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Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 23, 2022- 1:00 PM

Town of Vernon Fire Station #1, W233 S7475 Woodland Lane, Big Bend, WI 53103

Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission Meeting

Commissioners and (alternates)		
Representing	Name	Attended (yes/no, by phone)
Kenosha County	Andy Buehler Mark Jenks (non-voting)	Yes- Mark
Racine County	Chad Sampson (Jon Grove)	yes
Waukesha County	Alan Barrows (Leif Hauge)	Yes
City of Waukesha	Robins Grams (Doug Koehler)	Yes
Town of Mukwonago	Katelyn Bratz (Barb Holtz)	Yes
Town of Vernon	Lee Manthey	Yes
Town of Waterford	Jim Pindel (Shelley Tessmer)	Yes
Town of Waukesha	Ken Miller	
Village of Big Bend	Kayla Rush	
Village of Mukwonago	Wayne Castle	Yes
Village of Waterford	Fred Koeller (Al Sikora)	Yes
Village of Rochester	Wayne Jensen	Yes
Town of Burlington	Russ Egan	
City of Burlington	Donny Hefty	Yes
Town of Wheatland		
Village of Salem Lakes	Bill Hopkins	
SEWRPC	Tom Slawski (non-voting)	
WDNR	Sara DeBruijn (non-voting)	
WDNR	Rachel Sabre (non-voting)	Yes

Guests	
Representing	Name
WWMD	Greg Horeth
WWMD	Grant Horn

1. Call meeting to order. Katelyn Bratz called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm
2. Pledge of allegiance
3. Roll call and verify quorum
4. Confirm the audio recorder is running
5. Katelyn Bratz asked all commissioners to update their contact information.
6. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting held July 22, 2022.
 - a. Fred Koeller made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting.
 - b. Chad Sampson seconded the motion.
 - c. Katelyn Bratz abstained from voting, since she was not present.
 - d. Motion passed
7. Review the Treasurer's Report.
 - a. Wayne Jensenn met with Sara DeBrujin of the WDNR.
 - i. Sara clarified the following: ENUM accounts- 100,000 we can request as an advance
 - ii. The second 100,000 we have to submit invoices, once approved by the DNR they will release the funds to us.
 - iii. In the past, we paid from the funds we have, once we receive the funds from the DNR we rebalance the accounts. Per Jim Pindel
 - b. Status of ENUM
 - i. 20 completed
 - ii. 21- 35,000 according to the state
 - iii. 22- we have committed 255,000
 - iv. 23- Foth and Res ENUM- we have been invoiced, sent the information to Sara DEBrujin. Paperwork has been submitted; we have received the 160,000. Res has cleared their check.
 1. Balance of 40,000
 - v. 24- the access 55,000 will transfer to 24, state has approved, but we do not have the funds in our account.
 - c. Grant Horn, confirmed the ENUMS are a two year account for 200,000
 - d. Donny Hefty made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report

- e. Fred Koeller seconded the motion.
- f. Motion passed

Old Business

- 8. Fox River 2023 Summit – Katelyn Bratz shared to following from an email from Tom Slawski
 - a. The date for the next Fox River Summit is tentatively March 16, 2023.
 - b. Tom made a request for \$5,500 in funding for the next Fox River Summit.
 - c. Jim Pindel made a motion that we find \$5,500 for the next Fox River Summit.
 - d. Donny Hefty seconded the motion.
 - e. Motion passes
 - f. Katelyn Bratz then clarified that the funding for the Summit comes from our grant funds.
- 9. Report on Fox River Park Project – Alan Barrows
 - a. Leif Hauge
 - i. Still in the planning phase
- 10. Schultz Shoreline Protection Project- Chad Sampson
 - a. Completed a month ago
 - i. received the paid in full invoice and turned into Wayne Jensen
 - ii. Project can be removed from old business
- 11. North Tichigan Road Shoreline Restoration--Chad Sampson
 - a. 3 neighboring property owners
 - i. Completed a month ago
 - ii. 2 of the 3 owners have submitted paperwork. Waiting on the third paperwork
- 12. WWMD Project-Grant Horn
 - a. They went forward with the project.
 - i. Manual is completed
 - ii. Will submit the paperwork
 - iii. Looking for a rebid this fall
 - iv. Suggested we remove it from the agenda.
 - v. Greg Horeth wanted to share that this Saturday there is an annual meeting, there were challenges with the announcements, the meeting will be informational only.
 - vi. Oct 29th will be their adjournment meeting date.
 - 1. Which will approve the annual budget and all

appointments.

- vii. Wayne Jensen asked for clarification on the finances of the WWMD projects. There were two different projects in discussion. Reviewing a past approval and the future approval project.

13. Solberg Slope Stabilization- Chad Sampson

- a. Working on permitting
- b. We were approved for 9,000 dollars
- c. Chad Sampson asked if we had these funds or if the landowner needed to wait.
- d. Wayne Jensen will need to submit an invoice and the state will reimburse for the funds.

14. Ogden Slope and Shoreline Stabilization- Chad Sampson

- a. Approved for 11,000- still in the design and permitting phases, 2023 build estimate.

15. SEWRPC Survey from Waterford Dam to Illinois border-Tom Slawski

- a. No update

New Business

16. Approval of authorized SEWFRC representative (need to approve resolution (i.e., vote) to appoint an authorized representative for the purposes of signing documents and complete and sign form, and provide to WDNR)

- a. Jim Pindel made a motion approving Wayne Jensen as primary and Katelyn Bratz as the alternate
- b. Fred Koeller seconded the motion
- c. Motions passes

17. Report on activities of the work being done by Foth and RES
Katelyn Bratz read the following email update:

MEMORANDUM

From: Ry Thompson & Mark O'Leary, Resource Environmental Solutions (RES)
Tom Ludwig (Foth)
To: Tom Slawski (SEWRPC) + SEWFRC Board
Date: September 23, 2022
Subject: RES-FOTH Update to SEWFRC Board on Contract Activities

A representative from the RES-Foth team is not able to attend the in-person SEWFRC Board Meeting on Friday, September 23rd. We have prepared the following written update, but would

look forward to finding a time to meeting in person and present the update at the October or November meeting.

- ***Stakeholder Outreach:***

Over the last few months, team representatives have continued outreach efforts to identify high-priority projects and partnership opportunities for furthering water quality improvement and ecological restoration within the Fox River watershed through a presentation at Sweetwater conference, and meetings with Waukesha County Parks, Waukesha County Land Conservancy, Kishwaukee Conservancy, Geneva Lakes Conservancy, SEWRPC, Committee for Watershed Protection for Racine County, and Wisconsin DNR / Preston Cole.

- ***Grant Updates:***

Over the course of several months of meeting and attempts to find projects, there have been challenges with finding “shovel-ready” projects and securing match, though we continue to reach out to seek partners with projects, available match and a need for grant writing assistance to fulfill our commitment to bringing restoration funds to the watershed. We would welcome any assistance from the SEWFRC Board on any project they know of to further these efforts.

1. Regional Conservation Planning Partnership (RCPP) – In August, we learned from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that our RCPP application was not funded. The primary reason appeared to be a mismatch on the proposed match, as much of the match was dredge money from local communities. We are scheduling a meeting with NRCS WI representative Ryan Gerlich to discuss further and determine if a refined resubmittal is appropriate.
2. USFWS North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) – After seeking appropriate projects and speaking with Ducks Unlimited, it was determined that applying for a NAWCA grant was not feasible or wise, largely due to the recent successful Ducks Unlimited applications that will bring wetland restoration dollars to the watershed.
3. Federal Highway Administration (FHA) Protect Program – This program is part of the \$7.2 Billion Federal Infrastructure program. We are evaluating the list of 25 bridges identified by SEWRPC that are in need of repair/replacement for the best candidate to submit to the Protect Program, which will be administered by Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT). Foth will lead this effort to bring a significant infrastructure investment to the watershed.
4. Wisconsin DNR Wetland General Permit – We are evaluating several potential wetland enhancement / restoration projects in the Fox River watershed that could benefit from this funding source. We will be presenting to the Kishwaukee Conservancy Board on Monday, September 26 with a proposal to assist with fundraising and implementation of hydrologic restoration (tile removal) at the Conservancy. This would include a tile survey and disabling tiles to further their restoration efforts.
5. Wisconsin DRN Wetland In-Lieu Fee Program – We have been in preliminary discussions with Wisconsin DNR and other watershed partners about suitable wetland enhancement / restoration projects in the Fox River watershed that could benefit from this funding source.
6. Waukesha County Opportunities –

- a. We had a productive call with Waukesha County Parks and Waukesha County Land Conservancy and will be assisting with finding funding for several ecological restoration opportunities in the watershed.
 - i. *Fox Bend Park on the Fox River* – This site has extensive restoration opportunities, including wetland restoration in agricultural fields that are annually flooded by the Fox River. The 600-acre site has a now-dated Management Plan and they are excited to work together to identify appropriate funding sources to begin restoration of the site.
 - ii. *Tamarack Swamp Preserve* – This site is located in the Village of Menomonee Falls and includes an 830-acre wetland system. Opportunities exist to further wetland restoration throughout the area, in collaboration with the Conservancy, with the potential to help bring an Wisconsin DNR ILF Wetland Restoration grant to the area.

a. Commissioners voiced concern that the Menomonee Falls project is out of jurisdiction

b. Donny Hefty asked for clarification on what we are funding.

i. The RCPP is a starting point for grant writing.

1. Chad Sampson would be interested in talking further about the projects and contacts as he suggested several private matches to Foth and RES

ii. Rachel Sabre talked with them on several projects. She did not see any of the projects she had talked with them on surface water grant in the RCPP grant.

iii. Chad Sampson talked with them on the wetland grant application- He provided names and contact information for partnering landowners. He does not know the status of this communication.

iv. Greg Horeth- did we enter into the agreement a year ago- they are going to meetings to address information.

1. In one year, what do we have to show for their work? A disconnect on their part between the mission and agenda.

2. Offers himself to go to meetings to talk with them about the status of the work. What can they do with any of the information they have collected?

3. There is a disconnect between the amount of effort we are putting in and the amount of money that is putting in.
 4. We spent hours submitting information to Foth and RES. And they need to be attending our meetings.
- c. Katelyn Bratz and Tom Slawski will touch base with Foth and RES
- i. Wayne Jensen- there is only \$40,000 remaining in the ENUM-23
 - ii. They need to be in attendance at the meetings, so they can communicate with us their progress.
 - iii. Katelyn Bratz stated- We need to see the product before any further invoices are paid.
18. 2021 – 2030 SEWFRC Implementation Plan – Tom Slawski & Alan Barrows
- a. No update
 - b. Jim Pindel shared that they would be part of the subcommittee.
 - i. Mark Jenks and Jim Pindel both agreed to help the subcommittee.
19. Review and discussion of all projects on the Enum- 24 Waitlist
- a. We will add a section to the treasurer’s lists, of the waitlist, but pending funds.

Reports and Updates

20. SEWRPC Survey from Waterford Dam to Illinois border-Tom Slawski
- a. No update
21. Report on activities of Fox Waterway Agency of Illinois – FWA or Tom Slawski
- a. No update
22. Report on future of the Echo Lake Dam in Burlington-Donny Hefty
- a. Referendum is set- will be on the Nov 8th ballot
 - b. 7.7 million to remove dam
 - c. 8.1 million to repair the dam
 - d. Cost homeowner about 120.00 per year- City of Burlington tax payers
 - e. Several upcoming informational meetings
23. Report on Fox River Watershed TMDL progress – Rachel Sabre
- a. EPA consultant has submitted final report
 - b. June compiled data, waiting on the modelers- will take about 2 years to process everything.
 - c. Outreach should be happening this year....

24. Report on the Fox Watershed Mitigation Plan- Tom Slawski
 - a. No update
25. Watershed Protection Committee of Racine County- Chad Sampson
 - a. Field day was Thursday, September 15
 - b. 4 members attended, best one yet
 - c. Three stations- soil pit, cover crops, and research plots.
 - d. Drone spread cover crop over standing corn. Starts your cover crop earlier in the warmer weather. Can drop as certain rates, has had calls with interest.
 - e. Rainfall simulator- shows cover crops vs traditional farming.
 - f. 70 participants- not seeing the growth they would like in the farmer participation. Might make personal visits and touch back with past participants and re-energize them.
 - g. Good presence from Union Grove FFA
 - h. Saturday, September 24- Low Daily Brewing in Burlington
 - i. They will have 10 members and are doing education on soil health activities- 5pm they will speak.
 - i. Had a lot more money for cover crop grants- was able to provide the money to the guys that have been preaching and sharing the information but not taking the funds. If anyone would like funds for cover crops reach out to Chad Sampson
 - j. Winter Workshop
 - i. Feb 10
 - ii. At Cotton Exchange
 - iii. Keynote- David Brandt of Iowa will speak on farm soil health no till cover crops, share his story and answer questions.
 - iv. Had over 100 people last year.
 - v. Wayne Jensen said the program was really excellent, would support funds being used close to the waterway.
26. SEWFRC Website – Al Sikora or Alan Barrows
 - a. Make sure to submit before and after photos of projects.

Correspondence

27. 8/3/22 Village of Big Bend email is to inform you that Kayla Rush (krushmsw@gmail.com) is our newest appointee to the Southeast Wisconsin Fox River Commission to replace Larry Long.
28. 8/20/22 Katelyn Bratz forwarded an email to the commissioners for the Summer Field Day Brochure from Chad Sampson. Register by September 9th.
29. 8/30/22 Tom Slawski forwarded an email sharing this latest approach to flood control from our friends and colleagues in Illinois. See article below and I provide a link to the Engineering With Nature An Atlas, Volume 2 here, if interested:
https://ewn.ercd.dren.mil/?page_id=2463

30. 8/31/22 Tom Slawski forwarded an email share that our friends at the Fox Waterway Agency are completing a watershed management plan.
31. 9/7/22 Tom Slawski forwarded an email share a News articles - Echo Lake Burlington
32. 9/7/22 Tom Slawski forwarded an email share Fabulous Fox! Water Trail branding update.
33. 9/9/22 Tom Slawski forwarded an email update for an upcoming meeting hosted by the Fox Waterway Agency.
34. 9/23/22 Tom Slawski forwarded an email from Foth and RES with an update to share at the meeting.

Miscellaneous Issues

1. Chad Sampson– Potential Projects John Margis Jr. Wildlife Area-
 - a. Bohner’s Lake outlet into holding ponds, used to be a fishery
 - i. 200 feet of shoreline that could be restored
 - b. Maybe add a few access points- parking lot is already there.
 - c. We have a 9,000 limit to individual landowners- we have no limit on public land.
 - d. The supervisor would like something to happen.
 - e. Chad will communicate if addition to the agenda is needed
2. Next Meeting and Location
 - a. Public hearing on our budget- must be published 13 days ahead of time.
 - b. Need potential projects from the counties to include in the report.
 - c. October 28th
 - i. Town of Vernon Fire Station #1, W233 S7475 Woodland Lane, Big Bend, WI 53103
3. Close Meeting
4. Motion- Fred Koeller made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Chad Sampson seconded the motion
Motion passes.