

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT
HELD WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 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 August 20, 2025. Present were Trustee Judith S. Sotir, Trustee Michael Funkey, 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.

11541 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 July 2025 be approved in the amount of \$2,934,945.84. Motion was seconded by Trustee Gryder, put to vote and unanimously carried that the bills be paid as presented.

11542 It was moved by Trustee Brown seconded by Trustee Gryder put to vote and unanimously carried that the Financial Report for July 2025 be approved as submitted.

Controller Linnea Scherer addressed the Board with the Controller's Report. She advised the Board that in the Engineer's Report on page 6 there is a substantial payment to Williams Brothers Construction for the Bar Screen Replacement Project for \$2,221,790.41.

Ms. Scherer reported that the District's total investment balances as of July 31, 2025 is \$81,629,985. These project payments may be large but this is what the District has its reserve investment balance for.

Ms. Scherer reported that the auditors have completed the preliminary fieldwork phase of the audit. They will return for final field work next month.

Ms. Scherer advised the Board that they will be receiving letters from Sikich shortly for the annual fraud inquiries. She asked them to please fill those inquiries as soon as possible and send them back to Sikich.

11543 It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Funkey, put to vote, and the Motion was unanimously carried that the Controllers Report for July 2025 be approved as submitted.

11544 It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Funkey, put to vote, and the Motion was unanimously carried that the minutes of the July 23, 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 asked for a moment of silence for fellow co-worker Kyle Werner who passed away. Trustee Brown asked to have Trustee Nelson in mind today as he travels to Washington DC on the Honor Flight having the privilege of accompanying his former coach from East Aurora High School on that trip. Trustee Sotir on behalf of the Board congratulated all of the employees who celebrated birthdays in the month of August.

Plant Manager Joel Ilseman introduced Operations Tech I Joe LaVia as the union representative this month. Joe is one of the District's new employees in the Operations Department. He is currently working in Maintenance as part of Fox Metro's cross training program and he is doing a great job.

With no other Public Comments, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, 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 9:36 A.M.

In the Committee of Local Improvements, Manager Clementi gave a presentation summarizing Fox Metro's Biosolids Program, costs, and future planning efforts. She said this presentation was prompted by previous discussions at past Board Meetings and will summarize the District's Biosolids Program, costs and future planning efforts.

Manager Clementi said biosolids have been land applied since Fox Metro's inception to today and pictures were shown from the early 1930's removing sludge from sludge beds. Other pictures were shown of sludge being used in a garden in Aurora in 1942. Regulations started in 1984 and added 40 CFR by USEPA in 1933.

Manager Clementi said landfill disposal is used only if regulatory requirements are not met and the cost savings of land application versus landfill disposal is over \$0.5M/year.

The biosolids program was permitted by IEPA and USEPA in the early 1990's and it includes: permitting for generators, distributors and users, transport and storage design criteria, sludge application design criteria and sample collection, analysis for sludge, soil, groundwater, and plant tissue. Manager Clementi stated Fox Metro's biosolids program is probably one of the best in the State because there are standard procedures in place, everything is very well organized and documented. This program is also overseen by IEMA because of the radium that is in the sludge due to Oswego and Montgomery using deep wells. The amount of radium will be reduced when Lake Michigan water gets piped in to these villages.



The biosolids land application process begins with soil testing. Samples are collected and analyzed the season prior to application. The samples are tested for pH, nutrients, Cation exchange capacity, 12 different metals and radium.

Fox Metro has a large sludge storage area and Manager Clementi presented a picture. She explained that biosolids must be below EPA ceiling concentrations and meet pathogen reductions & vector attraction reduction standards. The quantity of biosolids applied is based on the nitrogen needs of the soil. Biosolids are generated through solids handling (centrifuged cake) and stored in a large sludge storage area. The product contains very good bacteria, a lot of the water has been removed and it is a very fine almost a granulated product and the farmers really like it for their crops.

When the biosolids leave Fox Metro they go to various farms that are in Fox Metro's Biosolids Program, it is stockpiled, trucked and spread on the agricultural fields where it is then incorporated into the soil. There are many farmers that are interested in the product. The reason farmers like Fox Metro's product over other wastewater agencies is that it does not contain plastics and other foreign objects.

Historically the biosolids have been applied to the farms in the Spring, and Fall and two years ago summer hauling was added. With summer hauling, staff takes advantage of the longer day length, there are drier soil conditions and less over time because the spreading can be done over the whole summer. Fox Metro has a lot of demand of biosolids from the wheat field farmers in preparation for planting in the fall. Fox Metro is the second largest facility in Illinois and in 2024 generated approximately 5,070 dry tons of biosolids compared to Chicago who generates 150,000 dry tons of biosolids annually. Biosolids from Fox Metro are applied to Kendall, LaSalle, and DeKalb County farms.

Fox Metro purchased three farms in the early 1990s. Staff is actually looking for a fourth farm to consider it as land reserve. Staff believes it is very important to have this land reserve in anticipation of future growth.

Trustee Gryder asked if the farms are still needed. Manager Clementi said staff has researched this and estimates that there is plenty of longevity on the 3 existing farms. Radium seems to be the constraint but the farms are still fine to be used to apply biosolids especially since Oswego and Montgomery go to Lake Michigan water supply in 2030, the radium levels will subside.

Manager Clementi had some what if scenarios. What if Fox Metro generates a lot of biosolids and they cannot be hauled off site? The options are that the biosolids can be stacked higher in the large storage area, build more storage which has to be permitted and also use outside trucking to supplement. The what if scenario with PFAS and Fox Metro cannot land apply anymore? Fox Metro will collaborate with Chicago in contesting with the help of IAWA, NACWA, MBA, and lobbyists. This is where staff would also ask the District's Board of Trustees to speak with elected

11546

officials. Not generating biosolids is not an option for wastewater treatment facilities, it is a necessity of the treatment process and it needs to be hauled somewhere.

At 10:00 A.M. Manager Clementi opened and read aloud bids received for the 2025 Mowing and Landscaping Contract Project as follows: Four Seasons Landscaping Plus – Total Bid \$65,656.00; Cox Landscaping – Total bid \$39,484.00; Langton Group – Total Bid \$79,536.00. After discussion, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to accept the bid from Cox Landscaping in the amount of \$39,484.00 and hold the bid from Four Seasons Landscaping Plus in the amount of \$65,656.00 pending review from staff for approval.

Continuing with the Committee of Local Improvements, Manager Clementi continued with her presentation and stated one thing that she and staff are working on is the idea of a regional sludge handling facility. As biosolids regulations become more stringent, other wastewater agencies are going to be in the same predicament and Fox Metro is the second largest in the state, they can pay us to handle their biosolids for them. It would be more cost effective for the District to do this regionally than each of the other smaller wastewater agencies add extra treatment. Trustee Funkey said the EPA has always been in favor of regional facilities. He inquired with the incineration of those portions that can't be placed elsewhere, would it be constructive for staff to investigate the construction of a regional incineration program? Manager Clementi said that is one thing staff has been working on. Not just incineration but many other concepts.

Manager Clementi said biosolids land application regulations have become more stringent. In 2002 a pilot study was completed and a Dragon sludge dryer was used. She presented a picture and explained how it worked but unfortunately there were some issues and it was not successful. Technology has improved significantly since then and the appeal for dry biosolids is that is less volume and that equals less landfill costs. Unfortunately, drying the biosolids uses a lot of gas whether it is incineration, kilns or sludge dryers. Now, with the Renewable Natural Gas Project, and Fox Metro selling the gas back to Nicor, it changes the entire cost ratio on all of this and it becomes much more lucrative. If Fox Metro goes through with its planned Future Food Waste Program, it will create more methane to put into the pipeline and power a biosolids dryer and other equipment.

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With no other matters to come before the Committee of Local Improvements, it was moved by Trustee Brown 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 10:15 A.M.

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Manager Clementi addressed the Board with Discussion and Action items. She requested Authorization to seek bids for Manhole #68NA-006 replacement located west of the Galena Road-Hankes Road intersection, unincorporated Aurora to be opened at 10:00 a.m., on October 22, 2025 at the Board of Trustees Meeting. After discussion, it was moved by Trustee Funkey, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and the Motion was unanimously carried to authorize to seek bids for Manhole #68NA-006 replacement located west of the Galena Road-Hankes Road intersection, unincorporated Aurora to be opened at 10:00 a.m., on October 22, 2025 at the Board of Trustees Meeting

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Manager Clementi presented Ordinance No. 946 amending Ordinance No. 751 in regard to the Termination Procedures when Disconnecting Sanitary Sewer Services. The biggest change is that Fox Metro needed to add due to the existing Ordinance. After extensive discussion, it was moved by Trustee Gryder, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Ordinance No. 945 amending Ordinance No. 751 in regard to the Termination Procedures when Disconnecting Sanitary Sewer Services.

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Manager Clementi presented to the Board for approval Ordinance No. 946 for US Contracting Service LLC, Annexation of 1.8357-acre development located at 174 Harrison Street, Oswego, Illinois. After Discussion it was moved by Trustee Gryder, seconded by Trustee Brown, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Ordinance No. 946 for US Contracting Service LLC, Annexation of 1.8357-acre development located at 174 Harrison Street, Oswego, Illinois.

11551

Manager Clementi presented to the Board for approval Resolution No. 1029 for a Repayment Agreement with Oswego School District #308 for underbilled water consumption at the 2 high schools. After Discussion it was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Gryder, put to vote and unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 1029 for a Repayment Agreement with Oswego School District #308 for underbilled water consumption at the two high schools.

Senior Project Engineer James Kerrigan addressed the Board with the Construction Project Report. Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Partial Payment No. 13 to Williams Brothers Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$2,221,790.41 for the North Waste Water Treatment Plant Bar Screen Replacement Project. The project is 48% complete and the pay request was reviewed by Trotter and Associates. The first of the new bar screens has been installed and is being readied for operation. Once complete, the contractor will begin the installation of the second bar screen. This process will be repeated over the next year until all screens are installed.

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 north panel installation is complete and waiting for ComEd approval to operate.



Mr. Kerrigan requested approval of Partial Payment No. 5 to Dahme Mechanical Industries, Inc., in the amount of \$498,600.00 for the Building K Plug Valve Replacement Project. The project is 40% complete and the pay request was reviewed by staff. The contractor is preparing the new steel structure to reinforce the floor in preparation for the new valve and piping installation.

Mr. Kerrigan reported that the Battery Install Project with General Energy is 10% complete and there is no pay request this month. The project design is being finalized and GEC is working with Tesla to finalize the installation details. The batteries are also in the production process at the manufacturing facility.

Mr. Kerrigan reported that the North Waste Water Treatment Plant Renewable Natural Gas Utilization Project with Whittaker Construction & Excavating is 0% complete and there is no pay request this month. The contractor has mobilized to the site and has begun the necessary pre-demolition work of removing all residual methane gas from the Sphere and Building E to allow work to proceed safely.

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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 eminent litigation.

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It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Gryder 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 eminent litigation.

The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:35A.M.

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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.

The Regular Board Meeting reconvened at 10:51A.M.

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It was moved by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Gryder 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)(1) personnel matters.

The Regular Board Meeting temporarily adjourned for Executive Session at 10:52 A.M.



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

Regular Board Meeting reconvened at 10:54 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 Funkey, put to vote and the Motion unanimously carried that the Regular Board Meeting be adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 10:54 A.M.

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