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Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission Meeting Minutes

Friday July 30, 2021 - 1:00 PM

- Katelyn Bratz called the meeting to order, led the pledge of allegiance, took roll call and verified quorum.
- The Audio Recorder was running.
- Approval of minutes from previous meeting held June 4, 2021.
 - a. Donny Hefty- motion to pass minutes as presented
 - b. Larry Long- seconded the motion
 - c. motion passes
- Treasurer's Reports for June 2021,
 - d. Fred Koehler- Motion to pass the report as presented
 - e. Donny Hefty-Seconded the motion
 - f. motion passes

Old Business

- Fox River 2022 Summit – Tom Slawski.
 - reminder that it will be on St. Patrick's Day and looking for topics and speakers.
- SEWRPC Survey from Waterford dam to Illinois border – Tom Slawski
 - continuing to work on the draft of pollutant load assessment
- John Kojis Farm Field gulley repair project – Chad Sampson
 - delayed due to neighboring project, contractor will work on both jointly.
 - Project will hopefully begin the following week.
- Report on Fox River Park Project – Alan Barrows
 - working through design components for the overlook deck. Working on additional grant funding and working with the Village of Mukwonago.
 - Goal of a 2022 Project
- Small-Scale Dewatering Test Engineering - WWMD
 - Closing out the cost for this project prior to Oct 1st.
 - Will not be using the bulk of the money requested.
- Small-Scale Dewatering Test –WWMD
 - altered the project, working on a new plan, 50,000 cubic yard per year project.
 - 2022 project start
 - Did not spend any of the money from this project. \$50,000 from SEWFRC was not utilized.
- Zanella Shoreline Restoration project – Chad Sampson



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- has not started due to threatened and endangered species restrictions. Can start after August. 1st.
- Hopefully complete by the next meeting
- Reidy Shoreline Restoration Project – Chad Sampson
 - conversations with the owners, original estimate came in higher than wanted.
 - Owners are searching for own contractors.
 - Difficult to access, steep, trees, contractors suggested winter access.
 - Bids are around 14,000-15,000.
 - Also has August 1 start time, due to threatened and endangered species

2. New Business

- Review and decide to accept or further modify the Proposed Modifications to the Project Acceptance Criteria for Shoreline Restoration Projects – All
 - Andy Buehler made a motion to accept the changes
 - Larry Long made the second
 - Motion Passes
 - Updated copies of the paperwork will need to be added to the website and the updated Implementation Plan.
- Report on activities of the work being done to obtain Emergency funding from the State of Wisconsin and to obtain Federal Funding utilizing the expertise of Foth and RES.
 - Tom Slawski shared that a copy of contract was sent out earlier in the week for everyone to review
 - We have received \$200,000 from the biennial budget. Which we will pay to Foth and RES to utilize this money to coordinate and apply for grants to expand our financial resources.
 - Andy Buehler is concerned with the scope of services, focused too much on preparing and getting to grants, vs. actual acquisition of grants.
 - Andy Buehler is also concerned with the scope of services, concerned it was not inline with the financial cost. Can we pair it down to the scope of services that we actually need?
 - Tom Slawski explained from his conversations with Chuck Wichgers that this money would leverage more money. This is a bit of an experiment to see how far we can stretch this money.
 - Tom Slawski reviewed the proposed payment due on the contract and outlined the following:
 - We already have MR199, our Implementation Plan
 - Coordinating the stakeholders, we are the stakeholders
 - We do not need a glossy format, we want the grant applications.
 - We want joint project funding between Illinois and Wisconsin.



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- We are already partnering with the following: the farm group, wastewater treatment facilities, WWMD, etc.
- Create a list of 4-10 unique collaborative projects that we wish to fund through the grant process.
- We can email them the Implementation Plan and the structure of the commission.
- Donny Hefty recognized that there is a lot of precursor work before grant application.
- Grant Horn echoed the concerns of the others on the commission and concern for the minimal amount of grant application focus.
- Fred Koeller has worked with grant writers in the past. He stated, you line up what the scope is and where does this culminate? You score the grants on likelihood of success vs. money available. You prioritize where you will allocate your effort.
 - He inquired about FOTH and RES's success rate for grant application.
- Alan Barrows voiced concern about what the grant deliverables were and supports stripping out the items that we do not need.
- Andy Buehler asked, are they clear on our goals, or is the paperwork given to us broad scope suggestion?
- Grant Horn suggests that we as the stakeholder meet directly with the grant writers, for a closer relationship and stronger chance of success.
- Greg Horath, WWMD shared, when we met with FOTH they have an entire department to learn and write the grants. With that in mind we should have more quantifiable information on what we can acquire.
- Wayne Castle asked, Is there value in FOTH and RES giving us more information on their proposal?
- Wayne Jensen asked, who is our negotiating person working with them? What are our proposed projects? We have the need for our documented projects.
 - Katelyn Bratz shared that Jim Pindel had offered to be the point person.
- Tom Slawski suggested we revise the proposal to include more grant applications, including the more complex and joint grant applications, which could open access to larger sums of money.
- Tom Slawski also suggested that all the money be pooled into element 4.
- Katelyn Bratz reviewed the suggestions thus far to give a tangible moving forward point. Suggested that we schedule a meeting to provide deliverables, but redirect most of the funds to element 4.
- Fred Koeller emphasized that we give them the deliverables, but also recognize they may have a small amount to do to modify and direct to specific grants.
- Grant Horn reinforced that they may have small tweaks to make to target specific grants.



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- Greg Horath wanted us to be aware that there is no state funding for dredging. Can lobby the governor, or someone else in Congress, but grants are available and we should not be misled.
- Rachel Sabre was concerned that if we collaborate with Illinois, and grant money is spent in Illinois, will that be detrimental to future funding?
- Tom Slawksi brought the idea of land purchase and collaboration with Land Trusts, is this a potential future avenue? Stewardship Funds?
- Alan Barrows asked about SEWPRC's survey, is there a preliminary draft to move discussions with the project forward.
- Katelyn Bratz made the summary suggestion that moving forward we let FOTH and Res know that we have concerns about the allocation of funding in the proposed contract. The commission believes that many of the items they have allocated money for, we have already obtained. The commission will share with FOTH and Res our Implementation Plan and other documents to help them better understand our organization and the structure, goals, stakeholders, and proposed projects we have already acquired. From there we will have another meeting to discuss how this changes their proposed contract.
 - Wayne Jensen made a motion to approve the action
 - Donny Hefty seconded the motion
 - Motion Passes
- Katelyn Bratz asked about establishing an email address for the SEWFRC which can be accessed by some or all of us? It was suggested that we reach out to Al Sikora.
 - Alan Barrows mad a motion to approved the action
 - Larry Long seconded the motion
 - Motion Passes
- Wayne Jensen asked if we should purchase a mass storage device to transfer and back up our files and data?
 - What is the legal requirement for keeping the recordings?
 - Hard drive storage vs Cloud storage
 - Decided to acquire a hard drive for storage at this time and look into future online storage
 - Alan Barrows made motion to approve the action.
 - Andy Buehler seconded the motion.
 - Motion Passes
- Schultz Shoreline Protection Project – Chad Sampson
 - We had approved the criteria at the previous meeting. We will add this to the waitlist to be reviewed when funding allows.
- 2021 – 2030 SEWFRC Implementation Plan – Tom Slawski & Alan Barrows
 - No Update.

3. Reports & Updates



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- Report on activities of Fox Waterway Agency of Illinois – FWA or Tom Slawski
 - No Report
 - Should talk with them when we proceed with the funding.
- Possible diversion of City of Waukesha water treatment plant discharge away from the Fox River – WDNR
 - Final Approval has gone through. City has started construction.
- Report on future of the Echo Lake Dam in Burlington.
 - No Update
- SEWFRC Website
 - Alan Barrows gave a reminder to submit a description of the project and the before and after photos, along with budget info.
- TMDL- Began monitoring in 2019. EPA contracts have been monitoring through Spring of 2022 for 2 years of water quality data at 13 sites. Covid has limited the outreach.
- Wayne Jensen asked to create a plan and set the date for the public hearing on the budget.
 - Set Public Hearing for October 22nd, in person, 1 pm, Burlington
- Fox River Mussel Monitoring- Kenosha County. Historically 17 species, they found 8 species. Tom Slawski will share future monitoring opportunities.

4. Correspondence

- 7/13/21 Email from Jim Pindel reporting on discussions with Rep. Wichgers regarding receiving a \$200,000 grant to get Foth and RES to work on getting federal grants for us.
- 7/23/21 Email from Tom Slawski notifying all of us about today's in-person meeting, with appropriate attachments.
- Scott Ochs- Inquiring on a shoreline restoration. Katelyn Bratz Redirected him to Chad Sampson's office.
- Crystal Mertins interested in expanding the current dredging project in Waterford north. Katelyn Bratz relayed that the concerned area was outside of the WWMD's permit. Katelyn directed Crystal to talk with Greg Horath for further information.
- Katelyn Bratz shared an email from Monica Wahlberg, of FOTH, inquiring about our available funds for dredging projects.

5. Miscellaneous Issues

- Watershed Protection Agency, Thursday, September 9th- Case Eagle Park, will be having demonstrations on runoff and erosion issues. They want to invite all municipalities within Racine County. Have invited 50 elected officials to come see their demonstrations.
- WWMS shared, dredging will move forward on Impoundment, financial support from almost 400 owners. Would like to apply for additional grant funding. Will be applying in 2022.



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- Alan Barrows introduced Marisa Castello; she will be working on conservation projects, etc within the Waukesha Office.
- Rachel Sabre shared of a meeting with stakeholders of USGS, decided that the Illinois River Basin, will have a Next Generation Water observing system installed. Money will be used to add technology to the monitoring of the river.
- Next Meeting will be August 27th, in person, with potential Zoom Sessions to move forward the grant writing process.

6. Close Meeting.

- Larry Long motioned to adjourn the meeting
- Andy Buehler seconded the motion.
- Motion Passes