



AD HOC RECONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Reconstitution Process Communication Memorandum #4

Date: April 22, 2026

To: Member Councils and leadership, Oconee County Council and leadership, West Union Council and leadership, and key stakeholders

From: Ad Hoc Reconstitution Committee

Purpose:

The goal of memo #4 is to provide a brief summary regarding the current status of the project, an update to the project timeline, and a list of potential future memos. The project status is intended to provide elected officials and staff with a summary response when questions arise regarding the progress being made. These items were requested by the ad hoc reconstitution committee to be updated and included at the end of future communication memos.

Project Status Summary:

The ad hoc reconstitution committee has continued to meet on a regular basis, and the facilitation team has completed one-on-ones with the following parties: Appalachian Council of Governments, OJRSA, Seneca, Walhalla, West Union, and Westminster. The facilitation team is supposed to meet with Oconee County later in April for their one-on-one meeting. Raftelis and First Tryon have been hired to complete financial studies, which will help answer many remaining questions regarding the value of each system and consolidation. These studies will continue through the summer.

Current Implementation Timeline:

**Note that this is subject to change as the project evolves and will be updated with subsequent communication memos.*

The following bullets were the original target schedule associated with completion of the initial recommendations from the feasibility study as proposed on June 16, 2025.

- **Within 45 days**, the current Board will dissolve the current Ad Hoc Committee and establish the Implementation Committee for further implementation oversight.
Complete – The implementation ad hoc committee was established by the OJRSA Board of Commissioners on August 4, 2025 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. This committee can make nonbinding recommendations. The report is available at www.ojrsa.org/info.



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- **On a quarterly basis**, the Implementation Committee will provide an update to the SC Rural Infrastructure Authority (SCRIA), the current Board and Oconee County on the progress of the implementation of these initial recommendations.
In-progress. Three reports have been provided by OJRSA to SCRIA so far including October 2025, January 2026, and April 2026.
- **Within 45 days**, the legislative revisions to the Act will be finalized and provided to the Delegation. Consultation shall be made with the Delegation on whether lobbyist support will be needed.
Revisions complete and submitted.
- **Within 90 days**, resolutions of support for system consolidation/Authority reorganization will be provided to and adopted by each governing body affected by the recommendations, including the Board, Seneca City Council, Walhalla City Council, Westminster City Council, West Union Town Council, Oconee County Council.
Complete as of March 3, 2026 for all listed parties.
- **Within 120 days**, consultants shall be engaged, and the process of collection system evaluation (technical) and valuation (financial) will be initiated, including identification of potential funding for this effort and immediate rehabilitation projects that may be identified or on current Capital Improvement Plans. Additionally, a rate consultant will be engaged.
Complete. First Tryon and Raftelis are engaged and are beginning work. The Raftelis study is expected to be completed by September 2026. Some portions of the First Tryon study will run concurrently with the Raftelis study; however, their final work will be dependent on whether consolidation will move forward. The completion of the Raftelis study is considered a major milestone in determining if system consolidation will occur and all parties will need to indicate their agreement to continue to move forward.

Below are the expected outcomes of these studies:

- *Strategic Financial Roadmap: Clear understanding of debt capacity, affordability, and long-term capital planning.*
- *Decision Support: Data-driven insights to guide prioritization of projects and justify potential mergers/consolidations into OJRSA.*
- *Enhanced Governance: Transparent communication tools for councils, boards, committees, and stakeholders.*
- *Clear Understanding of Financial Needs: Insight into revenue requirements for both individual subdistricts and a consolidated system.*
- *Equitable and Sustainable Rate Structure: Rates aligned with industry best practices, financial objectives, and capital needs.*



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- *Customer Impact Transparency: Analysis of how proposed changes affect affordability and fairness.*
- *Decision Support Tool: A robust model to guide future rate adjustments and capital planning.*
- *Strategic Recommendations: Guidance on policy considerations, economies of scale, and long-term financial sustainability.*
- **Within 120 days**, a Communications Plan will be developed under the guidance of the Implementation Committee and provided to all entities involved.
Complete. During the December 11, 2025, ad hoc reconstitution committee meeting, it was determined that a series of communication memos be developed based on questions received. These memos are to be sent to OJRSA Member Councils and leadership, Oconee County Council and leadership, West Union Council and leadership, and key stakeholders.
- **Within 60 days of the approved changes to Act being approved (likely July/August 2026)**, the list of recommendations for the initial commissioners for the New Commission will be provided to the Delegation.
Act adoption is in progress. S.829, the Joint System Governance bill, was unanimously approved by the Senate and sent to the House. The bill currently resides in the House Committee on Judiciary. No action has occurred since March 24, 2026.
https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/829.htm
- **Within 15 months**, after consultant engagement the evaluation and valuation of collection systems will be completed.
In-progress. Completion anticipated late summer/early fall 2026.
- **Within 18 months**, after consultant engagement the determination of a timeline for developing a unified, equitable rate structure will be provided as a part of the initial terms for collection system consolidation.
Not yet initiated, pending results from Raftelis study and agreement for all parties to move forward with consolidation. If there is agreement, the remainder of the work by First Tryon will be completed and the schedule for this will be provided.
- **Within 24 months**, legal documents to transfer collection system assets to the Authority will be executed, as well as all necessary reconstitution documents.
Not yet initiated, pending results from Raftelis and First Tryon studies and board approved reconstitution process.
- **Within 25 months**, if the legislative amendments have not been approved, plans for consolidation under the amended Act will be abandoned. Thereupon, the Authority will proceed to consolidate the member system and implement the reconstitution under the



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existing Act, with such process to be finalized by no later than **36 months**. Additionally, all members shall be issued permits in compliance with the SUR and added as co-permittees under the NPDES permit, if consolidation for any member does not occur. *Not yet initiated, pending results from Raftelis and First Tryon studies and legislative decision. If the legislation passes but there is no agreement around consolidation after the completion of the Raftelis study, the overall schedule will be updated for the completion of the reconstitution of the Authority.*

Future Potential Communication Memo Topics:

- 1) **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?
 - c. Who is responsible for billing?
- 2) **Rate Memo:** Standalone memo about rates that could also be formatted for public consumption to explain how we got here with rates and what the new rates reflect.
- 3) **Wholesale Agreement:** Explain what a wholesale agreement is and what the implications of being a wholesale customer would be.