

## MEETING NOTES

### SUBSURFACE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS (SSDS) TASK FORCE

DECEMBER 12, 2025

The meeting of the SSDS Task Force was convened at 9:15 AM, Friday, December 12, 2025 in the Executive Conference Room at the Williamson County Administrative Complex. Task Force members present included:

Rogers Anderson, County Mayor  
Mike Matteson – Community Development Director, Chairman  
Judy Herbert – County Commission Member  
Mike Haarbauer – Soil Scientist  
Keith Brotherton – Surveyor  
Steven Clifton – Engineer  
Scott Hill – Installer  
Britton Dotson - TDEC Representative  
Jennifer Tapp – Dept. of Sewage Disposal Management

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chairman Mike Matteson gave some opening remarks and asked all Task Force members to introduce themselves. He provided a revised Agenda, adding a 15-minute Public Comment period.

#### **Task Force Charge and Mission**

Chairman Matteson stated that the reason for the creation of the SSDS Task Force was due to concerns that were raised by the County Commission regarding the County's Septic Regulations, in particular the cost to homeowners and the timeliness of the projects while going through the system. The mandate of the Task Force is to provide recommendations to the County Commission and to the Board of Health on what if any SSDS Regulations should be enacted in Williamson County that are above and beyond the current State of Tennessee Regulations. They will start with the State Regulations as the foundation and then evaluate what additional regulations beyond those that the Task Force feels would be appropriate to add. They are expected to complete their findings and generate a report with the recommendations by April 1, 2026, at which time the County Commission will consider approving the Task Force Report and their recommendations at the May County Commission meeting. The Report will then be sent to the Board of Health. He advised that as part of the Resolution creating the Task Force, he was appointed as Chairman and will be responsible for ensuring that the Task Force meets the mandated time frames that were established in the Resolution.

Chairman Matteson proposed a Mission Statement, which is to create a report that outlines the regulatory provisions it feels should be included in the County's Regulations, above and beyond the State Regulations, and evaluating potential additional regulatory provisions for inclusion. The Task Force will weigh the benefits of those provisions, and those could be benefits to the environment, benefits to the equity or longevity of the system against any detrimental effects that they may have, such as additional expense, additional cost to homeowners, etc., and that the task force should only recommend adding

provisions when it determines that the benefits of doing so will clearly outweigh any negative effects. The Task Force members concurred with the Mission Statement as presented.

### **Discussion Regarding Process**

Mr. Brotherton asked if the current regulations were being disregarded, and if they were starting with TDEC's rules and adding to them as necessary.

Chairman Matteson advised the Resolution advises that the Task Force should form recommendations on what if any additional regulations beyond the State Regulations that Williamson County should have. He believes that means starting with the State Regulations.

Mr. Dotson stated he is glad to have the County Attorney in the meeting, because some previous contract counties have had discussions to determine what could be limited from the State's Program. There was some debate within the State's Counsel as to whether this would constitute being more stringent or rather preventing someone from exercising a right.

Mrs. Ransom asked Mr. Dotson to inform her if the State's General Counsel has adopted a formal opinion on these issues. She then went on to discuss the proposed Rules of Procedure of the Task Force, including, but not limited to, the Community Development Director as the chair, note taking for record of meetings, providing a public comment period at the end of each meeting, at least two public meetings specifically for public comments, and proper notice of meetings to the public. The Task Force confirmed that they were in agreement with these proposed procedures.

Mr. Matteson noted that the first of the two public meetings will be held on January 6, 2026 and the second will be held towards the end of the process, likely in March. He asked members to attend these meetings if possible.

### **Discussion Regarding Meeting Schedule**

Chairman Matteson proposed that the SSDS Task Force will meet every other Friday at 9 A.M. and will last approximately 1-2 hours through March. Members agreed with the proposed schedule.

### **Next Steps**

Chairman Matteson stated that he would like each member to review section s1-4 of the State Regulations to discuss at the next meeting on January 9, 2026. This would entail sub-surface sewage disposal systems, general definitions, subdivisions and additional site requirements, limitations for subdivision approval and individual lots and issuance of construction permits. He asked that each member, in addition to reading these sections, start thinking about what additional provisions you might want to discuss beyond the State Regulations.

Mr. Haarbaeur stated that he is aware there are some Planning Department Regulations that overlap with TDEC Regulations. He asked if it would be possible for the Planning Department to provide those regulations to determine if there will be any restriction on the ability to make changes.

Chairman Matteson advised that if those discussions occur, then they can be discussed at that time. However, he feels that they should first come up with what they believe are the best additional provisions to include and if there is some overlapping of the regulations, those can be reviewed and a decision made at that time.

## **Citizen Comment period**

Chairman Matteson opened the floor for public comments to those who had signed up to speak.

Kiah Ewer, Plat Reviewer for the Williamson County, advised that the current County Regulations originally started as the State Regulations in 1998 and were added to over a period of time. He admits that it is a little excessive and could be trimmed down. It is a combination of the State Regulations, additional requirements, etc., and has already been expanded upon. It was created with TDEC personnel, Sewage Disposal staff and county attorneys. A lot of it was additional wording to actually explain different aspects of the process and provide more detail. When you get to Plat Reviews or Inspections, if you have any questions or need for input, please call upon the Sewage Disposal Department for assistance.

No one else signed up to speak.

Chairman Matteson asked if there was any other business.

Commissioner Herbert advised she's had residents contacting her regarding costs associated with the process and she asked if they had to wait until the Task Force had completed its responsibilities before anything could be done to assist them.

Chairman Matteson stated that the County does not have the ability to apply new regulations until they are adopted, and noted that the Task Force is not creating the regulations, they are generating a report with their recommendations to provide to the County Commission.

Mr. Brotherton advised he also has some clients that have chosen to put their projects on hold and he wasn't sure how long it would take or what to tell them.

Chairman Matteson stated that June is a more realistic time frame for changes to be adopted.

Mr. Brotherton asked if it was possible to work backwards by just removing unnecessary regulations.

Mrs. Ransom advised that the County Commission Resolution appears to charge the Task Force with starting with the State Regulations and adding from there.

Mr. Britton mentioned that some of the other counties they have worked with have simply referenced TDEC's Regulations, rather than repeating them, and then elected to add to them or amend them.

Mr. Clifton asked if one standard contract was used for all counties or do they have their own individual contracts.

Mr. Dotson stated that they have occurred over time, so there are differences in the contracts, but he believes they are trying to make them all similar. He advised that TDEC is there to confirm if their rules have been adopted locally by the county and it meets the States Regulations at a minimum.

Mayor Anderson asked if the other contract counties work through the Board of Health.

Mr. Dotson advised that they do not exclusively work through the Board of Health.

Mayor Anderson asked why Williamson County has to go through the Board of Health.

Mr. Dotson stated that it was originally in the state statute and was the structure of the TDEC Program at that time, so the language of that Contract County Statute commonly referred to the Department of Health. There have been some since that aren't housed in the local health departments.

Mayor Anderson asked if this state law could be changed to eliminate the Board of Health.

Mrs. Ransom advised that she has been tasked by the County Commission to research this and determine what authority is given to the Board of Health in terms of authority and what changes may be necessary.

Mayor Anderson asked Mr. Dotson to do some research on that and update the Task Force at the next meeting.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:01AM.