

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(10)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: September 3, 2025

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution directing the County Mayor to explore executing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Solid Waste Management and Water and Sewer Department for combined biosolids and solid waste hauling and disposal; evaluate cost-effective opportunities for upgrading Class b biosolids into Class a biosolids; and provide a report

Resolution No. R-884-25

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/uw



MEMORANDUM (Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: September 3, 2025

FROM: 
Gen Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 11(A)(10)

Please note any items checked.

- _____ **"3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised**
- _____ **6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing**
- _____ **4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing**
- _____ **Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget**
- _____ **Budget required**
- _____ **Statement of fiscal impact required**
- _____ **Statement of social equity required**
- _____ **Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing**
- _____ **No committee review**
- _____ **Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present ____, 2/3 membership ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous ____, majority plus one ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3) (h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c) (2) ____) to approve**
- _____ **Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(10)
9-3-25

RESOLUTION NO. _____ R-884-25

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO EXPLORE EXECUTING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT AND WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT FOR COMBINED BIOSOLIDS AND SOLID WASTE HAULING AND DISPOSAL; EVALUATE COST-EFFECTIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR UPGRADING CLASS B BIOSOLIDS INTO CLASS A BIOSOLIDS; AND PROVIDE A REPORT

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County (the "County"), through its Water and Sewer Department ("WASD") provides water and wastewater services directly to more than 400,000 retail customers and indirectly through wholesale (municipal) utilities, including water supply, transmission, treatment, distribution, conservation, wastewater collection, treatment, disposal and water reclamation; and

WHEREAS, biosolids, also referred to as sludge, are nutrient-rich, semisolid organic material produced during the wastewater treatment process and are generated at WASD's Central and South District Wastewater Treatment Plants; and

WHEREAS, the County is the largest producer of biosolids in the State of Florida, with approximately 700 wet tons per day; and

WHEREAS, the removal of biosolids is essential to maintain effluent quality, which ensures that the water released meets environmental standards and regulatory requirements for safe discharge into the environment; and

WHEREAS, once biosolids have been removed during the treatment process, they are transported to a disposal site for its end use, which includes composting, land application, landfilling, and other legally permitted disposal methods; and

WHEREAS, based on the remaining pathogen levels after the wastewater treatment process, biosolids are classified as either Class A or Class B, with Class A having very low or undetectable pathogen levels thus allowing for unrestricted use, including in public access areas, and Class B having some detectable pathogen levels thereby restricting their end use applications; and

WHEREAS, due to recent changes to the Florida Administrative Code aimed at minimizing nutrient migration and protecting water bodies, the number of disposal facilities available to receive biosolids have significantly decreased; and

WHEREAS, as a result of these regulatory changes, utilities statewide are now competing to secure hauling and disposal allocations, leading to increased pricing and a reduction in the number of vendors with current capacity to haul and dispose of biosolids; and

WHEREAS, WASD currently contracts with various vendors to handle the disposal of the County's biosolids through several different methods, including landfilling, composting and land application; and

WHEREAS, the County is expending approximately \$26,000,000.00 per year on various contracts for the disposal of its biosolids; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Solid Waste Management ("DSWM"), processes approximately 1.7 million tons of garbage and trash throughout the County's disposal system annually; and

WHEREAS, although DSWM does not accept biosolids at its landfills and does not handle or dispose of biosolids for WASD, several of DSWM's existing contracts reference or involve biosolids, and coordination between DSWM and WASD on operations, shared vendor relationships, and/or infrastructure planning may create opportunities for increased efficiency, cost savings, and shared use of infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, one of the current limitations facing WASD in the management of biosolids is the regulatory designation and permitted use of existing sites, while several DSWM facilities may already be permitted or otherwise capable of receiving biosolids under existing regulations, creating an opportunity for greater operational flexibility and interdepartmental coordination; and

WHEREAS, building on interdepartmental interactions and asset opportunities, the County may benefit from increased efficiency and cost-reductions by exploring an agreement to combine the hauling and disposal of WASD's biosolids with DSWM's solid waste operations and/or to utilize DSWM sites, where appropriate, for such purposes; and

WHEREAS, the execution of a memorandum of understanding ("MOU") between DSWM and WASD for combined biosolids and solid waste transportation, processing, and/or disposal could (i) support long term planning, (ii) create a funding stream and internal enterprise revenue for DSWM, (iii) centralize and consolidate sludge processing and management, (iv) enhance environmental controls and mitigate public health risks, and (v) enable sludge reuse innovation and support sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the County may also benefit in exploring a cost-effective and sustainable means of upgrading biosolids from Class B to Class A standards, using options that do not require capital expenditure or the purchase of new equipment but rather utilize existing facilities or partnerships,

WHEREAS, upgrading biosolids to Class A standards without capital investment may reduce long-term disposal costs, eliminate tipping fees, expand reuse opportunities, reduce landfill reliance, and position the County to comply with evolving environmental regulations while advancing its climate resilience and circular economy goals; and

WHEREAS, a coordinated approach to biosolids and solid waste hauling and reuse may enhance operational efficiency, foster interdepartmental collaboration, and create opportunities for public-private partnerships, all while aligning with the County's long-term solid waste planning, infrastructure investment, and sustainability objectives,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Incorporates the foregoing recitals.

Section 2. Directs the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to explore whether it is in the County's best interest to enter into an MOU between DSWM and WASD for combined biosolids and solid waste transportation, processing, and disposal.

Section 3. Directs the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to provide a report to the Board within 60 days from the date of this resolution that details: (i) the current vendor hauling arrangements and limitations for both WASD's biosolids and DSWM's solid waste, (ii) the feasibility of combining the transportation, processing, and disposal of WASD's biosolids with DSWM's solid waste, and (iii) whether there are any regulatory limitations on the use of existing DSWM facilities for biosolids composting. The report shall also detail: (i) the Class B biosolids volumes that are currently generated from WASD's wastewater treatment plants, including the processing and disposal costs and the disposal destinations for those biosolids, and (ii) the feasibility of options available to the County for upgrading Class B biosolids to Class A without

new capital investments by the County. The report shall be placed on an agenda of the full Board without committee review pursuant to rule 5.06(j) of the Board's Rules of Procedure.

Section 4. The County Mayor or County Mayor's designee shall coordinate with the Office of Management and Budget, the County Attorney's Office, the Finance Department, and any relevant regulatory agencies in preparing the report and evaluating the feasibility of any recommended actions to ensure fiscal, legal, and operational viability.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado. It was offered by Commissioner **Danielle Cohen Higgins** , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Kionne L. McGhee** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Anthony Rodríguez, Chairman	aye		
Kionne L. McGhee, Vice Chairman	aye		
Marleine Bastien	aye	Juan Carlos Bermudez	absent
Sen. René García	absent	Oliver G. Gilbert, III	aye
Roberto J. Gonzalez	aye	Keon Hardemon	aye
Danielle Cohen Higgins	aye	Eileen Higgins	aye
Natalie Milian Orbis	aye	Raquel A. Regalado	aye
Micky Steinberg	aye		

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 3rd day of September, 2025. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

JUAN FERNANDEZ-BARQUIN, CLERK

By: Basia Pruna
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

dsh

David Stephen Hope
Valerie M. Toth