

Southeast Wisconsin Fox River Commission Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 22, 2025 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
Barb Holtz, Town of Mukwanago
Wayne Jensen, Village of Rochester
Robin Grams, City of Waukesha
Lee Manthey, Town of Vernon
Chad Sampson, Racine County
Paul Tollard, Kenosha County
Donna Duester, Town of Wheatland
Howard Moser, City of Burlington
Tom Slawski, SEWRPC
Rachel Sabre, WI DNR

Guests:

Lorenzo Santos, Racine County
Liz Adams, Racine County

1. Alan Barrows called the meeting at 1:02 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll call and verify quorum
4. Chad Sampson recording the meeting and taking minutes.
5. 2025 – 2026 Budget
 - a. Robin Grams made a motion to approve the 2025 – 2026 SEWFRC Budget
 - b. Chad Sampson seconded the motion
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
6. Election of Officers for the 2025 – 2026 fiscal year.
 - a. Barb Holtz nominated Alan Barrows for Chair.
Jim Pindel motioned to close the nominations, seconded by Fred Koeller to elect Alan Barrows as the Chair.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
 - b. Fred Koeller nominated Chad Sampson for Vice Chair.
Fred Koeller motioned to close nominations, seconded by Wayne Jensen to elect Chad Sampson as the Vice Chair.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
 - c. Chad Sampson nominated Jim Pindel for Secretary.
Fred Koeller motioned to close nominations, seconded by Donna Duester to elect Jim Pindel as the Secretary.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously

- d. Jim Pindel nominated Wayne Jensen for Treasurer.
Robin Grams motioned to close nominations, seconded by Barb Holtz to elect Wayne Jensen as Treasurer.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
- 7. Approval of the meeting minutes from July 25, 2025
 - a. Fred Koeller made a motion to approve the previous minutes.
 - b. Lee Manthey seconded the motion.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
- 8. Review of the Treasurer's Report and ENUM Project Status
 - a. Treasure reports were received in an email from Jim Pindel.
 - b. Wayne Jensen gave an overview of reports.
 - c. A motion was made by Fred Koeller to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Lee Manthey.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously

Old Business

- 1. 2026 Fox River Summit
 - a. Tom Slawski stated the Summit will be March 12, 2026
 - b. Tom stated they are starting to put together a list of speakers.
 - c. Jim Pindel made a motion to utilize \$5,500 for the 2026 Fox River Summit, seconded by Chad Sampson.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
- 2. SEWRPC Survey from the Waterford Dam to Illinois border
 - a. Tom Slawski said most of the plan is complete and is hoping to have a draft copy completed within the next few meetings.
- 3. Vernon Wildlife Area DU Impoundment Restoration – No report.
- 4. Racine County Shoreline Projects - Magner, Plantz, Doering, Milczarski, McCormick and Hondel
 - a. Chad Sampson stated that McCormick's shoreline was completed by CHILS and the Commission's cost-share was \$6,000.
 - b. Chad stated that Hondel's shoreline was completed by Stoneycreek Landscaping and the Commission's cost-share was \$9,000.
 - c. Chad stated that they were finishing up the Magner shoreline and bank stabilization project today and completed by Stoneycreek Landscaping with a total cost-share of \$9,000.
 - d. Chad stated that Plantz was scheduled to begin construction by Stoneycreek Landscaping next week.
 - e. Chad stated the Milczarski and Doering were scheduled for September construction.
- 5. Noble Brothers Burgers Permeable Pavers
 - a. Chad Sampson did receive a copy of a new design. After reviewing the design, the permeable pavers were planned for the area not currently being worked on. Chad

suggested keeping the \$50,000 allocation for Phases II and III which hopefully include permeable paver shown in the plan.

New Business

1. 2021 – 2030 SEWFRC Implementation Plan
 - a. Alan Barrows stated that Katelyn Bratz had made many edits and corrections. They need to be reviewed and incorporated into the plan.
2. Fox River Watershed Hazard Mitigation Plan / Regional Coordinator Group – No Report
3. Fox Bend Wetland Restoration Project within the Village of Vernon
 - a. Alan Barrows said the project is in the process of converting reed canary grass to desired vegetation.
 - b. Alan Barrows said the site has not been visited since the flooding, but he doesn't anticipate any structural issues.
4. Margis Phase III Shoreline Protection and Access Improvements
 - a. Chad Sampson said construction is planned for mid-September.
5. Fox River Restoration at Wilmot WI
 - a. Jared Young sent an email to Paul Tollard. Paul said they are about two weeks from completion.
6. Racine County Office of Emergency Management requesting funding for two new flow gauges.
 - a. Lorenzo Santos stated the total cost is \$31,300, but the cost was itemized as hardware installation for \$16,500 and the annual operational cost was \$14,800.
 - b. Howard Moser explained the gauge was removed during the rebuild of the Jefferson Street bridge. The equipment had no longer been supported, so it was just removed and not replaced. This is the gap of flow gauges in the Fox River system.
 - c. Jim Pindel made a motion to cost-share \$16,500 for the hardware installation, seconded by Fred Koeller.
 - i. All Ayes, with Howard Moser abstain
7. Consideration of having a Wisconsin Statute attorney on retainer to advise us on legal issues.
 - a. Rachel Sabre will send an email to the legal team at WI DNR and provide an update at the next meeting.
 - b. There was some discussion about who can be a voting member for the municipality and deciphering the existing language in the statute.

Reports and Updates

1. Report on the activities of the Fox Waterway Agency of Illinois.
 - a. Tom Slawski said he receives reports from the Agency and they are currently adjusting dams to deal with the flood water making its way into Illinois.
2. Report on the future of the Echo Lake Dam in Burlington.

- a. Howard Moser said they did the bid opening on August 4th. They received two bids. They presented the bids at the last council meeting. The vote was tabled, but should happen on September 2nd. The cost of \$6.2 million was to rehabilitate the dam, do the shoreline work and park upgrades.
 - b. Howard continued to say the part not included is the dredging. They are trying to locate an area to place the dredged material for dewatering. That estimated cost is \$3.5 million to \$5.5 million.
- 3. Report on the Fox River Watershed TMDL Progress
 - a. Rachel Sabre said the last meeting was April 22nd. Eric Hetler is doing the TMDL modeling.
 - b. Rachel said Illinois already has a TMDL in place which impacts our modeling.
 - c. Rachel said you can go to the website to listen to recordings of the meetings.
- 4. Watershed Protection Committee of Racine County
 - a. Chad Sampson said the Summer Field Day is Thursday, September 11th at Case Eagle Park.
 - b. Chad continued to say he met with 8 or 9 farmers to fill out their 2026 grant application.
 - c. Chad also mentioned that he and Brian Gunderson (farmer and co-chair) of the WPCRC are going to be presenting at the Eagle Lake Improvement Association's annual meeting on Saturday morning.
- 5. Kenosha County Regenerative Producers
 - a. Paul Tollard said he talked to Paul Maggio and are having their next meeting on September 3rd.
- 6. SEWFRC Website
 - a. Alan Barrows stated we'll have to update the officers.
- 7. SEWFRC Roundtable on the Waukesha / Milwaukee County flood event on August 9 – 10.
 - a. The Commissioners each told a story of their work or personal experience with the flood event.

Correspondence

7/26/25 Email from Jim Pindel to mark calendars for today's meeting.

7/26/25 Email from Jim Pindel to Tom Slawski requesting an update on the SEWRPC report.

7/29/25 Tom Slawski replied sent the email reply to all Commissioners.

7/30/25 Email to Rachel Sabre to contact the DNR attorney.

7/31/25 An email for all Commissioners concerning the RCPP funding.

8/18/25 An email of the invitation and announcement for today's public hearing and meeting.

8/18/25 Jim Pindel said he received an email from Ellen Cole who will no longer be a Commissioner, but we be replace. Jim had not heard who the replacement is yet.

Miscellaneous Issues

1. The next meeting was set for September 19 at 1 p.m. at the Big Bend Fire Station.
2. A motion by to adjourn by Fred Koeller, seconded by Barb Holtz to adjourn at 2:14 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Chad Sampson, SEWFRC Commissioner