

Commission members present:

Howard Garvens (Town of Waukesha) (Vice-Chairman)
Shelley Tessmer (Town of Waterford)
Barb Holtz (Town of Mukwonago)
Chad Sampson (Racine County)
Alan Barrows (Waukesha County)
Al Sikora (Village of Waterford)
Don Scott (Town of Vernon)
Dean Falkner (Village of Mukwonago)
Jim D'Antuono (Wisconsin DNR)
Jeff Thornton (Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission)
Jim Pindel (Town of Waterford) (Secretary/Treasurer)

Commission members absent:

Greg Kessler (Town of Waterford) (Chairman)
Randy Craig (Town of Vernon)
Jamie Soneberg (Village of Big Bend)
Ron Peterson (Village of Big Bend)
Steven Crandell (City of Waukesha)
Mary Pindel (Town of Waterford) (Co-Secretary/Treasurer)

Also present: Dick Kosut of the WWMD

At 1:10 PM, 8/20/10, Vice-Chairman Howard Garvens called the Commission Meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Howard Garvens introduced the new commissioner Dean Falkner representing the Village of Mukwonago. Roll call was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Minutes from the July 16, 2010 meeting were reviewed. It was motioned by Chad Sampson and seconded by Alan Barrows that the minutes be approved as submitted. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer Reports – The Treasurer's Report for July 2010 was reviewed. Jim Pindel then passed around a two page addition to the Treasurers Report. The first page simply showed all the payouts planned against ENUM-16 added to the non-grant income and expenses as budgeted in the 2010 budget. The second sheet showed the following deviations from the budget, \$514.82 in grant income from the owners of Schmidt and Canton Island, a shortfall of \$223.55 in fourth quarter of 2009 interest, a \$638.92 shortfall in expected 2010 interest and a \$12.95 increase in the 2010 website hosting cost. The net effect is that instead of the \$12,820.42 we thought we had available for additional grant project and some non-grant funds, we now only have \$12,460.29 in total available funds. Jim Pindel pointed out that a decision will have to be made when we get to the end of the year and we do not have non-grant funds available to pay for the publication of our 2011 budget and announcement of the annual public hearing. We will have to decide whether to not publish the budget and public hearing notice or to use grant funds in order to meet our statutory commitments or find some other source of funding. Shelley

Tessmer motioned to accept the Treasurers Report and Al Sikora seconded the motion. The treasurer's report was approved.

Old Business

- a) Schmidt & Canton's Island Demonstration Erosion Control Project (active)
Shelley Tessmer reported that a tree fell on the main path of the island and that she had to form a new path. Also she reported more beaver damage on the island. Shelley also said that she informed the owners of the amount of cost share they are responsible for and that she expects to obtain this payment for us in the near future. Shelley advised that she will be going back to work next month and will be working from 10:00AM to 2:00 PM and so will not be able to attend our 1:00PM meetings.
- b) Boat/Canoe Launch in Big Bend (active) – Jim Pindel reported that he had talked to Brian Glenzinski about whether any of the \$20,000 we budgeted for the Vernon Marsh project might not be needed in light of the large Federal Grant he anticipated receiving. Brian said that he needs all of it because it was listed as an additional payment from a concerned local conservation group and he could not change his grant application at this late date. Brian also said he needs our \$20,000 plus some other funds that he has commitments for to do initial work before the federal grant money becomes available in July of 2011. Jim Pindel also reported that he had checked with Jim D'Antuono to see if any of the \$6075 we had committed to the Kossik Streambank restoration project might be available and Jim D'Antuono that that it seemed that the project in some form was likely to go forward requiring all of the money we budgeted for it.
- c) Grand Drive/ Buena Park Project (active) – WWMD Dick Kosut stated that the project has gone out for bids and that the bids will close on August 30, 2010 at which time the work will be awarded to the appropriate bidder.
- d) Phantom Woods Road Channel Enhancement (active) – Barb Holtz Barb Holtz stated that the project has moved along very well and that they have gotten everything planted. She reported that a botanist from SEWRPC came to site to help determine what was good and what plants had to go in the area that was not affected by the project. He was generally pleased with what he observed at the project site. Barb said that she has pictures that she will share with us at our next meeting. Barb said that the volunteer planting comprised of many concerned groups went well, planting over 1000 plants in a four hour time period. She has only noticed two plants that have not survived and some casualties should be expected. Barb said that she had sent photos to Al Sikora for our website and Al said that they will be up online this week.
- e) Mukwonago Shoreline Stabilization Project (active) Jim Pindel said that he had emailed Steve Brunner of Ruckert- Mielke concerning this project asking when we would see the required documentation for reimbursement. Steve said that he would be working with the Village of Mukwonago over the next couple weeks to

- have the paperwork completed.
- f) Vernon Wildlife Area Stream bank Stabilization Project (pending) – Jim D’Antuono said that they have held a pre-bid meeting with potential contractors. They have received bids from several contractors so far and the contract has not been awarded yet. It is still expected that the project will be completed this fall.
 - g) Vernon Wildlife Area Flowage Restoration Project (tabled until August) – Jim D’Antuono reported that just like at last month’s meeting Brian Glenzinski said that he has had a very positive indication that the federal grant he has applied for will come through. Jim D’Antuono also stated that Brian Glenzinski expects to use our funding as well as some other funds to start work on the project before the federal grant money becomes available.
 - h) Kossik Stream Restoration Project (active) – Jim D’Antuono said that he met with Mary Kossik and her consultant and that they had told them what their concerns were with the proposed plan. Mary and her consultants are going to rework their plan to narrow the channel and move it further away from the environmental corridor. Jim expects that Mary will provide a revised set of plans in the next few weeks.
 - i) Possible boat/canoe launch on Highway ES (pending) – Alan Barrows reported that he was at the site last Wednesday and noted a deep gully about waist deep which had washed out. Alan said he would talk to the counties public works department and get them to possibly fill the gully with rock riprap.

New Business

- a) Disposition of the SEWFRC Digital Camera. (for the very last time). Jim Pindel reported that he has not been able to hook up with Jamie Soneberg to get him to evaluate and possibly buy the camera. This pursuit is ongoing.
- b) Should Farmland Preservation Plans be added to “Reports & Updates” section of our agenda? Barb Holtz said that we should be aware of what is going on with the Farmland Preservation Plan especially in Waukesha county as well as in Racine county. She stated that Waukesha county has a very weak plan that requires five contiguous square miles of farmland in order to be considered for many of the protection programs that will keep them in open farmland condition. There are only three small sections of Waukesha county that meet these criteria. One in Eagle Township, one in Ottawa Township and a third in Oconomowoc. Most of Waukesha County’s farmland is in small parcels separated by municipalities, subdivisions and private homesteads. The point being that rain water falling on and filtered through the farmland becomes the ground water that eventually flows into or springs into the Fox River and the rest of our watershed. Barb pointed out that the Mukwonago River protection plan calls for protection of uplands as much as adjacent property for the good of the river. Referring to

Racine County Chad Sampson said that he attended a meeting with the Town of Waterford because they want to maintain the A1 agricultural zoning for part of their township. Chad said that the Town of Waterford and the Town of Burlington are the only townships in Racine County that have areas qualified for A1 zoning which amounts to about 9000 acres in total. This is a key part of Racine County's Farmland Preservation Program under development. The choice of participating in the A1 zoning status is up to the local municipalities and the County goes along with their desires. The recent downturn in the economy has lessened the demand for development which has slowed down the conversion of farmland into subdivisions. Chad Sampson said there are 4000 vacant lots in Racine County at the moment. There is about 125,000 acres of farmland in Racine County. Chad pointed out that farmland that is zone A1 can only be developed at a rate of one acre per twenty acres, the rest remaining in open farmland. Understanding that Barb Holtz has volunteered to watch the progress of the Waukesha County Farmland Preservation Plan and is willing to advise the commission of the progress, especially as it affects the Fox River watershed, Shelley Tessmer motioned and Al Sikora seconded the motion that we add this topic to our "Reports & Updates" section of the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports and Updates

- a) Update of SEWFRC Implementation Plan – Jeff Thornton stated that he and Alan Barrows and some of their colleagues performed a survey of the Fox River from the Barstow impoundment down to the Iron Bridge at the north end of the Waterford impoundment. Jeff said they have photos that they will share with us at the next meeting and made the following observations. Major issues they came across included tree falls and obstructions to navigation in the river, one of which completely blocked off the river requiring them to portage around it. There were a number of places showing significant bank erosion, particularly on outside edges in meanders in the river. There were other places where there were home sites or development at the top of the bank where we may want to consider some future project to eliminate the erosion. They noticed a number of invasive plant species especially large areas of phragmites. This is a very invasive species with very little habitat value. Jeff thought that phragmites was pretty much restricted to the Green Bay area but it seems to be working its way down the Fox River. Phragmites is a reed type of plant that can grow to six to twelve feet high and has sort of a feathery appearance. There were still some areas of purple loosestrife primarily just above the iron bridge north of the Waterford impoundment which need to be addressed. They observed some cattle in the river at one point near the Waukesha Racine County boarder. Jeff said that at our next meeting they will be prepared to show a slide show of the observation as well as a map of the location of the observations. They also attempted to get GPS locations for some of the projects the SEWFRC completed in the past. Jeff went on to say that SEWRPC has spent some time in house investigating extending the boundary of the commission north to the source of the Fox River and south to the Illinois border.

- The extension of our boundaries would require legislative action. It is expected to have a draft copy of the new implementation plan ready for our October or November meeting and get it finalized by the end of the year. Jeff said that SEWRPC will be contacting the WWMD to see if they could facilitate taking them around the Waterford impoundment, so that they can complete this last portion of the survey.
- b) Waterford Dam Restoration – Chad Sampson Chad Sampson said that there was nothing new to report and that the draw down was still slated for sometime next summer.
 - c) Mukwonago River Basin Protection Plan – SEWRPC Jeff Thornton said that the plan is complete and is available on their website SEWRPC.org.(under the tab for environment, then under the tab for lakes & streams) There are a few minor modifications that need to be made to it due to comments received after people reviewed it. In the next month or two, Jeff will be able to provide a more complete report on the plan. One of the things that is an integral part of the plan is a recommendation that the municipalities that form the corridor in which the Mukwonago River flows consider forming an overlay district to help protect some of that flood plane. This could result in larger set backs than are required by state statutes.
 - d) Frame Park Creek Watershed – Jim D’Antuono said there was nothing new to report.
 - e) Report on activities of Fox Waterway Agency (FWA) of Illinois – Jeff Thornton reported that the Agency has been busy applying and removing as appropriate slow/no wake restrictions due to the high water levels they are experiencing. Regarding the high water levels, Jeff stated that the aquifer water level measuring station in Vernon Marsh is at nearly surface levels compared to being ten feet below ground back on 2008 before all the floods and rain occurred.
 - f) SEWFRC Website – Al Sikora said that he had recently received the photography from Barb Holtz on the Phantom Wood Drive project and he will be posting these to the website shortly. He will also investigate the link to the Mukwonago River Basin Protection Plan.

Correspondence –

- a) 7/24/10 The 8700-001 & -002 forms for the Schmidt & Canton Island Project and the WWMD Idlewood Projects emailed to Jim Ritchie to close out projects
- b) 7/31/10 Email from Jim Pindel to Jim D’Antuono documenting Jim Pindel telephone conversation with Brian Glenzinski concerning Vernon Marsh dyke restoration and asking results of meeting with Mary Kossik
- c) 8/2/10 Email response from Jim D’Antuono to Jim Pindel stating that the Kossik Streambank restoration project will still possibly go forward and require the funds we have budgeted.

Miscellaneous Issues –

Jeff Thornton asked if Jim Ritchie or one of the DNR's environmental grant specialists could investigate if the SEWFRC would be eligible for cost share grants under any of the following programs: NR 7, MR191, NR195, or NR 198. Even though these are generally 50% cost share grants, it would at least be some source of funding money for the commission.

Chad Sampson said that there will be a conservation bus tour on September 15, 2010 conducted in Racine and Kenosha counties to visit site demonstrating erosion control practices that have been implemented in the last few years. There will be fifteen stops and the plan is to disembark at about five of these stops. Chad said he will email everyone copies of the brochure, detailing the event. The cost is \$10.00 per individual which includes a lunch.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Barb Holtz and seconded by Chad Sampson, the motion carried.

Meeting Closed at 2:25 PM

NEXT OFFICIAL MEETING WILL BE Friday, September 17, 2010 at 1:00 PM. (Meeting Location: Big Bend-Vernon Fire Station #3, W233 S7475 Woodland Lane, Big Bend, WI 53103.)

Respectfully submitted by Jim & Mary Pindel