

**ROCK RIVER WATERSHED GROUP
MEETING MINUTES
FOUR RIVERS SANITATION AUTHORITY
JANUARY 12, 2022**

Greg Cassaro called the Rock River Watershed Group to order at 10:00AM. The meeting was held in the Board Room at the Graceffa Administration Building, 3501 Kishwaukee Street, Rockford, Illinois. Non-voting members attended through GoToMeeting, Board members attended in person.

Attendees responded to roll call.

Board members present: Greg Cassaro, FRSA; Jeff Reininger, South Beloit; Dan Barber, Rockton; Anne George, Woodstock; Brent Anderson, Belvidere; Josh McNitt, Dixon; Michael Christensen, FRSA; Sean Von Bergen, Winnebago County; Jim Grant, Harvard; Jim Mangum, Marengo.

Also in attendance was Pat Kelsey of Fehr-Graham.

Cassaro opened the floor for discussion of last month's meeting minutes.

Cassaro asked that a motion be made to approve the minutes.

Barber made the motion.

Grant seconded.

Cassaro called for a vote.

All AYE's were declared.

Minutes from last month's meeting are approved.

Cassaro turned the floor over to Barber for the Treasurer's Report. The current account balance sits at \$170,521.19. At the previous meeting, Barber stated that he had been in contact with the accounting firm Siepert about taking care of any tax forms that the RRWG needs to have completed. After receiving the final estimated cost for Siepert to take care of the federal taxes 990 as well as the CO1 and CO2 forms, the Group determined that a NTE purchase of \$2500 to Siepert should cover all necessary expenses.

Cassaro asked that a motion be made to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Anderson made the motion.

McNitt seconded.

Cassaro called for a vote.

All AYE's were declared.

Treasurer's Report is approved.

The next item on the agenda pertains to the pending status of the Marengo and Harvard membership. Grant stated that Harvard will be able to put forth their dues after May 1. This would

include both the current 21-22 dues as well as the upcoming 22-23 dues. Barber noted that the 22-23 dues have not yet been set.

Cassaro asked that a motion be made to accept Harvard to the Group and receive their dues payment in May.

Barber made the motion.

George seconded.

Cassaro called for a vote.

All AYES were declared.

Harvard is approved as a Group member and will submit their dues after May 1.

Mangum notified the Group that he has met with the council of his POTW and has been approved to join the RRWG. Mangum is aware that dues are required retroactively and will be submitting dues for both fiscal years. Both Marengo and Harvard have agreed to send a letter of intent with signatures from their board authorizing the membership. Marengo and Harvard were also instructed to send their sampling data to Geosyntec for analysis as it pertains to the NARP.

Cassaro asked that a motion be made to accept Marengo to the Group.

Reininger made the motion.

Christensen seconded.

Cassaro called for a vote.

All AYES were declared.

Marengo is approved as a Group member.

With the last item in Old Business, Cassaro informed the Group that no responses have been received by any of the entities that received an open enrollment invitation letter.

Moving on to New Business, Cassaro turned the floor over to Fred Andes of Barnes & Thornburg. Andes provided a brief synopsis of his experience in working with the IEPA and with several groups that are in the process of developing NARPs. Andes alerted the Group that the IEPA may be pushing for stringent phosphorous ranges of 0.1 or 0.2. He also noted that phosphorous may not be the only target and that the IEPA may be looking into other stressors to the watershed. Most of the work completed by the Watershed Group is going to be technical – gathering data, testing and analysis, and working with a consultant to help draft the NARP and negotiate with the IEPA on data targets. If the IEPA determines targets that a group feels is not feasible, experienced environmental lawyers can help communicate with the IEPA to find a middle ground. However, Andes noted that the IEPA could be amenable to deadline extensions if the watershed group is showing true and continuous progress, rather than groups rushing through the NARP to try to make their permit date. Cassaro asked if the IEPA could be convinced to consolidate NARP due dates given that some members have a due date for 2023 and others for 2024. Andes responded that the IEPA would be open to making that accommodation as they have experienced that situation before. Andes stressed that when in conversation with the IEPA about the Group's progress and any possibility of an extension, emphasize on the data and do not use the Group's financial feasibility as a reason for delay. In summation, Andes told the Group to keep the IEPA as up to date as possible so that if they have any concerns with the process, there's room and time to address these and make any necessary changes.

The next item in New Business is that of the Group's annual meeting. Cassaro reminded the Group that per the bylaws, the Group should title one of the monthly meetings as the Annual Meeting and it is there that the next fiscal year's dues are set. The budget for implementing the workplan will be a key part in the calculations of dues. Cassaro asked that the Group keep this in mind for when the Annual Meeting is set.

The Group moved on to the Report of Subcommittees. Trotter was absent from the meeting and unable to present an update on the RRWG website. He sent a list of discussion topics for the website that the Group determined would be a lengthy discussion and would prefer to have more time to review the topics before conferring.

Cassaro asked that a motion be made to table the website discussion until next month, providing members time to come prepared with any answers or comments.

Barber made the motion.

Christensen seconded.

Cassaro called for a vote.

All AYES were declared.

The website discussion has been tabled until the next meeting.

The subcommittee was next to present to the Group a summation of their meeting earlier that morning. Lanning and Kelsey participated in several conference calls with the team at ISU and they are very interested in involving their students to help with the sampling. The discussion led to the determination that the students would be hired as interns to help collect the samples from the watershed and maintain the Sonde units. Most of the students in the program at ISU come from the surrounding area so are familiar with it and reside fairly close making the sampling trips more accessible. The hiring of these undergrad students to do the sampling would be in relation to whichever engineering firm we award the sampling RFP to.

Additionally, Kelsey gave each member a copy of the draft workplan that his firm has compiled. It is currently in a review state by his team. Fehr-Graham would like for the RRWG to take the draft and review it, and pose any questions or comments on the workplan to a Group email chain prior to February 1.

Action items for next meeting include looking over Trotter's website questions. The Group was also asked to consider the annual meeting and due structure requirements for the next fiscal year. Harvard and Marengo will be submitting their letter of intent and their sampling data to Geosyntec. The Group must also review the draft workplan.

With no further discussion, the Group will next meet on **Wednesday, February 9th at 10:00AM.**

Cassaro asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Reininger made the motion.

McNitt seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 10:59AM.