

MINUTES

FRNSA Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 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 Romback-Bartels (Board Secretary, DNR), Tom Buchholz (DOT), Daina Penkiunas (SHPO), Dean Haen

Attending: Ron Van De Hey, Jeff Feldt, Tim Short, Bruce Enke, Jean Romback-Bartels, Tom Buchholz, Daina Penkiunas, Dean Haen, Mary Schmidt (Schmidt Communicates), Beth Taubel, Phil Ramlet

Attending Virtually: John Vette, Daina Penkiunas, Steve Erb (Appleton Yacht Club), (2) anonymous callers

Start: 3:05p End: 4:15p

Agenda:

1. Introduction
 - a. Board members went around and stated their name and position
 - b. Mary Schmidt with Schmidt Communicates introduced herself
 1. Board meeting virtual session was opened into the incorrect meeting number
 1. Board meeting virtual session was opened in correct meeting
 - a. The attendees listed above under “Attending Virtually” were then able to join the meeting in progress
2. Review and approval of previous board meeting minutes
 - a. Discuss
 1. Items carried over from June meeting for follow-up
 1. Progress on the Financial Policies and Procedures
 - a. Update
 - i. 2014 Financial Policies and Procedures manual submitted to Chuck Krueger with Hawkins Ash for feedback
 1. Phil Ramlet anticipates that FRNSA is on schedule to have Financial Policies and Procedures manual completed by end of 2023

2. Review bidding process, update as necessary
 - a. Update
 - i. Bidding process will be updated as part of the Financial Policies and Procedures manual
3. Joint Legislative Audit Committee
 - a. Response letter submitted
 - i. Tom Buchholz requested copy of letter submitted to Joint Legislative Audit Committee be sent to all board members
 - ii. Discuss any response
 1. No response received from the Joint Legislative Audit Committee at this time
 - b. Follow up phone calls with Department of Administration (DOA) legal counsel took place on 09/25/23 to discuss Facilities Development
 - i. Phil Ramlet, Tim Short, Ron Van De Hey and Jean Rombach-Bartels were present on the call
 1. Bill Ramsay (DOA) sent revisions and updates to the Draft Operating Agreement
 2. Phil Ramlet will connect with DOA quarterly and submit Board of Directors agenda and minutes monthly
 3. DOA is not interested in maintenance or upkeep projects
 4. DOA wants to be involved in leases, easements, etc
 5. DOA requested a six-year plan from FRNSA
 - a. DOA will help as necessary
 - c. Jeff Feldt motions to approve and accept previous minutes, seconded by Dean Haen, all approve
3. Review and approval of Treasurer's Report – August - Tim Short
 - a. Financial Summary
 1. Expect another decline in September
 2. Funds down 542K
 3. No concern at this time
 - b. Unlock the Fox monthly summary from Associated Bank
 1. Market changes: Minus 382K
 - c. Monthly expense details
 1. Staffing up 50%
 1. Three pay periods in August
 2. Administrative cost down
 1. No liability insurance payments

3. No capital expenses
4. 20K to Kleinschmidt
5. 22.5 to UWGB
6. Maintenance crew will be terminated as of November 4, 2023

4. Executive Director – Phil Ramlet

1. Season Information

1. Discuss

- a. Two more weekends left in the navigational season
 - i. One regular weekend
 - ii. One Free Fall Colors weekend
 - iii. Little Chute and De Pere locks are only locks still open
- b. Boats have almost reached 4000
- c. Phil Ramlet anticipates a 50% increase in revenues from the 2022 navigational season

2. Menasha Lock

1. Update

a. Discuss

- i. Phil Ramlet and Mary Schmidt are working on a list of talking points and common questions/answers
 1. Should be available for the Board of Directors in late September or early October
 2. Key messages to Board of Directors
- ii. Report from Kleinschmidt
 1. Needs to be simplified before release to public
 2. Needs to be put in easily understood words
- iii. Media
 1. Depending on Board of Directors actions, information will be released to media in October or November 2023
 2. Phil Ramlet will be the primary spokesperson
 3. WLUK 11 has shown interest
 - a. No other media outlets have responded to Mary Schmidt in last three years
 - i. No staffing resources to cover basic news
 - b. Will give WLUK 11 exclusive
 - c. Will post story on FRNSA site once WLUK 11 has completed
 - d. Press releases to update on board actions/votes so FRNSA is transparent
 - e. Mary Schmidt has found WLUK 11 to be fair, objective and interested

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- f. FRNSA to reach out next week to talk about where FRNSA is in the process at this time
 - g. Will work with editors to put executive summary on their websites
 - h. Board is comfortable releasing information prior to DNR feedback on 60% design
- iv. Eblast
 - 1. Will be sent out to season ticket buyers, municipalities, etc
- v. FRNSA site will be updated with current information
- vi. Government Leaders
 - 1. Begin one-on-one outreach to government leaders
 - a. Request funding early for state budgeting purposes
 - b. Inquire if leaders can earmark funds for FRNSA
 - c. Why not spend FRNSA money first?
 - i. Not being good stewards if we drain our accounts
 - d. Don't count on getting funds earmarked-go after federal grants
 - i. EPA
 - ii. Restoration
 - iii. Waterways
 - iv. Etc
 - 2. Currently a state surplus
 - a. Go after fund now
 - b. Looking for \$6M
- vii. Kleinschmidt costs
 - 1. Currently FRNSA has spent approximately \$300K on 60% design
 - 2. 40% balance estimated to be an additional \$600-700K
 - 3. Anticipated cost is \$1M
 - a. Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau (FCCVB) has expressed interest in donating to this project
 - 4. FRNSA needs to decide whether they want to spend the money to get final design
 - a. Find out about any environmental process or have an agreement prior to paying for final design

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- b. Input from politicians/interest groups/agencies/public/etc prior to paying for final design
- viii. Informing Winnebago boaters
 - 1. Have special communications with
 - a. Boat sellers
 - b. Newspaper/Media
 - c. FRNSA site
 - d. Connect with Oshkosh Community Foundation
 - e. Eblast
 - f. Etc
- ix. DNR Review
 - 1. Will be included in Board of Directors October 2023 meeting
 - a. Broad media statement shouldn't be released until after DNR review is complete
 - 2. DNR will try to get any questions to FRNSA in advance to try and answer prior to meeting
 - 3. DNR will provide feedback/weaknesses
 - 4. DNR will do their best to see what information would trigger permits
 - a. General permit
 - b. Individual permit
 - i. Difference between the two is the timeline and public feedback
 - 5. List of DNR staff that FRNSA will be working with will be provided
 - a. Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) had no comment or permit concern with the first 60% design a few years ago
 - i. DNR will reach out to check on ACOE interest currently
 - 6. Other Agencies/Groups – FRNSA unsure of who needs to be involved? Who would tell us/advise?
 - a. Tribal agencies
 - b. Federal agencies
 - i. ACOE
 - ii. No Coast Guard involvement
 - c. DOA
 - i. Not interested
 - ii. No expertise
 - iii. Update as necessary
 - d. State agencies
 - e. SHPO

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- i. Daina Penkiunas (SHPO) requested FRNSA submit a request for review form
 - ii. SHPO could then do a review of early stages of planning
 - iii. SHPO comments/preliminary concerns/questions available once project is submitted
 - iv. Final design effects on locks/archeological sites
 - v. Has FRNSA applied for any Federal grants?
 - vi. Have Tribal agencies been consulted or in on discussions?
 - f. Environmental groups/agencies
 - i. What is the process
 - x. Public Meeting
 - 1. Hold in 2024
 - a. Have only one meeting for all
 - b. Keep open for several months for public input
 - 2. Engage environmental groups
 - a. Push back expected
 - b. Big commitment
 - 3. Tom Buchholz has most experience with public input meetings
 - a. Input in outreach plan
 - xi. Summary of anticipated timeline
 - 1. Timeline will be completed once FRNSA receives/reviews DNR's input
 - 2. DNR review to be presented to the Board of Directors at the October 2023 meeting
 - 3. Media fact sheet to be presented to the Board of Directors at the October 2023 meeting
 - 4. Rough timeline – open to change
 - xii. Approval
 - 1. FRNSA to establish an “approval” process
 - 2. Board will give a “conditional approval” to move forward with project
 - 3. Vote date may be moved forward if necessary
 - xiii. All phone calls regarding Menasha project to be routed to Ron Van De Hey
- 3. Grants/donations
 - 1. Review and motion on Nelson Grant Agreement
 - a. Discuss

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- i. Phil Ramlet states that FRNSA is not expected, or required, to complete all portages
 - ii. FRNSA can reapply for grant after a two-year cycle
 - b. Bruce Enke motions to approve acceptance of the Nelson Grant Agreement, seconded by Tom Buchholz, all approve
 - 4. Trip to Montreal
 - 1. Discuss
 - a. Phil Ramlet will travel to Montreal, Quebec, Canada on 09/27/23-10/01/23 due to the east coast goby problem
 - i. Invasive species – goby problem
 - 1. Lake Champlain, VT
 - 2. Hudson River, NY
 - 3. St. Lawrence River, NY
 - 4. Estimate approximately 200M to fix
 - ii. Look at locks
 - iii. Discuss alternatives to keep goby out of Lake Champlain, VT and Hudson River, NY
 - iv. Goby already found in St. Lawrence River, NY
 - v. FRNSA to work together with New York, Vermont, and Quebec
 - 1. Possibly pool resources
 - 2. Work together for government funds
 - 3. Small price to pay for more support
 - vi. Jean Romback-Bartels talks with New York monthly
 - 1. Put Phil Ramlet together with New York and others
 - b. John Vette questions if there is any way to eliminate the goby
 - i. Jean Romback-Bartels states that goby are very difficult to get rid of
 - 1. No biological way to target just goby
 - 5. Capital Projects Committee – Tom Buchholz
 - a. Discussion and approval to pay the following invoices
 - 1. Westwood Invoice 1230801167
 - 1. Tom Buchholz motions to pay Westwood invoice, seconded by Tim Short, all approve
 - 2. Kleinschmidt Invoice 000202308273
 - 1. Contract change approximately two months ago
 - a. Revise 60% design
 - b. Questions to how much money has been allocated since inception
 - i. Phil Ramlet will get accurate number for October Board of Directors meeting
 - c. FRNSA doesn't want any surprise billings

2. Tom Buchholz motions to pay Kleinschmidt invoice, seconded by Tim Short, all approve – Jean Rombach-Bartels abstains

6. Executive Committee – Jeff Feldt

a. Update

1. Items discussed at the September Executive Committee meeting
 1. City of Kaukauna Lease
 2. Community Foundation kayak portage grant
 3. Menasha Update
 4. ETL need for office
 5. Ahlstrom Lease
 6. Compensation recommendation for Phil Ramlet

7. DNR – Jean Rombach-Bartels -

1. Update - ACOE Dry Dock –
 1. No update

8. Fundraising Committee – John Vette

a. Update

1. FRNSA needs to get on the Community Foundation calendars to discuss funding opportunities for the Menasha lock
2. Phil Ramlet has met with Associated Bank and Endries Otto CPA in September to request donations
3. Mary Schmidt is applying for matching grants for portages
4. Mary Schmidt has met with US Venture to request donations
 1. US Venture declined
 2. Mary Schmidt as contact with others at US Venture and will reach out to individual givers

9. Rapide Croche Committee – Bruce Enke

a. Discuss

1. Bruce Enke continues to wait for Phil Ramlet and Tim Bolwerk (Westwood) to reach out with availability to meet at lock
 1. See what, if any, engineering concerns need to be addressed

10. Adjournment

- a. Jeff Feldt motions to adjourn, seconded by Tom Buchholz, all approve

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