

Fox River Study Group Draft Minutes
Board of Directors Meeting via Conference Call
9:30 AM April 25, 2024

In Attendance:

Board Members: Art Malm, Friends of the Fox River, Brian Witkowski, City of Aurora, Cindy Skrukud, Sierra Club, Eric Johnson, FRWRD, Karen Clementi, Fox Metro, Rob Linke, Kane County, Tim Wilson, City of St Charles

Others:

Bartlett Durand
Billie Jean
Bob Morris
Cameron Colby, FRWRD
Cecily Cunz, Baxter & Woodman
Cyrus McMains, YBSD
Dean Farr, Izaak Walton League
Diego Mora, Village of Wauconda
Ernesto Huaracha Lake County SMC
Holly Hudson, CMAP
Jan Mangers, VOF Sierra Club
Karolina Cho, Gewalt Hamilton
Kevin Fecske, Barrington

Kim Hansen
Leonard Dane, Fehr Graham
Lindsay Muth, Trotter and Associates
Mike Warner, Gewalt Hamilton
Naren Patel, Fehr Graham
Rishab Mahajan, Geosyntec
Sam Youssef, FRWRD
Sarah Cowley, EEI
Steven Polaskey, Fox Metro WRD
Tim Bassuener

The meeting began at 9:30 am with self-introductions.

Minutes – Approval of the minutes of the March 28, 2024 board meetings was moved by Karen and seconded by Cindy. The minutes were approved unanimously (Tim abstained).

Treasurer's Report – Karen presented the Treasurer's report. As of 3/31/24 our balances were as follows:

Old Second National Bank \$448,546.49
BMO Harris checking \$4,862.09
BMO Harris savings \$78,832.54

Invoices went out to all member agencies for this year's contributions.

Karens stated we will have two or three quotes for audit services this year. Thanks go out to Holly for her auditor recommendation.

Karen requested a motion for the Board to authorize the transfer of monies from current accounts to new accounts for the purposes of obtaining better yields. 0.2% is abysmal.

Cindy moved, Brian seconded to accept the Treasurer's and Finance Committee's reports and, further, to authorize the Finance Committee to transfer monies to other financial institutions as the Finance Committee finds appropriate for the purposes of increasing account yields. The motion was approved unanimously.

Modeling and Monitoring –

Rob indicated he would be speaking about USGS station monitoring costs with Cliff in the next week. Art requested Rob ask how USGS was planning to replace the gauges at South Elgin and Montgomery prior to dam removal. A discussion followed regarding the potential for FRSG participation in the Northwest Water Planning Alliance. Tim described the current research local water agencies have engaged with the County about the extent of groundwater resources in the central Fox River Valley. That report is due next year.

Rob indicated it is time to start to consider post dam removal monitoring at Carpentersville. He will contact Leonard Dane.

Communications Committee – Brian is continuing to reach out to contacts, putting together the Lunch and Learn about the new MS4 changes.

Cindy said the Dr. Margenot Lunch and Learn presentation is available on video via our website. His team is looking for help identifying and accessing soil samples from locations identical to the University of Illinois’ “oldest in the nation” library of soils samples and records.

The Margenot group, in a different project, is asking help to identify tributary sites that may be accessed for an erosion study. Rob will put together an information package to enlist other public agencies’ cooperation, starting with KCFPD.

Dam Communications Subcommittee –

Art stated the plans and specs are on the street for the removal of the Carpenters dam. There is provision for coordinating mussel relocation.

FAQs have been published by USACE so we can release what they wrote in their draft of last month. Letters from the Corp to Aurora and South Elgin with answers to program detail questions also provide some guidance for other communities. Rob will contact the Corps and ask them to present a progress update at the next meeting. Cindy recalled Ryan committed to a partners’ call following the Summit.

Art said we are now in a position to craft an informational program, and discussed the challenge to distill our most effective public messaging to the simplest terms. Rob suggested caution as FRSG moves forward with education and outreach efforts relative to the FRIP’s dam removal recommendation given the contentious nature of dam removal among some stakeholders in the Fox River Valley.

Art suggested our water reclamation districts and public works departments should have a special interest in promoting dam removal. He wondered how IEPA would view the NPDES permit of a Water Reclamation District not following FRSG’s 2022 FRIP if their host municipality decided to keep their dam.

Karen indicated her board did not want any political engagement with their customer communities. Tim said a fact-finding committee with various representatives from the City St. Charles, the St Charles Park District, and local residents has been formed to review the dam removal proposal.

NPDES Special Conditions Committee -

At this time IEPA has yet to respond to our last submittal with recommendations for standard NPDES application language.

Chair's Report –

Bartlett Duran and Mohammed Haque representing the Northern Moraine Water Reclamation District presented a program on nutrient trading in the watershed. This presentation is based on the Wisconsin nutrient trading model, modified and successfully used by Iowa and adapted for Illinois.

Rob pointed out the link to our 2023 Annual Report to the IEPA. Cindy has received no feedback so all appears in good shape.

The first cut draft update of the FRSG 10 Year Plan update was made and will be sent to the Board for comments and questions. Tim and Rob will get that out for discussion in June.

The IEPA 319 non point source grant deadline is May 15th. Three communities requested our support with their grant applications. The projects involving Woods Creek, Mahoney Creek and dam removal on Little Rock Creek are in line with FRSG interests and activities

Karen moved, seconded by Tim, for Rob to send a FRSG letter of support for these three projects. The motion approved unanimously.

Links to videos/slides of past events

- FRSG Lunch & Learn Sessions (find in our [FRSG videos folder](#))
 - ISWS Trends Report- presented by Elias Getahun and Atticus Zavelle, [Link to Trends Report folder](#) Feb. 29, 2024
 - Great Lakes to Gulf Observatory webinar presented by Laura Kammin and Jong Sung Lee at https://lewisclark.zoom.us/rec/share/JmJV_4gPWLxFFc2UteSqiMo5Up6p6f9egCTfLnI0MOzUn2hOmaSsTR2MlfiBi3Ws.2Ygo-7xWakkYcbYg_.Passcode: 89S=e#f7 Nov. 30, 2023
- April 10 – FREP Noon Network, Noon-1:30 pm – Fishes of the Fox River presented by Tristan Widloe, IDNR's Region 2 Streams Biologist at Hoover Forest Preserve's Meadowhawk Lodge. More information available here: <https://foxriverecosystem.org/fox/meetings-news>
- April 23 – Virtual One Earth Film Festival, 6 pm- *Carbon: The Unauthorized Biography* foxriverecosystem.org/fox/film-festival
- March 2024 Fox River Summit [See agenda here](#). Videos coming soon at Southeast Fox River Partnership YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@benlikesjazz>
- “Total Maximum Daily Loads for Total Phosphorus and Total Suspended Solids in the Fox Illinois River Basin” (FOXIL TMDL). Project website: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/TMDLs/FOXIL> Includes Informational Webinar - Oct. 31, 2023 & Project Introduction Webinar - Feb. 15, 2023
- Fox Waterway Agency's [Watershed Planning for the Chain O'Lakes Region](#)
 - Fox Waterway Agency March 13, 2024 presentation of Watershed-Based Plan for the Chain O'Lakes Region [slides](#)

Next regular meeting: Thursday, May 23rd, 2024 9:30 am. The 2024 meeting schedule remains the 4th Thursday Jan-Sept and the 3rd Thursdays Oct-Dec.

Tim moved and Bryan seconded the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Malm, Secretary, FRSG