

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT  
HELD WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025**

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 January 22, 2025. Present were Trustee Judith S. Sotir, Trustee Michael Funkey, Trustee Chuck Nelson, Trustee Randall Brown and Trustee Scott Gryder. Also present were District Manager Karen Clementi, Regulatory Manager Tim Rubis, Human Resources Supervisor Dan Rivera, Plant Manager Joel Ilseman, Senior Project Engineer James Kerrigan, IT Supervisor Dan Vargas, Controller Linnea Scherer and Senior Administrative Assistant Norma Rodriguez.

11423

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 December 2024 be approved in the amount of \$4,227,712.64. Motion was seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bills be paid.

11424

It was moved by Trustee Funkey seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Financial Report for December 2024 be approved as submitted.

Controller Linnea Scherer addressed the Board with the Controller's Report. She reported that all year-end documentation for payroll has been completed including W-2s and 1095s. Staff is also working on 1099 forms for the independent contractors the District paid during the year.

Ms. Scherer advised the Board that budget season is coming up quickly, she and staff are working to prepare budget forms to provide Supervisors with helpful data for their budget preparation.

11425

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

December 18, 2024 Regular Board Meeting minutes be approved as written. Each of the Trustees having received and read copies of said minutes before the meeting.

In Public Comments, Trustee Sotir addressed the public and asked for any public comments. Hearing none, on behalf of the Board, she congratulated all of the employees who celebrated birthdays in the month of January.

Plant Manager Joel Ilseman introduced Drew Klotz who is the Union Representative at today's Board Meeting. Drew is an Operations Tech II and has been with the District for 21 years. Drew is also the newly elected Union's Vice President.

Manager Clementi introduced Sonia Martinez. Sonia is a Customer Service Representative in the Billing Department and just celebrated her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the District. Sonia is attending the meeting today to discuss and answer any questions with regard to the topic of collections and disconnection procedures that will be discussed in the Committee of Local Improvements. Sonia has been a wonderful advocate for the District in collecting a large number of overdue payments, has a great work ethic and is great asset to the District.

Manager Clementi congratulated Human Resources and Safety Supervisor Dan Rivera on receiving his Masters in Public Administration.

With no other Public Comments, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Nelson, 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 9:40 A.M.

In the Committee of Local Improvements, Manager Clementi discussed and reviewed in detail the 2024 District-Wide Goals that were met. She said staff is very proud to present their accomplishments for this past year.

## **2024 DISTRICT-WIDE EXPECTATIONS**

### **1. Meet or exceed all environmental permit requirements (NPDES, Biosolids, FESOP)**

- There were zero excursions
- Because this is the fifth year Fox Metro received the NACWA Gold Award Fox Metro is eligible for NACWA \*Platinum\* Award. This is the first time receiving this award. Congratulations to the Operations team for their leadership.
- Plant Performance – Plant performance was excellent.

Manager Clementi stated that the proof is that there is an endangered fish living in the Plant's effluent. There is one paper published and also a lot of data that shows that Fox Metro has been a refuge for this endangered fish that lives in the effluent when the river is dirty and full of algae. The Plant's effluent is cleaner than the water in the Fox River at many times of the year. Trustee Funkey said this data should be published in the District's website.

Trustee Funkey said this information would be really good to give the schools, local colleges and universities for the biology students.

Trustee Sotir said one of the most frequent questions she gets asked is how clean is the water that Fox Metro treats and puts back in the Fox River. She tells them that the water is cleaner than the water in the river because over 98% of pollutants are removed.

Trustee Nelson inquired how the Plant has improved air quality. Manager Clementi said the key was installing the covers on the clarifiers and that has significantly decreased the odors emitting from the Plant.

- Biosolids – All permit requirements were met.
- FESOP (air quality) – all permit requirements were met.
- Worked to minimize sanitary sewer overflow events within the District's direct Jurisdiction. Had one CSO event at the plant and field on 01/26/2024 on west side of Aurora.

### **2. Work toward an accident-free workforce**

- Safety Group meets monthly
- There will be a presentation by Safety and Asset Management Committee next month

## **2024 District-wide Goals**

### **1. Complete biennial rate study**

- Found a new vendor: NewGen Solutions

- Modeling complete and in-hand
  - Draft Report has been completed
  - Will have presentation for Board in Spring
2. **Complete Website redesign with workgroup and outside vendor.**
    - Completed May 2024
  3. **Complete ARPA service lining project with City of Aurora**
    - Work completed throughout 2024
    - Full reimbursement of \$410K received
  3. **Disinfection Improvements**
    - PAA pilot study report in Progress
    - Ineffective mixing discovered
    - Simple engineering solution
    - Engineering consultant evaluating alternatives
  4. **Ribbon-Cutting for solar field**
    - Postponed due to construction delay but will have it with the District's 100<sup>th</sup> year celebration in summer of 2025

### 2024 Strategic Goals

1. **Completed public relations events, as appropriate – Completed several**

Trustee Funkey suggested sending a copy of this report to the Biology teachers in the area and perhaps they can work it into their curriculum throughout the year. Manager Clementi said staff has worked with a lot of teachers in the area with regard to this in the past.

2. **Complete five-year project look-ahead: August 2024**
3. **Initiate CIW planning for future phosphorus removal**
  - Working with flow and loading study is in progress
  - Operational improvements: Completed MagPrex pilot and struvite zapper
4. **Develop a draft Responsible Bidder Ordinance**
  - First and second drafts are complete
  - Staff is reviewing the second draft
  - Workgroup will meet soon

## **2024 Completed Projects**

- Digester Complex Improvements Project: \$9.1M
- H3-H4-H5 Valve Vault Improvements: \$1.5M
- DCM-3 Heat Exchanger Replacement: \$0.05M
- North Aurora Pump Station: \$9.6M
- Orchard Road Pump Station Generator: \$0.5M
- Oswego Pump Station HVAC: \$0.2M

## **2024 District Highlights**

- Received the NACWA Platinum Award: Year 99/100
- CPRG grant application for RNG coalition: Teaming with other wastewater agencies. Even though the District did not receive the grant, staff learned a lot and improved communications with other agencies and staff is working on other teaming projects.
- RNG planning for the District to be the first wastewater agency in Illinois to install Renewable Natural Gas
- Mooseheart connected to Fox Metro's system in October 2024 = improved Fox River quality. This is a 40-year project in the making.
- Completed a Compliance Order with Factor
- Negotiated a new Union Contract

Manager Clementi said it has been a great year for the District, staff got a lot accomplished in 2024. The Board gave kudos to Manager Clementi and commended her on the great job she and staff are doing.

With no other matters to come before the Committee of Local Improvements, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Gryder, 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 10:00 A.M.

Manager Clementi addressed the Board with Action Items. She presented Resolution No. 1023 approving the District to join the



Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network (IPWMAN) to the Board for approval. This is a statewide mutual aid network where other public agencies help each other in case of a natural disaster event. The cost to the District is \$500.00 per year. Trustee Gryder suggested staff look to see if the District can become members of Kendall County Emergency Management Agency (KCEMA).

11428

It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried that Resolution No. 1023 approving the District to join the Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network (IPWMAN) be approved as published.

Manager Clementi requested authorization for the renewal of the Biosolids Management Contract with Ag-Tech to terminate on December 31, 2026. This is a two-year contract with up to five renewals and this would be the District's second renewal with Ag-Tech. They are entitled under the existing contract to a hefty increase but they have agreed to accept a 2% per year increase for a total of 4% for the two-year contract. It was moved by Trustee Gryder, seconded by Trustee Nelson, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried to renew the Biosolids Management Contract with Ag-Tech to terminate on December 31, 2026.

11429

The next action item was the discussion of Residential Disconnection Procedures for overdue accounts. Manager Clementi said the District historically has had literally hundreds of overdue accounts for many years. The District does have the authority to dig up and break their sewer for non-payment if for some reason their water service cannot be shut off. Because of the efforts of the Billing Department, currently they are down to only 43 unpaid accounts of balances over \$400.00. This is remarkable because the District has over 85,000 accounts. There are two accounts that the Billing Department would like go through the procedure of the digging process. Attorney Silverman and Manager Clementi have been discussing and an Ordinance needs to be amended to codify and update some of the procedures. Other Districts do dig up and cap the sewer for non-payment but the District has never used of that recourse in the past. Trustee Funkey inquired if most the large unpaid accounts are well accounts. Manager Clementi said the majority of them are,



however, some accounts are in Moecherville with Aqua Illinois, who is a private agency. Aqua Illinois will not shut off water service for Fox Metro.

Manager Clementi stated digging and tapping the sewer line for the large unpaid accounts would be a last resort. Sonia said Fox Metro has four overdue accounts that owe over \$5,000.00, the highest owing \$9,000.00 and last time anything was paid on this account was in the 1980s. She said all collection efforts have been exhausted without success. Discussion ensued.

Trustee Funkey said that under the current District's Ordinances and States Statues, Fox Metro has the authority go out and dig and tap the sewer for non-payment of accounts. Manager Clementi said that was correct but Fox Metro has never enforced it. Trustee Funkey inquired if what Manager Clementi was looking for today was the authority to enforce the Ordinance and State Statute. Manager Clementi said that was correct. Some of these properties have Judgements and Liens on them. Attorney Silverman said Fox Metro can Foreclose on the Liens and he can pull the title on these properties and see what collection recourse would work best. Before anything is done, he and Manager Clementi should meet and review the current Ordinance and update it if it is necessary.

Senior Project Engineer James Kerrigan addressed the Board with the Construction Report. Mr. Kerrigan reported that the 111<sup>th</sup> St. Pump Station project with Vissering Construction is 95% complete and there is no pay request this month. Final punch list items are currently being completed.

Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Partial Payment No. 6 to Williams Brothers Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$321,803.72 for the North Waste Water Treatment Plant Bar Screen Replacement Project. The project is 16% complete and the pay request was reviewed by Trotter and Associates. Demolition of various portions of the existing building to make way for new equipment has commenced, and staff and the contractor are coordinating equipment shutdowns as needed. Interior piping and electrical work is also underway.



Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Pay Application No. 4 to General Energy Corporation in the amount of \$823,564.60 for the Solar Farm #2 Project. The project is 75% complete and the payment requests were reviewed by Staff. The solar panel install at the North array is complete and electrical infrastructure work will follow shortly. The South array panel installation is almost complete and electrical installation work is underway.

Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Pay Application No. 2 to Dahme Mechanical Industries, Inc. in the amount of \$266,400.00 for the Building K Plug Valve Replacement Project. The project is 13% complete and the pay request was reviewed by staff. Materials continue to be delivered to the site, and work on the preparation of the existing piping and hardware in the basement of the building has commenced.

Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Pay Application No. 1 to General Energy Corporation in the amount of \$630,000.00 for the Battery Install Project. The project is 10% complete and the pay request was reviewed by staff. The project has commenced and staff is coordinating with the contractor on the preliminary site work for the installation.

Mr. Kerrigan said with regard to the current planning and design projects, staff hosted a kick off meeting with Nicor and Strand last week to discuss the RNG project.

Trustee Funkey said when the subject of the RNG project was discussed in previous Board Meetings, it was discussed that Fox Metro would be a regional cleaner of methane gas. He inquired if the storage tank Fox Metro has for the methane gas is large enough to accommodate gas deposits from other wastewater plants. Manager Clementi said it is not large enough. Staff's plan is to have tanker trucks. Other agencies would leave their loaded tanker and switch it out with an empty one, this way Fox Metro would not have to build another gas sphere. Discussion ensued.

It was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Gryder, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried that the



Construction Project Report be approved as published and payments be made as requested.

Trustee Sotir requested an Executive Session to discuss litigation matters.

11431

It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Funkey put to vote by roll call, it was unanimously carried to temporarily adjourn the regular Board Meeting for an Executive Session.

The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:22 A.M.

11432

It was moved by Trustee Gryder, 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 10:52 A.M.

No decisions were made in Executive Session.

11433

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:53 A.M.

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