sales in our home and  
9 delivering lasagnas to people just so that we could  
10 continue the fight.

11 So we really appreciate that you're bringing  
12 this back. As we said, it's our homecoming. So we  
13 appreciate your support with team -- sign up a  
14 team. Sign up -- you can be a virtual team if you  
15 can't walk the track with us that day, but that's  
16 how you support us, and get us sponsors. We need  
17 sponsors that will help us in the fight. So we  
18 appreciate your time today, and I expect all of you  
19 on the track on April 27th.

20 CHAIR GARCIA: Well, thank you to the three of  
21 y'all. On behalf of this Board, I want to thank  
22 all of you for all of your efforts in what you're  
23 doing to fight cancer. And, Mr. Gilzean, thank you  
24 for your initiative to revive this effort here in  
25 the District, and we'll be there in April to help



1 you with respect to this event. Thanks, again.

2 MR. GILZEAN: Mr. Chairman, before I go back  
3 and finish my -- and members of the Board, before I  
4 finish my report, what I love about this program,  
5 and I love about Ms. Yamile's story, but what's  
6 good about this, it brings in not only our  
7 employees, it brings in the hotels' employees, it  
8 brings everyone together, and one of the things  
9 I've been sharing across the District, and to  
10 anyone that would listen, is that I'm very  
11 optimistic about 2024 due to the fact that -- and  
12 now I'm jumping ahead, but due to the fact that  
13 this is one way of us building that community and  
14 going forward, and I see it each and every day.  
15 What's awesome today is now you guys are getting to  
16 see it, too, so that's awesome.

17 All right. So after I paid some bills, back  
18 to my regular scheduled program. Thank you for  
19 your efforts in bringing Relay back to Central  
20 Florida. I look forward to participating with this  
21 District all star team.

22 Let's see. In an ongoing effort to enhance  
23 our employees' wellbeing, and to help reduce the  
24 stress caused by cancer, in 2023, the District  
25 implemented a new employee benefit to provide all

1 full-time employees with short-term disabilities  
2 diagnosed with one of the 25 -- 21 qualifying  
3 cancers listed in Statute 112.1816. Employees can  
4 apply for short-term disability insurance. If  
5 approved, the District will cover the difference in  
6 their weekly pay.

7 After the three-month short-term disability,  
8 employees may apply for long-term disability  
9 insurance, and, if approved, the District will  
10 cover the difference, as well. Knowing the impacts  
11 of cancer and the effects it has not only on those  
12 diagnosed, their families, co-workers, and even the  
13 larger community, my administration has made it --  
14 the wellbeing of our employees a top priority in  
15 2024.

16 Additionally, by prioritizing work/life  
17 balance our employees deserve will translate to  
18 providing excellent services to all taxpayers  
19 resulting in a seamless experience for the millions  
20 of visitors who come to the District to enjoy.

21 As District administrator, I am proud to have  
22 the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District  
23 hosting Relay for Life of Lake Buena Vista at  
24 Maxwell Field, and I invite all of our taxpayers,  
25 operating participants, CFTOD employees, and the

1 Central Florida community at large to come and take  
2 part in this homecoming event.

3 Now I'd like to segue into the recognition of  
4 our team members who have shown their continued  
5 excellence in dedication to our operation over the  
6 last two months. These team members have gone  
7 beyond the call of duty, and they're a large part  
8 of why this is known for seamless service and  
9 excellence.

10 Starting with Ms. Ella Hickey from our  
11 building and safety department. Ella has been  
12 instrument -- instrumental in helping coordinate  
13 our EPCOT building code update. This diligent task  
14 requires Ella to work with our vendors and external  
15 partners to complete every aspect accurately.

16 Our EPCOT building codes are renowned for the  
17 detailed specs and requirements. Along with this  
18 duty, Ella was instrumental in maintaining the  
19 Accela programming and permitting software the  
20 District utilizes. Ella has been invited to be a  
21 program presenter at various Accela conferences and  
22 presented at the Building Officials Association of  
23 Florida. Ella has played a critical role in  
24 supporting the building and safety team, allowing  
25 it to maintain the high operational readiness for

1 which the department is known for. Joey, please  
2 join us at the podium, who is Ella's manager, who  
3 would like to say a few words. Joey, Joey.

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Glen, and Board  
5 members. So if anyone knows anything about Ella,  
6 Ella has been here roughly about 22 years, and  
7 nothing happens in our department that Ella doesn't  
8 touch or have a part in. And she makes the  
9 department run seamlessly. But one thing that she  
10 does on top of everything else is -- our permitting  
11 program is the lifeline of what we do as building  
12 and safety team, and Ella is one of the few people  
13 in the nation that is a Accela systems  
14 administrator for the civic platform for the  
15 permitting system, and you have to have at least  
16 three years of experience in that program in order  
17 to obtain the certification, and Ella has over ten  
18 years of experience just in that area alone.

19 So where we just had a major upgrade recently,  
20 there's things that we have to re-program or change  
21 and adjust in order for us to work -- use daily,  
22 the internal customers and the external customers,  
23 and having Ella in-house just makes it seamless,  
24 and it allows us to use it efficiently and  
25 effectively without any downtime.

1           So we appreciate that, and we would not be  
2           able to -- if she was not here, we would have to  
3           put in a work order, wait for someone, you know, to  
4           come respond, make the changes that we need that  
5           are necessary. But as Glen mentioned, Ella has  
6           been requested to travel all over the United States  
7           to present on behalf of the cutting edge that the  
8           District does here, as far as our permitting,  
9           and -- because we lead a lot of the online  
10          permitting systems that we have, and so she's been  
11          asked to travel to multiple states around the  
12          United States to present on behalf of the District  
13          and what we do here and how we do it.

14          So it's an honor to have Ella here, and thanks  
15          for everything.

16          MR. GILZEAN: All right. So now this is the  
17          time in the program where we have to do a big photo  
18          op and check presentation. So come on, Board  
19          members; come on, Ms. Ella. Let's move this  
20          around. Congratulations.

21          MS. HICKEY: Thank you.

22          (Applause.)

23          MR. GILZEAN: I'm sorry for butchering your  
24          last name.

25          MS. HICKEY: That's okay.

1 (Photograph taken.)

2 MS. ZIEGLER: Congratulations.

3 MR. GILZEAN: All right. Next I would like to  
4 recognize Lance Kochen from our fleet team. Lance  
5 was critical in serving one of our emergency  
6 response vehicles working continuously alongside  
7 with the fire department and the manufacturer team  
8 to resolve this issue. Working late into the  
9 evening, Lance fixed the vehicle allowing a special  
10 event to continue as scheduled. This is not the  
11 first time he's gone up and beyond for the District  
12 or for the fire department ensuring a seamless  
13 experience for guests to experience daily. Acting  
14 fire chief would like to come up and say a couple  
15 words. Come on, Chief.

16 MR. FERRARI: Good morning, Mr. Gilzean,  
17 Chairman Garcia, members of the Board. I'm Eric  
18 Ferrari, the acting fire chief. The fire  
19 department proudly delivers world-class service  
20 with our world-class personnel day in and day out,  
21 it -- but we can't do that without outstanding  
22 internal support. We have incredibly complex  
23 systems internally and rely on information  
24 technology and their support. Our facilities where  
25 we house our firefighting staff, it becomes their

1 home, require maintenance, and our maintenance  
2 department, facilities department, it provides  
3 world-class service to us so that we can deliver  
4 service.

5 And then there's our fleet department and  
6 Lance Kochen. Lance and I have a bat phone to each  
7 other, so when he gets a call from the fire chief,  
8 he knows it's serious. But on this particular day  
9 that warranted this award, we had our  
10 million-dollar fire truck -- our bucket truck, our  
11 aerial apparatus on stage for a guest -- I'm sorry,  
12 not a guest, a cast member that was -- had taken a  
13 fall, and we needed to set up a bucket truck to do  
14 a high point, which is basically tie some rope to  
15 the bottom of the bucket, and we hoist someone out  
16 of a vault who had fallen down a vault.

17 Great operation, it was seamless, right? The  
18 guest -- I'm sorry, the cast member made a full  
19 recovery, but our bucket truck got stuck in the  
20 air. It's an incredibly complex vehicle, lots of  
21 sensors to keep us in a safe operating zone because  
22 it can go all kinds of distances and all kinds of  
23 angles.

24 But on this particular day, it decided it  
25 didn't want to come down, and it was on stage. And

1           so -- and we had -- Disney had alerted us there was  
2           a nighttime event scheduled for this particular  
3           area, so pressure was on. We called the  
4           manufacturer. They came out. We couldn't bed the  
5           truck. And we had Lance out there, and Lance  
6           stayed into the evening, crawling under that truck,  
7           doing all kinds of things that he does and knows  
8           best; that he is a master at his craft, and was  
9           able to bed the truck, and we were able to get the  
10          truck successfully off stage. It ended up being a  
11          computer issue. I like the days of manual  
12          hydraulic levers but can't fight -- can't fight  
13          technology.

14                 So he is -- this award was well deserved  
15                 because he really got us out of a bind, and he goes  
16                 above and beyond consistently day by day to keep  
17                 our fleet running, our frontline fire and rescue  
18                 apparatus, especially during the demands of the  
19                 system during the summer, when we experience more  
20                 technical issues, and he's on-site to get us back  
21                 up and running. Thank you.

22                         (Applause.)

23                 MR. GILZEAN: Congratulations.

24                         (Photograph taken.)

25                 MR. GILZEAN: All right. Continuing the



1 recognition of our employees, I would like to also  
2 thank Dwight Sweeting from our building and safety  
3 team. Dwight continuously excels in meeting the  
4 needs of our customers. Recently, Dwight answered  
5 50 calls within two days, and by doing so, his  
6 department was able to service each call that came  
7 in while ensuring there was no delays in repairing  
8 or installing critical systems allowing for  
9 contractors to continue to work without losing time  
10 or productivity.

11 Joey, come back up to give a couple words  
12 about Dwight.

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, again, Glen, and  
14 the Board. so Dwight has been a member of our  
15 department for about six and a half years now. He  
16 came to us in September of 2017, and Dwight works  
17 for one of our -- we're the only group in our  
18 department that is 24/7. There's always someone  
19 from their team that's here.

20 Now, during the -- there was a week in  
21 November of '23, last year, that every one of  
22 Dwight's team members got sick and were unable to  
23 work. And so Dwight worked almost every shift for  
24 two days straight in order to keep everything going  
25 for the District. And so it was just -- it was

1 extremely above and beyond because Dwight is a  
2 family man with four kids at home, and -- but he's  
3 dedicated to making sure that we at the District  
4 provide the highest service we can. So we  
5 appreciate Dwight's effort, and we just wanted to  
6 make sure we recognized him for that effort. Thank  
7 you, Dwight.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. GILZEAN: Congratulations.

10 MR. SWEETING: Thank you so much.

11 (Photograph taken.)

12 MS. ZIEGLER: Congratulations.

13 MR. GILZEAN: All right. Last but not least,  
14 I'd like to thank Sandra Trombly, our construction  
15 project administrator. Sandra has constantly gone  
16 up and beyond her job duties. Sandra has exceeded  
17 her current employment role's expectation and to  
18 team up with her supervisor to maintain the  
19 progress of the environmental science addition  
20 project.

21 In addition, she has been instrumental in  
22 establishing the creation of the standard uniform  
23 filing matrix for all construction management files  
24 on our network drive. These tasks are a huge lift  
25 and well done, Sandra. Sandra is not here, but

1 Craig will say a couple of words for her. Craig,  
2 where are you at? Come on, Craig.

3 MR. SANDT: Good morning, Glen, Mr. Chairman,  
4 members of the Board. I recommended Sandra, Sandy,  
5 Trombly for this excellence award due to her  
6 willingness to consistently go above and beyond her  
7 job duties, as Mr. Gilzean said.

8 Her current role as construction project  
9 administrator is a catalyst for construction  
10 management department's quality control and  
11 financial oversight. Over the last year, Sandy has  
12 worked extremely hard, again, as Mr. Gilzean  
13 stated, to create a uniform filing matrix. So we  
14 have currently construction management software and  
15 then we also kind of mirror the file structure for  
16 that software into our own end drive records, too,  
17 which makes it easier -- a lot easier to -- to pull  
18 data out of it after projects are done archiving  
19 and whatnot.

20 Due to a major vacancy in the CM team's  
21 staffing, Sandy has stepped up her current role,  
22 helped me to day-by-day project management over our  
23 environmental services facility, which is a  
24 beautiful facility when it's done. She's been very  
25 helpful in that role, helped us succeed as a

1 department and construction management team.

2 Again, her efforts were very valuable,  
3 oversight and cost savings to all the District, and  
4 construction management team and making us  
5 successful, too. Her work ethic is amazing. She's  
6 always one to come in early, work late. Sometimes  
7 I have to kick her out of the office. Never  
8 complaining about the amount of hours she puts in  
9 to make our construction management team  
10 successful. I apologize that she cannot be here,  
11 but she's very grateful for the award and  
12 consideration. Thank you very much.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. GILZEAN: Mr. Chairman, members of the  
15 Board, there's a lot happening at the District.  
16 Our teams are dedicated to provide an excellent  
17 customer service while finding innovative ways to  
18 improve doing business as a government. We have  
19 upgraded systems and launched a massive effort to  
20 procure local services and goods, and our  
21 re-branding effort continues to move forward.

22 In a collaborative effort with acting chief  
23 fire -- Chief Ferrari, and the entire fire  
24 department, we have completed the re-branding  
25 process for the fire department patch, and we'll be

1 unveiling the new department patch at a press  
2 conference located at fire station one tomorrow at  
3 10:30.

4 I am truly proud to lead this incredible  
5 organization reaching excellence in innovation.  
6 2024 is going to be a monumental year for the  
7 District. I am excited daily about the opportunity  
8 each one of our employees has to leave a  
9 generational change behind. I want to thank our  
10 team members for their dedication throughout the  
11 transition, and I look forward to the year ahead of  
12 us.

13 As I begin to wrap up, I would like to mention  
14 that we have included in the Board package, is our  
15 semi-annual easement report. This report  
16 identifies the easements of a routine nature that  
17 were executed for the time period of August through  
18 December '23. This reporting is provided as  
19 required under Resolution 565.

20 Next, I want to update you on our procurement  
21 outreach efforts. As you heard earlier, I was  
22 honored to address the Lake Nona Chamber of  
23 Commerce earlier this month to discuss the BuyLocal  
24 Now initiative. I also discussed the initiative at  
25 the Florida Economic Consortium's State of Florida,

1 Emerging Market Townhall -- that's a tongue  
2 twister -- where I discussed contract opportunities  
3 and the vision for the District's BuyLocal Now  
4 program. Thank you to Ms. Candy Cole and  
5 Commissioner Rod Love, respectfully, for their  
6 invitations to speak to their members.

7 Our procurement team is hard at work ensuring  
8 local businesses, small and large, can bid on  
9 district contracts. The District that never sleeps  
10 is open for business, and through our BuyLocal Now  
11 initiative, we will continue to work diligently to  
12 save taxpayers money while providing contract  
13 opportunities to innovators and entrepreneurs  
14 headquartered in the Central Florida region.  
15 Mr. Chairman, members of the Board, that concludes  
16 my manager's report.

17 CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you, Mr. Gilzean. We  
18 will move onto new business, and we'll get to hear  
19 from some more of our very capable team members  
20 here in the District present on a number of action  
21 items. So as to 8.1, contract number 6464,  
22 Mr. Gilzean, do you want to introduce your team  
23 member?

24 MR. GILZEAN: Yes, sir. I would like to bring  
25 up Ms. Chris Ferraro, the director of RCES.

1 MS. FERRARO: Good morning, Mr. Gilzean,  
2 chairman of the Board, and members of the Board.  
3 This morning I'm seeking approval for a contract  
4 for sodium hypochlorite, contract number C006464.  
5 This is essentially bleach that we use in numerous  
6 processes inside of the utility systems, and our  
7 treatment of wastewater, potable water and in our  
8 energy plants.

9 Partnering with District contracting  
10 personnel, we had a successful bid for this service  
11 and this goods. We began the bidding process in  
12 October. We had three bidders for this service,  
13 and we are proposing and seeking Board approval for  
14 a three-year contract for a sodium hypochlorite  
15 supply with Odyssey Manufacturing Company. They  
16 are located in Tampa, Florida. The total amount of  
17 the contract is \$2,909,724.54. They are the low  
18 responsive and responsible bidder for this service.

19 So we have a couple of slides. Now we're just  
20 going to talk a little bit more about the use of  
21 this product in the utility systems of the  
22 District.

23 So it is used extensively in our water  
24 recovery, water resource recovery facility, which  
25 is our re-branding of the wastewater treatment

1 plant. It's a 20 million gallon per day plant that  
2 treats 4 billion gallons of wastewater each year.  
3 The sodium hypochlorite is also used in our potable  
4 drinking water system that produces  
5 6 billion gallons of drinking water each year.

6 Next slide. These are just some of the  
7 storage facilities. We're very cautious and safe  
8 as we take delivery of this product from our  
9 vendors. You can see that the tanks are -- they're  
10 a double-wall tank, and they're inside of a  
11 containment system just to make sure we're  
12 safeguarding the environment.

13 This is another example of the tanks at the  
14 wastewater treatment plant. And our final slide  
15 shows some of the storage containers that are at  
16 our chiller plants and energy plant facilities  
17 where this is used in the treatment and cleansing  
18 of our cooling towers.

19 So with the Board's approval today, we are  
20 seeking approval for this item. It will be funded  
21 through multiple accounts for the corresponding  
22 utilities and routine operating expense. The  
23 volume of this product used each year is about  
24 640,000 thousand gallons, and for our full fiscal  
25 year basis, it's about a million dollars per year.



1           CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. Thank you for that  
2 report. Are there any questions from my fellow  
3 Board members? Hearing none, is there a motion  
4 that we approve this contract?

5           MR. AUNGST: Move to approve agenda item 8.1.

6           MS. ZIEGLER: Second.

7           CHAIR GARCIA: All -- any further discussion?  
8 Hearing none, all in favor, indicate by saying aye.

9           THE BOARD: Aye.

10          CHAIR GARCIA: Any oppose? Let the record  
11 reflect it passes unanimously, and thank you very  
12 much for that very comprehensive report.

13          MS. FERRARO: Thank you. I have one more. I  
14 think I'm next, as well. It is wastewater day for  
15 the utility system today for the Board's approval.  
16 We are seeking the approval of another contract for  
17 rehabilitation of the District's rapid infiltration  
18 basins over a three-year time frame for  
19 rehabilitation of 12 of those rapid infiltration  
20 basins.

21          Rapid infiltration basins are used to recharge  
22 the Florida aquifer. They are on the western side  
23 of the District's property located along SR 429.  
24 They -- we provide from our wastewater treatment  
25 facility reclaimed water, which is naturally

1 filtered back to the aquifer and recharges.

2 The rehabilitation work includes  
3 rehabilitation of the liner, a natural -- a  
4 synthetic geo-liner, and then the sand that's on  
5 top of those rehabilitation units.

6 This is a success story for our BuyLocal  
7 bidding process. Got to give a nod to build on  
8 Glen's -- the success of this program. We did go  
9 out for bid in October. We received two bids. We  
10 are proposing award to the lowest responsible and  
11 responsive bidder of Carr & Colliers, Inc., for an  
12 amount of \$825,700 for rehabilitation of 12 of the  
13 rapid infiltration basins, that we're going to do  
14 four per year.

15 And we have a little map of the infiltration  
16 basins. So if you're driving up 429, and you think  
17 to yourself, wow, what is that? These are -- they  
18 look like sand pits and sand traps as you come  
19 along. What's shown in green has already been  
20 rehabilitated, and what's shown in red is what's  
21 proposed in this contract. This does represent a  
22 savings of almost \$300,000 over the prior work that  
23 was done to rehabilitate these rapid infiltration  
24 basins. Unless there are any questions, that  
25 concludes my report.

1 CHAIR GARCIA: Well, that was a great report,  
2 too. Are there any questions from the Board?

3 MR. GILZEAN: Mr. Chairman, I apologize for  
4 interrupting, but as Chris mentioned, this was a  
5 responsible bidder that was part of the BuyLocal  
6 program, but what's really exciting is that they're  
7 headquartered right up the road in Apopka, Florida,  
8 where I had the opportunity to speak to the Apopka  
9 Chamber. So it just shows that this -- this  
10 collaboration on this project is really working,  
11 and it's really allowing us to be a good neighbor  
12 to our community. So thank you, sir.

13 CHAIR GARCIA: Mr. Gilzean, is this the first  
14 time that this company --

15 MR. GILZEAN: Yes, sir.

16 CHAIR GARCIA: So they've never done work in  
17 the District?

18 MR. GILZEAN: Never.

19 CHAIR GARCIA: And through the procurement  
20 process that you implemented for the District, they  
21 had an opportunity that not previously they would  
22 have had to work in the District.

23 MR. GILZEAN: That is correct. And I do have  
24 to give a shout out to our procurement team. They  
25 work really hard, and I'm really proud of them.

1 So, Tiffany, hat tip to you and your team.

2 CHAIR GARCIA: So you've heard at other  
3 meetings that we're not only experiencing  
4 significant savings from the new procurement  
5 program, that we're affording opportunities to  
6 local businesses that never had an opportunity to  
7 work with the District before, so it's a win-win  
8 for us, a wonderful thing.

9 Next --

10 MR. GILZEAN: Motion. Motion.

11 CHAIR GARCIA: Oh, yeah, that's right.

12 MR. BARAKAT: Mr. Chair, I will -- I'll  
13 motion.

14 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. Thank you.

15 MR. AUNGST: Second.

16 CHAIR GARCIA: Yeah. Any further discussion?  
17 Hearing none, all in favor, indicate by saying aye.

18 THE BOARD: Aye.

19 CHAIR GARCIA: Any oppose? Let the record  
20 reflect that passes unanimously. Thank you very  
21 much for your reports.

22 Next, Mr. Gilzean.

23 MR. GILZEAN: At this time, I would like to  
24 bring up Mr. Ray Crooks, who is the director of  
25 utility business affairs.

1           MR. CROOKS: Mr. Chairman, members of the  
2 Board. Good morning, Mr. Gilzean, as well. I'm  
3 here this morning because one of the critical  
4 contracts that the District uses to bring natural  
5 gas to this property to allow you to supply your  
6 customers with natural gas needs to be updated.  
7 The District has had these agreements in place with  
8 the Florida Gas Transmission Company since the  
9 early '90s, and we have continually rolled over  
10 those agreements.

11           In a 2014 rate settlement, the District was  
12 granted -- the District and other shippers were  
13 granted the right to continue a ten-year rollover  
14 segment, and this is one of those ten-year  
15 rollovers. This is a vital asset for the District  
16 to provide natural gas services, so for us it's  
17 something that has to be done and should be done.  
18 It's to provide -- in providing natural gas  
19 services for the District, this particular segment  
20 of the agreement is a -- cost the District about  
21 \$300,000 a year of a total \$3 million of costs that  
22 we pay to Florida Gas Transmission Company.

23           I was hoping -- I was hoping the District  
24 would be able to filter through the presentation.  
25 There we go. There we go. Just to give you a

1 little bit of perspective of the pipeline situation  
2 that the District participates in. On this  
3 graphic, you will see four different pipelines  
4 available. The District participates in the  
5 blue -- the dark blue line, which is Florida Gas  
6 Transmission Company. Again, the District has been  
7 dealing with them and doing business with them  
8 since the early '90s, and they've been a great  
9 partner for us.

10 Next slide, please. The District has eight  
11 points that they can purchase and ship gas into the  
12 pipeline, and you see them there with the different  
13 arrow locations on the pipeline. The pipeline  
14 extends from southern Texas all the way down to  
15 Miami, so it services people along the -- shippers  
16 along that pipeline, roughly, about 5,000 different  
17 miles of pipe is what FGT has.

18 The District, again, has eight points, and we  
19 also have a ninth where you can buy at a hub price.  
20 And we tend not to do that because that's more  
21 pricey when you do it that way, but we have lots of  
22 flexibility.

23 Next slide, please. There we go. Next one.

24 MS. MILLS: That's it.

25 MR. CROOKS: Okay. Well, let me just

1 continue. Florida Gas Transmission Company has  
2 5,300 miles of pipe. Again, it goes from south  
3 Texas all the way through to south Florida. It  
4 delivers about three BCF of gas per day, which is a  
5 lot of natural gas. Florida is natural gas  
6 dependent, and we have over 240 delivery points on  
7 the pipeline, which allows the District and other  
8 customers to buy gas and ship it and deliver it at  
9 their locations.

10 It has 50 interconnections with other  
11 pipelines, and it has also direct storage  
12 connections with other pipes should you decide that  
13 you wanted storage. The reason that we want to get  
14 this agreement put in place is because the ten-year  
15 rollover is a time-sensitive issue. Our contracts  
16 end pretty much in February of 2025, and I suspect  
17 your next question would be, Why are we dealing  
18 with this in 2024? That's a cadence that the  
19 pipeline company itself determines. We don't  
20 determine, as the customer, when FGT should update  
21 their contracts.

22 So this is a cadence that we have followed for  
23 25-plus years, and FGT is going to continue doing  
24 it that way. So we need this approved such that we  
25 can basically have our ten-year rollover for the

1 next ten years, which would take us to 2035. And,  
2 suffice it to say, that this is one of two  
3 contracts that the District has, so there's going  
4 to be one coming to you later in the year, probably  
5 April or May this year, but the District needs to  
6 approve these to continue its gas business.

7 And, quite frankly, the things that also are  
8 important about this rollover is that there was an  
9 intervening rate case in 2022, and that rate case  
10 allowed us to get about a 10 percent rate decrease  
11 in our cost. So rolling over for another ten years  
12 is not only beneficial operationally, but it's also  
13 beneficial from a cost perspective.

14 So we're asking approval for you to rollover  
15 the ten-year agreement with Florida Gas  
16 Transmission on behalf of the District, and do that  
17 on behalf of its customers, gas customers, and it  
18 also is a financial benefit to the District. So  
19 it's a good story all around, and I think it's  
20 something that we ought to do not just financially  
21 but strategically, as well.

22 CHAIR GARCIA: Well, Mr. Crooks, thank you for  
23 that report. Are there any questions from my  
24 fellow Board members?

25 Hearing none, is there a motion?



1 MR. PERI: So moved.

2 CHAIR GARCIA: Is there a second?

3 MR. BARAKAT: Second.

4 CHAIR GARCIA: Any discussion? All in favor,  
5 please indicate by saying aye.

6 THE BOARD: Aye.

7 CHAIR GARCIA: Please let the record reflect  
8 the motion passes unanimously. Thank you,  
9 Mr. Crooks.

10 MR. GILZEAN: All right.

11 CHAIR GARCIA: Who is next, Mr. Gilzean?

12 MR. GILZEAN: Last but not least, Ms. Chris is  
13 back to close us out.

14 MS. FERRARO: Thank you. My apologies but  
15 we're still discussing wastewater. This is a  
16 three-part agenda item to set a budget for  
17 rehabilitation of two duplex lift stations.  
18 They're kind of a medium-sized lift station.  
19 Seeking Board approval to set that budget at  
20 \$3.25 million; seeking Board approval for \$250,000  
21 in design and support services; and seeking Board  
22 approval to award a contract for finishing design  
23 services, mitigating construction service with CPH,  
24 in the amount \$174,270.94.

25 So we'll move into a little bit of

1 conversation about the details of the project.  
2 This project does propose use of existing bond  
3 funds from the 2021-1 taxable bond series, so it's  
4 money the District already has in the bank that  
5 we're proposing to use for this rehabilitation  
6 project.

7 So, in total, the District owns 32 lift  
8 stations that convey wastewater from around the  
9 District's property to our wastewater treatment  
10 plant at the south service area. Two lift stations  
11 included in the scope of this project are lift  
12 station 46, which conveys wastewater from Port  
13 Orleans Resort. I hate to say this and take away  
14 any of the magic for anyone who's listening, but we  
15 do convey wastewater from some of our hotels and  
16 resorts. And also at lift station 59 that is at  
17 the Boardwalk Resort.

18 Those lift stations are about 30 years old.  
19 From a planning life span of those stations, we  
20 think about starting to look at them about 25  
21 years, and we perform annual condition assessments  
22 and prioritize the areas that need rehabilitation.  
23 These two are on the top of our list.

24 We did begin work in this design in 2020. At  
25 that time, we envisioned rehabilitating in one year

1 for our lift stations. We did get an opinion, a  
2 probable cost, through our design process, and  
3 those costs were higher than anticipated. We did  
4 check with our peer utilities and found that it's  
5 following the trend, so we're proposing a reduction  
6 in scope for this particular project.

7 We will start with our two highest priority,  
8 complete design, split the bid package from four  
9 lift stations down to two, and then anticipating  
10 going out for bid, and those subsequent  
11 construction costs.

12 This is just a little bit of an example of the  
13 deterioration inside of those facilities. These  
14 are components that are inside our wet well and our  
15 riser and our valves. Some of them are proposed to  
16 come out -- come out of the below grade pits and  
17 come up above for the safety of folks working in  
18 those lift stations, and a number of the components  
19 just need replacement. It's a very caustic  
20 environment.

21 These are the locations of the two lift  
22 stations. The one on the left is lift station 59  
23 at the Boardwalk Resort, Disney's Boardwalk Resort,  
24 and the one on the right is at Port Orleans Resort.

25 Just more pictures of degradation. Each lift

1 station has individual needs. You can see there's  
2 some corrosion on the riser piping and also some  
3 corrosion on the valves inside of the valve pits,  
4 and this is at lift station 46.

5 So there are three different items for Board  
6 approval. We always start asking for approval of  
7 the overall project budget before we start asking  
8 to spend parts of that budget. There are prior  
9 approvals that we've discussed. There were RCES  
10 soft costs approved in 2020 in the amount of  
11 \$50,000. We also had work done by CPH, which we  
12 are continuing. The original work done by CPH was  
13 done as a work authorization on a master services  
14 agreement that has expired. So we are continuing  
15 the work with CPH, and then moving forward we would  
16 be in our new procurement process, but we are  
17 asking to continue that work with CPH for  
18 efficiencies and economies of scale.

19 So our first item for Board approval this  
20 morning is to set the overall project budget at  
21 3.25 million for phase one of our lift station  
22 rehabilitation project.

23 CHAIR GARCIA: Why don't you do the other  
24 two --

25 MS. FERRARO: Sure. Certainly, sir.

1           CHAIR GARCIA:  -- and then we'll take them all  
2           at one time.

3           MS. FERRARO:  The next item for consideration  
4           for the Board is to approve design and support  
5           services for RCES, not to exceed \$250,000 for phase  
6           one of the project.  These are for services,  
7           inspection, field engineering services through  
8           construction and project closeout.

9           The third item for the Board's consideration  
10          is a contract award to the CHP in the amount of  
11          \$174,270.94 for additional design services and  
12          bidding and construction services for phase one of  
13          the project.

14          CHAIR GARCIA:  So thank you for another very  
15          informative report.  Are there any questions from  
16          my fellow Board members?

17          MR. AUNGST:  Yes, Mr. Chair.  Thank you,  
18          again, for that report.  I just wanted to ask,  
19          whenever I see phase one, obviously, I understand  
20          that means there's going to be more.  So do you  
21          have any kind of a guesstimate or estimate on how  
22          many phases, how many years, and what the total  
23          project looks like overall?

24          MS. FERRARO:  Yes, sir.  Well, for this, in  
25          particular, we split this into phase one and phase

1 two. As I mentioned before, we took two lift  
2 stations out of the scope of work just to kind of  
3 have a more reasonable dollar proposal.

4 So, generally, we continually assess the lift  
5 stations in the District. You'll see us coming to  
6 you for lift station approvals for multiple years.  
7 You know, there's 32 lift stations, and we did a  
8 lot of building and construction in the '80s, '90s,  
9 and 2000s, so now as they come of age -- I can get  
10 you a full number. I don't know that we've  
11 estimated the full scope, but it will be an ongoing  
12 story when we come in to talk to you about the  
13 needs and the wastewater collection systems of the  
14 District.

15 MR. AUNGST: And these are being prioritized  
16 based on need in terms of age and function?

17 MS. FERRARO: Correct.

18 MR. AUNGST: Okay. Very good. Thank you.

19 CHAIR GARCIA: Any other questions?

20 MR. BARAKAT: Mr. Chair, just a couple quick  
21 ones. So we -- we're, obviously, at the end of  
22 useful life. I'm sure we anticipate future growth.  
23 Basically, are we baking in sort of additional  
24 capacity, not just based on current need but  
25 assuming a certain amount of growth going forward?

1 MS. FERRARO: Yes, absolutely. We look at  
2 being able to support -- one of the reasons, I  
3 think, when we talked about why our rates are so  
4 competitive against our neighbors is we try to  
5 build so that we can support expansion within the  
6 current asset base, right, so we're not coming --  
7 if there's an incremental load to be added, we  
8 don't have to make a multimillion dollar  
9 investment, so we're continually having that  
10 allowance and capacity to support growth.

11 MR. BARAKAT: Okay. Thank you. And I'll just  
12 say, I mean, one should never apologize for talking  
13 about clean water. It is, I think -- as an  
14 infrastructure guy, I think this is kind of magical  
15 to see how this all works behind the scenes. So I  
16 appreciate you sharing that and educating with the  
17 public, and I'm supportive. Thank you.

18 MS. FERRARO: Magical is a word we don't often  
19 hear, so thank you very much for that.

20 CHAIR GARCIA: Any other questions? Hearing  
21 none, is there a motion we approve these three  
22 items?

23 MR. AUNGST: Move to approve agenda 8.4 and  
24 subparts A through C.

25 CHAIR GARCIA: Is there a second?

1 MS. ZIEGLER: Second.

2 CHAIR GARCIA: Any further discussion?

3 Hearing none, all in favor, indicate by indicating  
4 aye.

5 THE BOARD: Aye.

6 CHAIR GARCIA: Let the record reflect the  
7 motion passes unanimously.

8 Thank you very much for your reports here  
9 today. And we'll then move to public hearings,  
10 specifically, Resolution 658. Mr. Langley.

11 MR. LANGLEY: Resolution No. 658, a resolution  
12 of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District  
13 adopting a paid parental leave policy for District  
14 employees. This is a public hearing. We have a  
15 staff presentation followed by opportunity for  
16 anyone in the public that wishes to speak, they  
17 can. Thank you.

18 MR. GILZEAN: Okay. My administration has  
19 been working to ensure the District is a premiere  
20 workplace in Central Florida and beyond. Today we  
21 are announcing the parental leave policy that  
22 enables parents to take time off to make memories  
23 as new parents or as their family grows.

24 I want to know that these policies are not  
25 simple -- simply employee benefits, they are human



1 policies. Our employees requested this policy, and  
2 I'm grateful to the District team for their  
3 feedback and input throughout this process. As  
4 Florida's First Lady, Casey DeSantis, said, "In  
5 Florida, we believe family is everything."

6 My administration is committed to ensuring  
7 growth -- growing families have the time to spend  
8 with their loved ones. No two families are alike.  
9 The CFTOD parental leave policy assures its  
10 esteemed public servants who serve the District  
11 taxpayers can bond with their babies in early  
12 months of their child's lives. In addition, the  
13 policy allows employees who have adopted children  
14 to have time to build a foundation and a bond with  
15 their child.

16 When you work for a place that is here for  
17 you, when the times are tough, and the -- with  
18 policies and programs designed to support you and  
19 your family, it reminds you that your employer has  
20 your back through the ups and downs. With that,  
21 that concludes my presentation.

22 CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you for that  
23 presentation. Are there any public comments with  
24 respect to this resolution? Hearing none, is there  
25 any -- yes, sir, Chris.

1           MR. WILLIS: Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.  
2           It seems like a laudable goal and something that  
3           will be wonderful for the employees. We know that  
4           there's been a lot of folks that have been fleeing  
5           the District because of a lot of the corruption and  
6           chaos.

7           I guess a question that I would have would be  
8           considering that the Board was created as a  
9           repudiation and a response to Disney's support of  
10          the LGBTQ-Plus community, and speaking out against  
11          the "Don't Say Gay" law, I'm curious whether when  
12          you talk about families, whether that's going to be  
13          inclusive of all families. I'm wondering.

14          CHAIR GARCIA: Yeah. Well, first of all, we  
15          take issue, respectfully, with your  
16          characterization as you just articulated.

17          MR. WILLIS: Okay.

18          CHAIR GARCIA: And you've been here before,  
19          Chris, and so you know what the rules are. And  
20          public comments are a time for members of the  
21          public to comment, but it's not a time for  
22          questions. If you have a question, as I indicated  
23          before, visit with Mr. Gilzean after the meeting,  
24          and he can answer any specific questions. And so  
25          do you have any further public comment here on

1 this?

2 MR. WILLIS: Well, that is my comment, and I  
3 understand that the Board and the executive  
4 director wouldn't respond to my question, but I do  
5 pose it as a question that I think would be a very  
6 much interest to a number of Floridians, who  
7 you-all are serving on behalf of, and I would hope  
8 it's a question also that you-all would be  
9 interested in getting an answer to, so thank you  
10 very much.

11 CHAIR GARCIA: Yes, sir. Thank you for  
12 your -- your comments.

13 Any further comments on this matter?

14 MR. FERRARI: Mr. Chairman, may I --

15 CHAIR GARCIA: Yes, Chief. Sure.

16 MR. FERRARI: I'm just talking to my colleague  
17 saying, I need a nudge to go up and make a comment.  
18 Members of the Board and Mr. Gilzean, I just want  
19 to comment about this policy and how it impacts the  
20 work force.

21 This is something that I've advocated for for  
22 a very long time in my career, my 24 years here.  
23 And just as a personal note, I have adopted two  
24 children, and so knowing that down the road with  
25 future adoptive parents, the impact this will have

1 on their adoption experience, because it's already  
2 an emotional experience to begin with, and then  
3 allowing that bonding time, to go through that  
4 process, it is just very profound, and I can tell  
5 you I speak on behalf of the entire fire department  
6 that we are very appreciative of this initiative,  
7 and it does not go unnoticed. Thank you.

8 CHAIR GARCIA: Chief, thank you very much for  
9 those comments. Any further public comments on  
10 this resolution? Any questions or comments from my  
11 fellow Board members?

12 MR. AUNGST: Mr. Chair, if I might. First,  
13 I'd like to thank Chief Ferrari. As Administrator  
14 Gilzean said, the First Lady and the Governor have  
15 made championing parents and families a priority,  
16 and, in September, they announced a robust parental  
17 leave policy for state employees.

18 And in my interactions with our employees in  
19 the District, and walking the District and the comm  
20 center and the fire station and environmental  
21 sciences, it has become apparent that we have so  
22 many -- so many employees that are opening their  
23 homes for adoption and fostering, and we have  
24 probably a higher percentage of adoptive parents  
25 than most jurisdictions, than most cities, and

1 probably most employers.

2 I am an adoptive parent. I know how difficult  
3 that process is. It is not easy. We do not make  
4 it easy in this country to adopt children or to  
5 foster children. We need to make it easier. There  
6 are so many kids who need that support of a loving  
7 family.

8 And I can tell you, as someone who did not get  
9 paternity or maternity leave -- my wife didn't get  
10 maternity leave for either of our children, I  
11 didn't get paternity leave. My adopted son was  
12 exposed to opioids in utero, and we were not the  
13 first family that was selected to adopt him. And  
14 when the first family got there, they decided they  
15 couldn't take care of him.

16 And so after he was born, we were called, not  
17 expecting it, and we had to go up to Pittsburgh.  
18 My wife basically had to move to Pittsburgh and  
19 take care of him in the NICU. Thank God she's a  
20 pediatrician. So I said, if you -- if you think we  
21 can do this, we can do this, and we did.

22 But having the support of our employers and  
23 having the leave would have been really -- really  
24 game changing for us because it made a very  
25 difficult and expensive process just that much more

1           difficult and expensive. And so I think this a  
2           model policy for the State. I think that all  
3           employers, not just government, should follow the  
4           lead in encouraging everyone to consider adoption.

5           And the fact that it includes fostering is  
6           really groundbreaking to me because fostering, you  
7           take the difficulty of being a parent, you take the  
8           difficulty of adoption, you multiply it by a  
9           hundred. And folks who are foster parents really  
10          have a heart for our children, and there's so many,  
11          especially older children, that need that foster  
12          care.

13          So I think this is a great day for the  
14          District. I think that it is something that is  
15          obviously going to apply to every single employee  
16          in the District, and that kind of goes without  
17          saying. So thank you again, I appreciate it.

18          CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you for those comments  
19          and thank you for sharing your personal story with  
20          us. That was very powerful. Any other public  
21          comments?

22          MS. ZIEGLER: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to echo  
23          those comments. I think that as a mother, I was  
24          actually working -- when I first became pregnant, I  
25          was working at a small business that didn't even

1 have any type of maternity policy in place because  
2 most of the people who were working there were a  
3 little older. But, fortunately, they were able to  
4 put that in place, but I can tell you as a young  
5 parent and family, these are instrumental. And I  
6 think -- I want to commend our governor and our  
7 first lady for highlighting, you know, being family  
8 focused, it goes a long way, and thank you to the  
9 chief for your comments because I think when you  
10 think about where you want to work, you want to  
11 know that they are caring about your life, not only  
12 what you're doing inside your work day, but that  
13 your family, and that plays such a meaningful part  
14 of just the value and the morale that you have.  
15 And I commend Mr. Gilzean for expanding this to the  
16 District, and I believe it will pay dividends.

17 I do want to comment on the commenter's  
18 statement. The Parental Rights In Education Act,  
19 which is often grossly mischaracterized, I would  
20 just echo that we follow the laws of Florida and  
21 the Constitution and discriminatory action is not  
22 available in any way, shape, or form within the  
23 District. So if that needs to be cleared up, I  
24 think those kind of statements add a unnecessary  
25 division, and so I wanted to make sure that's very

1 clear.

2 CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you for those comments.  
3 Any further comments on this resolution? Hearing  
4 none, is there a motion?

5 MS. ZIEGLER: I move to adopt Resolution 658  
6 as presented.

7 CHAIR GARCIA: Is there a second?

8 MR. PERI: Second.

9 CHAIR GARCIA: Any further discussion? All in  
10 favor, indicate by saying aye.

11 THE BOARD: Aye.

12 CHAIR GARCIA: Let the record reflect the  
13 motion passes unanimously.

14 And we'll move onto unfinished business and  
15 other business. Is there any?

16 MR. GILZEAN: No, sir.

17 CHAIR GARCIA: Hearing none, we'll stand  
18 adjourned. Thank you-all for attending today.

19 (Time end 11:01 a.m.)  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25





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