

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT  
HELD WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 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 June 18, 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, Attorney David Silverman, 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.

11516

The bills were presented and read. It was moved by Trustee Gryder that the bills that have been presented and paid during the month of May 2025 be approved in the amount of \$3,919,166.99. Motion was seconded by Trustee Nelson, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bills be paid as presented.

11517

It was moved by Trustee Brown seconded by Trustee Funkey, put to vote and unanimously carried that the Financial Report for May 2025 be approved as submitted.

Controller Linnea Scherer addressed the Board with the Controller's Report. She said the fiscal year end has come and staff has begun with preliminary preparations for the audit. She asked the Trustees to pay particular attention to page 3 of the Board Financial Report. They will note that the District's current year actual has a total net income of \$10.6 million. This is higher than the budgeted expectation of \$1 million deficit. She said to keep in mind that these numbers will change as the District is still in the process of paying bills for products and services received before May 31<sup>st</sup>. The District also budgets conservatively to account for unforeseen events, which may negatively impact its revenues or increase its expenses.

Ms. Scherer noted that the Administration and Overhead actuals in the report came in so much lower than budgeted due to a decrease in engineering fees and insurance fees. She also advised the Board that the District's income came in higher than budgeted due to moving the bulk of its reserve funds into IMET and Meeder after the budget had been adopted.

11518

It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Funkey, put to vote, and the Motion was unanimously carried that the minutes of the May 21, 2025 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, she continued and on behalf of the Board congratulated all of the employees who celebrated birthdays in the month of June.

The Fox Pride recipient this month is Carole Walsh, Senior Laboratory Instrumentation Specialist. Carole is unable to attend the board meeting today. Steven Polaskey from the Environmental Compliance Department nominated Carol and he provided the following statement explaining why he nominated her: “Carole has been with the District for 26 years and deserves to be recognized for her great work in the lab and providing such a good example to all of the newer employees. I know she wishes she could do all the same work that she used to before being more restricted to her assistance chair, but the role she has evolved into is incredibly important and often goes unrecognized. The people that often get recognized in the lab are those that do the complex analyses, of which Carole still does her fair share, but she has taken on a more significant role in the behind the scenes activities that keep the lab running. She has taken on checking and validating data with the most critical eye in the lab. This frees up time for supervisors to manage and analysts to analyze. She did a full day of background research on alkalinity for chemically enhanced settling that saved us the first week of CEPT jar testing when my alkalinity testing plan failed. Carole is constantly questioning our methods and why we do things, which in science is a huge positive, and makes sure that we are doing the right thing. She is always willing to help the newer staff with problems. I wish I were a better wordsmith so I could better say the positive impact that Carole has on the lab. I just want to finish by saying that I have noticed her efforts in helping the lab be a better place to work.”

11519

With no other Public Comments, it was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Funkey, 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, Regulatory Manager Tim Rubis addressed the Board regarding the Environmental Compliance Department Requirements and to answer questions on how the Pretreatment Program works. This is a robust program with a lot of complexity and it can be confusing. Mr. Rubis said the Grease Program was discussed at the time the Grease Ordinance was being updated. In his presentation, he will concentrate on the industrial pretreatment side of the department, which is the main reason the Pretreatment Department was formed in the first place.

The EPA’s National Industrial Pretreatment Program (IPP) was established in 1978 and the IPP was approved at Aurora Sanitary District in 1985. The reason the IPP is important is because it contains lists of prohibited discharges for all industries that help prevent large amounts of pollutants to pass through and cause corrosion of the collection system and/or the Treatment Plant, prevent injury to workers from



hazardous fumes, prevent explosions, prevent interference with wastewater treatment facility, prevent limitations on sludge disposal options and/or greater expense and it also prevents the pass-through of toxins into surface water. Pretreatment tries to remove or minimize these hazards at the source.

Fox Metro gets audited by the USEPA to make sure that it is compliant with its NPDES permit and the last audit was conducted in 2018. Part of the audit consisted of visiting some of the industrial sites in the District. Regulations have changed since 1985 and are constantly being updated. Manager Clementi, Pretreatment staff and the USEPA did a line-by-line rewrite in 2016 and it took approximately one year to complete. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Rubis explained that within Fox Metro's NPDES permit the Pretreatment Department is supposed to be financially self-sustaining and have to maintain an adequate revenue structure and staffing levels for the continued operation of the program. Industries are surcharged for compatible pollutants that are treatable but are above and beyond what is received from residences. These compatible pollutants are suspended solids, ammonia, fats, oils and greases and BOD. These pollutants from the industries take more resources to treat. The industries can reduce their surcharges by either installing their own pretreatment system or reduce their load to the plant. Industries are charged a fine if they discharge non-compatible pollutants such as metals, chemicals and other harmful pollutants. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Rubis gave a compliance department breakdown. He explained that Article 40 CFR 403.5 in the NPDES permit prohibits pollutants that can cause a pass through or interfere with the wastewater treatment process. Fox Metro has 29 significant industrial users in the District that are part of the IPP. Fox Metro has a Grease Ordinance that states food service establishments must be inspected. In the past, Fox Metro would hire a consultant for the compliance work but now this is done in house.

Trustee Sotir said the District has rate payers instead of tax payers and the rate payers pay for any surcharges and it really depends on who is using it as opposed to a general amount.

Manager Clementi said generally the District's primary revenue sources can be divided into four categories: 1) user fees based on consumption paid by all users of Fox Metro's infrastructure, 2) development fees for new users, 3) additional funds needed to sustain the environmental compliance program and the additional treatment required to serve these commercial and industrial users, and 4) interest income. She gave the Board a summary of these four revenue streams from the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and each category's relative proportion for the District's annual budget. Base user fees comprise the most significant proportion of the District's revenue, and all entities, including the industries, pay on a consumption basis. The pretreatment revenues are meant to offset the District's additional needs for the



Industrial User's additional sampling, testing, wastewater loading, and compliance reporting.

Trustee Nelson said he assumed the inspections varied for each facility and inquired what is generally involved in an inspection. Mr. Rubis said the inspection involves an interview portion where documentation is reviewed to make sure the industry has everything that is required and then a walkthrough of the facility is completed. The inspection protocol is also outlined in a guidance document. In the inspection of a facility, staff also looks to make sure there aren't any spills that can affect the treatment.

The Pretreatment Department has an industrial sampling calendar that is shared with the Lab so they can plan and prepare for the samples because it gives them the date and type of samples they will be receiving. The samples that are collected are composites and grab samples. A grab sample is where a staff member physically grabs a sample and spot checks it as water is flowing and the parameters the lab looks at are fats, oils and greases and this is mandated. A composite sample is a 24 hour sample. A device that has a computer inside is placed at the industry, a sample is then taken and placed in the device, the device is then locked and checked by staff after 24 hours. This is all outlined in the lab's Standard Methods and have been in place for forty or fifty years and updated periodically. After the sample is collected, it is placed in different bottles for testing. All these samples have methods such as being put on ice and chain of custody. The samples are logged into the database and certain analysis are assigned dated and stamped. Once the tests are performed, the results are entered in the database, rechecked by another lab technician and finally the test is validated. All test results are legal documents to assure industries that all tests are being performed correctly. Some industries choose to do outside laboratory sampling and they can collect their own samples and Fox Metro can review them. The majority of the time they get the same result that Fox Metro does. Trustee Sotir said these are the reasons for the surcharges because it is very expensive for Fox Metro to do all the testing and things that have to be done and they have to offset the costs. Mr. Rubis said once the results are in then the data is transferred into Fox Metro's billing system and an invoice is produced. The majority of the monthly invoice is based on water usage, the rest includes surcharges and lab charges. The invoice also includes fines and permit fees if applicable. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Rubis gave the Board an overview of the Grease Program. He displayed a photo of the inside of an industry's grease trap unit that is located inside the industry. He explained in detail how the grease trap works and how it is inspected. The Pretreatment Department has a database where it records, reports and pictures are downloaded and inspectors can enter data while they are out in the field. All of the pumper records go in this database as well.

Mr. Rubis said with regard to compliance Fox Metro has been involved with the Fox River Study Group for over 20 years. Staff also performs Sonde Deployment which collects PH, Dissolved Oxygen, temperature, blue green algae from upstream and



downstream of the river to show impacts of Fox Metro's effluent on the receiving streams during different flow conditions.

In order to be in compliance with the NPDES permit, Fox Metro holds a yearly Public Information Meeting with the City of Aurora.

Recently the Pretreatment Department has been training the Field Department's staff on the CSO sampling. This is very helpful because the Field Department is on call for the facility and if the CSO would go on line they would be able to take the samples because they are already there. This is something the lab normally would do on a voluntary basis. This work is reimbursed to the District from the City of Aurora because Fox Metro operates the facility but the City of Aurora owns it. The reason the City of Aurora reimburses the District is because the sampling has to be under the supervision of a licensed wastewater operator and Fox Metro has the credentials. Fox Metro has been partnering with the City of Aurora for approximately 26 years on this process.

Mr. Rubis said it can be challenging sometimes to measure performance within the department but districtwide everyone is doing a great job and as a result, Fox Metro won the NACWA Platinum Peak Performance Award for having no plant violations for five years and performing ten thousand tests. Kudos to the Operations Department and all other departments because they all played a part in achieving the award.

Manager Clementi stated that this presentation is tied in to the rate study because the District should not be relying on Industrial Pretreatment to generate revenue, it is meant for industries to just pay their proportional share. Pretreatment only makes 2% of the District's annual revenue and it is meant to self-fund.

Trustee Sotir inquired if staff had information regarding PFAS. Mr. Rubis said data is generated by sampling different basins within the District that are only residential and do not have any industries or commercial discharge going into them. Staff is obtaining some good data and will have a presentation ready for the Board in the next couple of months.

Trustee Sotir stated there is a new variant of COVID that is going around called Razor Throat virus and she inquired if Fox Metro tests for this. Manager Clementi said Fox Metro does test for that strain and she just received the May data from the State and the data does not show that strain, they also do genetic testing of every strain. The data is showing COVID still going up and down but it does speciated. She will add this data to her report next month and bring it to the Board. Discussion ensued.

With no other matters to come before the Committee of Local Improvements, it was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Funkey, 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 10:35 A.M.

Manager Clementi addressed the Board with Discussion and Action items. Manager Clementi gave the Board a Solar Energy Project Summary. She reviewed four-year data and said the solar field 1 has produced fifteen million kilowatt hours and saved \$640,000.00 in electrical costs to date. She spoke with Shawn Ajazi from Progressive and inquired if the District was doing better or worse than initially anticipated. Mr. Ajazi informed Manager Clementi that the District is one year ahead of how much electricity was anticipated it would produce. With regard to Solar field 2S, it went on line Tuesday, May 27, 2025.

Manager Clementi informed the Board that last Thursday, members of staff from many departments planted the one-acre demonstration pollinator garden. Some plants and seed were donated from staff homes garden and other plants were purchased at cost from a local nursery. Several plants, trees and shrubs have also been planted throughout campus as part of the beautification project.

Manager Clementi said the solar fields ribbon cutting and Fox Metro's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration will take place on October 3, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. Congressman Bill Foster will be available to attend and his office will be putting in a Congressional Record Statement for the event. A press release will be issued and Mr. Chris Childress from Progressive is assisting Manager Clementi with this. Fox Metro's Public Relations Group is also working on the event logistics. Discussion ensued regarding giveaways for the event.

Manager Clementi requested authorization to advertise for bids for landscaping and mowing services to be opened at 10:00 A.M., at the August 20, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting. it was moved by Trustee Brown seconded by Trustee Funkey, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried that based on recommendation of staff authorize to advertise for bids for landscaping and mowing services to be opened at 10:00 A.M., at the August 20, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting.

Senior Project Engineer James Kerrigan addressed the Board with the Construction Project Report. Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Partial Payment No. 11 to Williams Brothers Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$841,029.91 for the North Waste Water Treatment Plant Bar Screen Replacement Project. The project is 28% complete and the pay request was reviewed by Trotter and Associates. The installation of the new gates for the new bar screen channel have been completed and the channel is ready for installation of the new bar screen. Demolition of the upper level of the existing building continues.

Mr. Kerrigan reported that the Solar Field #2 Project is 90% complete and there is no pay request this month. The South array is online and is generating power. The

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north panel installation is almost complete and waiting for ComEd Approval to operate. Site clean-up is also underway.

Mr. Kerrigan reported that the Building K Plug Valve Replacement Project is 21% complete and there is no pay request this month. The contractor continues to wait for delivery of the remaining valves and equipment and is finishing minor hardware replacement work on existing piping.

Mr. Kerrigan reported that the Battery Install Project with General Energy is 10% complete and there is no pay request this month. The project is currently in design and staff is reviewing the latest design information.

Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Partial Payment No. 3 to RJ O'Neil, Inc., in the amount of \$18,720.00 for the P1 Server Room HVAC Project. The project is 97% complete and the pay request was reviewed by staff. Pay request No. 1 in the amount of \$9,450.00 was sent to the contractor previously. The work on installing the new HVAC system is complete. Startup is currently being scheduled.

Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Final Payment No. 2 to Helm Service in the amount of \$7,174.00 for the DCM 3 Air Handling Unit Replacement Project. The project is 100% complete and the pay request was reviewed by staff. The project is complete, and the system is fully operational.

11522

It was moved by Trustee Brown, 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 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) pending and probable litigation.

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It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Nelson put to vote by roll call and it was unanimously carried to temporarily adjourn the regular Board Meeting for an Executive Session to discuss 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) pending and probable litigation.

The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:57A.M.

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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 11:45 A.M.

No decisions were made in Executive Session.



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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 11:46 A.M.

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