

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT  
HELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2023**

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 October 18, 2023. Present were Trustee Judith S. Sotir, Trustee Michael Funkey, Trustee Dave Krahn, Trustee Randall H. Brown and Trustee Chuck Nelson. Also present were Attorney Gregg Ingemunson, District Manager Karen Clementi, Regulatory Manager Tim Rubis, Controller Linnea Scherer, Human Resources Coordinator Dan Rivera, Plant Manager Joel Ilseman, Senior Project Engineer James Kerrigan, IT Supervisor Dan Vargas. In attendance were Mr. John Lochbaum from Mooseheart and Mr. Chris Funkhouser from DR Horton and Senior Administrative Assistant, Norma Rodriguez.

11219

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 September, 2023 be approved in the amount of \$1,933,357.74. Motion was seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bills be paid as presented.

11220

It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Financial Report for September, 2023 be approved as submitted.

Controller Linnea Scherer addressed the Board with the Controller's Report. She said the audit is nearly complete and has nearly completed review of the report. She will be returning it to Sikich for processing and finalizing. The audit went very smoothly. Fox Metro has received a clean opinion. Sikich is scheduled to present the report at the November Board Meeting.

Ms. Scherer said that in an effort to improve Fox Metro's transparency, the District's website has now been updated with the audit reports and Board communication reports for Fiscal Years 2018

through 2022. The 2023 reports will be uploaded after they have been presented to the Board.

Ms. Scherer said that on October 4<sup>th</sup> she and Manager Clementi met with Trustee Nelson to review the Board Financial Report and give a tutorial on how to read the report. She reported that the meeting went very well, and would be happy to provide this tutorial to any Trustee that is interested.

It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote, and the Motion was unanimously carried that the minutes of the September 13, 2023 Regular 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.

Congratulations to Trustee Krahn on his 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being on the Fox Metro Board of Trustees.

The Fox Pride Award Recipient for October 2023 is Anna Aguirre. Anna joined Fox Metro's Billing team in April 2013 and was promoted to the Billing Coordinator position in January 2020. Anna's dedication to Fox Metro's success is unparalleled. She has taken the Billing team to a new level with her billing process improvements. Anna handles the bulk of the tough customers when they are angry and ask to speak to a manager. She also manages the relationships with the District's service communities billing counterparts, which can be challenging. Anna recently stepped up to take on more responsibility outside her comfort zone as the facilitator of the Whole Management team meetings. Anna always has an upbeat attitude and constant grace under pressure in a tough role.

Plant Manager Joel Ilseman introduced Mr. Kenny Austin as the Union representative at today's Board meeting. Kenny will be retiring on November 3, 2023 after twenty-five years at the District. Kenny is one of the Maintenance Department's senior mechanics

and has done a great job over the years. Kenny takes a lot of pride in doing his job and doing it correctly. Management and the Board appreciate everything Kenny has done for the District and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

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


The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned at 9:41 A.M.

In the Committee of Local Improvements, Mr. Dan Vargas and Ms. Anna Aguirre gave an overview of the Billing procedure cycle and account statistics.

Trustee Nelson stated he stopped by the Billing Department a few weeks ago and was given a quick recap of the Billing and collection procedure and Anna invited any Trustee that is interested in learning more about the department to stop by the Billing Department. The Billing Department consists of six employees that service approximately 85,000 accounts and take approximately 4,000 calls per month. In addition, besides doing the day to day functions, one of the main duties of the Billing Department is the collection on delinquent accounts.

Anna stated Fox Metro's service area includes Aurora, North Aurora, Boulder Hill, Montgomery, Oswego, Sugar Grove, portions of Yorkville and portions of Batavia. She explained the step by step process of collection after the original wastewater bill is sent out and not paid by the due date.

The first step is the issuance of the bill. When the original bill gets issued the customer gets 21 days to pay through numerous payment options. If the bill is not paid by the due date, a late fee is assessed, a disconnection notice is sent out on balances over \$100.00 and the customer is given another 25 days to pay that past due balance. After the 25 days, if the balance on the disconnection notice is still not paid, the account is sent to cities for shut off and then a shut off fee is added when the water gets disconnected. The shutoff occurs when



a shut off order is issued and that occurs 68 days after the original bill is issued. The City of Aurora shuts off daily and the miscellaneous towns every other month. Each town assesses different shut off fees that is passed on to the customer. The water service is restored the same day payment is received. Discussion ensued.


Anna explained in detail the tagging procedures for disconnection on properties that have past due amounts and are scheduled to be disconnected. Extensive discussion ensued regarding this practice and possible alternatives.

The tagging of the properties is performed in house by the Field Operations Department and it has been a great success. Anna displayed a slide showing the amounts collected in the past four months on past due accounts through the tagging efforts. Extensive discussion ensued.

Fox Metro also utilizes the State Debt Recovery Program in its collection efforts. The Billing department began utilizing this program in 2018. A list of past due accounts is sent to the state and payments can be deducted from State employees, tax refunds, payroll, and State winnings.

Anna explained that Liens against properties and Judgments against customers can be filed as a last recourse if all other collection efforts fail in collecting aged past due accounts that have a high balance and Fox Metro has been unsuccessful and/or cannot disconnect their service. Discussion ensued and Anna addressed all of the Board's concerns and answered all their questions in detail.

Mr. Dan Vargas continued with the second half of the presentation and reviewed the Billing statistics. Fox Metro services 85,607 accounts in four counties. Kane County has the largest amount with 44,749 accounts, Kendall County has 20,623 accounts, DuPage County has 14,689 accounts and Will County has 3,145 accounts. There are 2,401 unclassified accounts that include new construction and multi-tenant facilities. Mr. Vargas reviewed in detail the recent billing statistics that broke down the accounts by municipality, number of accounts and the number of bills sent out annually.



Mr. Vargas discussed the number of accounts that are enrolled in paper suppression and automatic payments along with the amount received each year through this option. He noted that the number keeps rising every year as people opt to receive and pay their bills on line. As a result of this, 382 two-foot mail trays are eliminated and saved over 6,000 pounds of paper and saved over \$100,000.00 in postage yearly. Mr. Vargas also reviewed in detail the other various payment methods used by customers to pay their bill and the amount received yearly by each of the payment options. Discussion ensued promoting paperless and autopayment options on future billings. Mr. Vargas answered all of the Trustee’s questions and addressed all of their concerns.

11223

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

The regular Board Meeting reconvened at 10:45 A.M.

Attorney Ingemunson addressed the Board with the Attorney’s Report. He presented the Board for their approval the Farm License Agreements between Fox Metro Water Reclamation District and (3) Lessees, namely: David Hopkins, Jim Connell Farms, Inc., and Quintin Wissmiller for certain lands owned by the District in the County of Kendall for farming purposes for the 2024 crop year.

11224

It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried based on the approval of the District’s attorney, the Farm License Agreements between Fox Metro Water Reclamation District and (3) Lessees, namely: David Hopkins, Jim Connell Farms, Inc., and Quintin Wissmiller for certain lands owned by the District in the County of Kendall for farming purposes for the 2024 crop year be approved as written.

11225

Attorney Ingemunson presented the Mooseheart Grant of Easement to the Board for their approval. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Mooseheart Grant of Easement be approved as written.

11226

Attorney Ingemunson presented the Morgan Creek Interceptor Grant of Easement to the Board for their approval. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Morgan Creek Grant of Easement be approved as written.

11227


Attorney Ingemunson presented Woolley Road Interceptor Ph3/Piper Glen 21” Sewer Plat of Easement to the Board for their approval. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Woolley Road Interceptor Ph3/Piper Glen 21” Sewer Plat of Easement be approved as written.

11228

Attorney Ingemunson presented for approval Ordinance 924 and Resolution 1012 authorizing an Annexation with Wheatland Crossing/Keka Farms Annexation. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Ordinance 924 and Resolution 1012 authorizing the Wheatland Crossing/Keka Farms Annexation.

Senior Project Engineer James Kerrigan addressed the Board with the Construction Project Report. He requested approval of Partial Payment No. 23 to Williams Brothers Construction in the amount of \$336,042.96 for the Digester Complex Improvements (DCM-4) Project. The project is 97% complete. Pay request was reviewed by CDM Smith. The contractor continues with the final painting of the M3 Digester cover. The final portions of process fire protection and electrical work are being completed. Final site work and pavement restoration has also commenced.

Mr. Kerrigan requested Partial Payment No. 24 to Whittaker Construction in the amount of \$32,172.65 for the North Aurora Pumping Station Improvements Project. The project is 97% complete. Pay request was reviewed by Strand & Associates. The facility has completed systems testing while under normal operating conditions. Work completed this month included site work, and additional controls testing. Decommissioning of the old facility, final connections to existing forcemain, and water main piping are also being coordinated.




Mr. Kerrigan reported that the 111<sup>th</sup> St. Pump Station project with Whittaker Construction & Excavating is 95% complete and there is no pay application submitted for this project this month. The contractor continues to wait for final permitting of the facility. No work has taken place on site this month. There are issues with power quality from ComEd which is causing operational issues at the facility. Staff and Strand have been working with ComEd and the contractor to deliver the final buildout of 480GV power to the facility on an earlier than anticipated schedule to alleviate these issues.

The H3, H4, H5 Valve Vault Improvements Project with Williams Brothers Construction is 95% complete and there is no pay application submitted for this project this month. The replacement parts for the damaged valves have arrived on site and the first of the valves has been installed. The final valve replacement and associated plant shut down is scheduled for the week of October 9, 2023.

The Orchard Road Pumping Station Generator Replacement Project with Newcastle Electric is 23% complete and the amount paid to date to Newcastle Electric is \$102,665.00. The generator equipment is continuing to be manufactured. The contractor has commenced site excavation work for the generator equipment pad and electric conduits, as well as installing electrical equipment inside the facility.

The Oswego Pumping Station HVAC Replacement Project with Anchor Mechanical Services, Inc., is 0% complete and no payment application was submitted for this project this month. Equipment is currently being manufactured. No work has taken place on site this month.

DCM 3 – Heat Exchanger Replacement with Anchor Mechanical, Inc., is 0% complete and no payment has been submitted for payment this month. The contract documents have been executed and the contractor is developing a schedule for the installation of the first unit with District staff. A pre-construction meeting was held on October 6, 2023, and installation of the first unit will begin on October 23, 2023.



Solar Farm #2 with SimpleRay/Round Trip Energy, is 20% complete and \$3,471,230.00 has been paid to date. All equipment and supplies have been ordered. Contractor is expecting long lead times for racking and the large electrical equipment. All of the regulatory permits have been obtained, except for the Village of Montgomery building permit. Public relations materials are in progress: signage is on order, educational video footage started on October 10, 2023.

Mr. Kerrigan also presented several current planning and design projects under consideration by staff. Discussion about these projects ensued.

It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried that the Construction Project Report be approved as published and payments be made as requested.


11229

Manager Clementi addressed the Board with the Manager's Report and as discussed at the last Board Meeting that staff would like to install a fence along the east (river bank) side of the solar field property. Staff also wants to repair the existing west (railroad side) fence to better protect the \$9M investment in the 2 solar fields as well as prepare for the future uses of the property. SimpleRay's contractor will be removing trees and brush clearing as part of their scope of work soon, and staff would like to follow behind them shortly thereafter to install the fence.

Manager Clementi requested authorization to seek bids on the solar field property fence installation to be opened at 10:00 A.M., on November 15, 2023 at the Board of Trustees Meeting. After discussion, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried authorizing to seek bids on the solar field property fence installation to be opened at 10:00 A.M., on November 15, 2023 at the Board of Trustees Meeting.


11230





The next item discussed is the P1 Basement Remodel Phase 1 – Epoxy coating basement floor. Manager Clementi stated staff has been working to repurpose the existing P1 basement space. There is 3,550 sq. ft. of useable space in the main open basement area. Cleaning and prepping have been completed by staff over the last weeks to prepare. The north entrance stoop was found to have significant water intrusion and repair work is currently in process. Staff is working on improvements to the existing P1 server room to provide better reliability of IT infrastructure and to expand beyond the existing space by relocating it to the basement. Prior to this work proceeding, the basement floor area needs to be prepared and finished. This is to reduce nuisance dust on the equipment, as well as allowing for repurposing the remaining floor area for other uses, including a large multi-purpose room where luncheons and training events can be hosted for all staff. There currently is no elevator and this space will have to be ADA compliant. Epoxy floor coating is believed to be the most durable and cost-effective floor option for the basement space due to its longevity and easy maintenance. Trustee Brown inquired the cost of installing an elevator in the basement to avoid injuries in taking things up and down the stairs. Manager Clementi said there currently is a dumbwaiter in the basement and she and staff will be speaking with the architect and ask them what would be the best options for ADA accessibility for occupancy and is it time to install an elevator. All these options will be brought back to the Board for their review in the future. Discussion ensued.

Manager Clementi requested authorization to seek bids on the P1 Basement floor Epoxy coating to be opened at 10:00 A.M., on November 15, 2023 at the Board of Trustees Meeting. It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried authorizing to seek bids on the P1 Basement floor Epoxy coating to be opened at 10:00 A.M., on November 15, 2023 at the Board of Trustees Meeting.



The next item discussed was the Health Insurance Renewal. Manager Clementi said the Insurance Committee will meet with Stumm Insurance on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Staff's recommendation is to renew the District Blue Cross Blue Shield plan if Stumm can negotiate a reduction in the annual increase. Staff would like to ask the Board to make a motion to renew the Health Insurance within a certain threshold and allow the committee to proceed with decisions and present final results at the November 15, 2023 Board Meeting. Staff would also like to review the dental plan, life insurance, Healthiest You Program and other benefits. Open Enrollment would begin immediately after the November 15, 2023 until December 5, 2023. Manager Clementi presented a chart to the Board outlining the insurance cost per employee per month for the last three years. Manager Clementi said that even with the increase, the District is still paying less for insurance than three years ago. Discussion ensued.

It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Krahn, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried to grant the Insurance Committee the authority to bind the coverage based upon a 7.5% increase and other minor modifications to the current insurance plan.

The next item discussed was the IAWA Annual Conference. Trustee Sotir said it was a good meeting and there were a lot of issues that were brought up including discussions regarding PFAS. This was the first time Trustee Brown and Trustee Nelson attended the annual conference and they both shared they enjoyed the parts of the conference they participated in. Trustee Nelson said there were some good suggestions regarding employee hiring and retention especially in this difficult market. Trustee Sotir said she enjoyed the Labor Attorney talks and having the comradery of other colleagues and having the opportunity to ask them what they are doing in their districts. Trustee Funkey asked for staff to draft a memo to the Board on Solar Field #1, Solar Field #2 and Renewable Gas program. He

would like bullet points with information if it can be supplemented.

At this time Trustee Sotir requested an Executive Session to discuss personnel and related matters.

Trustee Nelson said that Sugar Grove tabled the development agreement with Crown Development. Discussion ensued.

11233

It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that at the conclusion of New Business of today's meeting, we will temporarily adjourn for an Executive Session to discuss personnel, review the last six months of Executive Session Meeting Minutes and related matter.

The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 11:30 A.M.

11234

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

Regular Board Meeting reconvened at 11:51 A.M.

No decisions were made in Executive Session.

11235

It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and the motion unanimously carried that the Executive Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2023 to September 13, 2023 be approved and kept closed as recommended by Attorney Ingemunson and Manager Clementi.

11236

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

Meeting adjourned at 11:52 A.M.

R-580