

**Commission members present:**

Katelyn Bratz (Town of Mukwonago) (Vice-Chairperson)  
Alan Barrows (Waukesha County)  
Chad Sampson (Racine County)  
Fred Koeller (Village of Waterford)  
Francis Stadler (Village of Big Bend)  
Doug Koehler (City of Waukesha)  
Donny Hefty (City of Burlington)  
Wayne Jensen (Village of Rochester)  
Andrew Lois (Town of Wheatland)  
Tom Slawski (SEWRPC)  
Jim Pindel (Town of Waterford) (Secretary/Treasurer)

**Commission members absent:**

Dean Falkner (Village of Mukwonago) (Chairman)  
Jeff Lang (Town of Burlington)  
Andy Buehler (Kenosha County)  
Bob Bartholomew (Town of Vernon)  
Ken Miller (Town of Waukesha)  
Sara DeBruijn (Wisconsin DNR)  
Rachel Sabre (Wisconsin DNR)

Also present: Dan Treloar of Kenosha County.

At 1:05 PM, Vice - Chairperson Katelyn Bratz called the SEWFRC meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

**Minutes** The minutes from the January 12, 2018 meeting were reviewed. It was motioned by Fred Koeller that the minutes be approved and the motion was seconded by Alan Barrows. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer Reports** – Jim Pindel reviewed the January 2018 treasurer’s report. We started the month with \$32,434.31 in our Money Market Account. We received \$5.51 in interest in January bringing our Money Market account to a balance of \$32,439.82. The changes to the non-grant funds was the \$5.51 in interest resulting in the net non-grant funds available being \$32,375.01. The only change on the grant fund page was that the final cost of the smart salting workshop came in at \$2,464.32 which is \$535.68 under budget. It was motioned by Donny Hefty and seconded by Francis Stadler that the treasurer’s report should be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

- a) Progress Toward obtaining funding for the SEWFRC: Jim Pindel reminded everyone that he sent out an email saying that Dean Falkner, Tom Slawski and he

testified before the Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry. Jim said that Rep. Wichgers office called him to say that our testimony should outline how we track and control the grant funds we handle. Jim said he made his testimony address these issues, starting with the instructions on our website on how to apply for grant funds for a project, then reviewing our “Criteria for Project Acceptance”, then reviewing our “Cost Share Agreement” and finally reviewing the project signoff document we call the “Construction and Planting Certification”. Jim said that he ended by saying that we put these procedures together to show how carefully and diligently we care for the grant funds that are given to us. And to date we have used 100% of the grant funds for grant worthy projects. Dean Falkner’s testimony focused on pollution and the excessive phosphorus in the Fox River within our area of responsibility. Tom Slawski provided his own presentation and was based on SEWRPC’s cooperative work with us and that our goals line up with those of the SEWRPC. Tom pointed out that the financial support of our commission for the Fox River Summit allows for networking and coordination between many environmental, municipal and non-government agencies. Jim said that it appeared that the testimonies were well accepted and that this last Tuesday the Committee on Environment and Forestry voted unanimously (11 to 0) to support our bill AB 911. Francis Stadler asked what happens when the bill is passed by the committee and Jim Pindel said that the bill then goes before the entire Assembly for a vote and that before the meeting we checked and the bill AB 911 passed the Assembly 97 to 0. The bill was then passed onto the Senate for consideration. Jim finished by saying that he expects that we will have to go back to Madison and testify before some Senate Committee, just as we did for the Assembly, before our bill can go to the Senate floor for a vote.

- b) Fox River Partnership 2018 Summit: Tom Slawski said that the summit is progressing nicely. Tom said that registrations are lagging but he expects that as the summit comes closer registrations should pick up. Tom said it is a loaded agenda and passed around a flyer highlighting some of the key speakers. Tom said that they are still working on the finish of the summit to have a panel discussion or some other event to culminate the summit. Jim Pindel asked for a show of hands to see how many of the commissioners present intended to attend the summit and 6 commissioners raised their hands. Jim encouraged all present to invest their time in this worthwhile event. Donny Hefty said that he and Jim Kleinschmidt will be presenting a talk concerning the flooding that went on this last year. Donny pointed out that it will be appropriate to talk about the flooding from the Veterans Terrace since he can just point out the windows to show where some of the major flood events occurred. Some of the pictures in the presentation were taken from the Veterans Terrace location. Tom pointed out a presentation to be made by Phil Gaebler on Urban leaf management. This is a new topic which has come up and needs attention from many municipalities. Apparently leaves that get into the lakes and rivers deteriorate into phosphorus and other unwanted components. Alan Barrows said that he attended a presentation by the City of Fond du Lac on a 3 year study they were doing to see the effect of removing a

- number of ash trees that died from the ash bore. This study will monitor the amount of phosphorus and other consequences not having the leaf load in this controlled area. Donny Hefty said that he would be interested in seeing that data because the City of Burlington has to remove a large number of ash trees.
- c) Mukwonago River shoreline restoration at WE Energies Site. Alan Barrows said that he had not visited the site lately and had nothing new to report. Alan said that he expects to receive one more invoice from the contractor for the 1 year of maintenance in the contract. Jim Pindel pointed out that this project will be held open until that invoice is received and the documentation is submitted.
- d) ESR Project disposal sites environmental impact: No one from the WWMD was present, so Jim Pindel stated that he received an email report from Paul Kling of the WWMD which stated the following. Waste Management (WM) is still preparing a cost estimate for the various possible scenarios. Last Monday WM visited the WDNR site west of Conservancy Bay to access it as the dewatering site. The result was that they felt it was adequate. Russ Rasmussen of the WDNR went to the Secretary of the WDNR asking for support for this project and asking if it could be considered under the category 29 fee waiver. Russ said that the Secretary wants to help with the project but did not say how. The WDNR is concerned with the loss of revenue and the volume of materials that would be placed in the landfills. The WDNR brought up the idea of using the Dolphin process to dewater the sediment and then placing the dewatered sediment into the Super Mix gravel pit. This new idea will cause more testing and engineering and so the WWMD decided that they will not proceed with this option until they hear whether the category 29 fee waiver is accepted by the WDNR.
- e) Schuetze Playground Storm Water Abatement: - Jim Pindel said that he has all the information from the City of Waukesha and needs to process it.
- f) Mukwonago Park Shoreline Restoration – Alan Barrows said he did not have an update at this time. Jim Pindel asked if the project had started and Alan said it was complete and asked Jim if he had received any paperwork and Jim said he didn't recall any.
- g) Village of Waterford East Shore river bank Restoration: - Jim Pindel said that he thought that he had all the necessary documentation from the Village and so it is up to him to get the documentation processed.
- h) SEWRPC Survey for Waterford Dam to the Illinois Border – Tom Slawski said that SEWRPC has access to the original plot maps of the Fox River going back to 1836. They are now in the process of digitizing them so they can be overlaid with current maps to see how the river has changed course and size along the way. This comparison will help determine how much erosion has occurred and where. Tom said that they are also comparing historic cross sections of the river with the new ones he took during his survey. These comparisons will be part of a

presentation at the upcoming summit. Jim Pindel made 2 points he said that the Graef survey we had done a few years ago also made a comparison of the present and historic locations of the river. Tom Slawski said that Graef used the 2000 map data. The second point Jim Pindel made is that the maps SEWRPC is going back to are from 1836 and that is the same year that the first dam was put in in Waterford. Tome said that the maps did not show a dam in Waterford.

- i) Birch Lane Shoreline Protection Project: Chad Sampson said that there is nothing to report at this time and that construction will start in early spring.

### **New Business**

- a) Consideration of developing a USEPA 9-Key Elements Watershed Management Plan – Dean Falkner was not present and Jim Pindel pointed out that at our last meeting Dean said they have done as much as they can do without getting funding to hire someone to help design the plan.

### **Reports and Updates**

- a) Report on activities of Fox Waterway Agency (FWA) of Illinois – No one from the FWA nor Jeff Lang were present, so no report was made.
- b) Possible diversion of City of Waukesha water treatment plant discharge away from the Fox River: Doug Koehler said that the engineering was ongoing, but had nothing to report. No one from the WDNR was present (this is 2 meetings in a row that the WDNR was not represented) to make a report. Tom Slawski said that yesterday he attended a meeting of the Wisconsin Coastal Management group and asked them since the Fox River watershed will be connected to Lake Michigan water once the diversion occurs shouldn't the Fox River watershed be eligible for Great Lakes funding. He said he did not get a verbal response.
- c) Progress toward designation as a "National Water Trail" – Village of Waterford. Fred Koeller said that the next meeting of the group is scheduled for 2/27/18 and he didn't have anything special to report at this time. Fred did refer to the fact that they obtained the surface water grant that Tom Slawski alluded to before and said that Tom did most of the work including applying for the grant. Tom added that the letters of support including one from the SEWFRC helped. Tom said that they will be contracting with a group of professional trail developers who specialize in developing tools to support a trail system. It will be an interactive online tool. Tom pointed out that in Kenosha County there is a water trail already established and Dan Treloar said the Kenosha County had already done its own thing and what they already have in place could be leveraged into the overall National Water Trail effort. Dan said that they have landing sites mapped including the distances in between, which could be incorporated.
- d) SEWFRC Website – Al Sikora was not present and Alan Barrows said that he needs to update the maps to include the projects that have recently been completed.

At this point Tom Slawski asked if we were going to have a display for the upcoming summit and Alan Barrows said that we will use our 3 panel display and have some handouts. Alan said the 3 panel display needs revising since it says we only service Racine and Waukesha Counties.

**Correspondence –**

- a. 1/15/18 Email with attached unapproved minutes from the 1/12/18 ‘in district’ meeting.
- b. 1/16/18 Forward of an email from Andy Buehler stating that he contacted Rep. Kerkman regarding funding for the SEWFRC
- c. 1/16/18 Email with attached revised unapproved minute from the 1/12/18 ‘in district’ meeting sent to commissioners and legislators
- d. 1/16/18 Forward of an automatic email reply from Senator Wanggaard’s office, asking one of his constituents to resend it to him.
- e. 1/16/18 Similar autoreply email from Rep. Allen’s office with a request for one of his constituents to resend the minutes to him.
- f. 1/18/18 Email from Katelyn Bratz saying she contacted Rep. Cody Horlacher’s office concerning funding for the SEWFRC.
- g. 1/31/18 Forward of an email from the WDNR by Jim Pindel advising the request for a diversion of Lake Michigan water by the City of Racine to supply portions of Mount Pleasant.
- h. 2/1/18 Email from Jim Pindel advising of a phone discussion with Rep. Wichgers about our funding and the need for at least 3 of us to testify before the Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry on Tuesday 2/6/18.
- i. 2/8/18 Email from Jim Pindel advising of the testimonies before the Committee on Environment & Forestry and asking Commissioners to contact their legislators
- j. 2/10/18 Forward of an email from Rep. Wichgers concerning the testimonies
- k. 2/13/18 Forward of an email from Rep. Wichgers office that bill 911 passed the Committee on Environment & Forestry unanimously

**Miscellaneous Issues –**

Alan Barrows passed around a copy of the Waukesha County Aquatic Invasive Species Strategic Plan which he said was hot off the presses. This plan was generated by the Waukesha County detect, prevent, outreach initiative that the SEWFRC helped to fund with \$1,000 per year for 3 years from our non-grant funds. Alan said that they worked with SEWRPC for almost a year to get this plan put together. Alan said that Jim Pindel should keep the hard copy for our records and that the report is available on the county’s website. Alan said that they have developed a special map site (AIS-GIS map) to track the locations of invasive species. This map will be continuously updated adding locations where invasive species are found and removing area where the invasive species have been eradicated.

Jim Pindel said that he sent an email to all the commissioners regarding a Wetlands initiative, which he read about in the 2/8/18 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, a scanned copy of the article was attached to the email for everyone to read. Jim proceeded to highlight what was in the article as well as a follow up article from the 2/15/18 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. The first article said that legislative bills AB547 and SB600 would allow filling of wetlands without any WDNR permits. The Wisconsin Wetlands Association has gone on record opposing the legislation. A new organization called Sportsmen for Wetlands has been created to oppose these bills. This group is distributing bumper stickers opposing the legislation. The second article provided a little more information. It pointed out that the wetlands serve as sponges soaking up rain and storm water preventing flooding. This article made the distinction between connected and isolated wetlands. Connected wetland are those connected to a navigable body of water regulated by state and federal laws, whereas isolated wetlands are not adjacent to navigable waterways and can be found as depressions, shallow marshes and meadows which are regulated by the state only. This second article went on to make a case for the fact that precipitation is increasing annually in Wisconsin making the absorption of storm water by the wetlands all the more necessary. There are approximately 1,000,000 acres of isolated wetlands and 4,000,000 acres of connected wetlands in the state. The question Jim Pindel put to the commission was should we go on record opposing or supporting these bills. It was pointed out that the bill already passed in the Assembly and would be going to the Senate soon. Chad Sampson said that in Racine County there are more isolated wetlands than connected wetlands. If these wetlands get deregulated and filled in it would seem that the flooding Burlington had this last year would probably increase by about 20%. Alan Barrows added that the present laws require you to look for alternate solutions to filling in a wetland and now this requirement would go away. Dan Treloar said that the bill was revised about 5 times and in the latest rendition it increased the size of a wetland that can be filled in on farmland. The general discussion was that we would oppose the bills but that the train has already left the station and it was too late to do anything of consequence.

It was motioned by Andrew Lois and seconded by Doug Koehler that the meeting be closed. The motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting Closed** at 2:09 PM

**THE NEXT OFFICIAL MEETING WILL BE Friday, April 13, 2018 at 1:00 PM. (Meeting Location: Town of Vernon Fire Station #1, W233 S7475 Woodland Lane, Big Bend, WI 53103.)**