

Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Fox River Water Reclamation District held on Monday, January 11, 2021 at the Administration Building at 1957 North LaFox, South Elgin, Illinois. **Due to the Governor's Tier II Covid-19 restrictions which limits meeting size to 10 or fewer people, this meeting is available via Zoom video and audio conference.** Audio of the meeting was recorded. Present in the office was President Bruce Corn. Vice President Benjamin Bernal, Trustee Steve Rauschenberger, and Trustee Marty McCormack were present via zoom.

Staff present in the office included Executive Director Bob Trueblood, Technical Services Director Beth Vogt, Assistant Clerk Kim Narvaiz. Attorney Doug Scheflow was present via Zoom.

President Corn called the meeting to order at 9:16 A.M.

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 14, 2020 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES**

Trustee Hyman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bernal, to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2020 Board of Trustees as written.

There were no questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**APPROVAL OF CASH DISBURSEMENTS**

President Corn read aloud the cash disbursement totals per fund. Disbursements for the Sewer Revenue Fund \$1,057,262.58, Capital Improvement \$2,329,660.49, Depreciation & Replacement \$723,186.16, and Corporate Fund \$60,368.98. Trustee Hyman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bernal, to approve the Cash Disbursements as presented.

There were no questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**REVIEW OF CONNECTION PERMITS**

Technical Services Director Vogt reported that staff issued six commercial, seven industrial, and three single-family permits in between meetings. There was also two single-family permit that was reissued. A total of \$14,050 was collected on Connection Fees. Trustee Corn asked if the Elgin Animal Hospital was just moving into a different location within the same building. Technical Services Director Vogt responded that she believes that to be correct.

Trustee Rauschenberger made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bernal, to approve the Connection Permits as issued. There were no additional questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**REVIEW OF CONTRACTS AND PURCHASE ORDERS**

Executive Director Trueblood reported that there were two purchase orders over \$10,000 issued in between meetings.

- The first was issued to Flow-Technics Inc. for a new mechanical seal and supplies for a pump rebuild at Pump Station 10.
- The second was issued to Polydyne, Inc. for a standard order of polymer based on the contract pricing.

**FOIA REQUESTS**

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION TO APPROVE IEPA LOANS PAYOFF**

Trustee Bernal made a motion, seconded by Trustee Hyman, to authorize Executive Director Trueblood pay off the referenced IEPA Loans as described. Executive Director Trueblood commented that if approved the loans will be paid with investments funds as they mature, funds will not be pulled out early. Trustee Rauschenberger asked what the total amounts were due on each loan. ED Trueblood responded around \$500,000 on the Heat Exchanger which will be paid off with Depreciation and Replacement Funds and around \$620,000 on the Ammonia Storage Loan which will be paid using Capital Improvement Funds. Trustee Bernal asked what the anticipated timeframe was to pay off the loans. ED Trueblood responded depending on how investments mature, he expect to may them off in the next month or so.

There were no additional questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**MOTION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER NO. 4, FOR TIME EXTENSION NO. 1 TO JOSEPH J. HENDERSON AND SON, INC. ON THE NORTH WRF PHOSPHOROUS REMOVAL PROJECT**

Trustee Hyman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Rauschenberger, to approve Change Order No. 4, for Time Extension No. 1 of 60 days to Joseph J. Henderson and Son, Inc. on the North WRF Phosphorous Removal Project. Technical Services Director Vogt commented that the contractor has indicated that they will need about a 5.5 month time extension, however since there is a possibility of additional delays and that extension will exceed the NPDES permit deadline, staff is only requesting a 60 day extension at this time. Then staff, the consultant, and the contractor will work to determine the full extent of time extension needed for the project as well as obtaining an extension of the NPDES permit deadlines.

There were no additional questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**MOTION TO APPROVE COST PROPOSAL NO. 19 TO JOSEPH J HENDERSON AND SON, INC. ON THE NORTH WRF PHOSPHOROUS REMOVAL PROJECT**

Trustee Rauschenberger made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bernal, to approve Cost Proposal Request No. 19 to Joseph J Henderson and Son, Inc. on the North WRF Phosphorous Removal Project.

There were no questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**MOTION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 TO INDEPENDENT MECHANICAL INDUSTRIES, INC. ON THE ADP WRF BUILDING 10, 13, AND 35 HVAC IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT**

Trustee Hyman made a motion, seconded by Trustee McCormack, to approve Change Order No. 1 for the ADP WRF Building 10, 13, and 35 HVAC Improvements Project to Independent Mechanical Industries, Inc. Technical Services Director Vogt commented that this Change Order wraps up previously approved cost proposals prior to finalizing the project. Trustee Bernal asked if the delays in the project were due to materials or more related to Covid-19. TSD Vogt responded that there were a number of small issues such as a problem with the thermostat, an air handling unit and interconnection of new equipment to existing controls. She continued that overall staff is pleased with only a \$13,000 change order for a \$1 million project.

There were no additional questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**MOTION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 TO THIENEMAN CONSTRUCTION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF PUMP STATION 31**

Trustee Hyman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bernal, to approve Change Order No. 1 to Thieneman Construction Inc. Technical Services Director Vogt reiterated that this finalizes a net decrease in the contract of approximately \$144,000. Trustee Rauschenberger asked if the problems with the impellers has been fixed. TSD Vogt responded that the new impellers are installed and in use. Currently staff is trying to figure out a way to test the capacity of the station however without rain or high river water, but it may have to wait until spring when these events occur naturally. Trustee Rauschenberger asked how often does the District reach the 16.5 mgd required flow capacity. TSD Vogt responded last year it happened 4-6 times, it all depends on weather events. Executive Trueblood commented that it will happen fewer times once the City of Elgin fixes the river backflow issue downtown.

There were no additional questions or comments; President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

**TECHNICAL SERVICES REPORT**

Technical Services Director Vogt reported that the District is still waiting on a permit from IDOT regarding the Pump Station 38 Forcemain repair. Staff did receive some comments on 1/8/21 that staff should be able to address quickly through Trotter and Associates.

Technical Services Director reported that the IAWA Technical Committee held a webinar meeting on January 8<sup>th</sup>. Most of the discussions were in regards to the Covid-19 vaccine and what the private vs public sectors can and cannot mandate in regards to the vaccine.

Lastly TSD Vogt commented that the IAWA Legislative Subcommittee will begin meeting again as the Illinois Legislature gets back into session. If there are any trustees that would like to get on the mailing list for calendar invites to attend the teleconference, let her know. The committee is hoping to push for some movement on disposable wipes to get some statewide legislation on how they are labeled.

**STAFF REPORT OF ONGOING STUDY, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

Technical Services Director Vogt provided a written update on all projects. TSD Vogt commented that Pump Station 31 is essentially complete. There will be one more payment made to the contractor for retainage. At the North WRF there have been a lot of shut downs while piping connections are being completed for the Phosphorus Removal improvements. Staff is expecting a longer contract extension on this project due to Covid-19 as well as the headstones that were found and delayed the mixing basins for a few weeks.

At ADP WRF the Struvite project is moving along. Electrical work is almost complete and exterior paving has been finished. On the Liquid Project, the contractor is working on pouring

walls of the mixing basins and foundations for the fermenter facility for the ADP Liquid phosphorus removal project.

On the blower project, the contractor in finalizing the installation and controls of the first two blower replacement units and then will move on the final two. Lastly, everything has been submitted to the numerous permitting departments to start back up the river crossing project. Staff is hoping to hear back and receive some permits soon to begin work in this calendar year.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Trueblood reported that staff continues to do a good job following safety guidelines by wearing masks and social distancing. ED Trueblood continued that sewer treatment workers have fallen back a tier in line for the Covid-19 vaccine as their interaction with the public is less than other essential workers. Management is still monitoring the roll-out and is hoping to be able to get the vaccine distributed onsite like the District does the flu shot. In the meantime, he encourages employees who are able to get the vaccine for other qualifying reasons to do so when available.

The November 2020 financial statements prepared by Porte Brown were provided to the Board members. Executive Director Trueblood discussed a few items in the report including that revenues are currently up, and operating expenses are significantly down. A few things that contribute to the reduced operating expenses are salaries for positions that have not been filled and travel and training expenses are next to nothing as Covid-19 stopped all in person conferences and most trainings for 2020.

Executive Director commented that earlier this meeting the Board approved the pay off of two IEPA loans as the interest rates on these loans are higher than current investment interest rates. Trustee Bernal asked what staff will do about the District partners that also contribute to those loan payments. ED Trueblood responded that staff will present them with the option to pay off their balance in full or continue to make the bi-annual payments as they would have if the loan continued to be in repayment. Trustee Bernal asked what will be done with the additional funds that are freed up once these two loans are paid off. ED Trueblood commented that there are additional IEPA loans that the District has had to begin paying back this past year, so there are really no extra funds.

Next Executive Director Trueblood commented that the Fiscal Year 2022 budget will be discussed with the Board members at the next Board meeting. Items to note on the new budget are that, as expected, salaries and health insurance will increase. There will also be a significant increase in Depreciation and Replacement as more assets are added to depreciate, as well as a jump in debt services as more IEPA Loans go into repayment. ED Trueblood would like to complete another rate study in the near future to get an idea of what the user rate should look like to fund debt services better.

Staff is growing increasingly more aggravated with the stolen check issue as Chase and Fifth/Third bank are dragging their feet to get the money back to the District.

Executive Director commented that management has reviewed the current wage structure that was implemented in 2018. On average employees fell 1.5% below the average salary from the IAWA survey. Health insurance benefits, which are extremely good at the District, are not taken into consideration when looking at these salary studies. ED Trueblood will be working with HR Manager Venegas and management staff to review each employee's salary and pay grade to see what changes should be made at this time.

Lastly, Executive Director commented that the employee out of pocket health reimbursements are due to HR Manager Venegas by January 29<sup>th</sup>. They will be reviewed for approval and paid out to employees at the next Board Meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Attorney Scheflow provided copies of his December 31<sup>st</sup> invoice detailing services rendered for the month including a written report with further explanation. Attorney Scheflow commented that he would answer any questions Board members may have.

**ADJOURN**

As there was no additional business, Trustee Bernal made a motion, seconded by Trustee Hyman, to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 A.M. The next meeting is scheduled for 9:00 A.M. Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021. President Corn called for a Roll Call vote. Trustees Corn: Aye, Bernal: Aye, Hyman: Aye, Rauschenberger: Aye, McCormack: Aye.

Respectfully Submitted

Kim Narvaiz, Assistant Clerk

APPROVED:

Bruce R. Corn, President

Gary Hyman, Clerk-Treasurer