

**Commission members present:**

Dean Falkner (Village of Mukwonago) (Chairman)  
Barb Holtz standing in for Katelyn Bratz (Town of Mukwonago) (Vice-Chairperson)  
Alan Barrows (Waukesha County)  
Chad Sampson (Racine County)  
Jeff Lang (Town of Burlington)  
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)  
Bob Bartholomew (Town of Vernon)  
Ken Miller (Town of Waukesha)  
Tom Slawski (SEWRPC)  
Rachel Sabre (Wisconsin DNR)  
Jim Pindel (Town of Waterford) (Secretary/Treasurer)

**Commission members absent:**

Andrew Lois (Town of Wheatland)  
Andy Buehler (Kenosha County)  
Sara DeBruijn (Wisconsin DNR)

**Also present:** No Visitors present.

At 1:02 PM, Chairman Dean Falkner 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 February 16, 2018 meeting were reviewed. It was motioned by Alan Barrows that the minutes be approved and the motion was seconded by Fred Koeller. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer Reports** – Jim Pindel reviewed the February and March 2018 treasurer's reports. We started the month of February with \$32,444.80 in our Money Market Account. The \$10,000.00 check from Racine County for our 2018 allocation was deposited. We received \$4.98 in interest in February and \$6.06 in interest in March bringing our Money Market account to a balance of \$41,988.99. The changes to the non-grant funds was the \$4.98 and \$6.06 in interest resulting in the net non-grant funds available being \$32,386.05. There were no changes to the grant fund page. Jim Pindel pointed out that the \$2,035.68 in undedicated grant funds must be used up by 6/30/18. It was motioned by Bob Bartholomew and seconded by Doug Koehler that the treasurer's report should be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

- a) Progress toward obtaining funding for the SEWFRC: With the fact that Jim Pindel sent an email notice to all the commissioners last night stating that Governor Walker will sign our funding bill on Monday 4/16/18 there was no need for discussion. We all expressed our gratitude to Rep. Chuck Wichgers and Senator David Craig for their support getting this funding through. Jim Pindel and Dean Falkner will definitely attend the signing and Tom Slawski will check on his availability to go as well.
  
- b) Fox River Partnership 2018 Summit: Tom Slawski said that there were 144 attendees at the summit. The date for the next Summit is 3/22/2019. Tom said that the last item at the summit was an attempt to grow more collaboration and sharing among the different organizations present, especially across the Wisconsin – Illinois border. Tom said that Joe Keller of the Fox Waterway Agency (FWA) of Illinois was present but that he did not have a chance to talk with him. Tom thought that this might be the time to approach the FWA about cooperating on some projects that would be mutually beneficial to both of our groups. Tom thought that possibly a joint 9-Key Elements Plan or some shoreline restoration in the area he just surveyed near the Illinois border might be possibilities. Tom said we have formed subcommittees before to address particular objectives and maybe this would be a good task for a subcommittee. Dean Falkner said that a simple phone call to get things started might be in order. Jim Pindel asked if all the presentations from this year’s summit will be posted on a website accessible to all of us. Tom said they are in the process of getting the presentation posted and would notify Jim Pindel when they are ready along with a link or directions on how to find the presentations.
  
- c) Mukwonago River shoreline restoration at WE Energies Site. Alan Barrows said that he had not visited the site since 2/20/18 when the ground was frozen and he wanted to see if there was any runoff or ice damage. Barb Holtz said that she drove by the site today and that it looked very good and you could see quite a difference between it and the next door site that has not been improved. Alan said that he had talked to Ron Peterson the director of public works for the Village of Mukwonago who told him that Alex the owner of the 100’ section next to the WE Energies property was interested in getting his property fixed up as well. This is likely a new project for our future. Jim Pindel asked about how much Alan thought the project would cost and Alan said about \$150/linear foot, so \$15,000 for the 100’ section, which would be very doable.
  
- d) ESR Project disposal sites environmental impact: No one from the WWMD was present, so Jim Pindel stated that the problem they are facing is how to handle the ammonium/ammonia in the sediment. Jim said that they are looking into a method EPA 1313 which is used to adjust the PH of the sediment to remove metals. They are looking at modifying this process to change the ammonium to ammonia and then how to dissipate the ammonia. There are a number of parallel paths being pursued to get to a final conclusion. Jim also said that there is effort going on to see if the sediment can be used to be spread about 3” thick on farm

- fields and along roadways by the DOT. This option would not require the nonhazardous waste exemption.
- 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. He also said that he intends to contact Sara DeBruijn to see if he can meet with her to close out this and several other projects.
  - f) Mukwonago Park Shoreline Restoration – Alan Barrows said that he sent a request to Jim Pindel asking him to pay the contractor for his work. Jim said he didn't recall any request or making any payment. Both Alan and Jim said they would check on it.
  - g) Village of Waterford East Shore river bank Restoration: - Fred Koeller said that the project was completed and Jim Pindel said that he had to close it out with Sara DeBruijn of the WDNR.
  - h) SEWRPC Survey for Waterford Dam to the Illinois Border – Tom Slawski said that SEWRPC has made some progress. Tom said that it is their intension to incorporate the 19 high priority sites from the Graef study in 2014 with the sites Tom has identified in the lower stretch of the river. When they are finished their will be only one list of priority sites for our entire jurisdiction. Tom said he has studied Graef's prioritization methodology, which takes in stream bank height, slope and other relative criteria and will add proximity to infrastructure (roadways and bridges) to the methodology. The idea here is that erosion and streambank restoration is more important where people see or experience it than it is out in the middle of nowhere. Tom said at next month's meeting he will show us the sites he uncovered in the lower stretch of the river that need attention. Tom said that they will be using a tool called STEPL which can be used to determine streambank erosion with phosphorus and sediment loading. Then we can use this data to measure the load reductions of our work. Tom thought that having this data might make it possible for additional funding from other sources within the watershed. Dean Falkner pointed out that the Fox River is listed on the 303D list as noncompliant due to high phosphorus concentrations and everyone is contending with the sediment. Dean thought we should use this new data to try to bring the river into compliance. Dean said that we should be grateful to the state for defining the phosphorus limit, since now we have another reason to stop the erosion that is to get into compliance. Tom asked Fred Koeller what is the Village of Waterford's intent regarding the island just downstream of the Waterford dam. Fred said that it is used by fishermen and by kids just playing in the summer. The Village is even thinking about building a bridge from the shore to the island to gain greater access. Fred went on to say that during high water events like last summer's flood the water rushes through is area and the island obstructs the flow protecting the east shore from the fast currents. The east shore is where we just completed the shoreline restoration project. Fred also pointed out that the existing island experiences erosion in these high flow events and that

the small island that used to be next to it was completely washed away during the flood event. Dean Falkner pointed out that the monitoring they do showed the highest levels of phosphorus ever recorded downstream when the small island washed away.

- i) Birch Lane Shoreline Protection Project: Chad Sampson said that he talked to the contractor this morning and he said that the 2+ inches of rain predicted for this weekend will probably delay his start by a couple weeks. Chad said that the contractor wants to get the project done and it should be completed within the next 2 months.

### **New Business**

- a) Consideration of developing a USEPA 9-Key Elements Watershed Management Plan – Dean Falkner said that there is a subcommittee meeting planned for 4/19/18. Dean said that there has been good representation from the counties and the WDNR. Dean said that right now they are focused on technical questions and expects that they will be coming to the commission soon with a request for funding. Alan Barrows said that he printed out a copy of the meeting agenda and passed it around so that everyone could see it.
- b) Village of Mukwonago applying for UNPS & SW grant for the Village Pond. Dean Falkner said that the Village has applied for a WDNR grant to do some work on their pond to increase its retention capacity and they are looking to us for a letter of support to increase their chances of receiving the grant. Jim Pindel motioned that we empower Dean Falkner to write and submit this letter of support which was agreed upon unanimously. Dean also pointed out that this is an example of someone getting grand funds from someone other than us.

### **Reports and Updates**

- a) Report on activities of Fox Waterway Agency (FWA) of Illinois – No one from the FWA was present and Jeff Lang said that he has not be able to attend any of their meetings. Dean Falkner said that he talked to Joe Keller of the FWA at the Fox River Summit and that Joe was interested in finding some way of capturing sediment as it flows down the river before it reaches the Fox Waterway. Jim Pindel said that he had studied “sediment traps” on the internet and that there are diagrams and examples of manmade sediment traps. Jim also pointed out that as part of the dredging project planned for the Waterford impoundment; they noticed that there is a naturally occurring sediment trap at the north end of Conservancy Bay in the impoundment. The intent is to dredge out this natural sediment trap and allow it to do its work catching sediment before it flows into the impoundment. Clearly the sediment trap will require maintenance cleaning (dredging) periodically. Dean pointed out that a sediment trap might be a place where we can work in cooperation with the FWA to get special funding to help

the entire Fox River waterway.

- b) Possible diversion of City of Waukesha water treatment plant discharge away from the Fox River: No one had anything to report.
- c) Progress toward designation as a “National Water Trail” – Village of Waterford. Fred Koeller said that he had a report from Barbara Messick which pointed out that the two co-chairs of the Water Trail initiative made a presentation at the Fox River Summit last month, which was well accepted. The next meeting of the core development group will be held 5/2/18 and will be attended by Matt Kina who is experienced in water trails and water trail materials. They will discuss its logo and printed marketing and education materials. This work is being supported by the WDNR surface waters grant that Tom Slawski applied for. Tom Slawski said that the work they are doing now is a precursor to the online web portal they will develop for trip planning and recreational availability.
- d) SEWFRC Website – Al Sikora was not present and Jim Pindel said that he received an email from Andy Buehler saying that our website has not been updated to include Kenosha County and all the new municipal members. Jim passed this on to Al Sikora along with a current list of commissioners and that Al has updated the website accordingly. Barb Holtz pointed out that on the first page of the website it lists only Racine and Waukesha counties. Jim Pindel pointed out that there is some other minor clean up that needs to be done. For example, the website says “how to apply for a project” and it more accurately should state “how to apply for funding for your project”. Jim Pindel said he would review the website and advise Al of anything that might need adjusting. Everyone agreed that Al is doing a great job and at no charge to us.

### Correspondence –

- a. 2/20/18 Email from Jim Pindel to Mark your Calendars for today’s meeting.
- b. 2/22/18 Forward of email correspondence between Dean Falkner and Linsey Slater of WISN 12 TV concerning what the SEWFRC is doing for flood control. Dean pointed out we are not focused on flood control.
- c. 3/6/18 Received three copies of MoU between Racine County and SEWFRC for the \$10,000 allocation in the 2018 Racine County budget. Signed all three and mailed to signed copies back to the County.
- d. 3/7/18 Email from Tom Slawski advising of the Chloride Study that SEWRPC is starting this spring.
- e. 3/13/18 Email from Jim Pindel advising the status of our bill for funding. The bill passed in the senate committee and now needs to be passed on the senate floor.
- f. 3/15/18 Forward of an email response from Senator David Craig showing his support for our bill for funding.
- g. 3/19/18 Email from Tom Slawski asking us to take a survey to be used at the upcoming Summit.

- h. 3/21/18 Received \$10,000 check from Racine County for our 2018 allocation and deposited it into our Money Market Account.
- i. 3/21/18 Email from Jim Pindel advising the status of our bill for funding. All that remains is for Governor Walker to sign the bill.
- j. 3/24/18 Email from Jim Pindel to Rep. Chuck Wichgers concerning the bill which will allow filling in of wetlands without the need for a WDNR permit and the potential effect this could have on flooding such as we experienced last year in Burlington.
- k. 3/26/18 Email from Andy Buehler notifying us that our website needs to be updated to include Kenosha County and its municipalities.
- l. 3/31/18 Email from Dean Falkner providing the status of the 9-Key Elements Plan sub-committee.
- m. 4/2/18 Forward of email correspondence between Dean Falkner and Perry Lindquist of Waukesha County regarding our 9-Key Elements Plan and an attempt to hire a consultant to address nutrient loading.
- n. 4/12/18 Email from Jim Pindel stating that Governor Walker will sign our funding bill on Monday 4/16/18.

**Miscellaneous Issues –**

Rachel Sabre pointed out that she has put together a project for this coming summer focused on the middle Fox River working in conjunction with the 9-Key Elements subcommittee. She has chosen 5 HUC-12 areas, 3 of which are along the Fox River for her study. The project will do assessments on the tributaries that flow into the Fox River. Rachel said she just finished up her upper Fox River watershed report and that in a few years when the entire Fox River watershed has been assessed there will be an overall report covering the Fox River Watershed. Jim Pindel asked what is included in the assessment and Rachel said that they start with a fisheries sample on each site; she will be sampling and 15 to 25 sites in the middle Fox River area. They will do water quality assessment including phosphorus levels, conductivity, dissolved oxygen levels, temperature, PH, flow and habitat assessment. Barb Holtz asked if these reports are available online and Rachel said they will be. Jim Pindel asked who is funding this project and Rachel said that it is part of the WDNR's targeted watershed assessment.

Chad Sampson said that he has concerns about the new bill AB547 that was signed into law. He said he is receiving a lot of calls from farmers and developers who want to fill in isolated wetlands and are looking for guidelines. Chad said that the WDNR has not developed new guidelines yet and so Racine County is holding to the old existing guidelines. Chad called Racine County the pothole (wetland) capital of the state and that for example if the farm fields around Burlington which are now connected to the Fox River through tiles are filled in, then this water will have to run along the surface increasing the flood potential.

Chad brought up another topic saying that there is a farmer group in Racine County called the Watershed Protection Committee that has applied for a grant last fall. Chad said that he is financial guy and liaison with the county for this group. Some of the areas

the group is working on cross over into our jurisdiction. Chad said he would provide a map for our next meeting to show where they are in our area of jurisdiction. The \$13,000 grant they received to do cover crops, which is a new trend in soil and erosion control. The grant funds will also be used for creating some buffers along the Fox River and some of its tributaries. Due to a bill that Governor Walker signed last week, this groups funding has increased from \$13,000 last year to \$40,000 this year. This larger amount of money has gotten more farmers interested. Chad said that there are 7 or 8 farmers who have contacted them that have never planted cover crops before. Chad said that the only down side to the cover crops is that in the spring time the cover crops can keep the ground cold longer and may delay planting for a week. Chad said that the main up side to the cover crops is over time the soil and water retention increasing the farm field yield. They are trying to show that the economics of the cover crops equal the benefits. Chad said that he wants this committee to make a presentation at next year's Summit to get the word out on the advantages of cover crops. Jim Pindel asked if cover crops are only used in the winter and Chad said no, the idea is to keep the fields green, that is covered, all year around. Chad said that they are having a field day this fall in Waterford where a farmer has 3 different cover crops planted and we can see how it is coming along and gain from his experiences. Bob Bartholomew said that he has been doing cover crops for the last 5 years on his farm. Bob said he usually uses oats and sometimes it is whatever is left over and it works well. Bob also said that everyone is watching to see the results. Alan Barrows said that he thought that our commission should fund cover crops. There is some risk, for example if the crop doesn't grow and that if we cost shared for cover crops it should give farmers an extra incentive to try it.

It was motioned by Ken Miller and seconded by Bob Bartholomew that the meeting be closed. The motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting Closed** at 2:13 PM

**THE NEXT OFFICIAL MEETING WILL BE Friday, May 18, 2018 at 1:00 PM. (Meeting Location: Town of Vernon Fire Station #1, W233 S7475 Woodland Lane, Big Bend, WI 53103.)**