

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**February 15, 2017**

PURSUANT to written notice given all members of the Board, the above meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Parish, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board members present: President Parish, Secretary Jensen, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President Johnson, and Treasurer Elliott

Board members absent: 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Murphy

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the Minutes of the January 18, 2017, Regular Public Meeting as presented. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and Monthly Disbursements in the amount of \$105,208.26 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$27,925.66. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish "AYE"; and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:** No audience.

**PRIOR BUSINESS:**

**1. Rock Springs Playground Improvements**

Paul Marien updated the Board on the Rock Springs playground project. He presented the project idea to the Conservation Foundation Board and they were very excited about fundraising for the project. The Marketing and Fundraising Committees met and established a goal of \$60,000 as a target, which would fund about half of the cost of the playground. Trustee Murphy has offered her expertise help with the fundraising to assist the Foundation Board. The next step will be working with the architect to construct a clearer drawing of the project to present to potential donors. Paul explained that the District Board will have input on the design. The expenses will be paid through the District with the Foundation transferring funds raised to the District at fiscal yearend. He also suggested that the year-end appeal has never been ear-marked for any projects and maybe that should be a consideration. Trustee Elliot questioned if the Conservation Foundation is required to distribute 5% of their assets annually as a non-for-profit. Paul will look into the matter. The Foundation's Finance Committee will be meeting prior to their Board meeting on March 16, 2017. Trustee Elliot wondered if the Foundation Board had considered applying for grants but Paul informed the Board that they had not discussed a strategy at this point. Paul will keep the Board apprised of the progress.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. Budget Study Session:**

Paul Marien reminded the Board that they must hold a budget study session and typically that has been done right before the regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board unanimously agreed that 4:00 p.m. on March 15, 2017, would work. It will be a separate meeting from the regularly scheduled meeting at 5:30 p.m. and is considered a public meeting.

### **2. Travel Expense Reimbursement Act:**

Paul Marien informed the Board that a law had been passed affecting all local governments requiring a resolution to be implemented for reimbursing employees and Board members for out-of-pocket expenses. He stated that this is very minimal for the District since Shane Ravelette, Richie Wolf and himself have company credit cards that are used by all staff. The District's attorney drafted the resolution with Paul establishing the dollar thresholds. If an employee and/or Board member exceeds the threshold, Board approval must be obtained for reimbursement. Trustee Parish questioned if this applied to company credit cards. Paul explained that the District already had a credit card policy in place and this only applies to actual reimbursements to the employee/Board member directly for expenses they incur out of their own pocket. Some discussion followed if the dollar amounts were adequate but Trustee Elliott suggested that it could be revisited if proved to be inadequate. All Board members agreed with her suggestion.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the Travel Expense Reimbursement Act Resolution as presented. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish "AYE"; and Trustee Elliott "AYE"; and Motion carried.

### **3. Recreational Trails Program Grant:**

Shane Ravellette is applying for a federal grant to repair bike trail decking. The maximum the District can receive is \$200,000. Shane is applying for the maximum with the grant paying 80%. The application process was started ten days ago but waiting on some specific numbers to proceed. There will be a form that the Board President needs to sign. Since the deadline is April 4, 2017, the form will have to be presented to President Parish at his office. Trustee Jensen wondered how many bridges belonged to the District. There are three bridges on District property. Even if the grant is not awarded to the District, Shane explained that the work still needs to be done. If one of these bridges goes out, the entire system is down. The bike trail opened up in 1996 and is in need of repair. The Board gave approval to Shane to proceed with the grant process.

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve application for the Recreational Trails Program Grant. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish "AYE"; and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

#### 4. Staff Reports:

Paul Marien, Katherine Unruh, and Bill Clevenger met with the director of Ride Illinois to discuss a possible event scheduled for June 2018 focusing on "Looking for Lincoln." They are looking for a location feasible for a convenient stop over for one to two nights. Friends Creek is the only logistically site the District can offer. Paul will keep the Board updated. The IACD conference was scheduled for Thursday – Friday with Shane Ravellette, Katherine Unruh and himself on the organizing committee. Ed Cross will be the IDNR liaison to IACD. Paul reported that Ameren had completed the transmission line at Sand Creek but left the site a mess. Shane Ravellette is working on submitting costs to restore the area to how it looked before they installed the transmission line.

Richie Wolf suggested the Board look at the Audubon Exhibit that was now completed in the exhibit hall. Audubon also is sponsoring a bus for ten schools to be used for a field trip to Rock Springs Nature Center. The Festival of Spring will be held on April 22, 2017 from noon to 4:00 p.m. The Sangamon River cleanup will be from 10:00 am to noon.

Shane Ravellette reported with a slow winter, staff had been performing equipment repairs. At Sand Creek, staff has been proactively identifying troubled trees along the trails. At Friends Creek, the maintenance shop was cleaned and a large oak tree was taken down. Natural Resources rented a tree shearer to assist with taking down the dead red pine trees at Rock Springs Conservation Area.

Pam Smith reported that all the required payroll taxes had been filed before the January 31, 2017 deadline. Budget was compiled for administration review. Preparation had been completed for the annual worker's compensation audit to be held on February 22, 2017.

#### 5. Other

Paul Marien reported that the Foundation had been invited to apply for a Clean Energy Public Amenities Grant for up to \$5,500.00. Paul suggested that up to \$5000.00 could be used to install a new parking lot at Willow Branch and the other \$500 has to be used for some type of activity or event at the location. The Grant application is due March 2, 2017.

**COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:** No comments from the Trustees.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Jensen **MOVED** to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 6:22 p.m. Trustee Johnson **SECONDED** the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

ATTEST: Norman H. Jensen  
Secretary

James R.  
President