

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT
HELD WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 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, September 22, 2021. Present were, Trustee Judith S. Sotir, Trustee Michael Funkey, and Trustee Randall H. Brown. Also present were Attorney Gregg Ingemunson (via phone), District Manager Thomas F. Muth, District Engineer, John Frerich from Deuchler Engineering, Assistant District Manager Karen Clementi, Human Resources Coordinator, Patrick Divine, IT Supervisor, Dan Vargas, Controller, Linnea Scherer 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 August, 2021 be approved in the amount of \$1,674,227.42. Motion was seconded by Trustee Brown, 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 Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Treasurer's Report for August, 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 August 18, 2021 Board meeting be approved as amended by Trustee Brown and Trustee Funkey. Each of the Trustees having received and read copies of said minutes before the meeting.

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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 September 1, 2021 Special Board meeting be approved as amended by Trustee Brown and Trustee Funkey. 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 September.



The Board congratulated Nathan Vaughn for his 20 years of service at the District. They also congratulated Tony Medina for his 10 years of service at the District.

Manager Muth introduced Kevin Pokula, the District's new Human Resource Analyst.


Trustee Sotir announced that the recipients of the Fox Pride Award for the month of September are Brett Haick and Jeremy Mathre. Manager Muth said that in a recent team meeting, Jeremy demonstrated to the team what he and members of his team innovated. It is a mechanism to remove and replace the tertiary filter cloth. Replacement of these cloths has to be performed every five or six years. Manager Muth explained that there are nine tertiary filters and each one has eight 80 ft. long diamond shape frame that holds the filter cloth in place and when that filter cloth gets wet, it is very heavy and difficult to replace. Brett and his team have developed a mechanism that takes the process of replacing the heavy, wet, dirty, filthy filter cloth from two to three weeks to just a few days. Brett and Jeremy gave a short demonstration of their innovation and the process of changing the filter cloth. They explained in detail how the new mechanism they developed functions and how it has reduced the time it takes to complete this task significantly.

It was suggested by Trustee Brown that this idea should be shared with other wastewater municipalities in the area. Trustee Sotir also suggested making a video of this demonstration to showcase at the IAWA meetings. Brett and Jeremy addressed and answered all questions. Manager Muth also recognized Ryan Johnson, Sal Garcia, Mike Banzer and Ken Austin, who are the other members of the team who helped develop this mechanism.

With no other Public Comments, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, 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 9:50 A.M.

In the Committee of Local Improvements, Manager Muth discussed plans for a prospective second Solar System at the Plant. He recognized Shawn from Progressive Energy and Karen Clementi who have taken the lead on this project. They will be proposing to the Board Solar Project No. 2.




Manager Muth, Karen, Shawn, Gregg Ingemunson have spent a large amount of time reviewing the Lease Agreements and Power Purchase Agreements to ensure efficacy. He gave a Legislative update and reported that the Climate Equitable Jobs Act was signed by the Governor on September 15, 2021. This is a \$580M grant for wind and solar projects and a \$4,000.00 credit for an individual entity who purchases an electric vehicle.

Manager Muth petitioned the Board for approval to proceed with Solar System No. 2. This new solar field is proposed to be located adjacent to the current solar field. The second location is a one-acre parcel, South of the Lab.

The first Solar system will be attached to Electrical Service “A”. Solar System No. 2 would be attached to Electrical Service “B” and the Solar System Southerly of the lab would be connected to Electrical Service “C”. In order to receive the grant for this solar system, the solar fields cannot be connected to the same Electrical Service.

Manager Muth stated that a Request for Proposal was released by Progressive on May 10, 2021. Staff had a site walk through on May 17, 2021 with five different solar companies and bids were received on May 27, 2021 to be reviewed by Progressive and Fox Metro staff. The top three companies were Simple Ray, GRNE and Covet Energy. Based on review it was concluded that Simple Ray was the best choice. There is also a \$5,000.00 educational credit for the demonstration of the solar farm and pollinator Garden from Simple Ray. Staff has been working with them on all of the logistics and staff is seeking authorization from the Board to move forward with this project and have Trustee Sotir sign the Lease and Power Purchase Agreements at this time. Once approved by the Board, the project will move forward once the State begins to awarding the grant funds and approving projects. Also a Contract will need to be signed with Com-Ed. Manager Muth said this is a pretty aggressive schedule but if everything runs smoothly, in one year from now some fields may begin to be installed. Realistically, it will be Spring of 2023 when this Solar Field will begin to be operational. Trustee Sotir said that learning from the last solar field project, being proactive and prepared early, makes a big difference to get a project through.

Trustee Brown inquired what kind of savings are expected from this solar field project. Manager Muth said with the first solar field, there is approximately a 22% energy savings and Simple Ray predicts another 17% savings in energy load with the new solar field for a total of 39% and




that accumulates to approximately \$314,000.00 a year in savings. He added that the first solar field has been operational for eight months and it is going very well. Simple Ray will be responsible for the second solar field and they will own, operate, and maintain the system and Fox Metro will take advantage of the savings in energy costs.

Trustee Funkey inquired how staff arrived at the decision to award Simple Ray the project and not GRNE, who completed the first solar project for the District. Manager Muth explained that there was a checklist that staff utilized to determine the decision. He said GRNE could have been more responsible with some of the issues that are on the present site. There is no doubt that Fox Metro likes GRNE and staff has confidence in them however, it was felt that Simple Ray had more to offer. One of those things was the \$5,000.00 Educational Grant so that the District could be a school/business partnership to teach grade school children more about solar energy. This was something unique and it is something that GRNE did not offer. Manager Muth stated that Simple Ray has a good track record in other locations, they scored higher in the RFP process and they gave a much better rate. Trustee Funkey inquired what the rate translates in dollars. Manager Muth said he did not have the information at hand but would provide that to him. Trustee Funkey wanted confirmation if staff's recommendation was to go with Simple Ray. Karen confirmed that was correct she added that staff spent a lot of time with Simple Ray during the site visit and it seems like they are going to be good partners with the District. They have also made many commitments which they incorporated into the contract, including properly restoring the site, installing the pollinator garden and market the project for the District. Ultimately, staff felt more confident that Simple Ray could provide better service. Trustee Funkey said that the District's goal is to be first in line for consideration with the State. He inquired what Progressive's recommendation was. Karen affirmed that it was also Progressive's recommendation to go with Simple Ray for this project. Arnie and Shawn from Progressive sat with Manager Muth and Karen and had a long discussion regarding the selection process.

Trustee Sotir inquired how many acres would the new solar site occupy. Manager Muth said it would be approximately eight acres, which is the same size as the existing solar field. The pollinator garden will be placed in the one-acre site at the South Plant.

Karen stated that Simple Ray will develop a custom program for the District's student tours and will provide up to \$5,000.00 for this effort. Trustee Sotir said one of the things discussed in the PR meetings is to be



involved with the Aurora Library. She said that perhaps it can be a good idea to develop a video that can be displayed at the library. The teachers can bring the students to the library if they can't come here to get a tour of the solar fields. The District can also make that video available for the teachers to have at their schools.

Trustee Brown said he liked the demonstration that was given earlier regarding the tertiary filters. He inquired if a video can be produced that can be shared with the Aurora Library or Sci-Tech, demonstrating the panels, how they work and the process of changing the filter. Karen said that this is something that can be accomplished and the video can also be downloaded on to the District's website and YouTube for the general public to view.

Trustee Sotir said she would like to see is a video for a project like this be brought to the IAWA audience and have them ask questions on how we deal with the public and education. Trustee Brown suggested creating a panel that is portable that can be taken to the schools instead of students and teachers coming to the Plant especially now with COVID and transportation problems.

Trustee Funkey stated that the District has participated in numerous community events and parades in the last few years. He suggested developing some sort of a simple float that advertises the fact that Fox Metro has the 8-acre solar field and how much it is going to save in energy costs and now we are ready to start another field of approximately the same size. These two fields are not only going to save money for the District but it will also help save the environment. He suggested putting a package together and send it to all of the State Representatives, specially Congressman Foster. Discussion ensued


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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve the recommendation of staff to proceed with the second solar project and it be performed by Simple Ray on the basis of Progressive and Fox Metro Staff 's recommendation.

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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 10:15 A.M.



Attorney Gregg Ingemunson addressed the Board with the Attorney's Report. He presented for approval Resolution No. 990 for the Abrogation of existing Easement, Grant of Easement and Quit Claim Deed as part of Redwood of Oswego Subdivision. Gregg stated he is having difficulties obtaining documentation from the attorney. He recommends holding all permits until all documentation is received.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 990 approving the Abrogation of existing Easement, Grant of Easement and Quit Claim Deed as part of Redwood of Oswego Subdivision.

ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of Fox Metro Water Reclamation District this 22nd, day of September, 2021 by a vote of 3 to 0.

Attorney Ingemunson presented Resolution No. 988 approving Grant of Easement with Jericho & Orchard LLC of Hoffman Estates, in the Village of Montgomery, Kane County.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 988 approving Grant of Easement with Jericho & Orchard LLC of Hoffman Estates, in the Village of Montgomery, Kane County.

ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of Fox Metro Water Reclamation District this 22nd, day of September, 2021 by a vote of 3 to 0.

Attorney Ingemunson presented Resolution No. 989 approving Grant of Easement with Lincoln Prairie Aurora LLC and Pulte Home Company, a Michigan LLC, in the City of Aurora.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 989 approving Grant of Easement with Lincoln Prairie Aurora LLC and Pulte Home Company, a Michigan LLC, in the City of Aurora.

ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of Fox Metro Water Reclamation District this 22nd, day of September, 2021 by a vote of 3 to 0.

Attorney Ingemunson requested approval of Resolution No. 987 and Ordinance No. 904 for Annexation of Aventerra Wolf's Crossing Development located Southerly of Wolf's Crossing and Easterly of Douglas Road in the Village of Oswego, Kendall County.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that Resolution No. 987 and Ordinance No. 904 for Annexation of Aventerra Wolf's Crossing Development located Southerly of Wolf's Crossing and Easterly of Douglas Road in the Village of Oswego, Kendall County be approved as written.

Mr. John Frerich addressed the Board with the Engineer's Report and requested approval of Partial Payment No. 26 to Whittaker Construction, in the amount of \$36,435.44 for O&M Building Phase II Improvement Project.

Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 6 to Frank Marshall Electric, in the amount of \$89,274.60 for the Orchard Road Pump Station Upgrades.


Mr. Frerich requested approval of Partial Payment No. 4 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$163,443.15 for Building B Grit Tank Cover and Odor Control.

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It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, 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. There was a very good discussion at last month's Board Meeting with regard to a rate increase and proposed options. He said staff recommends that on January 1, 2022 a rate increase from \$6.53 to \$7.14 per thousand gallons be implemented and this represents less than a 10% increase. The second option is a rate increase from \$6.53 to \$6.83 per thousand gallons be implemented on January 1, 2022 and another rate increase from \$6.83 to \$7.14 per thousand gallons be implemented on June 1, 2022.

The reason staff recommends the first option is because there will only be one rate increase for 2022 instead of two and the next rate increase will be 2023. The key is that this will get the District closer to what was projected under the rate increase from two years ago.



Trustee Funkey inquired if the rate payers have been notified that the previously approved rate increase did not go into effect because of COVID. Karen informed Mr. Funkey that this has not been done. She added that the new notification advising the rate payers would include language that advised them that the District is resuming the rate increase. Trustee Funkey added that the rate payers should be aware that the District had a loss of revenue is the amount of approximately \$4M for suspending the rate increase and late fees for the last two years due to COVID.

Manager Muth recommends implementing only one rate increase in January 2022 and continue until June 1st of 2023. Trustee Brown inquired what the average dollar amount increase would be per household with the new rate increase. Karen stated that it would be approximately \$4.00 every two months for a family of four, depending on their water usage. IT Supervisor Dan Vargas has done a very good job in promoting water conservation ideas on our website. The less water people use, the lower their bill will be. Discussion ensued.


It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve the recommendation of Draft Version #1 for the rate increase from \$6.53 to \$7.14 per thousand gallons effective January 1, 2022 and to \$7.50 per thousand gallons effective June 1, 2023 as stipulated in Section 15.33 in the User Fee Increase Ordinance.

Manager Muth stated that staff will continue to conduct rate studies in order for the Board to continue to have the best financial information to be able to project and make fiduciary decisions based on that information in the future.

Continuing with the Manager's Report, Manager Muth advised the Board that he and Karen Clementi had a meeting at Mooseheart yesterday. They are very serious about utilizing Fox Metro's system. They currently have their own very antiquated system with trickling filters. They have completed an extensive I&I Study and they have spent approximately \$2M in system upgrades. With this study, they know where their sanitary system is and what condition it is in. They have also spent a lot of money with Visu Sewer to televise and clean their system and also to get a Utility Map which they never had before.

Staff is going to ask Mr. John Frerich from Deuchlers in the next couple of days for a task order to evaluate Mooseheart's system and give an

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Engineer's recommendation on how this area can potentially be served. Mr. Frerich has done studies of Mooseheart in the past and he will give staff an update on the information that is provided to him. Discussion ensued regarding the aspects of the evaluation.

Manager Muth said this matter is just in its infancy but wanted to communicate it to the Board. Mooseheart's system is very antiquated, it was built in 1928.

Trustee Funkey inquired what the current population was at Mooseheart. Karen said she was informed that they have approximately over 100 kids. They had 250 but due to COVID, population has decreased significantly. Manager Muth said Karen has done a great job of communicating with Mooseheart and the District has received a very nice letter from them and will share it with the Board.

At the IAWA Conference, Sanjay Sofit Director of the IEPA spoke about regionalization and taking over some of these types of facilities such as Mooseheart where they have their own system and the IEPA will be Grant Funding money. It was mentioned to Mooseheart regarding the potential for the State of Illinois to help contribute taking these older systems off because they are detrimental to the river even though they are small flows.


Manager Muth stated that there are a lot of things that have to be worked out and the Board will be involved in the process. The preliminary step is to perform a study and a financial analysis.

Mooseheart is excited about modernizing and they know they can environmentally improve. Discussion ensued

Manager Muth requested Executive Session to discuss personnel and related matter.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that this meeting adjourn temporarily for Executive Session.

In New Business, Trustee Brown inquired if there would be the possibility of a financial Bonus or paid time off to the Maintenance team who engineered the mechanism and saved the District money. This would be to encourage more thinking outside the box and innovating



ideas. He said the pin and the thank you card is nice but he was wondering if it was something else that can be given to these employees to show the District's appreciation. Karen said besides the pin and thank you card, each one of them received a \$100.00 gift card as well. Before COVID the District would have employee appreciation luncheons and other things and hopefully one day these activities can resume.

Trustee Funkey suggested to begin an Innovative Program in Job Completion Annual Award. Designate a committee of the employees to develop entries submitted by their fellow employees. This can be designed as an annual, semi-annual, quarterly or as needed award. Trustee Sotir likes the idea of an Annual Award because it says that we are going to take everything that has happened in the year and take that one project that just went above and beyond and bring it to the Board. Discussion ensued

Manager Muth said he would take this idea and give it to the PR Committee to organize it and coordinate it.

Trustee Funkey asked if the apparatus that was demonstrated today by the Maintenance team was patent. He said most employee contracts say anything you develop during the course of your employment belongs to the employer and not you. Manager Muth said thank you for the input.

Trustee Sotir said the whole point is that the employees were proud of what they accomplished and they wanted to demonstrate it and it meant a lot to them to be recognized. This demonstrated a team effort and the more Staff promotes a team atmosphere, the better this District is going to be. Discussion ensued

Trustee Brown inquired regarding connection fees for restaurants and how they are determined. Manager Muth explained the charge is \$1,650.00 per unit which is comparable and it is right in line within the area. He said all of the existing plumbing outlets are taken into account and these outlets include, floor drains, toilets, sinks, showers, etc. If it involves existing construction, a credit is given for the existing units. He explained in detail what the charges entail and the new plumbing standards. Staff looks at proposals and compile all the information in the plans and determines the fees.

Trustee Sotir announced that Karen Clementi was appointed to the IAWA Board Executive. The IAWA picks two delegates per year from 59



Sanitary Districts in the State of Illinois. The Board congratulated Karen and are very proud of her accomplishment.

Manager Muth said staff posted for new Lab Supervisor position. There were three candidates. Eva, Sue and Sonia and the committee chose Eva Kiss. She has been with the District for over thirty years, she has done an excellent job in the Lab and staff is confident that she will continue to excel in her position.

Trustee Brown commented that when he was here last week for a tour he noticed a Lab employee in a wheel chair and inquired if special accommodations were made for her. Manager Muth said there are accommodations that have been made. He explained in detail the accommodations that have been made and added that the Human Resources Analyst will be checking in with this employee periodically to see if there are any additional accommodations that are needed to help her perform her duties to the best of her abilities.

Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:45 A.M

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

Regular Board Meeting reconvened at 11:05AM

No decisions were made in Executive Session

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

Meeting adjourned at 11:34 A.M.

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