MINUTES OF MEETING
LAKE ASHTON
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Lake Ashton Community Development District was held on **Monday**, **September 21, 2026** at 9:00 a.m. at the Lake Ashton Clubhouse Ballroom, 4141 Ashton Club Drive, Lake Wales, FL.

Present and constituting a quorum were:

Brenda VanSickle	Chairperson
Mike Costello	Vice Chairman
Steve Realmuto	Assistant Secretary
Debby Landgrebe	Assistant Secretary
Greg Ulrich	Assistant Secretary

Also present were:

Jill Burns	District Manager, GMS
Savannah Hancock	District Counsel, Kilinski Van Wyk
Garrett Posten	District Engineer, Rayl Engineering
Matt Fisher	Operations Manager
Denise Plavetzky	Community Director

The following is a summary of the discussions and actions taken at the September 21, 2026 Lake Ashton Community Development District Board of Supervisors meeting.

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS **Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Burns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., called roll, and recited the pledge of allegiance. All five Supervisors were in attendance constituting a quorum.

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS **Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Ms. VanSickle presented the agenda and requested a moition of approval. Mr. Ulrich asked about the security session and if it was necessary to keep the whole session closed. Ms. Burns stated that they will revisit that section and if there is any discussion that can be held not under the close session they will do so. Mr. Realmuto asked if they were required to note the specific reason for the closed session. Ms. Hancock noted that

the publication that includes the verbage that it is for a closed security sesion persuent to this specific statute under Chapter 119 which is sufficient legally. There were no other questions and there was a motion of approval.

On MOTION by Mr. Costello, seconded by Mr. Realmuto, with all in favor, the Meeting Agenda, was approved 5-0.

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS **Public Comments on Specific Items on the Agenda *(All Public Comments are limited to three (3) minutes each)***

Ms. VanSickle opened the public comment period and noted that all public comments are limited to three minutes.

Resident (Marianne Zak, 4031 Birkdale Dr.) thanked the Board for approving the automatic door opener installation.

FOURTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **Consideration of Minutes from the August 17, 2026 Board of Supervisors Meeting**

Ms. VanSickle presented the minutes from the August 17, 2026 Board of Supervisors meeting. Mr. Realmuto passed an email out to the rest of the Board that he had sent Ms. Burns noting corrections in the meeting minutes. Ms. VanSickle also emailed Ms. Burns with some changes. Ms. Burns noted that those emails came in the night before and she had not gotten the opportunity to read or incorporate any of the requested corrections. Mr. Realmuto summarized his email noting that he is requesting the additon of several items where the discussion included important points that were not reflected in the notes, including the reasonings of the Supervisors who differed from the majority and the concerns that prompted ceratin staff responses. He believes by including more context it will better reflect staff responses for a complete picture of what actually occurred at the meeting. Board discussion followed and Ms. VanSickle asked if he was wanting to go back to a verbatium style of minutes records and he stated that that is not what he’s asking for but does believe that these minutes would include a more balance picture that are key to the discussion of the last meeting and he believes the District will benefit from having this in the minutes going forward. Ms. Burns noted that there is a lot

going on in the agenda today and suggested they table the approval of these additions until the next secheduled Board of Supervisor's meeting. The Board agreed and the next item followed.

FIFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **Staff Reports**

A. Engineer

Mr. Posten presented information for the Waterford paving project presenting four proposals noting that AAA came in as the lowest bidder at $55,500. As directed by the Board in discussion Berwick, he reached back out to AAA and for them to add that into the scope as a change order would be an additional $1,500 which he would like the Board to consider approving if they decide to approve the AAA proposal as he believes they will not find anyone to do that portion for a cheaper price. Additionally, the geo-technical testing, will be $3,700 from Nissi Geo-Technical with a total of $60,700 for the whole scope of work. Board discussion followed. Mr. Realmuto noted that the AAA quote, although the lowest, seems to have the highest line item for the thermal plastic portion of the proposal is the highest of all the other proposals and asked the engineer to ask if they would match that portion to the other proposal for small savings. Mr. Posten stated that he doesn't mind asking if that is Boad direction but stating that it is being quoted as a full job. Ms. Landgrebe added that there is no harm in asking. There being no other discussion, there was a motion of approval.

> On MOTION by Mr. Ulrich, seconded by Ms. VanSickle, with all in favor, the Proposal from AAA for Waterford and Burwick Paving Project with Additional Geo-Technical Work from Nissi totaling $60,700, was approved 5-0.

Mr. Posten continued reporting on the storm sewer repairs and added in the agenda packet is an overall assessment on what pipes were recommended repairing. As requested, he obtained two proposals: one covering all pipes with higher-category structural defects and one with a reduced scope. He recommended the reduced scope of five pipes, which have major (level four and five) defects. The remaining two pipes, one under Strathmore, have only level two defects and could be reinspected in a few years, possibly when Strathmore is repaved, for a couple of thousand dollars. The Board had

questions and discussion followed. Mr. Poston confirmed the deferred pipes correspond to the Shenandoah proposal of about $19,300 (156 linear feet) and almost $18,000 (175 linear feet). The Board moved to approve the Shenandoah quote for the reduced scope in the amount of $102,213.

> On MOTION by Mr. Realmuto, seconded by Ms. Landgrebe, with all in favor, the Proposal for Storm Sewer Repairs totaling $102,213, was approved 5-0.

Mr. Posten's final item was brought to his attention from the bridge repair contractor about the bridges down by the marina at the end of Hole 1 at the golf course that are wooden constructed on top of another material that looks to be questionable. Three of the four concrete approaches are cracked and broken, and one has a hole exposing a rotting wooden beam beneath. Placing new concrete on the flexible beam would crack again, and a steel plate option was too costly. Tools Tractor quoted $3,000 to repair the worst approach by removing the broken concrete and rotten beam and pouring full-depth concrete to the surface. Because conditions underneath are unknown, he will be on site when it is opened, and the other approaches could be requoted once more is known. Ms. Hancock said she would need to review the easement language to confirm the District has maintenance rights and suggested the Board could approve the repair contingent on legal confirmation. Otherwise, an easement agreement with the marina may be needed. Mr. Posten noted the work would close the area for about a day and a half and clarified that the south bridge is on marina property (with an easement), while the north bridge, where this repair is, sits on District-owned land leased to CDD2 for golf course use. Board direction was to approve the $3,000 repair contingent on legal confirmation

> On MOTION by Mr. Realmuto, seconded by Mr. Ulrich with all in favor, the Proposal for Bridge Repair totaling $3,000, was approved 5-0 contingent on District Counsel's confirmation.

B. Attorney

I. Presentation of Changes in Amended Rules of Procedure *(Request and Document Exhibit Provided by Supervisor Realmuto)*

Ms. Hancock asked how the Board wanted to handle the proposed amended and restated Rules of Procedure, noting she had prepared a comparison chart presented in the agenda packet for review that explained each change. Most changes reflect statutes that have been repealed or no longer exist and asked how in depth they would like for her to present the comprehensive chart. Mr. Realmuto thanked counsel for answering his questions offline as the Board had directed. He said he does not want a line-by-line review but wants to discuss a few unresolved sections, and suggested counsel cover the rest of her report first.

Counsel addressed a qualification letter from her firm's managing partner, Jennifer Killinski from April that has been circulating on social media and addressed concerns. She stated the firm was never engaged by the one CDD, they did not perform a conflict check, and there were no signed engagement letters. The letter only outlined the general merger process and estimated the firm's own legal fees, excluding engineering, bond counsel, filing fees with Lake Wales and Polk County, and management costs. Since the firm began representing the District (first meeting in June), it has declined to communicate with the group because the District is its client under Florida Bar rules. Ms. Hancock continued by answering Mr. Realmuto's follow-up questions. If engaged by both Districts for a merger, the firm would require both to sign a conflict waiver per Florida Bar rules. She sees little potential for legal conflict, though there could be political or personal disagreements among the Supervisors. She estimated the all-in cost of a merger would be closer to $200,000, if everything went smoothly. She noted Florida statutes do not lay out a process for merging a city-based and a county-based District, though Polk County would likely be cooperative. Board discussion on merger costs and process continued. Ms. Hancock noted that this is a complicated process and Ms. Burns clarified that a merger would not change anyone's debt assessment, which stays attached to the lot.

Returning to the Rules of Procedure, Ms. Landgrebe asked how many hours counsel spent on the Rules of Procedure comparison and what it cost the District. Ms. Hancock pulled her time and stated between her and her supervising partner approximately 10 hours with a cost of over $2,000. Mr. Realmuto responded that the

Board had directed him to work with Counsel on this, and he believed the Board needs to understand substantive changes before adopting the rules, which has value much like engineering studies do. He noted that a vast majority of the changes are to incorporate legislative changes which he has no issue with any of those. However, there are a number of items including additions that he believes the Board needs to talk about. Board discussion followed about Chair and Vice Chair responsibilities. Ms. Hancock noted that she would rather have conversations around substantive changes now rather than at the public hearing if there are going to be more changes made. Mr. Realmuto suggested that these kinds of discussions would be more properly handled by the new Board and that the public hearing to adopt the rules of procedure should be canceled and rescheduled when the new Board has had time to address it. Ms. Burns noted that the District has already paid for the advertisement to hold the public hearing. Ms. VanSickle brought up the point that the changes are statutory, the District has hired this new attorney, and she would hope that the Board would have confidence in the attorney to lead the District in the right direction. Mr. Realmuto insisted on going through all the non-statutory and substantive changes that he had questions on and presented them as such.

His first question concerns challenges to District decisions. Ms. Hancock clarified that challenge and appeal rights still exist in the relevant policies (amenity suspensions, encroachments, bid protests, etc.) and recommended keeping the firm's vetted language, which was rewritten after the 2025 legislative session.

Next, he raised a concern about remote participation from Board members and questioned whether only those physically present may rebut Board decisions. Ms. Hancock addressed Mr. Realmuto stating that Florida law does not require Districts to allow remote participation, quorum is based on physical presence, and Attorney General opinions support letting physically present members decide. Remote members participate by default unless the Board affirmatively votes to disallow it.

Mr. Realmuto asked a question about the intended scope of the waiver in section 1.3(11) which he believes waives the need to make a motion and that Board Direction can be given. He is requesting Board direction is clearly stated by the Chair in the meeting, being on the record as having actually occurred at the meeting and spoken out loud rather than being inferred by the person putting together the minutes. Ms. Hancock

specifically stated that the Board is not adopting "Robert's Rule of Order" and that this is meant to give the Board flexibility in not having to use a motion and second to get to Board discussion. The Board did not find it necessary to make the suggested change from Mr. Realmuto on Board direction.

The next item concerns agenda notices and Ms. Hancock explained the rule refers to legal notice. The District now advertises one annual meeting schedule rather than a monthly ad, with separate notices for public hearings and budget hearings which has been a significant savings to the District.

Next was a concern about filling vacancies and challenging the time frame in which the Board has to fill a vacancy. Mr. Realmuto suggested a 90-day time frame that the Board would have to fill a Seat vacancy. Ms. Hancock did note that there is no enforcement mechanism in place if the Board agrees to add a time frame to the language, but she is happy to incorporate that change. Board discussion followed. Mr. Realmuto made a motion to update the rules of procedure to include a 90-day limitation for Board members to fill a vacancy on the Board.

> On MOTION by Mr. Realmuto, seconded by Mr. Ulrich, with Mr. Realmuto and Mr. Ulrich in favor and Ms. Landgrebe, Ms. VanSickle, and Mr. Costello opposed, Authorizing Staff to add a 90-Day Limitation to Fill a Seat Vacancy, failed 2-3.

Mr. Realmuto continued regarding records retention and discussion followed on how long physical and electronic copies should be held. Mr. Realmuto would like for the rules of procedure to reflect the electronic record, how long they are held, and how Supervisors can access them. Ms. Hancock noted that she can go through the District's record retention policy if that is requested by the Board and that would be a more appropriate place for a change to be made if it needed. Mr. Realmuto asked to add the retention policy to a future Board meeting and asked staff to send the current policy to the Board and staff agreed. Ms. Burns stated that the record retentions policy was adopted by the current Board in 2025.

Another minor change with regard to the agenda that the Board reordered the agenda that is now different than the specification. His suggestion is to include what is

required of an agenda outline. Ms. Hancock said the rule already states the format is optional and serves as a baseline that keeps public comment in the right place. She offered to update the order to match the Board's current agenda. The Board did not want to make any changes and requested to move on.

Mr. Realmuto raised Rule 1.38 and Resolution 2026-05 (the budget resolution), which allow invoice approvals or spending resolutions to amend budget line items with no dollar or percentage cap. He also noted the new resolution omits prior language requiring the District Manager or Treasurer to establish administrative procedures for budget amendments. Ms. Hancock noted that a cap is unnecessary because spending resolutions already set limits, and the year-end amended budget adopted within 60 days of September 30 trues up and ratifies line items, which is standard practice. The omitted sentence repeats Section 3, which already requires compliance with Florida law.

Now that all of Supervisor Realmuto's questions have been talked about on public record, she can share their prior correspondence with the rest of the Board, as it is no longer a Sunshine Law violation.

Ms. Landgrebe wanted confirmation that Counsel is approving the contracts. Ms. Hancock confirmed that she drafts every District contract from the approved proposals, including robust construction contracts for the stormwater work, and does not sign vendor-drafted agreements.

C. Field Manager

Mr. Fisher presented the Field Manager's report that was provided in the agenda package for review and summarized ongoing and complete project for the Board.

I. Aquatics Maintenance

a) Presentation of Monthly Aquatics Site Visit Review

Mr. Fisher reported a photo update on ponds and bridges will come next meeting. Solitude is doing an adequate job, though there are some algae blooms, and the littoral shelf at Site 5 is being replanted at the vendor's cost. Mr. Realmuto requested that Solitude's district manager be referred to differently to distinguish and eliminate confusion because it comes off as confusing in the minutes.

The Board is requesting better surge protection options for the District. Mr. Fisher stated the Zap Cap indicator shows red and may need maintenance. He will check TECO coverage and ask Kincaid, the District's electrician, about alternatives such as commercial-grade UPS units for the access control and bowling systems.

D. Lake Ashton Community Director

Ms. Plavetzky updated the Board on the restaurant RFP responses noting that the deadline for those is October 9th. Notices will go out for two candidate forums. She reported Brown Stucco repaired the chimney brick veneer on September 14, with no leaks observed since, and she will have staff check the attic specifically. ASG completed its first quarterly security PM on September 10th and recommended replacing the non-working analog bowling alley camera and repairing the gates with virtual loop detectors to avoid tearing up pavers. The gates will be discussed in closed session. She summarizes a hydraulic closer proposal for the east pool gate is pending, Nations is meeting contract coverage including weddings, and draft post orders are still awaiting supervisor feedback. She reviewed upcoming speakers, the Fall Festival, Trunk or Treat, and noted the LA Times is available. Lastly, she noted that AdventHealth did sign a new three-year sponsorship renewal starting next year and she is requesting the Board to ratify that action.

On MOTION by Ms. VanSickle, seconded by Mr. Costello, with all in favor, the AdventHealth Three-Year Renewal, was ratified 5-0.

I. Consideration of Proposal for Restaurant Kitchen Ice Machine Replacement (Bin Replacement Option & Full Machine Replacement Option)

Ms. Plavetzky reported that the ice storage bin in the restaurant needs to be replaced with a cost of $4,269. The Board can replace the whole machine at a cost of $10,726. Board direction is to table this for now. The ice machine is not currently being used, and they can revisit this proposal when there is a definitive direction for the restaurant.

II. Consideration of Proposal for Installation of Swing Door Operator

Ms. Plavetzky reported because the prior door vendor was unresponsive, Magnum Door Solutions submitted a proposal for the west-side automatic door: $5,216.22 for the operator and $1,895 to relocate the card reader to a post, totaling $7,111.22 (the Board previously approved $6,500).

> On MOTION by Mr. Ulrich, seconded by Ms. Landgrebe, with all in favor, the Proposal for Installation of Swing Door Operator totaling $7,111.22 was approved 5-0.

Discussion continued concerning the Nations guard gate attendant. Mr. Realmuto stated it has improved significantly, but a new guard was reported spending long periods on the phone while parked. He asked that supervisors monitor checkpoint reports proactively. Ms. Plavetzky added the guard is new, the issue is being monitored, she meets weekly with the site captain, and additional training is underway, with replacement if there is no improvement. Ms. VanSickle wanted to state that things are not going as well as reported with continued complaints and Ms. Plavetzky stated that it is a work in progress, and she believes performance is much better than it was a few months ago and will be diligent in monitoring the progress.

III. Consideration of Renewal of Bingo Room Rental Agreement *(Dates will be provided under separate cover prior to the Board Meeting)* – ADDED *(*taken out of order)*

Ms. Plavetzky reported that the Bingo room rental contact expires at the end of the month and presented a proposal for the renewal that was provided in the agenda for review and with dates to be provided by Bingo.

> On MOTION by Ms. Landgrebe, seconded by Ms. VanSickle, with all in favor, the Renewal of Bingo Room Rental Agreement, was approved 5-0.

E. District Manager

Ms. Burns reported there are upcoming staffing changes to the onsite staffing contract. Jacob has resigned and there is a current maintenance vacancy. Caroline will

be taking a promotion within GMS with her last day being on September 30th. Ms. Plavetzky has also resigned, effective this Friday. As of Friday, there will be a vacant community director position, the following week there will be an open activities position, and in the immediate an open maintenance position. Staff will be advertising for those positions, and this will leave a very big hole in staffing and services until those positions can be filled. Former community director Christine Wells has agreed to return about 15 to 20 hours per week in the interim. Some supervisors had suggested waiting until after the election to hire a new community director, and Jill asked for Board direction.

Ms. VanSickle is giving Board direction to extend the restaurant RFP deadline for at least another 30-days because without the appropriate staff that might make things more difficult and any new restaurant coming in will need the most support it can get. Ms. Hancock stated that her and Ms. Burns have also had that discussion and that they will issue an addendum to the RFP extending the due date. It will also give proposers more time to come in and see the facility. Discussion followed on working atmospheres and why they are losing staff members. Ms. Burns explained that long-term staff have endured mistreatment and increasing job insecurity, with residents and some Board members repeatedly telling them, "good luck after November," along with talk of bidding the contract or moving to direct employment without comparable benefits. GMS relocated valued staff because they would otherwise have been lost. She said she has moral concerns about hiring a community director now if the position could be in jeopardy within 30 days and asked the Board to state its intentions. Ms. Burns confirmed GMS manages about 350 CDDs and that the only one using direct hires is Lake Ashton II. Mr. Ulrich stated publicly that he opposes direct hiring and stated his reasoning. Ms. Landgrebe also voiced her opinion on the matter stating that she also opposes direct hiring. Mr. Realmuto agreed completely. He said direct employment would likely lower staff quality because of reduced benefits and advancement opportunities, and he does not foresee it happening. He asked Ms. Burns to confirm that at least one departure was due to a job offer already in progress and she did confirm.

Ms. Landgrebe stated as the only sitting supervisor running for re-election, she is disheartened that residents have cursed at, threatened, and made unreasonable demands of staff. She said the community is losing tremendous assets, everyone owes

staff an apology, and rumors of self-hiring should stop. Ms. Burns requested the current and future Boards to commit to supporting new hires for at least a year so they can succeed and noted the last two community directors each served nearly 15 years. She acknowledged many residents treat staff wonderfully, but the environment has shifted over the past nine months. Ms. Burns asked that as the interim Community Director position returns part time, that the Board allow Ms. Wells to maximize her time, limiting meeting times and see what they could do via email. She also asked residents, although excited to see her, to limit distractions as she's on a limited schedule. If there are certain desk activities that need to be done, let's maximize that time, maybe shorting hours in the short-term. Mr. Ulrich implored the community to volunteer.

In terms of maintenance holes, Ms. Burns suggested a hiring pool maintenance company and discussion followed. Ms. Burns will bring in some proposals to the next meeting and hold off on hiring that third maintenance position. Ms. Burns is asking for understanding of changing desk hours and it's going to be a fluid situation getting people in position as soon as possible. They are looking to hire the right person rather than getting the position filled as fast as possible. Getting a community director to lead the community will be important. The ads will get placed and the search will begin. The restaurant RFP will get extended at least 30-days making the decision in November and onboarding in December in hopes that the new community director will be in process by then. Board direction is to push the RFP deadline for November 1st for consideration at the December meeting.

Ms. Burns suggested moving the December meeting because it falls on the week of Christmas and suggested December 14, 2026. Ms. Hancock stated for the record that the due date will be early November with presentations to occur at the December 14th meeting and they should plan to be there in person. After discussion, staff noted that they could be available on Thursday, November 19th at 1:00. Board direction was to keep the November meeting on the 23rd and the December meeting will be on the 14th.

SIXTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **Financial Reports**

A. Combined Balance Sheets
B. Capital Projects Reserve Fund
C. Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance

D. Approval of Check Run Summary

Ms. VanSickle presented the financial reports, including the balance sheet, capital project and project reserve funds, statement of revenues and expenditures, changes in fund balance, and check run summary. No comments were made, and approval of the check run summary was requested.

> On MOTION by Mr. Costello, seconded by Mr. Realmuto, with all in favor, the Check Run Summary, was approved 5-0.

SEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS Old Business

A. Consideration of Resolution 2026-10 Adopting a Joint Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2026/2027

Ms. VanSickle presented the resolution. Mr. Realmuto has a concern about the November 19th date. Ms. Hancock may be able to attend via Zoom and Ms. Burns will not be able to attend any Thursday. Ms. Burns does not think it will be a problem. Board direction was to table adopting a meeting schedule until the next Board of Supervisor's meeting.

EIGHTH ORDER OF BUSINESS New Business

A. Ratification of Renewal of Sponsorship Agreement with Advent Health

This item was discussed under the Community Director's report.

B. Consideration of Renewal of Landscaping Service Agreement with Yellowstone

Ms. VanSickle presented the renewal and Ms. Burns stated that their fee is not changing making this an extension of their current contract if the Board is amenable.

> On MOTION by Mr. Costello, seconded by Mr. Ulrich, with all in favor, the Renewal of Landscaping Service Agreement with Yellowstone, was approved 5-0.

C. Consideration of Audit Services Engagement Letter from Auditor for Fiscal Year 2026 Audit

Ms. VanSickle presented the engagement letter for auditing services totaling $3,400.

Docusign Envelope ID: 62D019C7-2904-8095-815F-AC3DC1CB0E67

On MOTION by Mr. Realmuto, seconded by Ms. Landgrebe, with all in favor, Resolution, was approved 5-0.

NINTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **CLOSED SECURITY SESSION**

A. Presentation of Preventative Maintenance Report from All Systems Go

There was a closed security session.

B. Consideration of Proposal for Gate Repair (All Systems Go)

C. Consideration of Proposal for Bowling Alley Camera Replacement (All Systems Go)

The Board took one motion to approve items B and C.

On MOTION by Mr. Realmuto, seconded by Mr. Ulrich, with all in favor, Items B and C, were approved 5-0.

TENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **Public Comments**

There being no comments, the next item followed.

ELEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **Supervisor Requests/Supervisor Open Discussion**

There being no comments, the next item followed.

TWELFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.

On MOTION by Ms. Landgrebe, seconded by Mr. Costello, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Jill Burns

Secretary / Assistant Secretary

Signed by:

Buck Vanhoff

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Chairman / Vice Chairman