

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, August 22, 2023 – Board Meeting 3:00PM PROMPTLY

Meeting Location: 1008 Augustine Street, Kaukauna, WI 54130

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), Bruce Enke, John Vette, Jean Rombach-Bartels (Board Secretary, DNR), Tom Buchholz (DOT), Daina Penkiunas (SHPO), Dean Haen

Attending: Ron Van De Hey, Jeff Feldt, Tim Short, Bruce Enke, John Vette, Jean Rombach-Bartels, Tom Buchholz, Dean Haen, Phil Ramlet, Beth Taubel, Mary Schmidt (Schmidt Communicates), Steve Erb (Appleton Yacht Club)

Not Attending: Daina Penkiunas

Start: 3pm End: 4:15p

Agenda:

1. Introduction
 - a. Introductions were made
2. Review and approval of previous board meeting minutes
 - a. Discussion
 1. Items carried over from June meeting for follow-up
 1. Follow up with June 28, 2023, phone call with Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)
 - a. Fencing/Timeline
 - i. Phil Ramlet had another phone call with ACOE to discuss fencing and contamination
 1. Phil Ramlet emphasized that FRNSA wants the highest standard of clean
 2. No timeline has been established
 - ii. Jean Rombach-Bartels spoke with ACOE today
 1. ACOE has discovered lead in the basin
 2. Site investigation set the timeline back
 3. Cleanup is not in ACOE budget
 4. FRNSA will continue to work with ACOE

5. Requested updates from ACOE
6. Phase 1 was done in approximately 2016
2. Follow up with Department of Administration (DOA) meeting from June 29, 2023
 - a. Ahlstrom Lease
 - i. Mark Kjorlie, the Ahlstrom representative that FRNSA has been working with, has retired
 - ii. FRNSA will wait until we meet with the new representative before Phil Ramlet discusses with DOA
3. Jeff Feldt motions to accept previous meeting minutes, seconded by Tim Short, all approve
3. Joint Legislative Audit Committee
 - a. Discussion
 1. Response letter from Phil Ramlet to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee previously sent to board members for review
 2. Letter also sent to Bill Ramsay with DOA for review
 3. Board has already resolved half of the issues brought up by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee
 1. Personnel Policies cleaned up
 2. Visitor Center and Phone app FRNSA board discontinued putting additional funds into these projects, once it became apparent that they weren't going to go any further
 3. Vinton contract has been sent to DOA for review
 - a. DOA needs to develop a process for looking at submissions
 - b. FRNSA needs to determine what is the difference between a "maintenance" project and a "capital" project
 - c. What is the threshold that will determine submission is needed
 4. FRNSA already coordinates their projects with SHPO, DNR and will with DOA
 5. FRNSA believes it has a good grasp on open/closed meetings and recording of minutes
 - a. SHPO has had open records training
 - b. FRNSA will coordinate with the state or our attorney to have training done on WI Open Meeting Law and Open Records training in January 2024
 - i. Approximately 30-minute time commitment
 6. FRNSA Board has done a lot right
 - a. Ron Van De Hey states that the auditors are our friends, not our enemy
 4. Going forward, FRNSA board will work on
 1. Complete writing/approving Financial Policies and Procedures by December 31, 2023

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2. Review bidding process and update as necessary, then follow the process
 3. Get DOA more involved with FRNSA decisions
 - a. Leases
 - b. Contracts
 4. FRNSA board to work on relationship with state
 5. Get clarification on WI Statute 16.85
 - a. None of the board members were aware of this statute
 6. Board will plan as best as possible, approving Capital Improvement Projects
 5. Phil Ramlet will submit response letter to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee on Wednesday or Thursday of this week
-
4. Review and approval of Treasurer's Report – Tim Short
 - a. Financial Summary
 - b. Unlock the Fox monthly summary from Associated Bank
 - c. Monthly expense details
 1. Updates
 1. Unlock the Fox Fund up \$274,729.00
 2. Market up
 3. Labor costs up due to navigation season
 4. Heavy spending month
 - a. Capital Expenses were over \$50K
 - i. Majority of that to Westwood
 1. Multit-lock miscellaneous charges
 2. Civil Engineering charges
 5. No concerns currently
 2. Tim Short motions to accept Treasurer's Report, seconded by Bruce Enke, all approve
5. Executive Director – Phil Ramlet
 1. Season Information
 1. Discussion
 - a. Two more weeks until regular navigational season ends
 - b. October free Fall Colors/Opportunity to take boats out of water
 - c. Currently, sales are up 20%
 - d. Noted that numbers for the 2020 and 2021 seasons may not be accurate, we currently utilize tablets (Jeremy Cords incorporated them in 2022), which make data gathering more accurate
 2. Menasha Lock
 1. Update

- a. Kleinschmidt draft expected to be available for review by end of August 2023, along with 60% design
 - i. Will be reviewed by FRNSA internally
 - ii. Draft will be submitted to DNR's northeast Wisconsin office for review
 - 1. DNR's "Goby Team" will read/review
 - a. Will flag items of concerns/missed information
 - b. Will present questions
 - c. Will gather information and present to FRNSA
 - d. Verify science has been applied properly
 - 2. DNR will not discuss permits until design is almost 100% complete
 - iii. Cost estimate is expected September 2023
 - 1. Will enclose with Board of Director material packet for September meeting
 - iv. Once feedback is received back from the DNR
 - 1. May take up to 60 days to review
 - 2. FRNSA needs to make a decision to go forward with electronic barrier or not
 - a. Public feedback plan/process needs to be discussed and determined
 - 3. Jean Romback-Bartels will abstain from these decisions
 - v. Concerns raised over amount of money that will be spent from final design to bid ready

3. Grants/donations

1. Nelson Grant Agreement

a. Discussion

- i. FRNSA has been awarded \$150K grant for portage improvements along the entire system
 - 1. Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region (CFFV) was impressed with Amanda Peterson's submission
 - 2. Grant will be paid out over a two-year period
 - a. \$75K per year
 - i. December 2023
 - ii. June 2024
 - 3. This will be a matching grant
 - a. DNR has funds available
 - i. Recreational Boating Facilities grant would make the most sense

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- b. Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau (FCCVB) will be contacted to see if they can contribute
- c. Appleton Yacht Club (AYC) will be contacted to see if they can contribute
- d. Approach municipalities
- 4. Seventeen locks would equal 34 portages
 - a. Some portages only need minor maintenance
 - i. Minor grading
 - ii. Vegetation removed
 - b. Others need more maintenance
 - i. Stone work
 - c. Overall project estimated at \$500K
- 5. Ron Van De Hey asks for a motion to accept the grant
 - a. Concerns from board members
 - i. Is there portage specs and design to follow – yes, submitted with grant
 - ii. Is FRNSA required to complete all portages, even if we run out of grant/match money-no, Phil Ramlet stated he had a conversation with CFFV and it was verbally stated that FRNSA would not have to complete project if funds run out
 - iii. If budget for project is \$500K will FRNSA have to fund the balance of \$200K after grant/match funds are spent-no, Phil Ramlet stated we would just complete portages if we have funds-grant only requires us to match the \$150K
 - iv. Five year project
 - v. Will apply for grant each year
 - vi. If FRNSA is unable to match grant with donations, would FRNSA need to do the match from FRNSA funds-yes
 - vii. Due to concerns from board members, Phil Ramlet was asked to clarify contract verbiage
 - viii. Phil Ramlet was asked to come back to the board with a full plan
 - ix. Dean Haen stated that board is unable to make motion to accept, not only due

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- to the concerns, but because item is not listed as an action item on agenda
- b. Phil Ramlet will reach out to CFFV to correct contract verbiage
 - c. Motion to accept/deny grant will be added to September Board of Directors meeting
 - d. Phil Ramlet stated he was to give CFFC an answer the next day (08/23/23); chance of losing grant
 - i. Ron Van De Hey suggests a special meeting to approve grant
 - ii. Phil Ramlet would prefer to stick to the regularly scheduled meeting calendar
 - e. FRNSA Board may discuss "Kayak Portage Passes" in the future
 - i. Portage access would be available 24/7
2. Steve Erb with the Appleton Yacht Club (AYC) brought concerns to board
- a. Hazards are not clearly marked
 - i. Appleton locks not marked
 - ii. Who purchases markers/buoys
 - 1. Phil Ramlet advised that FRNSA will be looking into markers/buoys internally at the October or November board meeting
 - a. Will discuss markers/buoys and get a cost estimate for Menasha to Green Bay section of river
 - b. Approach municipalities to discuss
 - b. Appleton 3 Landing updates requested
 - i. Phil Ramlet stated that FRNSA doesn't have any updates
 - 1. Suggested AYC reach out to John Neumeier with the City of Kaukauna for updates
 - a. Requires easement from FRNSA
 - i. Letter has been submitted to the state
 - 2. Project completion would be years away
3. Phil Ramlet was asked what became of the couple that was at the Annual meeting who were interested in helping FRNSA get more kayak traffic through locks-they also had printed material about the locks that they handed out to other kayakers
- a. Phil Ramlet stated that he would be meeting with Joe and Diane Bast, along with Mary Schmidt (Schmidt Communicates) on Wednesday, August 23rd to discuss
 - i. Phil Ramlet would thank them for their interest; however,
 - 1. They are not allowed to generate any information without our review and approval

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2. FRNSA is not a kayak/paddle company
 - a. Recommend that they get involved with a kayak/paddle company

6. Capital Projects Committee – Tom Buchholz

- a. Discuss for approval
 1. Endries Otto CPA's Invoice 49723 (Service 12/16/22-03/31/23)
 1. Endries Otto needs to get us invoicing in a more timely manner
 2. Kleinschmidt Invoice 000202307137
 1. Invoice is still within budget
 3. UWGB Invoice 12754 (rec'd late-submitting to wrong email address)
 4. UWGB Invoice 12867
 1. Questions whether FRNSA wants to continue with the UWGB study long term remain
 - a. Will discuss at September or October meeting
 5. Westwood Invoice 1230702232
 1. Tom Buchholz motions to approve payment of Endries Otto and Westwood invoice, seconded by Jean Rombach-Bartels
 2. Tom Buchholz motions to approve payment for Kleinschmidt and the two UWGB invoices, seconded by Dean Haen, all approve, Jean Rombach-Bartels abstains

7. Executive Committee – Jeff Feldt

- a. Update
 1. Executive Committee met on Tuesday, August 8, 2023
 1. Discussed
 - a. Joint Legislative Audit Committee
 - b. Fundraising
 - i. Continue to compile donor list

8. DNR – Jean Rombach-Bartels -

1. Update - ACOE Dry Dock –
 1. See notes under 2; a; 1; ii

9. Fundraising Committee – John Vette

- a. Update
 1. Donor list
 1. Mary Schmidt (Schmidt Communicates) has met with some board members
 - a. Tim Short
 - b. Ron Van De Hey
 - c. Jeff Feldt

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2. Not a long enough donor list
 - a. Currently 109 names
 - i. NEW Paddles would be interested in donating
3. Mary Schmidt will meet with John Vette next
 - a. Talk to industries in the Oshkosh area
 - b. John Vette mentions that he has to come to the meetings to find out what is going on with fundraising
 - i. Would like to be engaged with fundraising
4. Westwood has agreed to donate \$2K

10. Rapide Croche Committee – Bruce Enke

- a. Update
 1. Bruce Enke and Phil Ramlet to meet with Tim Bolwerk with Westwood to do an evaluation/assessment
 1. Will meet in September
 2. Phil Ramlet has inspected Rapide Croche with a trusted advisor
 - a. Lock is in reasonable shape
 - b. Only short term/small maintenance needs to be done

11. Adjournment

- a. Jeff Feldt motions to adjourn, seconded by Tim Short, all approve