

Fox River Navigational System Authority

1008 Augustine St
Kaukauna, WI 54130
920-455-9174



Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting

Tuesday August 8, 2023, 8:00 AM (CDT)

Location: 1008 Augustine Street, Kaukauna, WI 54130

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/781018437>

United States: +1 (646) 749-3122 Access Code: 781-018-437

Members: Jeff Feldt (Chair), Ron Van De Hey (Vice Chair), Tim Short (Treasurer), Jean Rombach-Bartels (Secretary)

Attending: Jeff Feldt, Ron Van De Hey, Tim Short, Phil Ramlet, Mary Schmidt (Schmidt Communicates), Beth Taubel

Attending Via Phone: Jean Rombach-Bartels

Start: 8a End:9:10a

1. Review and approval of past meeting minutes
 - a. Ron Van De Hey motions to approve past meeting minutes, seconded by Tim Short, all approve
 - b. Discussion
 - i. Items carried over from previous meeting for follow-up and to verify completion of tasks:
 1. Talk with Bill Ramsay with Department of Administration (DOA)
 - a. Update
 - i. FRNSA Lease renewal
 1. Phil Ramlet will discuss with Bill Ramsay when they meet in December
 2. City of Kaukauna Lease
 - a. Update
 - i. Lease from, Attorney, Andy Rossmeissl
 1. Information received from the City of Kaukauna 08/07/23 regarding property along Kaukauna Lock 1
 3. Donor list
 - a. Mary Schmidt, with Schmidt Communicates, and Phil Ramlet worked on list at FRNSA office on July 13, 2023
 - i. Update

1. Donors' lists requested from
 - a. 1000 Islands Environmental Center
 - b. Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve
 - c. Grignon Mansion
 - d. Fox Cities Performing Arts (PAC)
 - e. Heckrodt Wetland Reserve
 - i. None of the above will share their lists or don't have a donor list
2. Compiling FRNSA donor list
 - a. Tim Short has a good list started
 - b. Individual "asks" will be very important
 - c. Possible donors
 - i. Mary Schmidt will reach out to US Venture
 - ii. Inquire about their G4 fund
 - iii. Mark Gell with RiverHeath Apartments
 - iv. Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau (FCCVB)
 - d.
3. Mary Schmidt has reached out to the following and none will be donating
 - a. JJ Keller
 - b. Thrivent
 - c. Pierce Manufacturing (Oshkosh Corporation)
 - i. These corporations are currently concentrating on providing funds for "needs"
4. Phil Ramlet has already reached out to Westwood for a donation
 - a. Will meet with Associated Bank next
5. FRNSA will utilize "Google Drive" to manage contacts
6. Finalizing Donor List
 - a. Mary Schmidt to meet with Jeff Feldt later today
 - b. Mary Schmidt meeting with Phil Ramlet later this week
 - c. Mary Schmidt will be reaching out to Ron Van De Hey too
4. Calculation from Associated Bank to see what amount FRNSA should be receiving from DOA for SEG Funds

- a. Update
 - i. Phil Ramlet met with Associated Bank a couple of weeks ago
 - 1. Will get amount at next meeting
- 2. Executive Director
 - i. Fundraising
 - 1. Community First Foundation Grant
 - a. Discussion
 - i. Received a \$150K grant from the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region (CFFVR) for portages
 - ii. Paid over two-years
 - iii. \$75K per year
 - iv. FRNSA needs to match funds
 - 1. Provide internally
 - 2. Raise in community
 - 3. Discuss matching fund opportunities with DNR and SHPO grants
 - a. Good approach would be to sit down with DNR to discuss
 - b. FRNSA doesn't qualify for grants going point by point, better to discuss face to face
 - v. With these funds FRNSA will be ½ to 2/3 towards getting portages done
 - vi. Thank you to Mary Schmidt and Amanda Peterson who submitted the grant request
 - ii. Friends of the Fox (FOF)-Requested Jeremy Cords join their board
 - 1. Discussion
 - a. Would be an asset to FRNSA to have Jeremy Cords on the FOF board
 - i. Would know what FOF is working on
 - ii. FOF can encourage the Appleton Yacht Club (AYC) to utilize and support FRNSA
 - 1. Influence lock hours
 - iii. FRNSA will be discussing buoys in October or November
 - 1. Would be good to work with FOF in regards to buoys
 - iii. Annual Meeting & Staff Appreciation Feedback (07/25/23)
 - 1. Discussion
 - a. Meeting and appreciation were both well received
 - b. Food was good
 - c. Pullman's was very easy to work with
 - d. Nice to be on the water
 - e. Good that spouses were able to attend

2. Suggestions for 2024 Annual meeting and staff appreciation
 - a. Have podium for whomever is speaking
 - b. Bigger slides for people to see
 - c. Signage to point attendees to the event room
 - d. Invite state legislators that are along the river system
 - i. Possibly have them speak
3. Season end appreciation
 - a. Board is invited, along with spouses
 - b. There will be a raffle for employees
 - i. Gift cards
 - c. Employees with five years of service will be recognized
- iv. 2023 Navigational Season
 1. Sales Information
 - a. Discussion
 - i. \$23,600.00 gross sales for the period 11/07/22-08/01/23
 2. Boat Numbers
 - a. Discussion
 - i. Boating down 20%
 1. Numbers inflated during Covid
 2. People are attending concerts and other activities
- v. Legislative Audit Bureau & Joint Legislative Audit Committee letters
 1. Limited-scope review based on hotline call(s)
 - a. Letter dated 07/21/2023 from Legislative Audit Bureau
 - i. Multiple allegations made to the Legislative Audit Bureaus' hotline
 - ii. Limited scope review was initiated
 - iii. Recommendations for improvements
 - iv. Several recommendations require action by the Board of Directors
 - v. Phil Ramlet and Ron Van De Hey discussed meeting with the auditors to go over audit and recommendations
 1. Beth Taubel had reached out to the auditors and was informed that
 - a. Out of the hands of the Audit Bureau
 - b. No additional information has been requested by the Audit Committee
 2. Phil Ramlet has had conversations with Bill Ramsay at Department of Administration (DOA)
 - a. DOA aware of audit

- b. Discussed items to be taken care of
- c. FRNSA and DOA will share their reports with each other prior to submitting responses to Audit Committee
- 3. Long-term Strategic Planning/Capital Projects
 - a. Phil Ramlet, Tom Buchholz and Bruce Enke have been discussing projects
 - i. Morphed into a five-year capital improvement plan
 - ii. Not yet a board project
 - b. Mission statement written when FRNSA started
 - i. Need to “dust off” statement and formalize
 - ii. When Bob Stark was CEO his main concern was a boat haul over and a cleansing station
 - iii. When Tim Rose was CEO his main concern was to open Menasha Lock and a Visitor Center
 - c. Visitor Center Project
 - i. WI State Statue 237.04(11) addresses Visitor Center approval
 - d. Mobile Application
 - i. Tim Short feels some responsibility for the mobile application as he introduce Jeremy Cords to the person who was to do the mobile application
 - e. Interpretive Trail has come to fruition
 - i. It is sometimes necessary to spend funds to make projects happen; however, that doesn’t guarantee or require the project to be completed
 - f. FRNSA has taken bids on capital improvement projects

- i. No plans/specs have been submitted to the DOA since inception of FRNSA
- g. WI State statute 15.85
 - i. It would be nearly impossible to submit every project to DOA
 - ii. (17) Locks, (20) acres
 - iii. Not all projects are lock related, some are property related
 - iv. FRNSA should push back on this requirement
 - v. Phil Ramlet states he will visit DOA quarterly
 - vi. FRNSA needs to send all lease agreements to DOA for review and approval
 - vii. Consider having a DOA representative on the Board of Directors
 - viii. Board is an extension of the State of Wisconsin to oversee the locks
 - ix. What organization trumps who; does DOA oversee Legislative Audit Bureau or vise-versa

4. Financial Policies

- a. Tim Short feels some responsibility as the Board of Directors treasurer
 - i. Tim Short currently has a table of contents for financial policy
 - ii. When policy is complete, Jean Rombach-Bartels will provide feedback to Tim Short
 - iii. Phil Ramlet and Ron Van De Hey recommended Hawkins Ash write up policy
 - iv. Hawkins Ash is unable to write our policy as it is a conflict of interest

- v. Hawkins Ash can review and give feedback once policy is written
 - vi. Suggested that Tim Short just “tweak” the amounts on the 2014 Financial Policy; however
 - vii. 2014 Financial Policy is outdated and doesn’t take in to account the use of payroll direct deposit, ACH payments, etc
 - viii. Also doesn’t include any verbiage related to “Emergency Repairs” process or “Specialized Vendor” process
 - ix. Tim Short will provide all Board members with a copy of document so all are working off the same document
 - x. Should also include providing training to Board and staff
- 5. Personnel Policy
 - a. Already adopted
- 6. Open Records Law Compliance
 - a. FRNSA feels as if it is state compliance at this time in response to the six points pointed out in the audit
 - b. Need a clearer understanding of what is required for minutes pertaining to Closed Sessions
- b. Letter dated 07/26/2023 from Joint Legislative Audit Bureau Committee
 - i. Discussion
 - 1. Phil Ramlet will address each recommendation
 - a. Response due to Joint Legislative Audit Bureau Committee is 08/25/23
 - b. Comment on where we’re at with each recommendation

- c. If action needs to be taken, will respond with what FRNSA will do to accomplish
 - d. Timeline to accomplish recommendations
 - i. Complete by 12/31/23
 - e. Once response is drafted
 - i. Phil Ramlet will send to the Executive Committee members on 08/15/23 or 08/16/23
 - ii. Will copy attorney, Andy Rossmeissl in exchange
 - iii. Phil Ramlet requests responses from Executive Committee be returned to him by 08/18/23
 - iv. Phil Ramlet will submit final response to the Joint Legislative Audit Bureau Committee on 08/24/23
- vi. Menasha Update
 - 1. Kleinschmidt Work Product
 - a. Discussion
 - i. FRNSA will have report, per contract, by the end of the month
 - ii. FRNSA will look at internally and analyze
 - 1. DNR will receive report to review and comment on
 - 2. Will discuss at the October or November board meeting
 - iii. Possibly have a draft report to review prior to release to public
 - 1. Final report can then revised based on comments from FRNSA and DNR
 - a. Would like the opportunity to review before public has access
 - b. Channels 2 and 11 are watching for this report to be released
 - c. FRNSA wants to make sure that report is properly packaged and communicated
 - 2. Verify with attorney, Andy Rossmeissl, to confirm that this would be appropriate
 - iv. Make report public once final draft is available
 - 2. Communication Plan
 - a. Discussion

- i. Once final Board of Directors approval is completed
 - 1. Release report to public
 - 2. Allow 60-90 days for public review
 - a. Public meeting for comments/feedback
- 3. Adjournment:
 - a. Motion to adjourn by Jeff Feldt, seconded by Ron Van De Hey, all approve