



# Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority

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www.ojrja.org

## OCONEE JOINT REGIONAL SEWER AUTHORITY Ad-Hoc Reconstitution Committee and Executive Committee March 12, 2026

The Ad-Hoc Reconstitution Committee and Executive Committee meeting was held at the Coneross Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Commissioners/Committee Members that were present:

- Katherine Amidon (Environmental Planner, Bolton & Menk)
- Chip Bentley (Appalachian Council of Gov'ts.)
- Kevin Bronson (City of Westminster) – Committee Chair
- Chris Eleazer (Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority)
- Lawrence Flynn (Pope Flynn - OJRSA Attorney) – *via Microsoft Teams*
- Glenn Hart, Oconee County Councilman
- Joel Jones (Consultant, JonesWater)
- Angie Mettlen, (Vice President, Ardurra)
- Scott Moulder (City of Seneca)
- Celia Myers (City of Walhalla)

Committee Members that were not present:

- None.

OJRSA appointments and staff present were:

- Lynn Stephens, Secretary/Treasurer to the Board and Office Manager

Others present were:

- Mr. Stewart Jones, Oconee Co. Administrator
- Mayor Linda Oliver, Town of West Union – *via Microsoft Teams (arrived at 9:09 a.m.)*
- Mr. Matt Durham, Oconee Co. Council
- Mr. Cam Spencer, Goodwyn, Mills, & Cawood
- Tony Adams, Oconee Co. Citizen

**A. Call to Order** – Mr. Bronson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

### B. Approval of Minutes

- **Ad Hoc Reconstitution Committee and Executive Committee Meeting of February 12, 2026**  
*Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moulder, to approve the February 12, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried.*

### C. Committee Discussion and Action Items

1. **Update on South Carolina Senate Bill 829 (Joint System Governance)** – Mr. Flynn reported that he testified in a subcommittee hearing two (2) weeks ago. The bill was sent to Senator Alexander and queued up for the full committee. Mr. Flynn said he received an update that it went through and has moved to the full Senate floor. Mr. Flynn added that the Senate only has nine (9) weeks remaining in this legislative session, but he feels good steps have been made. If anyone has any

issues, it will usually happen during the second reading on the floor. There are no reasons for issues, and the OJRSA is in pretty good shape.

Ms. Mettlen stated that Mr. Flynn and Mr. Eleazer had discussions with other joint sewer and water authorities, and she felt the conversations were beneficial in talking about questions that came up. Mr. Flynn replied that it was intentional to reach out to the ones that the OJRSA jointly represents and those that the OJRSA had contacts with. Mr. Flynn said time was spent talking through the issues they had and headway is making in the process. He said he feels good where it stands right now. Mr. Bronson asked if there were any amendments to this bill. Mr. Flynn replied there were none.

**2. Update on Raftelis and First Tryon Financial Studies** – Ms. Mettlen reported she passed on the commitment letters passed by the OJRSA board to the firms, and they are ready to start. Raftelis plans to start in early April with completion around August/ September. First Tryon will begin after Raftelis is finished. Both firms have done similar studies together, so Ms. Mettlen feels good about it.

Ms. Mettlen said the firms had been able to see a list that Ms. Amidon drafted regarding the data that was obtained, but Ms. Mettlen said she did not want to give them full access until they were contracted to do the work; the firms have been provided with access now. Ms. Mettlen added that the Member Cities, Town of West Union, and Oconee County may need to provide some billing data and audit information.

Mr. Hart took a moment to request that the visitors at today's meeting be recognized.

Mr. Bronson introduced Mr. Matt Durham, Oconee County Councilman, and Mr. Stewart Jones, Oconee County Administrator. Mr. Eleazer stated that Mayor Oliver of the Town of West Union just joined the meeting through Microsoft Teams as well. Mr. Cam Spenser of Goodwyn, Mills, & Cawood introduced himself, and Mr. Bronson introduced Oconee County resident, Mr. Tony Adams.

**3. Recap and Update on One-On-One Meetings** – Ms. Mettlen reported that all entities have had the one-on-one meeting except for Oconee County (which will be scheduled soon). The entities have been positive, and everyone agrees that something needs to be done and must change. She said each entity has its own concerns, and issues will need to be flushed out before there is a last-minute major problem. She said she appreciated everyone's conversations and that this helps make things as transparent as possible. Ms. Mettlen said she also plans to have a one-on-one meeting with Mr. Eleazer. Ms. Mettlen added that issues will most likely bubble up, so there will be continued conversations to deal with them. The goal is to get everyone in agreement.

Mr. Bronson asked if Ms. Mettlen learned anything earth shattering. Ms. Mettlen replied that there is still work to be done on the makeup of the new board and that the legislation is part of that process. This will need to be massaged and worked through.

Mr. Bronson asked if anything was heard that wasn't heard before. Mr. Jones said he heard statements he had not heard before; however, he didn't learn anything new. There was nothing shocking.

Ms. Mettlen said that everyone agreed that the public messaging needs to be consistent across the board with each entity. Ms. Amidon spoke briefly about the communications memos and stated she would talk through the memos, the options, and other action items later in the meeting.

Mr. Jones said the entities provided honest conversations and spoke about the obstacles to get through. Ms. Mettlen added that none of the obstacles were new. Mr. Jones added that where the OJRSA is today took years with a broken system, and it will not be fixed in a day. Ms. Amidon asked if anyone wanted to share any new information with the group. Mayor Oliver said she was enjoying just listening to the conversation, but no one else had any comments.

Mr. Jones added that the consultants don't represent anyone in particular; they represent the path forward. He stated that they want honest feedback/criticism on how they are doing if need be. Mr. Bronson thanked the consultation team for their hard work.

Mr. Hart asked if they were going to receive the estimates for buying the suppliers today. Ms. Mettlen replied that this is part of the financial studies that Raftelis and First Tryon are undertaking. She said it is recognized that the financial elements are critical (what the rates will look like and the valuation components). This is part of the process. She added that the information that will be provided will be beneficial to everyone.

Ms. Amidon presented the committee with the options for consolidation and requested that this not be given to the public until it is finalized (*but included with these minutes*). Ms. Amidon stated that the Sewer Use Agreements are dated and have contradictions; they need to be resurfaced and rewritten. In the meetings, everyone agreed with that. Everyone was also excited about changing the board membership; although, there was no unanimous agreement on how the new board is comprised. She added the board change can happen regardless if the legislation passes or not, so board membership can be reduced from the current nine (9) people.

Ms. Amidon defined a full and partial consolidation with full meaning all collection systems are under the reconstituted OJRSA (one unit) and partial meaning some systems will be under the reconstitution and others not (who will then become wholesale customers). She stated there is an additional option of bringing Oconee County to the table. She said Oconee County had a seat on the board years ago but currently doesn't now, and they want a seat again. Ms. Amidon stated there are more options out there, but the options sheet only shows the six (6) main options. She asked for feedback or questions from the committee.

Oconee Administrator, Mr. Stewart Jones, asked who the blue box on the options sheet represented. Ms. Mettlen replied it wasn't a who, but rather a what: the OJRSA board, and Ms. Amidon stated it is the reconstituted OJRSA board as a whole. Mr. Stewart Jones added that he thought each option was from an individual entity's feedback.

Mr. Eleazer asked if the top three (3) options were without Oconee County having a seat, and the bottom three (3) options were the same options but with Oconee County having a seat; Ms. Mettlen confirmed this. Mr. Joel Jones asked if this is what came out of the original Ad Hoc Committee; Ms. Amidon said the last option with Oconee County having a seat came out of the committee.

Ms. Amidon asked if the sheet gave some clarity. Mr. Bronson stated he thought the same as Mr. Stewart Jones that each option was based on an individual entity's feedback from the meetings, but he understands now. Mr. Moulder asked if this is an accumulation of all the feedback into six (6) different options. Ms. Mettlen said it didn't necessarily come from feedback but is based on what can happen. Mr. Moulder asked if these were purely restructuring options and were not weighted in any way; Ms. Mettlen confirmed this.

Ms. Amidon asked if the committee wanted a cleaned-up version of this in memo format to go out to everyone's councils. Mr. Moulder stated this page will create a lot of confusion. Mr. Bronson and Mr. Moulder both thought it would be easier in narrative form.

#### **4. Communications with Elected Officials and Leadership: Feedback and Future Memo Requests -**

Ms. Amidon asked for feedback on memo ideas and presented the committee with a draft list of memo topics (*made a part of these minutes*).

- #1 is about "Land Use Control," and she stated that this can happen at any time. She explained how no sewer entity, that is not a municipality or a county, has land use control. That control, which gives zoning power, the ability to choose ordinance laws, and protection of agricultural land, is held solely by the municipality or county. She stated the public and councilmembers get confused about this. She asked about drafting a memo on this.

Mr. Moulder replied that sewer can impact land use for growth and development and a causation explanation is needed. Mr. Eleazer stated that there is no mechanism to deny sewer in agricultural areas between the plant and the interstate other than land use, and the people down in that area didn't want sewer or development. Mr. Moulder stated that the municipalities and county can control land use, but if a developer wants to pay for a force main and lift stations,

they can with land use; he added that a sewer line means growth and development. Mr. Eleazer spoke about where there are two (2) force mains in parallel between the Golden Corner Commerce Park and the wastewater plant, you cannot tap into them; however, if you cut the pipes in half, send the flow into a wet well, and put a pump station in, then the area could be served.

Ms. Amidon asked if it would be helpful to explain the roles of the OJRSA, the municipalities, and the planning commission, and then explain how that works. Mr. Moulder said that would work. Mr. Bronson agreed with Mr. Moulder that a causation explanation is needed and should be explained in simple terms. Mr. Hart suggested to look at Exit 1 on the interstate in Georgia as an example and explained how there are ten (10) industries there, and it's beginning to look like New York City with high-rise buildings.

Mr. Moulder asked how the OJRSA impacts economic growth and how is growth controlled when it doesn't control sewer expansion. Ms. Mettlen said she heard this throughout the conversations and wants to get to the root of the concerns. Mr. Jones stated everyone needs to understand how projects are funded and how it works.

Mr. Flynn stated annexation control is a condition for service. Mr. Moulder replied that it is usually tied to water; no community uses sewer. Mr. Flynn added that annexation control is a condition of service. Mr. Moulder replied that these conditions are generally tied to water and doesn't know of any entity that uses sewer; Mr. Flynn replied he has a couple of clients who use sewer. Mr. Bronson said it must be tied to water; Ms. Myers spoke about the City of Central using sewer but customers are on Easley water. Mr. Bentley stated that sewer providers are on the edges; Greer CPW won't provide sewer without annexation in the city. Ms. Mettlen said there will be other control-related things that pop up, but it would be beneficial to show what may happen and what will not happen and where control lies.

Mr. Moulder spoke about needing a three-party annexation agreement, because it would be the municipality who doesn't control the sewer, so the OJRSA would have to agree. Mr. Flynn said the requirement would be an obligation as a service commitment for membership to the OJRSA to not provide sewer service unless a petition is filed with the affected municipality as a condition of future service. The city would not be party to it, but there may be other ways to structure it.

- #2 is for a "Timeline." Ms. Amidon said it was about nine (9) months ago (last June) since a timeline came out, and there was a request for an updated timeline based on any changes. She asked if this should be done before or after the legislative decision. Mr. Moulder said the timeline should be incorporated into another memo like the elevator speech. Mr. Bentley suggested it be updated in every memo.

Ms. Mettlen said this timeline is a target, but she doesn't want to force the process and wants to keep everyone as comfortable as possible. Mr. Flynn spoke about how the timeline should be viable based on the approved act.

- #3 is for "Elevator Speech," and Ms. Amidon said this was a request out of the one-on-one meetings regarding when council members are approached with questions from the public. Ms. Mettlen added that the messaging needs to be consistent. She said that when anyone receives any questions, just let her and Ms. Amidon know.
- Ms. Amidon stated that answers cannot be given at this time for items #4 ("Order of Operations/Responsible Party") and #5 ("Rate Memo") as they will be based on the Raftelis and First Tryon studies. The answers will be provided later. She said the rates are diverse and it needs to be explained what they are and how they are calculated. Ms. Mettlen added that it also should provide what went into the calculation. Mr. Jones replied that it's key to keep rates down, but the cheapest rate isn't always better.

Mr. Moulder asked to have this modified into a narrative. He then asked if it should be sent to the councils. He said they will have loads of questions that this committee is not ready to answer

and wasn't sure it was a good thing to do. Ms. Amidon asked if Mr. Moulder felt it needed to be released to the councils. After thinking about it for a moment, Mr. Moulder said the councils will have questions no matter what, so, yes, send the narrative out. He added that questions might be best for now. Ms. Myers suggested having an update on the timeline to show what the upcoming topics would be.

Ms. Amidon said she will draft two (2) memos. She said she was challenged to keep them at two (2) pages or less. Each memo will have reminders for every meeting.

5. **Discussion of Wholesale Agreement Considerations** – Mr. Jones spoke about this (which was item #6 on Ms. Amidon's list). He provided a draft list of considerations to the committee (*made a part of these minutes*) and gave a brief overview for each. Mr. Flynn said that this highlights what it will look like. Mr. Moulder said this was a great summary.

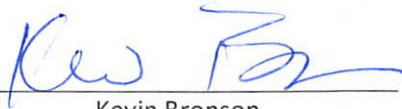
D. **Committee Member Discussion** – None.

E. **Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

#### Upcoming Meetings

1. **Operations & Planning Committee** – Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.
2. **Finance & Administration Committee** – Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.
3. **Board of Commissioners** – Monday, April 6, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.
4. **Reconstitution Committee & Executive Committee** – Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Approved By:

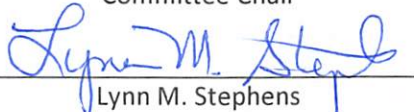


Kevin Bronson  
Committee Chair

Date Approved:

4/9/26

Approved By:



Lynn M. Stephens  
OJRSA Secretary/Treasurer

Notification of the meeting was distributed on March 6, 2026 to *Upstate Today*, *Anderson Independent-Mail*, *Westminster News*, *Keowee Courier*, WGOG Radio, WSNW Radio, City of Seneca Council, City of Walhalla Council, City of Westminster Council, Oconee County Council, SCDES, [www.ojrsa.org](http://www.ojrsa.org), and posted at the OJRSA Administration Building.



## **Ad Hoc Reconstitution Committee and Executive Committee**

OJRSA Operations & Administration Building  
Lamar Bailes Board Room  
March 12, 2026 at 9:00 AM

*This advisory committee was established by the OJRSA Board of Commissioners at its August 4, 2025 meeting to consider the reorganization recommendations as identified in the [Ad Hoc Sewer Feasibility Implementation Committee Final Recommendations](#) report. This committee can neither create policy nor make decisions on behalf of the OJRSA or other wastewater service providers within the area. The recommendations are available at [www.ojrsa.org/info](http://www.ojrsa.org/info).*

*OJRSA commission and committee meetings may be attended in person at the address listed above. The OJRSA will also broadcast meetings live on its YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/@OconeeJRSA](http://www.youtube.com/@OconeeJRSA) (if there is a technical issue preventing the livestreaming of the meeting, then a recording will be published on the channel as soon as possible). For those not able to attend in person, then the OJRSA Board or Committee Chair will accept public comments by mail (623 Return Church Rd, Seneca, SC 29678) or at [info@ojrsa.org](mailto:info@ojrsa.org). Comments must comply with the public session instructions as stated on the meeting agenda and will be received up until one hour prior to the scheduled meeting. If there is not a public session scheduled for a meeting, then comments shall not be accepted.*

### **Agenda**





- A. Call to Order** – Kevin Bronson, Committee Chair
- B. Approval of Minutes**
  - Ad Hoc Reconstitution Committee and Executive Committee Meeting of February 12, 2026
- C. Committee Discussion and Action Items**
  1. Update on South Carolina Senate Bill 829 (Joint System Governance) – Lawrence Flynn, OJRSA Counsel
  2. Update on Raftelis and First Tryon financial studies – Angie Mettlen, Facilitator
  3. Recap and update on one-on-one meetings – Angie Mettlen, Katherine Amidon, and Joel Jones; Facilitators
  4. Communications with elected officials and leadership: feedback and future memo requests – Katherine Amidon, Facilitator
  5. Discussion of wholesale agreement considerations – Joel Jones, Facilitator
- D. Committee Member Discussion** – Led by Kevin Bronson, Committee Chair  
Discussion can be related to matters addressed in this meeting or for future consideration by the Board or Committee. Voting is not permitted during this session.
- E. Adjourn**

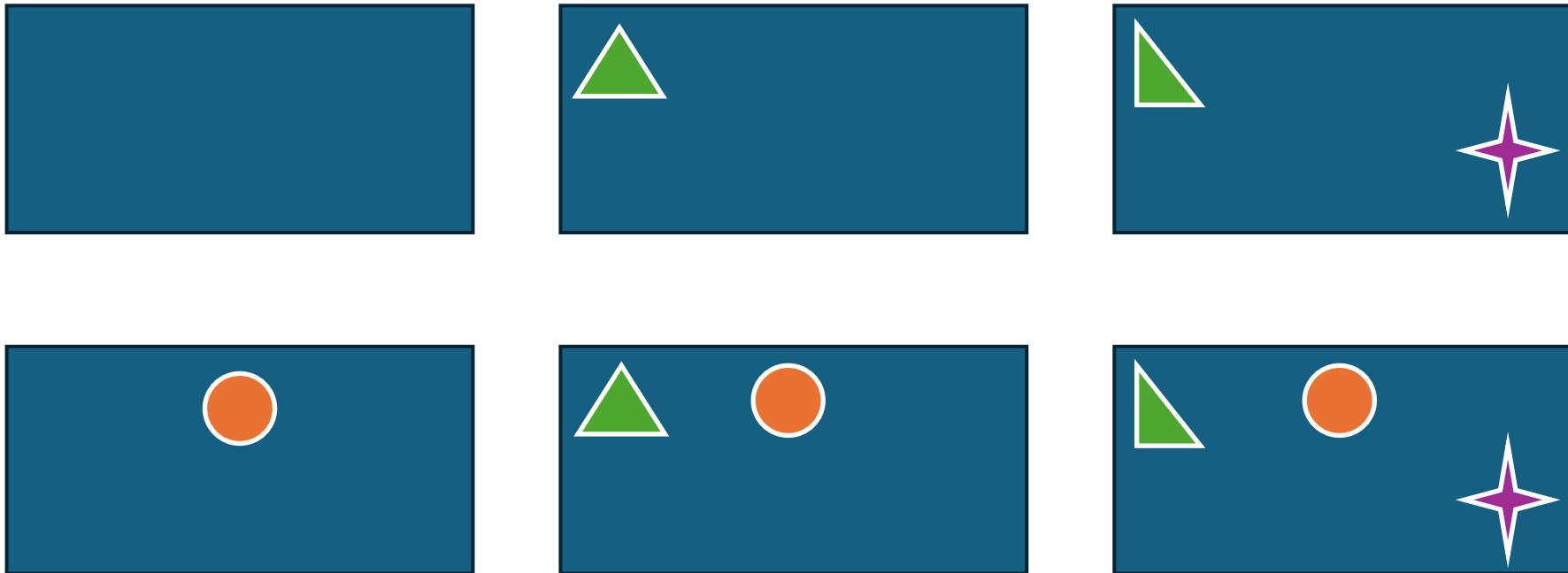
### **Upcoming Meetings**

*All meetings to be held in the Lamar Bailes Board Room unless noted otherwise.*

- Operations & Planning Committee – March 19, 2026 at 8:30 AM
- Finance & Administration Committee – March 24, 2026 at 9:00 AM
- Board of Commissioners – April 6, 2026 at 4:00 PM
- Reconstitution Committee and Executive Committee – April 9, 2026 at 9:00 AM



-  Reconstitution: Unanimous support for this – update sewer use agreements, change board membership \*
-  Full Consolidation: All collections systems and treatment under one entity – the reconstituted OJRSA
-  Partial Consolidation: Some collection systems and treatment under one entity, others wholesale customers \*
-  Oconee County included in the reconstituted OJRSA



\* Board membership change can occur regardless of legislation passing

DRAFT



## REGIONAL SEWER FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Future Memo Ideas - **DRAFT**

Ad-hoc meeting: March 12, 2026

- 1) **Land Use Control:** Reiterate the power that jurisdictions maintain with land use control and remind how sewer expansion works and the tools available.
- 2) **Timeline:** An update to the implementation timeline – \*note timing of that is hugely based on the decision at the senate
- 3) **Elevator Speech:** Consider a memo with the elevator speech for council members for when they run into constituents
  - a. Reminder water has nothing to do with this conversation
- 4) **Order of Operations/Responsible Party:** What happens when Fill in the blank. This may yield multiple memos and timing will be based on decisions that have yet to be made. Here are some examples:
  - a. Sewer backs up? Who's fixing it?
  - b. Determining Rates? Who has a say?
- 5) **Rate Memo:** Standalone about rates that could also be formatted for public consumption to explain how we got here with rates and what the new rates reflect
- 6) **Wholesale Agreement:** Explain what a wholesale agreement is and what the implications of being a wholesale customer would be

# Considerations for Wholesale Agreement

Joel Jones, Facilitator

## Potential Items for Wholesale Agreement - DRAFT

### Legal/Administrative

- Basis and purpose of agreement to include explicit treatment as wholesale entity
- Delineation of infrastructure, operational, and customer ownership
- Geographical/customer boundaries and who has future rights to serve
- Basis, structure and adjustments of rates and fees - including fixed, volume, capacity fees, and surcharges.
- Capacity ownership buy-in - amount of system capacity used, available, and reserved
- Terms, conditions, and duration of agreement and/or component of the agreement - reopener clauses
- Severability conditions and administrative due process to protect both parties

### Operations

- Rules of engagement - how the parties will work together at all levels to provide contracted services
- Delineation of operational responsibilities and mutual aid agreements
- Capacity planning and assurance processes - how new connections will be planned, approved, designed, and constructed
- Monitoring, inspection, and billing processes/mechanisms
- CMOM requirements, reporting, inspection, and review

### Regulatory

- Establishment of regulatory authority - wholesale customer treated as a user
- Establishment and/or delineation of regulatory responsibility - residential, commercial, and industrial
- Permitting and reporting requirements - collection system, FOG, pretreatment, capacity assurance
- Compliance schedule(s) for current non-compliance and system improvements
- Enforcement response protocol including fines, cost recovery, and due process