

OJRSA Reorganization Recommendations

AD HOC REGIONAL FEASIBILITY STUDY IMPLEMENTATION
COMMITTEE

Why Are We Here?

Planning Study
completed August 2024

Ad Hoc Committee
formed November 2024

Goal: Evaluate and
recommend governance
changes for OJRSA



Committee Composition

10 voting members, 1 ex officio

Utility, legal, financial, and government expertise represented on committee

Chaired by Joel Jones after Graham Rich's resignation for personal reasons

Group met monthly for last 7 months

Summary of Meetings

Meetings between Dec 2024 and June 2025

Open to the public, FOIA-compliant

Focused on feasibility of structural changes and legal pathways available for restructuring

Five recommendations presented focused on restructuring and implementation of the plan

1st Recommendation

System Consolidation

Consolidate collection systems (include County and West Union) into one newly structured Authority

Ask governing bodies of each Authority member (current and future) to adopt resolution in support of consolidation effort

Conduct technical and financial evaluations of each system to facilitate transfer of systems

Develop unified, equitable rate structure for use by the reconstituted Authority

Contingency if Consolidation Fails

If consolidation fails or does not progress in a timely manner the current Authority will issue individual permits to each entity

Ensures current Authority's compliance with existing NPDES permit as outlined by SCDES

Avoid EPA co-permittee scenario for current partners

2nd Recommendation System Consolidation

Initial 5-member Board appointed by Governor

Each member — Seneca, Walhalla, Westminster, and Oconee County — will have a representative

Gubernatorial appointees cannot be current elected officials or staff of an Authority member

Commissioners must have a service contract for public sewer at the time of appointment

Dependent on legislative change to current Joint Water/Sewer Authority Act

Alternative Structure If Statute is Not Amended

Recommendation would be to continue under current method of appointment

Each member appoints one member to the board

Add one at-large member agreed to by all members

Discourage elected officials/staff appointments to avoid serving two entities at same time

3rd Recommendation System Consolidation

New Governance will supersede all existing agreements

Enable Authority to provide retail sewer services and operate all collection systems

New governance document will be drafted during initial evaluations and finalized after consolidation

4th Recommendation Implementation Committee

Recommend forming a 5–6 member
Implementation Committee to oversee next steps
focus on implementation oversight

To include:

- No more than 2 reps from current Board
- 1 OJRSA staff member
- 1 representative of Oconee County
- 1 representative from ACOG

No more than 2 additional facilitators (non-voting)

Independent legal counsel should remain actively
involved

5th Recommendation Communication Plan

Unify messaging across members to ensure clear and consistent messaging

Allow public input and engagement of Authority customers during process

Promote transparency and buy-in to build trust in the process

Implementation Timeline Highlights

90 Days: form committee, adopt resolutions of support from members

120 Days: engage consultants to begin system evaluations and valuation,
develop communications plan

18 Months: complete valuation and equitable rate structure

24 Months: transfer assets, finalize reconstitution documents

36 Months If legislation not approved reconstitute under existing act

Conclusion

Recommendations improve the long-term viability and growth potential for sewer in the County

On current track the Authority faces:

- Significant regulatory compliance matters
- Funding shortfalls, and
- Restrictions on growth and development of the County

Consolidation will promote a more effective, equitable, and resilient sewer authority

Questions & Discussion
