

Southeast Wisconsin Fox River Commission Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 29, 2026 at 1 p.m. – In person meeting at Vernon Fire Station #1.

W233 S7475 Woodland Ln. Big Bend, WI 53103

Commissioner's Present:

Alan Barrows, Waukesha County
Jim Pindel, Town of Waterford
Fred Koeller, Village of Waterford
Wayne Jensen, Village of Rochester
Lee Manthey, Town of Vernon
Chad Sampson, Racine County
Wayne Castle, Village of Mukwonago
Doug Koeller, City of Waukesha
Rachel Sabre, WI DNR
Paul Tollard, Kenosha County
Kathryn McNelly-Bell, Town of Mukwonago
Jim Woodke, Village of Salem Lakes

Agenda

1. Alan Barrows called the meeting at 1:01 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll call and verify quorum
4. Chad Sampson recording and taking minutes.
5. Fred Koeller made a motion to approve the previous minutes, seconded by Doug Koeller.
 - a. Motion passed unanimously, with Kathryn McNelly-Bell and Jim Woodke abstaining.
6. Review of the Treasurer's Report. Following some discussion about the maximum of \$50,000 cost share to be spent each year on shorelines with a \$9,000 maximum cost share for each landowner from the Commission, a motion made by Paul Tollard to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Chad Sampson.
 - a. Motion passed unanimously with Kathryn McNelly-Bell abstaining.

Old Business

1. Fox River Summit – Wayne Jensen stated the final invoices for the 2026 Summit have been paid, but not submitted for reimbursement yet.
2. SEWRPC Survey from the Waterford Dam to the Illinois border – No report, but Alan Barrows did provide some background information regarding the survey.
3. Racine County Office of Emergency Management Flow Gauge – Chad Sampson stated that Lorenzo is no longer the Emergency Management Coordinator. Liz Adams has taken over that position for now. No report.
4. Noble Brothers Burgers Permeable Pavers – Chad Sampson said Jay Noble left a message that they will be moving forward with Phase II of the project this year.

New Business

1. Discussion of a bi-state NRCS RCPP – Paul Tollard discussed whether or not we should remove the RCPP from the agenda due to the fact that we do not have a staff person to write it. It was decided as a group that we can this on the agenda with the potential to administer a grant in the future.
2. 2021 – 2030 SEWFRC Implementation Plan – Alan Barrows said there were no comments regarding the updated plan. Alan asked for a motion for the SEWFRC Implementation Plan be approved by the Commission. Fred Koeller made a motion to approve the plan, seconded by Chad Sampson. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Fox River Watershed Hazard Mitigation Plan / Regional Coordinator Group – Alan Barrows said Gail Goodchild moved into the Director role.
4. Consideration of having a Wisconsin Statute attorney on retainer to advise us on legal issues – Alan Barrows reached out to Don Gallo, an environmental attorney, that is very familiar with Wisconsin environmental law. Don said he would charge half of his normal rate to represent the Commission. The Commission has a current list of questions for the attorney. Jim asked the Commissioners to email him with any additional questions they may have. Wayne asked if the Commission should approve any action to have Don Gallo to come to a meeting. Alan Barrows suggested having a contract drawn up to understand the expectations.
5. Racine County 2026 Shoreline Projects – Chad Sampson gave an update on all of the shoreline projects, which included some exact cost share amounts and timelines for project completion.

Reports and Updates

1. Report on the activities of the Fox Waterway Agency of Illinois – No report.
2. Report on the future of the Echo Lake Dam in Burlington – No report.
3. Report on the Fox River Watershed TMDL Progress – Rachel Sabre said they've responded to all of the comments from the public comment period.
4. Watershed Protection Committee of Racine County
 - a. Chad Sampson said Gunderson Grain Farms won the WI Farm Family of the Year and will be doing a short film in August. The Summer Field Day will take place on September 10th. The Winter Workshop will take place in February and Ray Archuletta will be the speaker.
5. Kenosha County Regenerative Producers – Paul Tollard said Kenosha's group is typically small grazers and Paul Maggio leads the group. There is nothing additional to report.
6. SEWFRC Website
 - a. Alan Barrows said the updated implementation plan was put on the website.

Correspondence

- 3-25-2026 An email from Chad Sampson with corrected names on the Racine County Shoreline P Projects.
- 4-25-2026 An email announcing today's meeting.
- 4-30-2026 Jim Woodke, Village of Salem Lakes, left a voicemail stating he will be taking over for Bill Hopkins as the Commissioner.
- 5-18-2026 An email from Chad Sampson with the approved minutes.
- 5-18-2026 An email with the approved minutes was sent to Al Sikora for the website.
- 5-18-2026 A letter from the Kenosha County Executive's office announcing Paul as the Commissioner.

Miscellaneous Issues

1. Wayne Jensen requested a meeting for the end of July to fill out the annual report to be approved by the Commission.
2. The next meeting was set for July 17 at 1 p.m. at the Big Bend Fire Station.
3. A motion to adjourn by Fred Koeller, seconded by Chad Sampson to adjourn at 2:11 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Chad Sampson, SEWFRC Commissioner.