

Fox River Navigational System Authority

1008 Augustine St
Kaukauna, WI 54130

Philip Ramlet, Executive Director
Telephone: 920-850-1677
Jeremy Cords, Operations Director
Telephone: 920-309-4501



Minutes

FRNSA Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 – Board Meeting 3:00PM PROMPTLY

Meeting Location: FRNSA Main Office 1008 Augustine St Kaukauna, WI

Virtual: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/412495285>

United States: [+1 \(786\) 535-3211](tel:+17865353211)

Access Code: 412-495-285

Members: Ron Van De Hey (Chair), Jeff Feldt (VP), Tim Short (T), (No Secretary), Bruce Enke, John Vette, Jean Rombach-Bartels (DNR), Tom Buchholz (DOT), Daina Penkiunas (SHPO)

Attending in Person: Ron Van De Hey, Jeff Feldt, Bruce Enke, Jean Rombach-Bartels, Tom Buchholz, Phil Ramlet, Beth Taubel, Dean Haen, Dave Peck and Mary Schmidt

Attending Virtually: Tim Short, Daina Penkiunas, John Vette and Patrick S (anonymous caller)

Start: 3:00p End: 4:30p

Agenda:

1. Introduction
 - a. Introductions were made
2. Review and approval of previous board meeting minutes
 - a. Discussion
 1. Items carried over from previous meeting for follow-up
 1. Follow up with DOA regarding Insurance Coverage
 - a. DOA has requested time to review, expect response in April
 2. Request increase in SEG Amount from DOA
 - a. DOA has requested time to review, expect response in April
 3. Propose to renew FRNSA lease early with DOA
 - a. DOA has requested time to review, expect response in April
 4. Clarification from Andy Rossmeissl regarding having two agendas, one for members and a separate one for the public, for state entity
 - a. Confirmation received from Andy Rossmeissl that it is legal for FRNSA to have an agenda for Board Members and a separate agenda for the public
 5. Clarification from Andy Rossmeissl on requiring public to appear in person even if a virtual option is available to board members (goes back to having two separate agendas)
 - a. Confirmation received from Andy Rossmeissl that it is legal for FRNSA to have an agenda for Board Members offering a virtual option and a separate agenda for the public without offering a virtual option, requiring the public to attend in person

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6. Letter of support to John Neumeier, with City of Kaukauna, for docking seawall issued
 - a. FRNSA shows that the property in question is owned by the State of Wisconsin and not the City of Kaukauna.
 - i. A lease, or easement, would be necessary between the City of Kaukauna and the Department of Administration
 - b. Letter of support has been completed
7. Andy Rossmeissl reviewed Heart of the Valley Metropolitan Sewerage District (HOVMSD) documents
 - a. Completed
 - b. FRNSA shows that the property in question is owned by the State of Wisconsin and not the City of Kaukauna.
 - i. A lease, or easement, would be necessary between the City of Kaukauna and the Department of Administration
 - ii. FRNSA is waiting on feedback from City of Kaukauna
 1. FRNSA would require restoration to be completed once HOVMSD project is completed
8. Research directive spending funds available from members of congress
 - a. Representative Mike Gallagher's office requested we wait three weeks to reach out as there are some pressing matters his office is working on currently
2. Bruce Enke motioned to approve the January meeting minutes, seconded by Jeff Feldt, all approve
3. Friends of the Fox (FOF) – Guest Dave Peck
 - a. Barge/Buoy
 1. Barge
 1. FOF wanted to see if FRNSA was interested in purchasing a small, road ready barge for buoy placement
 - a. FOF would contribute
 - b. Community Foundation would back up this purchase
 2. Board of Directors has declined purchasing a barge
 - a. FRNSA isn't in the construction business
 - i. Typically contract maintenance projects
 - ii. Would be additional costs incurred due to insurance, storage, maintenance and having staff available to operate
 2. Buoys
 1. Dave Peck maintains a number of buoys at his own time and expense
 - a. Currently borrows a pontoon to place buoys
 - b. Damage to boats and difficult to navigate without proper buoy placement
 - c. Cities should be responsible for buoys
 - i. Outagamie County currently requires FOF to have liability insurance to "volunteer" to help on the river

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1. Cost of insurance is \$500.00
- d. FOF inquired if FRNSA would take on the responsibility to manage buoys along the system
 - i. FRNSA wouldn't need to provide buoys
 - ii. FRNSA has concerns about liability, cost, administration of buoys
 - iii. FRNSA is not part of the whole river, only responsible for stretches of river
 - iv. Buoy program would help organize and bring uniformity
 - v. Would require a MOU with all communities along the river for FRNSA to provide buoys to whole river
 1. DOA land would go to center of river
 - vi. No policing at this time for navigation aids
 - vii. Who would fund a buoy program
 - viii. Average lifetime for buoy is 7-8 years
 - ix. Buoys stay in year round
 - x. SHPO Maritime staff may be available to present buoy information to FRNSA board regarding running a buoy program
 1. Cost, maintenance and work involved annually
 2. Installation and removal
 - xi. Buoy's to be discussed at the next Board of Directors meeting in March 2023
- b. Digital Map
 1. Preferred kayak route
 1. Dave Peck would be willing to update maps
 - a. FRNSA may be able to offer a stipend to Dave Peck for updating maps
 2. Suggests the possibility of including amenities/information for boaters
 - a. Bathroom facilities
 - b. Restaurants
 - c. Etc.
 3. Current map is available
 - a. Phil Ramlet and Jeremy Cords will review
 2. Portages
 1. FRNSA would like to update portages
 2. Have portages mapped out for boaters
 3. Grants available per Community Foundation
 - a. Submit in May or June
 - b. Maps would need to be available to submit with grants
 - i. FOF would be happy to help with grant writing and using their 501c3 status
 - ii. FOF offered a letter of support too
 4. Sub-committee for portages

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- a. Bruce Enke, Jeremy Cords and Phil Ramlet have met and discussed establishing a sub-committee
 - i. Concentrate on Kayak portages

4. UWGB AIS Report

a. Update

- 1. Spiney water flea has been found
 - 1. Did not come through locks
- 2. DNR wasn't immediately notified
 - a. UWGB needs to shore up protocols to make sure they are being properly followed
- 3. Why does FRNSA continue to pay for this testing
 - a. Creating a base line to have accurate information if a transfer station is ever put in place for Rapide Croche
 - i. Date will be critical
 - b. Good citizenship
 - i. Part of our mission
 - c. We are not mandated to continue these test
 - i. If FRNSA discontinues testing we only need to let contractor know that we're not going forward with more testing
 - ii. DNR has nothing to do with FRNSA testing
 - 1. Will take our information
 - iii. Current budget \$35-36K annually

5. Kleinschmidt Group

a. 60% Design Proposal

- 1. Discussion
 - 1. Electric barrier contract signed
 - 2. Telecom meeting completed
 - 3. Work has begun
 - 4. Anticipated completion date is August
 - a. Present results to DNR
 - i. Address issues
 - ii. Cost estimate for construction (Lunda)
 - iii. Board of Directors will then make a decision

6. Review and approval of Treasurer's Report – Tim Short

- 1. Unlock the Fox Fund Summary
 - 1. January was a good month, funds up \$637K
 - 2. Anticipate a lose in investments for February
 - 3. Market has been challenging
- 2. Monthly Expenditure Summary for current fiscal year
 - 1. Minor repairs
 - 2. Nothing alarming
- 3. Fiscal year-to-date expense comparisons

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1. Administrative expenses were up
 - a. \$24K for special studies
 - i. Electrical Resistivity Study
 - b. \$33K for Endries Otto, CPA
 - i. Finally received required back up reports
 - c. \$16K Liability Insurance
 4. Jean Romback-Bartel motions to approve Treasurer's Report, seconded by Jeff Feldt, all approve
7. Executive Director – Phil Ramlet
- a. Employee Policies
 1. Update
 1. Bruce Enke, Ron Van De Hey and Phil Ramlet had a good discussion with ETF representative, Andy, to clarify questions
 - a. Yes, FRNSA employees are state employees
 - i. Employees are required to make WRS contributions each pay period and contribute to "sick leave conversion"
 1. ETF confirms with FRNSA each employees sick leave conversions upon retirement
 2. FRNSA doesn't incur future debt when an employee retires as FRNSA/Employee pay in monthly
 - b. No final approval on policies
 - i. Jean Romback-Bartels will get policies to Executive Committee at the April 2023 meeting
 1. Route concerns/questions/changes/etc. to Jean Romback-Bartels
 2. Will present to Board of Directors for final approval at April 2023 meeting
 - b. Grant Opportunities
 1. Community Foundation
 1. Grants available for
 - a. Kayak portages
 - b. Urban fishing opportunities
 - c. ADA fishing
 - d. Grants due in June
 2. DNR
 1. Companion grants available
 3. Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)
 1. FRNSA requested funding for trail signs
 2. CVB Tourism Action Plan
 - a. Unlock all Fox Locks
 - i. Open waterways to everyone
 - ii. Water access to local attractions
 - iii. Rapide Croche Barrier
 1. Protecting resources
 - b. FRNSA owned river front property
 - i. Develop

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- ii. Lock houses
 - c. Pam Seidl, Executive Director, CVB
 - i. Would like to discuss goals
 - 1. How to go about
 - 2. Where to get funding
- 8. Capital Projects Committee – Tom Buchholz
 - a. Discuss for approval
 - 1. Westwood Invoice 3230100037 \$6,749.96
 - 2. Westwood Invoice 3220900049 \$2,177.88
 - 3. Westwood Invoice 3230200006 \$1,768.79
 - b. Tom Buchholz motions to approve payment, seconded by Bruce Enke, all approve
- 9. Executive Committee – Jeff Feldt
 - a. Update
 - 1. Electrical Resistivity Study
 - 1. Discussion
 - a. Tim Bolwerk with Westwood will have an update in March
 - 2. Open Meeting Law Compliance Guide
 - a. Copy will be emailed to members who did not receive it previously
 - 3. 2024 Budget - Rough Draft
 - a. Pushed back to April
 - 4. CIP
 - a. Office building exterior will be getting painted
 - 5. Audit
 - a. Currently all information that has been requested, has been submitted
 - 6. Appleton Lock 3
 - a. FRNSA would like to have property back that had been previously “swapped” for Visitor Center
 - i. Phil Ramlet will send proposal to owner and owner representative
 - 7. Nelson Family Tour
 - a. Scheduled for June
 - b. Golf carts for tour
 - c. Lunch
 - 8. Power of the River
 - a. Airing on Public Television
 - b. Thursday, March 2 at 8pm
 - c. Jeremy Cords is in it
 - i. Lock history
 - 9. Next Executive Meeting
 - a. Tentatively set for March 21, 2023
 - b. Virtual option available
 - 10. Property Committee - No update this month
 - a. Update

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11. DNR – Jean Rombach-Bartels -

1. Update - ACOE Dry Dock –

1. No status update from ACOE. If no response within two weeks, Jean Rombach-Bartels, DNR will contact ACOE's Chicago office
 - a. Daina Penkiunas with SHPO recently received an email from Alex with ACOE to discuss projects
 - i. Daina and Jean will come up with talking points to address dry dock

12. Fundraising Committee – John Vette

a. Update

1. No update

13. Rapide Croche Committee – Bruce Enke

a. Update

1. Bruce Enke, Jeremy Cords and Phil Ramlet have met a few times to discuss
 1. Portage development
 2. Portage facilities
 3. More exposure to public with portages in place
 4. Putting a together a committee to tackle needs
2. Maintenance
 1. Locks walls showing signs of fatigue
 2. Concrete work needed
 3. Masonry work needed
 4. Maintenance items needed to be completed this year

14. Adjournment

- a. Jeff Feldt motions to adjourn, Bruce Enke seconds, all approve