

February 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Approved April 3, 2025



Advisory Committee

(appointed by Board of Directors)

Via Zoom Video Conference Call and In-Person

Fox Waterway Agency
45 S Pistakee Lake Rd
Fox Lake, IL 60020

----- Minutes -----

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Smarto

Meeting called to order at 7:01 P.M. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

2.0 Roll Call

Secretary Basten

Present: Pat Smarto, Anne Basten, Rob Bryson, John Fischer, Holly Garvey, and Don Schnurr

Present via Zoom: Tom Fernstrom, and Greg Urban

Staff Present: Rob Bowman

Others Present: Director Chris Stochl and Tom Morgan

Absent: Police, Pam Althoff, David Corrigan, John Maguire, and Rob Rinkenberger

Excused Jason Hettermann and Mike Missak

3.0 Review of Minutes and subsequent comment/corrections/approval

The Draft minutes of November 7, 2024, were provided to the members in advance for review or approval.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of November 7, 2024

Motion: Rob Bryson

Second: Holly Garvey

Motion carried

4.0 Reports

4.1 FWA Update - Rob Bowman reported on three months of board meetings where the following was approved:

2025 meeting schedules

The purchase of a 2023 service truck which was then sold out from under the agency due to timing

Discussion on a lease with the Smokehouse Dispensary for piers and passed in December

Audit approved to proceed with Dam, Snell & Taverine CPA

The Dredging policy was reviewed and the 2024 completed projects were summarized

2025 preliminary budget was presented but sent back for revisions to be made by staff

There was a report of public complaints about someone breaking ice with a barge on Lake Marie which was investigated, and it turns out there is no law preventing someone from breaking ice and using the water.

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The Field Crew has been emptying Cooper's east cell and moving the soil to Wall St which they hope to have completed by the 2nd week of April and then it is hopeful that the cell is recertified to accept dredge materials.

Permits are being finalized for the pole barns in Lake County and once approved, staff will be doing ground prep once the permits are in hand.

Tom Fernstrom asked about dredging down river and there is currently no suitable parcel of land identified to pursue dredge material dewatering down river. The previous parcel was sold after backlash from the surrounding public with the proceeds used to secure the Wall St property. Rob Bowman shared that discussions have been had with McHenry County Conservation District and Lake County Forest Preserve District with no viable land being made available as of this date.

4.2 Regional (Upper/Lower/Lakes)

It was noted that the River itself is currently open with most channels and bays being iced in. Holly Garvey noted how much glass she was able to pull out in an area by her. Don't go barefoot! It was noted that an ice fishing derby was scheduled for February 8th. Rob Bryson reported seeing a fox on the ice by his house.

5.0 Old Business

5.1 Volunteer Coordination Update

Anne Basten will continue to work to reach out to volunteers and find out what they want to be involved with. Still looking for partnership for supporting a volunteer coordinator position. Additional volunteers are needed for odd jobs around the office and sites.

5.2 Green Infrastructure Grant Update

Rob Bryson added information on a ComEd Green Grant that might be of interest to 501 (c) 3 groups wishing to implement water quality improvement projects. It was noted that the Petite Lake HOA group did not receive additional grants yet besides the Lake Co SMA grant. They are proceeding with the project.

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5.3 FWA Social Media Policy Creation

This item is on hold for now.

5.4 Website Updates/Fix/Redesign

No progress has been made on this as bugs from the new sticker program have been the priority. If any members of the Advisory Committee or public have suggestions for links to be added to the Resources Page, please forward them to Rob Bryson.

5.5 Video Update – Future Topics – Report Card

The current Report Card was shared. We currently have 161 subscribers and 6050 views of the YouTube channel. 57,171 views on those videos shared on Facebook. (Not all videos have been shared on Facebook) Any suggestions for additional video topics should be directed to Rob Bryson or Pat Smarto.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Sticker Fulfillment

Anne Basten reported that the front office staff were pretty well caught up on all the sticker renewal payments received to date now that the majority of the glitches have been fixed and with volunteer help stuffing envelopes. They may need additional last minute help come spring and near holidays as purchases in person increase. Satellite site sales have not yet started or set up.

6.2 ILMA Summit

Rob Bryson will be giving a presentation on the steps used for our watershed based plan and the implementation at this conference in March.

6.3 Lake County Forest Preserve Project Update

Joe Keller, Pat Smarto and Rob Bryson met with Executive Director Ty Kovach and Board President Jessica Vealitzek where they discussed recommendations from the watershed based plan as they relate to the Forest Preserves. No commitments were made.

6.4 Northern Illinois Boat Show

Chairwoman Smarto will send out a draft schedule for our booth at the boat show scheduled for 2/26 through 3/2/25. All Advisory Committee members are encouraged to sign up for one or more shifts. Several QR codes will be created to steer those interested to the various pages of the current website related to the waterway along with some of the videos and handouts used previously. Pat Smarto will work with Rob Bryson and Rob Bowman to organize.

6.5 2025 Clean up

We are hopeful that we can get some of the volunteers to organize this year's clean up. Maybe have a booth at the April 26th Earth Day event in Fox Lake?

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6.6 Bauske Boat Basin

The FWA is in the process of closing on the purchase of land known as the Bauske Boat Basin along Rt 12 in Fox Lake on the West side of the river. Plans are in works for about 5 or 6 acres out of the 10 that are out of the flood plain. There are options for Bauske to lease back part of the property for a while.

7.0 Member Comments

U of I Internship Opportunity - Rob Bryson is working with Joe Keller and another organization for a possible internship support to investigate weed management on the chain.

8.0 Public Comments

Tom Morgan spoke about his involvement with the Lake Lovers group in Lake County and the Xylem testing tool they will be using for additional testing on lakes this summer. Rob Bowman offered to take Mr. Morgan around to all the Lakes on the chain to test if they group was interested in obtaining that data. They will discuss this later after Mr. Morgan speaks with his group.

9.0 Adjournment – 8:15 p.m.

Motion: Rob Bryson
Second: Holly Garvey
Motion carried