

Fox River Study Group
August 22, 2024

Chair Rob Linke called the meeting to order and had all attendees introduce themselves.

Attendees included:

Board members: Cindy Skrukrud, Sierra Club; Brian Witkowski, City of Aurora; Karen Clementi, Fox Metro WRD; Alyse Olson, FREP; Debra Ness, City of Elgin; Eric Johnson, FRWRD; Rob Linke, Kane County

Others: Jan Mangers, Sierra Club Valley of the Fox: Emily Conti, EEI, Karolina Cho, Gewalt Hamilton Associates representing Hainesville, Lake Barrington, Fox Lake, Antioch Township (Lake County); Mike Warner, Gewalt Hamilton, representing Grant, Avon, Fremont and Ela Townships(Lake County), Cyrus McMains, YBSD; Dean Farr IL Div, IWLA; Naren Patel, Fehr Graham; Mark Bowman, Village of Barrington; John Stein, Village of Cary; Lindsay Muth, Trotter and Associates; Kenneth Kamper, CDM Smith; Phil Cotter, Village of East Dundee Bob Morris; Deanna Doohaluk, TCF Anna Kootstra, Wauconda; Billie Jean Anthony, City of Crystal Lake; Tim Wilson, City of St Charles; Sam Youssef, FRWRD; Stephen McCracken, DRSCW

Minutes of the July 25 meeting Motion by Karen, second by Brian to approve minutes with minor edits by Karen and Cindy. Passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report Karen reported a minor error by the bank is being corrected at OSNB where we have a money market account and two CDs. Two checks cleared at our BMO Harris checking account and dues from Aurora were deposited into our BMO Harris savings account. There were no bills to pay this month.

Motion by Eric, second by Deb to accept Treasurers report. Passed unanimously.

Karen received an email from USGS asking if FRWRD could continue to be lead on their contract. Eric said yes. Karen will loop Eric into emails.

Finance Committee Karen reported that the 2023 audit is proceeding.

Committee of the Whole- Rob said what was discussed at the August 8 meeting will be covered in items below.

NPDES FRSG Special Condition Committee- Karen said it is in IEPA's hands to get back to us on our proposed language.

Modeling & Modeling Committee-

WI Fox River TMDL Rob reported that WDNR will be holding webinar on their TMDL on the Fox River in Wisconsin on Sept. 25. The link is in the agenda.

Carpenter Dam Post-Removal WQ monitoring. Draft RFP was discussed at the COTW meeting. Tim will provide input on draft and Rob asked other board members to send in their comments. Work to be done in Spring/Summer 2025. Brian will share his RFP language.

Communications Committee-

Emails from FRSG Rob tried to send announcement of today's meeting from his Kane Co. email. He'd like to know if anyone received it. We also sent it out from the FRSG email.

Website Brian said Rob, Cindy and he met yesterday. They are asking Becky to move things around on the FRSG splash page to better point people to the available info.

Outreach Rob asked for someone's help to cover tabling at McHenry County Water Forum on Sept. 18. Rob reported the committee discussed putting together some short videos about FRSG efforts. He is working on an outline to share with the board.

Lunch&Learn sessions Brian is still working on finding an IEPA staffer to report on the MS4 permit.

Cindy said we discussed at our last board meeting asking Wes Cantoor at IDNR to do a Lunch & Learn on the State Water Plan. Dean Farr said FOFR, IDNR and IWL hosted 2 sessions on the plan for legislators. Water supply was a big part of the discussion. IDNR has a dashboard that indicates concerns about water supply. Dean provided a link to a video session Wes held: Illinois Water Planning in a Nutshell at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWrOpCKXft8&t=18s>

Dean also reported that the state's FY25 budget contains a roughly 48% decrease in SWCD operational funding. He shared a link to a letter from the AISWCD at <https://aiswcd.org/proposing-a-path-forward-despite-state-cuts-to-swcd-funding/> and a petition in support of restoring funding at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FundSWCDs>

Chair's Report-

Annual Meeting Rob reported the Annual Meeting is set for Thursday, Oct 31st at 9 am at The Centre in Elgin. The COTW discussed presentation ideas: FRSG overview of 2024 efforts, ACE update on Habitat & Connectivity Study, Carpenter Dam Removal Status (removal to start the week of Labor Day) by KCFPD and their consultant, USGS presentation on Fox R impacts on Illinois River. Rob and Cindy were work on the agenda and will discuss the meeting logistics with the board at our next COTW meeting.

Army Corps Study- IDNR is getting our last \$35,000 payment to the Corps. With that payment, the Corps will get back to us with the plans for additional input into finalizing the study and the additional funds needed from the FRSG.

Carpenter Dam Removal- Pre-construction meeting was held last week. Work will start week after Labor Day weekend. They will start on the east side of the dam. It is Otto Engineering private property on the east side so there is little access there. KCFPD will rope it off. On the west side, the dam parking lot will be fenced out too as it will be the construction staging site. Rob discussed with KCFPD and IDNR that rock bar south of dam will be open for public viewing. Kane Co, KCFPD and IDNR will collaborate on drone flights so the public can see what is happening. 1000 cfs and below is their target for work; river is below that now.

Cindy asked about plans for mussel rescue. Rob said the public access in this area is the issue because of the staging of materials. The other concern is liability issues and the flow concerns. Rob will check on this with KCFPD staff on their plan. IDNR fisheries will be onsite during the deconstruction. Wes said IDNR is not doing any active water quality monitoring during the deconstruction. The contractor has submitted a Water Quality Management Plan to the IDNR and the Corps for approval.

Rob has encouraged KCFPD to get as much real time info out as possible.

10-Year Financial Plan- COTW discussed that the plan needs to address all impairments on the river. We discussed BG algae monitoring and budget for communications that needs to be fleshed out. We will discuss more at our next COTW meeting. Cindy is reaching out to ISWS regarding a next contract for data compilation and trends analysis.

Upcoming Events-Rob went over the list of upcoming events listed in the agenda.

News- Stephen McCracken reported Sierra Club sent letter to IEPA last week that none of the NARPs are acceptable. Deanna Doohaluk will forward the letter to us, and the board will discuss at the next COTW meeting.

Motion by Brian, second by Karen to adjourn at 10:36 am.