

**Fox River Study Group Draft Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Meeting via Conference Call**  
**9:30 AM May 25, 2023**

**In Attendance:**

Board Members: Cindy Skrukrud, Art Malm, Brian Witkowski, Rob Linke, Debra Ness, Alyse Olson, Karen Clementi, Tim Wilson

Others in attendance:

- Scott Firnbach, Village of Round Lake Park
- Leonard Dane, Fehr Graham
- Dan Hughes, East Dundee
- Mike Ott, Strand
- Deanna Doohaluk, TCF
- Geoff Penman, City of Sandwich  
gpenman@sandwich.il.us
- Gabriel Powers, McHenry County Conservation District
- Emily Conti, EEI
- Steven Polaskey, Fox Metro WRD
- Zac Bonesz, City of Batavia
- Holly Hudson, CMAP
- Lindsay Muth, Trotter and Associates
- Jenny Murphy, USGS
- Christine Davis, Illinois EPA
- Dean Farr, Izaak Walton League
- Rishab Mahajan, Geosyntec
- Cyrus McMains, YBSD
- Beth Vogt, FRWRD
- Tim Wilson, City of St Charles - Tri-City Board
- Bob Morris
- Logan Gilbertsen - HR Green
- John Stein, Village of Cary
- Andrea Pracht, HR Green
- Jack Russel, FRWRD

The meeting began at 9:30 am with self-introductions following discussion about email problems with calendar invites where remote servers are blocking correspondence. Cindy introduced Deb Ness as Elgin's new representative to the Board.

**Minutes** - Motion by Rob, second by Tim to approve minutes of the April 27, 2023 Board Meeting. Motion approved unanimously with abstentions by Karen and Alyse who did not attend that meeting.

**Treasurer's Report** – Karen provided the Treasurer's report. As of 4/30/23 our balances are as follows:

Old Second Bank \$447,649.98  
BMO Harris checking \$93,413.83  
BMO Harris savings \$1,212.56

Checks not cleared include \$79.47 for the Sierra Club, \$10 reimbursement to Cindy and \$90,300 to the IDNR for the 519 study.

Karen thanked Barrington, Plano and FRWRD for their annual contributions. Karen gave Porte Brown notice to proceed with our 2022 audit.

Brian requested a duplicate invoice for 2023 contribution to be sent to Aurora.

Karen requested Board authorization to pay CMAP \$1,847.75 for the Indian Creek study and FRWRD \$6,625 reimbursement for the USGS 2nd quarters' sonde study.

Brian moved to approve the bills. Art seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Chair's Report** – Cindy provided a link to the 2022 Annual Report to IEPA in the meeting agenda: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tVy7-bZvavq8yWjT35FT7pttRanpF0ZE?usp=sharing> All outstanding board appointment letters and 2022 in kind expenses for the audit were requested. Expenses and in-kind service from anyone devoted to the FRSG should be included. Send to [foxriverstudygp@gmail.com](mailto:foxriverstudygp@gmail.com).

Elgin's annual contribution to the Study Group requires execution of an Agreement with the FRSG Board. This year the Agreement, substantially identical to previous agreements passed by the Board, has been updated with new population figures. A motion to accept the proposed annual agreement with Elgin was made by Tim and seconded by Brian. The motion was passed unanimously.

A memo received from Nick Karnezis (new Army Corp project lead taking over for Bridget Bentley during her maternity leave) indicated the Army Corp will have a call this afternoon with their division office to outline their draft Tentatively Selected Plan ("TSP") for concurrence. Nine of ten (NOT Algonquin) dams will initially be recommended for removal. IDNR and FRSG as partners would be given a brief opportunity to support or reject the TSP. Cindy will represent FRSG and support the TSP based upon our modeling and other research. Cindy believed this would be a major milestone meeting for the Corps.

The Corps will provide FRSG with the opportunity to review the draft TSP prior to making available for public review. Art requested contact information for Nick.

**Finance Committee** – Karen had nothing further to report.

**Modelling and Monitoring Committee** – Holly provided an update to the Indian Creek subwatershed study. Geosyntec continues to work modeling development. She hopes to provide a summary report next month.

Rob stated the M&M subcommittee met May 5 with Rishab to discuss improvement possibilities for the MS4 BMP tracking tool. The tool's continued development and use promoting state of the art management practices follows recommendations made in our 2022 draft FRIP filed with the IEPA and currently pending approval. In a May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting with Geosyntec Rob requested preliminary proposals for further model development. This tool if developed for general watershed use would likely have significant management overhead requirements (ie costs) that will be evaluated..

**Communications Committee** – Brian reiterated his request for speakers to do BMP. Cindy indicated Becky Hove is again working on updating our website with items forwarded by Cindy.

**Dam Removal Communications Subcommittee** – The Dam Removal Communications Subcommittee expects to have preliminary marketing proposals from Gilmore Marketing and possibly Aileron for discussion as soon as next month. These would focus on developing the public information and education campaign advocating for dam removal as called for in the 2022 draft FRIP. Art indicated the Committee's intent to have FRSG ready to support the TSP on its release for public comment (currently slated for September 2023).

Art also indicated the last permit required for bidding the Carpenters dam deconstruction was from the IDNR. Bidding is expected July or August 2023 with work to be done in September or October

2023. Rob indicated the Kane County permit has yet to be issued because they have yet to received the plan set but believes that issuance will be a simple formality.

Holly mentioned Dave from McHenry County CD announced an extension of the comment period for the Fox River Shoreline feasibility study at Lion's Prairie until June 19<sup>th</sup> and are looking for stakeholder input in the Cary Algonquin area.

**Annual Meeting Subcommittee** – Cindy indicated the Centre of Elgin would be available November 9<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>. The committee will either recommend or select a date.

**NPDES Special Conditions Committee** – There has been no response to the committee request for IEPA input for developing more standardized/efficient permitting procedures for FRSG members. Beth proposed that permit holders currently facing new permit application deadlines create a common set of text responses where possible for use in the IEPA approval process.

### **Upcoming events/other updates**

- Cindy gave a shout out thanking Jack Russel for his 32 years of service at FRWRD and the many years supporting the work of FRSG. Jack is retiring next week and is already fielding requests from FRSG board members and others for volunteer time. Good luck, Jack. Sam will take over coordinating the FRWRD lab with FRSG sampling activities.
- FREP Noon Network on Wednesday, June 14, Noon-1:30pm: "Brewster Creek Dam Removal Project - 10 Plus Years Later." Jeff Mengler, Nancy Williamson, and others will present at the Brewster Creek Forest Preserve (formerly Camp Tu Endie Wei). For more information: <https://foxriverecosystem.org/fox/meetings-news>
- Holly mentioned Gabe Powers from McHenry County CD announced an extension of the comment period for the Fox River Shoreline feasibility study at Lion's Prairie until June 19<sup>th</sup>. They are looking for stakeholder input from the Cary Algonquin area.
- Dean Farr briefed the Board on his attendance at an IDNR/IEPA legislative session and highlighted his concerns about future water supply challenges in McHenry and Lake Counties. Dean suggested legislators generally speaking are not well briefed on these matters but do show interest.
- A "Salt Smart" training and certification program for Illinois, especially targeting parking lots and sidewalks, will be available from the Conservation Foundation according to Scott. The Foundation was awarded a 319 grant totaling \$300,000 for this purpose together with additional monies from the Northwest Water Planning Alliance. Given how the public sector is incentivized by excess winter salting, this training and certification program is expected to be especially effective. See [Saltsmart.org](http://Saltsmart.org).

### **Links to videos/slides of past events**

- [FREP Feb. Noon Network Video](#) "A watershed approach to uncover suitable habitat for vulnerable mussel species in the Fox River Watershed in WI and IL." Alison Stodola, Aquatic Biologist and Curator of Malacology with the IL Natural History Survey Prairie Research Institute.
- "Total Maximum Daily Loads for Total Phosphorus and Total Suspended Solids in the Fox Illinois River Basin" (FOXIL TMDL). The study area includes the Upper, Lower, and Middle Fox River, the Des Plaines River, the Mukwonago River, Sugar and Honey Creeks, the White River, Nippersink Creek, North Mill Creek, and Channel Lake watersheds. The FOXIL TMDL study area covers approximately 1,060 square miles within Wisconsin. Project website: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/TMDLs/FOXIL>

- Fox River Summit 2023 presentations on [YouTube](#). Past presentations are at drop-down menu at <https://www.southeastfoxriver.org/foxriversummit>
- Our Fox River and Friends of the Fox River were the subject of a new documentary “Watershed Warriors” in the Rivers are Life series. This 12 minute film can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GEAAvrEdzE>.

**Next regular meeting: Thurs. June 22 9:30 am**

2023 meeting schedule: 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs in the months Jan-Sept,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs in the months Oct-Dec,  
Annual Meeting Nov. TBD

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Malm, Secretary  
Friend of the Fox River

