

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT
HELD WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 21, 2020**


The Board of Trustees met in a regular monthly meeting at 9:30 A.M. in the offices of the District at the Water Pollution Control Plant on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. Present were, Trustee Judith S. Sotir, Trustee Michael Funkey (via phone), Trustee Randall H. Brown and Trustee Christopher F. Childress. Also present were Attorney Gregg Ingemunson (via phone), Manager Thomas F. Muth, District Engineer, John Frerich from Deuchler Engineering (via phone), Assistant District Manager, Jimmie Delgado, Assistant District Manager Karen Clementi, Human Resources Coordinator, Patrick Divine, Project Engineer Drew Zeipen (via phone), and Norma Rodriguez.

10710 The bills were presented and read. It was moved by Trustee Childress that the bills be allowed as read, ratify and approve the checks drawn during the month of September, 2020 in the amount of \$1,717,412.39, Motion was seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bills be paid as presented.

10711 It was moved by Trustee Childress seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Treasurer's Report for September, 2020 be approved as submitted.

10712 It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote, and the Motion was unanimously carried that the minutes of the September 23, 2020 Board Meeting be approved as written. Each of the Trustees having received and read copies of said minutes before the meeting.

In Public Comments, Trustee Sotir on behalf of the Board congratulated all of the employees who celebrated birthdays in the month of October. Manager Muth congratulated Dan Rivera for completing and passing the Associate Safety Professional Exam. This was a very difficult and rigorous exam. The Board congratulated Dan for his achievement.



Trustee Sotir presented a Certificate of Recognition to Michael Tucker. Mike has been with the District for four years and last year he was promoted to Pretreatment Coordinator. Mike does an enormous amount of extracurricular projects for the District. He is a talented artist and based on his drawing he is the creator of Fox Metro's official mascot, Felix the Fox. Mike is a member of the Public Relations committee and he does an outstanding job for the District. Manager Muth and the Board expressed their appreciation for Mike's efforts and for going above and beyond for Fox Metro.


Manager Muth advised the Board that Fox Metro was nominated as Deuchler received the American Society of Engineering Award for the Long Term Control Plan. This award is very prestigious and Deuchler did a great job in getting the District in a position to be able to be part of this award. Manager Muth and Deuchler congratulated the Board for being an exemplary group of professionals and environmentalist in their forethought to approve these projects prior to getting Federal guidance. This puts Fox Metro ahead of its NPDES permit. Manager Muth said a video was shot yesterday and it went very well. Trustee Childress said this is a testimony to the Fox Metro leadership and the employees of Fox Metro. He said the Board acts on staff guidance because they are here each and every day and they know what is needed at the Plant. Trustee Sotir on behalf of the Board said they appreciate the talent the District has because they are the type of people that can get the job done and they do it well. She also thanked Manager Muth for his leadership.

10713

With no other Public Comments, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Regular Board Meeting be temporarily adjourned for the Committee of Local Improvements.

The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned at 9:48 A.M.

In the Committee of Local Improvements Manager Muth addressed the Board to discuss the Biosolids Program, Solar Energy System Construction and COVID-19 Financial Update. Manager Muth began his presentation by illustrating slides of how Biosolids land application was done in the 1930's. He said regulations began in 1984 and added to 40 CFR by USEPA in 1993. Landfill disposal is used only if



regulatory requirement are not met and the cost savings of land application versus landfill disposal is over \$0.5M/year.

Mr. Gregg Buchner, who has retired from the District, established the Fox Metro Biosolids Program. The program includes: permitting for generators, distributors and users, transport and storage design criteria, sludge application design criteria, sample collection and analysis for sludge, soil, groundwater and plant tissue.

The Biosolids land application process includes soil testing. The soil is collected and analyzed the season prior to application because there many restrictions that need to be fulfilled in order to qualify to land apply to a farm. The soil needs to be tested for Ph, Nutrients, Cation exchange capacity, 12 different metals and radium before the first application of biosolids.

Each year the District accumulates approximately 4,571 dry tons (22,000 cubic yards) of biosolids. Each year it is applied to nine farms in the Spring and Fall for a total of approximately 650 acres. It must be below EPA ceiling concentrations and meet pathogen reductions, vector attraction standards. The quantity of biosolids is applied base on the Nitrogen needs of the soil and is generated through solids handling and stored in a Sludge Storage areas.

The biosolids are then hauled and stockpiled, trucked and applied to local farms. Manager Muth displayed video of the spreading and incorporation into soil on agricultural fields. Discussion ensued and Manager Muth advised the Board where these agricultural fields were located and answered all questions in detail.

The next item discussed was the Solar Energy System. Karen Clementi began her presentation updating the construction of the solar field. She said she has been in contract with Eric Peterman who is in charge of the project and she also had drone footage that she shared with the Board. The footage showed the Solar Field and the posts that have been installed.


The Committee of Local Improvements temporarily adjourned at 10:00 A.M.

At 10:00 A.M. Manager Muth opened and read aloud bids received for Land Application of Dried Biosolids Contract as follows: Stewart Spreading – Total Bid \$793,600.00; Agtech – Total Bid \$598,200.00; The Engineer’s estimate for this project is \$475,000.00. After extensive discussion and based on recommendation of staff, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bid from Agtech, for \$598,200.00 be accepted and the bid from Stewart Spreading for \$793,600.00, be held pending specification review and approval by Fox Metro Reclamation and Deuchler staff. The Board requested the amount the District has paid in the past. Manger Muth advised the Board he would have those numbers for them at the next Board Meeting.

The Committee of Local Improvements reconvened at 10:15 A.M.

Karen Clementi continued with her presentation and drone footage regarding the Solar Project. She advised the Board that Racking Foundations and underground boulders have added a considerable amount of time to the project due to working through those challenges. The contractor is currently approximately 75% complete with the post in the ground. The switchgear and transformer pads are complete and the electrical equipment is in place. Boring from the Plant to the solar field is scheduled to occur on November 2, 2020 and GRNE has been coordinating this with Automation and Electrical Supervisor, Mike Petersen. The racking structure and module installation is scheduled for completion by November 6, 2020 and per GRNE and ComEd the project is scheduled to go live at the end of November. Karen stated that the Village of Montgomery has won an award for the District’s Solar System. ComEd stated that they would like to be involved in the ribbon cutting ceremony but that probably will not take place until Spring of 2021.


Trustee Childress said GRNE’s Public Relations representative will be working with District staff to develop a link that the public can access to view how much power the Solar Plant is generating at any given time. They will also prepare a Press Release with regard to the ribbon cutting ceremony and the date the plant goes live.



Next in the Committee of Local Improvements, Jimmie Delgado gave the Board a COVID-19 Financial Update. He said beginning in April, Fox Metro has suspended late fees, rate increase and water shut offs. The suspension of these actions have resulted in loss of revenue for the District. By suspending the late fees, the District experienced a loss of \$544,265.24 in revenue through 10/15/2020. By suspending the rate increase in June, the District experienced a loss of \$870,000.00 in revenue through 10/31/2020. Jimmie said if this continues until June of 2021, the revenue loss for the District will be approximately \$2.5M. Trustee Childress asked how this revenue loss is going to impact future increases. Jimmie said the goal is to try and get through the Pandemic and there are multiple pieces that need to be considered. There is usage and there are projects, which are the biggest driver of District expenses. The District halted projects for approximately three months which is approximately 50% of construction season causing some of the big expenses to be deferred. Trustee Childress asked it is anticipated that this will offset the budget deficit. Jimmie stated that it would and that the shortfall also gets offset by usage. During the Pandemic, there were more people at home and they were watering their lawns, using their pools and it was a very hot and dry summer.

Jimmie said usage is up and compared September of 2019 to September of 2020 usage, it went up 67% and this translates to approximately \$1M in revenue. He said the goal is to have the Board apprised and staff's recommendation at this time is to stay the course. The District's collection efforts are working based on the numbers reviewed. Jimmie said some of the collection efforts include new Red Tag Procedure which the Billing Department has implemented and that encourages payments. Red disconnection letters are still being mailed out, The Billing Department is offering payment plans and are successfully receiving payments even though shut offs for non-payment has ceased..

The District suspended water shut offs in April and the Illinois Commerce Commission has asked all utilities to extend the moratorium until 03/31/2021. Even though the District is not completely subject to Illinois Commerce Commission, his recommendation is to abide by them. This is consistent with winter gas and electric guidelines because these are essential necessary



services that the State and Federal Government has asked to suspend disconnection. Jimmie said staff recommends to extend moratorium until 03/31/2021 and the Board concurred with that request.

Manger Muth informed the Board that last month an employee from the Operations Department contracted COVID. The important thing to note is that he stayed home, he got tested, and as soon as he got the results, staff back tracked who he had been in contact with at the plant and as a result, three additional employees had to be quarantined. All supervisors have met to discuss what further measures can be taken to reduce exposure. The trailers that were discussed at the last month's Board Meeting will be delivered and installed in the next few days and that will minimize contact between employees and reduce potential exposure. Trustee Childress said staff has done a fantastic job in coming up with ideas and ways of keeping all of the District's employees safe and healthy through this Pandemic. Manger Muth said it has been a challenge and he praised all of his staff who has worked together to find safe ways to keep the District functioning 24/7. Trustee Sotir said one of the advantages is the great communication staff keeps with all the employees. They send out weekly memos to employees regarding information on the plant and also how to keep them and their families safe during this pandemic. She thanked Jimmie and Karen for their great job and effort.


10715

With no other matters to come before the Committee of Local Improvements, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Committee of Local Improvements adjourn and the Regular Board Meeting reconvene.

The regular meeting reconvened at 10:33 a.m.

10716

Attorney Gregg Ingemunson addressed the Board with the Attorney's Report. He reviewed, discussed and requested approval of the Farm Leases for Crop Year 2021. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve and execute the Farm Leases for Crop Year 2021 in the form that has been reviewed.



Mr. John Frerich addressed the Board with the Engineer's Report and requested approval of Partial Payment No. 15 to Whittaker Construction, in the amount of \$1,067,715.17 for O&M Building Phase II Improvement Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 12 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$294,630.75 for H5 Clarifier and H3, H4 and H5 Vault Improvements Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 4 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$6,658.20 for Aeration Tanks Walkway Repairs Phase 2 Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 4 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$57,081.69 for Building B3 Odor Control Improvements project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 1 to Valley Electrical Contractors, Inc., in the amount of \$12,717.00 Oswego Pump Station MCC Replacement Project.

It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Engineer's Report be approved as published and payments be made as requested.

Manager Muth addressed the Board with the Manager's report. He advised the Board that there is a need for odor control at the grit building. The employee's lunch room in the O&M facility is being constructed and it is in very close proximity to the grit building. These are open tanks with primary flows coming in and being aerated and thus producing a very strong odor. This is not a good situation, in essence the solution to the odor issue in the building has been on the wish list to resolve. Staff believes it is now a necessity more than previously anticipated. Staff has had success at the Reckinger Road facility using ozone odor control treatment. Staff has researched the product and believe they will have success using this product at the grit tanks to significantly reduce odors.

At this time, Manager Muth requested authorization to seek bids to purchase a Vapex unit for Building B Odor Control unit and Vapex



10718

Odor Control Procurement to be opened at 10:00 A.M., at the November 18, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting. After discussion, it was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried to authorize the recommendation of staff for the purchase of the Vapex Odor control unit to be opened at 10:00 A.M., at the November 18, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting.

Manager Muth reported to the Board that Fox Metro participated in State Representative Stephanie Kifowit's annual recycle and shred day on October 3, 2020 and it was a big success. There was a large attendance and staff was able to collect over 90 pounds of unwanted medication.

10719

With no other business to come before the Board, Manager Muth requested an Executive Session to discuss personnel and related matters. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that this meeting be temporarily adjourned for Executive Session.

Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:50 A.M.

Regular Board Meeting Reconvened at 11:13 A.M

There were no decisions made in Executive Session

10720

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that this meeting be adjourned.

Board Meeting Adjourned at 11:14 A.M.

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