

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT
HELD WEDNESDAY MARCH 24, 2021**

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, March 24, 2021. Present were, Trustee Judith S. Sotir, Trustee Michael Funkey, Trustee Christopher F. Childress, Trustee Dave Krahn and Trustee Randall H. Brown. Also present were Attorney Gregg Ingemunson (via phone), Manager Thomas F. Muth, District Engineer, John Frerich from Deuchler Engineering (via phone), Assistant District Manager Karen Clementi, Human Resources Coordinator, Patrick Divine, IT Supervisor, Dan Vargas, and Norma Rodriguez.

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The bills were presented and read. It was moved by Trustee Funkey that the bills that have been presented and paid during the month of February 2021 be approved in the amount of \$1,868,707.50, Motion was seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bills be paid as presented.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Treasurer's Report for February, 2021 be approved as submitted.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote, and the Motion was unanimously carried that the minutes of the February 17, 2021 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 March.

Trustee Sotir on behalf of the Board congratulated Plumbing Compliance officer Don Davis for his 10 years of service at the District.




Trustee Sotir and the Board also congratulated Environmental Compliance Coordinator Michael Tucker for his five years of service at the District. Manager Muth added that Michael has progressed in the Pretreatment Department and is now the Coordinator. Michael is very active in the Public Relations Committee, he is a very talented artist and is the creator of the District's Mascot, Felix the Fox. Michael is pursuing his Masters Degree in Business Administration and has recently accepted the position of Chair in the Pretreatment Committee for the Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies.

Manager Muth presented Matt Entile from the Field Department. Matt has gone above and beyond this month. The North Avenue pumping station had a major problem. Matt contacted the area representative to acquire parts and was told that the parts would not be in for four to five days. Matt then contacted someone he knew and obtained most of the materials that were needed. Matt had those materials delivered to his house the same day and was able to have what he needed to fix the generator that malfunctioned. In the meantime, more issues were found with the generator and Matt was able to locate parts in Bolingbrook, drove there the same day and he and two other members of his team worked until late in the evening to fix the generator. Matt is dedicated to his job, he went above and beyond on this job and he is an outstanding member of the Field Maintenance Team. All Trustees congratulated Matt for his dedication to the District and the outstanding job he did at the pumping station.

Matt Entile addressed the Trustees and thanked Manager Muth for the text he sent and the phone call he received from Pat Divine that week. He said it was thoughtful and it meant a lot to him and says that goes a long way when Management shows appreciation for an employee's work.

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 9:45 A.M.



In the Committee of Local Improvements Manager Muth gave the Board a presentation updating them on the Construction Projects at the District. There are a few projects currently in construction and they are the Boulder Hill Interceptor Repairs, Building K Valve Replacement, Building B Odor Control and the New O&M Building.

Manager Muth began his presentation by showing slides of the Boulder Hill Interceptor dig repair. He explained the way the pipes were constructed in the past and described in detail the damage and type of repairs that were needed to prevent sewer back-ups in Boulder Hill Basin 41. He explained that liners could not be used on these pipes because there were severe sags in them and added that the clay pipes were replaced with PVC pipes.

The next project is the Building K Valve Replacement. Manager Muth displayed a slide which showed the major pumps in Building K and explained in detail the replacement process, the valve's functions and the reason for replacement.

The next project is Building B Odor Control. Manager Muth stated Whittaker Construction placed covers over the grit tanks. This new system is now operational and it will significantly reduce the odor in that building. Staff received some odor complaints from some neighbors to the South of the Plant so this system was not only added to improve the air quality but also to improve the District's neighbor relations. Slides were shown of the odor control unit and staff being trained.

The next project Manager Muth discussed was the new O&M Building. He said asbestos removal will begin on April 4, 2021 from the old O&M Building. All staff is moving out of that building and moving in to the new one before that date. Parts of the old building were incorporated into the new one such as the 95 year old arch at the entrance for historic conservation. The contractor did an excellent job with this feature. Manager Muth displayed slides of the various areas of the new O&M building and their function and also explained in detail the progress of construction.

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Manager Muth said he is very pleased with the Contractor on this project and is very impressed with the workmanship and pride they take in their work.

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

The regular meeting reconvened at 10:08 A.M.

Attorney Gregg Ingemunson advised the Board that there was no Attorney Report this month.

Mr. John Frerich addressed the Board with the Engineer's Report and requested approval of Partial Payment No. 20 to Whittaker Construction, in the amount of \$683,183.94 for O&M Building Phase II Improvement Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 9 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$9,900.00 for F Aeration Tanks Walkway Repairs Phase 2.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 9 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$80,821.80 for Building B3 Odor Control Improvements Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 5 to Valley Electrical in the amount of \$15,927.00 for Oswego Pump Station Electrical Upgrades Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 1 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$38,385.00 for the Building B Grit Tank Cover and Odor Control Project.

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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 Managers Report. He requested authorization to seek bids for two Grinders for the Orchard Road Pumping Station to be opened at 10:00 A.M., April 21, 2021 at the Board of Trustees Meeting. After discussion, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried to authorize to seek bids for two Grinders for the Orchard Road Pumping Station to be opened at 10:00 A.M., April 21, 2021 at the Board of Trustees Meeting. This is further approval of the action taken by the Board at the last Board Meeting of February 17, 2021, the delay was necessary due to change in specifications.

The next item discussed in the Manager's Report was the 2021/2022 Budget. Manager Muth reported that there has been on going meetings with staff to complete the budget for 2021/2022. He stated that last June Fox Metro did not implement a rate increase due to COVID and staff wants to prepare the budget with the assistance of the Board and guidance as to what the rate increase should be in order to calculate that in the budget.

Manager Muth also advised the Board that Fox Metro has not conducted any water shut offs for non-payment of bills and in order to formulate the budget, staff needs guidance from the Board as to when the District would like to reinstitute water shut offs again.

Manager Muth summarized and said that from a budgetary standpoint the District is doing well. The user fees are in sur plus compared to what the budget showed. He added that Fox Metro has not been collecting any late fees nor any rate increase that resulted in losing \$2.75M in revenue. That was offset with higher user fees and delay in capital improvement payments due to COVID.


Trustee Childress inquired if staff contemplated in the budget funds knowing that the District was not going to do the 5% increase. Manager Muth responded that it was in the budget. Trustee Funkey said the action the Board took was in consideration of the problems created by COVID and the delay in the economy. He does not believe the problems are going to be corrected immediately. Although the District lost over \$2.5M in revenue, it balanced out by the user fees that were collected. He said rates should be enacted to



keep the District at a safe balance and have enough funds for maintenance repairs and future purchases. Manager Muth said staff is going to wait for the Rate Study but do not anticipate raising rates or enforce past due penalties until 2022. Trustee Childress stated that the Rate Study will drive it and it should forecast where the District's finances will go negative and that will determine whether the District will have a rate increase or not. Manager Muth said staff can take the Rate Study and incorporate those numbers after January 1, 2022. Trustee Funkey said the Board already took action based on the last rate study and that action was to impose a 5% increase which was delayed and inquired what will the new Rate Study teach everyone that they are not already aware of, taken into account and acted on it by approving a 5% increase. Manager Muth said that what will happen is the Board will see updated numbers. The future rate study will be less aggressive with capital projects expenditures. By plugging in those projected expenditure, it may predict different recommendation for the Board to consider.

The next item discussed was the Fox River Connectivity and Habitat Study by the Army Corps of Engineers. Manager Muth said the District has been involved with the Fox River Study group for approximately 20 years. Studies have helped determine how the water quality of the Fox River will be based on phosphorus removal from wastewater treatment plants. It was mentioned last month that the most recent study showed 1.0 mg/l and June 1, 2021 it will be enforced as a requirement by the NPDES Permit and Fox Metro is already meeting that requirement. The NPDES Permit will require Phosphorous to be at 0.5 mg/l in 2030. Science has shown that to go to 0.10 mg/l is not cost effective because the water quality in the river will show little to no improvement.

Manager Muth said that a Fox River Connectivity has been delayed by the Army Corps of Engineers based on State of Illinois budgets and other issues. He said staff would like as a Board to show that it is important for this study to be completed because the connectivity study shows the environmental, economic and all other facets of the effects on the river with dam removal. Fox River Study groups feels that it is very important that many dams along the Fox River be removed because they are no longer serving the purpose they were at the time they were built, now they are more of a danger. A free



flowing river is healthier from a biological standpoint where there are fish, muscles and macro vertebrates because the danger is gone when the dams are removed. Some communities like St. Charles, Illinois for example oppose dam removal because they believe the economic development of their downtown will be dramatically impacted, but most people on the Fox River feel that it is imperative that the dams be removed and it will improve the water quality of the Fox River.

Trustee Brown inquired what the number of dams that were involved in this resolution and the amount it would cost to remove them. Manager Muth said there are 15 dams and he is not entirely sure but believes the cost is approximately \$5M to remove each one. Karen Clementi stated that the purpose of this is to improve the Fox River and if the wastewater treatment facilities are not going to do anything more, which is what the model is showing, something needs to be done in order to improve the river. She said this study will show which dams should come out and make an impact. This study began a few years ago but was only 50% completed due to budget cuts. The group is asking to complete the study and make recommendations.

Manager Muth requested approval of Resolution No. 984 in Support for Completing of the Fox River Connectivity and Habitat Study by the Army Corps of Engineers. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Childress, put to vote and unanimously carried that based on recommendation of staff Resolution No. 984 be approved for completing the Fox River Connectivity and Habitat Study by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Manager Muth advised the Board that in the last week Fox Metro was contacted by Representative Foster's office to advise staff that there could be some funds appropriated for various projects. Staff intends to apply for grants for a couple of projects. Staff in the past applied for a grant for the lining of the Southeast Interceptor project. The plans have been completed with the help of Deuchlers. Staff is also going to submit for a grant approval to complete the Fox River Connectivity and Habitat Study by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Fox River Study group have sated they will share the cost of this project as well. Karen said that the important part of this study

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is that once the recommendation is put forward, the groups or municipalities can qualify for Federal funds. Without this study the municipalities would have to use their own funds for the project. Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of the dams and the complexity of the removal process.

With no other business to come before the Board, Manager Muth requested Executive Session to discuss Personnel, and related matters

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At this time 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.

In New Business, the Board discussed the Solar Plant's Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. They discussed the details of the event and agreed on holding it on April 24, 2021 at 10:30 A.M. Representative Foster and other community leaders will be invited to attend.

Trustee Childress said a sign should be created that contains the name of the District Manager and of all the Trustees that were sitting on the Board at the time the Solar Field Project was installed. He said GRNE would be responsible for the sign, staff just needs to send the information needed to them.

Manager Muth thanked Linnea for stepping up the last month, she has done a great job and the Board appreciated her hard work and dedication to the District.

Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:38 A.M.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Childress put to vote and unanimously carried that the Executive Session be adjourned and resume the Regular Board Meeting.

Regular Board Meeting reconvened at 11:53 A.M

No decisions were made in Executive Session



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It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Childress put to vote and unanimously carried to authorize Gregg Ingemunson to pursue the claim for unpaid rent against Paschen Construction, the former tenants of the solar property

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With no other business to come before the Board, it was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Krahn put to vote and unanimously carried that this meeting be adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 P.M.

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