Fall Creek Falls Utility District

Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2026 — Draft Pending Board Approval

Location: 27364 SR 30, Pikeville, TN 37367
Scheduled time: 6:00 p.m. Call to order: 6:03 p.m. Adjournment: 7:23 p.m.

1 Call to order and organization

Following the recording announcement, the meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. Commissioners Robert Walling and Jerry Blankenship were present; Commissioner Virginia Lewis was absent. A quorum was established. Staff and guest participants included General Manager Thomas Champagne, Office Manager Monica Blankenship, Distribution Manager Calvin Wooden, an engineering representative identified as Katie, and customer Jonathan Ferguson.

The President's office was vacant and Vice President Virginia Lewis was absent. Public comment concerning appointment of a temporary presiding officer was invited; none was recorded. Commissioner Jerry Wayne Blankenship proposed Commissioner Robert Walling as temporary presiding officer. Commissioners Walling and Blankenship approved the appointment, 2–0, with Commissioner Lewis absent. Commissioner Walling then presided.

2 Agenda review

Commissioner Robert Walling moved to approve the agenda as presented; Commissioner Jerry Blankenship seconded. Commissioners Walling and Blankenship voted in favor; Commissioner Virginia Lewis was absent. The motion carried, 2–0.

3 Previous meeting minutes

Commissioner Blankenship moved to approve the September regular-meeting minutes as presented; Commissioner Walling seconded. The Chair stated that the September minutes were approved. Commissioner Blankenship also moved to approve the October 7, 2026 workshop minutes as presented; Commissioner Walling seconded. The signed workshop-minutes approval record shows Walling—Yes; Blankenship—Yes; Lewis—Absent. The October 7 workshop minutes were approved, 2–0.

4 Public comments and advanced Item 6.7

Jonathan Ferguson described a customer-side leak repaired October 2, approximately 475,000 gallons of reported usage, and an anticipated bill exceeding $7,000. Staff discussed incorrect meter identification and mistaken service shutoffs. Ferguson requested assistance with the bill.

Commissioner Walling moved to advance Agenda Item 6.7 for immediate account review; Commissioner Blankenship seconded. Discussion addressed the final bill, applicable leak coverage, assistance resources, a possible payment plan, and relocating the meter nearer the residence. Staff would review the account and assist with coverage and outside assistance. No bill adjustment, payment-plan terms, or meter relocation was approved in the recorded discussion.

Commissioner Robert Walling moved to place the Ferguson account and payment-plan matter on the November 4, 2026, workshop agenda for further review and discussion; Commissioner Jerry Wayne Blankenship seconded. Commissioners Walling and Blankenship approved the referral, 2–0, with Commissioner Lewis absent. No payment plan was approved at this meeting. The meeting then returned to the original agenda order.

5 Unfinished business

Staff discussed completing the September bank-signatory authorizations and providing approved minutes for bank paperwork. Preparation for the November 1 collections guidelines was identified for follow-up. No new banking or collections policy was adopted in this discussion.

6 New business

6.1 Resolution No. 2026-10-01 Annual election and terms of officers

The General Manager presented the amendment addressing annual officer elections and vacancies. Commissioner Walling moved to adopt Resolution No. 2026-10-01; Commissioner Blankenship seconded. The roll-call vote, confirmed by the signed resolution, was Walling—Yes; Blankenship—Yes; Lewis—Absent. The resolution was adopted, 2–0, effective immediately. It provides for annual officer elections at the first regular meeting of each calendar year; officers elected at this meeting serve until the annual election at the first regular meeting in calendar year 2027, subject to the resolution's vacancy provisions. The combined office of Secretary/Treasurer remains in place.

6.2 Election of Board officers

Commissioner Robert Walling nominated Commissioner Virginia Lewis for President. A second was acknowledged, but the transcript does not clearly establish the seconder's identity. No additional nomination was recorded. The presiding officer announced Lewis elected President. No separate individual vote responses or roll-call vote were recorded for this election. Commissioner Walling then nominated Commissioner Jerry Wayne Blankenship for Vice President. Commissioner Blankenship seconded the nomination. No additional nomination was recorded. The presiding officer announced Blankenship elected Vice President and stated that he had received the required vote; separate individual vote responses or a roll-call vote were not recorded. Under Resolution No. 2026-10-01, these officers serve until the annual officer election at the first regular meeting in January 2027, subject to the resolution's provisions.

Commissioner Blankenship nominated Robert Walling for the combined office of Secretary/Treasurer; Walling seconded. The recorded roll call was Walling—Yes; Blankenship—Yes; Lewis—Absent. Walling was announced elected, 2–0. Walling continued presiding for the remainder of the meeting.

6.3 Resolution No. 2026-10-04 Public Records Request Policy

The General Manager presented Resolution No. 2026-10-04 and Exhibit A, establishing the Public Records Request Policy and addressing public access and protection of exempt records. Commissioner Blankenship moved to adopt the resolution and Exhibit A as presented; Commissioner Walling seconded. The Chair declared the resolution adopted. The signed resolution confirms adoption on October 12, 2026, effective immediately.

6.4 Water Plant change order

The engineering representative presented Final Change Order No. 1, dated September 30, 2026, for Contract 225 - Water Treatment Plant Improvements, with Austin Construction Co. The change order adjusted actual installed quantities, resulting in a net increase of $11,526.00 and a revised contract total of $813,297.00, with no change in contract time. Commissioner Robert Walling moved to approve Final Change Order No. 1; Commissioner Jerry Wayne Blankenship seconded. The Chair declared the change order approved.

6.5 Resolution No. 2026-10-05 Construction Fund transfer

The General Manager presented Resolution No. 2026-10-05 for a one-time $200,000 General Fund transfer to the Construction Fund for Water Plant renovations, supplemental to the unchanged $15,000 monthly transfers. Commissioner Blankenship moved adoption as presented; Commissioner Walling seconded. The Chair declared the resolution passed. The signed resolution confirms adoption October 12, 2026, with two votes in favor; Commissioner Lewis was absent. The resolution requires documentation of available funds and projected balances, budget review and any required Board-approved budget amendment before transfer, retention of transfer records, and reporting of completion and resulting balances to the Board.

6.6 October billing delay and late-payment penalties

The Office Manager recommended waiving penalties because of billing-conversion delays. Commissioner Robert Walling moved to waive late-payment penalties for the October 2026 billing period; Commissioner Jerry Wayne Blankenship seconded. Commissioners Walling and Blankenship approved the motion, 2–0, with Commissioner Lewis absent. The waiver did not forgive underlying charges.

6.7 Customer account review

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting immediately following public comments, as summarized above.

7 Managers reports

Distribution and system maintenance

The Distribution Manager reported leak repairs, including a repeat main-line break on Old Spencer Highway, two meter installations, and additional installations planned. Installation of the Rockdale master meter awaited a fitting. Later discussion addressed a deteriorated valve, road work and permissions, a planned interruption affecting approximately 50 meters, protective equipment, and advance customer notifications.

Treatment Plant

The General Manager reported lower production requirements with tanks remaining full, operation through completed Basin 2, and reduced chemical use before recent rainfall. A delayed bleach delivery had required a temporary production shutdown; storage remained adequate, with delivery expected the next morning. Upcoming coating work and a later shutdown were discussed, including tank storage, contractor coordination, weather, and possible engineering inspection assistance.

Office

The Office Manager reported 152 paperless-billing enrollments as of October 7, customer use of online payment options, and printed bills ready for mailing. Account posting and email billing awaited a software correction and vendor follow-up the next morning. Staff discussed approximately $100 in mailing savings, reduced printing, service-level revenue reports, mobile service orders, and system mapping. No new software contract or payroll change was approved.

General Manager position status

The General Manager reported his recollection of the October 7 parking-lot discussion with Commissioners Lewis and Walling concerning reporting an employee’s off-duty incident. He described the trust and resignation remarks, stated that discipline against him had not been mentioned, and requested clarification of reporting duties, management authority, and Board expectations. Participants discussed the job description, personnel procedures, employee performance, and the need for clearer guidance.

Commissioner Robert Walling moved to place a review of the General Manager’s job description and responsibilities on the November 4, 2026, Board workshop agenda. Commissioner Jerry Wayne Blankenship seconded. Commissioners Walling and Blankenship approved the referral, 2–0, with Commissioner Lewis absent. The action was limited to scheduling workshop review and discussion; no amendment to the General Manager’s job description, responsibilities, or authority was adopted. No acceptance of a resignation, termination, or disciplinary action against the General Manager was recorded.

8 Other Board matters

The engineering representative discussed an application with an October 30 deadline and requested billed water quantities, production quantities, water-loss information, and examples of unusual usage to support zone-meter planning. Staff discussed meter locations and suitable meter pits. No additional approval or expenditure authorization was recorded.

9 Adjournment

Commissioner Blankenship moved to adjourn; Commissioner Walling seconded. The Chair announced the motion passed and adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

DRAFT - SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL. These minutes will be presented for approval at the next regular Board meeting.