

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
May 17, 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, Treasurer Elliott and 1st Vice President Murphy, 2nd Vice President Johnson and Secretary Jensen
Board members absent: None

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve the Minutes of the April 19, 2017, Regular Public Meeting as presented. Trustee Jensen 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 \$ 102,791.27 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$33,301.19. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE", and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE: None

PRIOR BUSINESS:

1. Rock Springs Playground

Paul Marien reviewed the most recent update of the playground design. The new design is made of wood and designed to last a long time, meets safety and accessibility standards. Trustee Elliott questioned the cost of the playground equipment with Paul responding that the double tower would cost approximately \$32,000.00 and the climbing rock approximately \$20,000.00. Paul said the entire playground with hardscape, stone sitting wall and everything else would cost approximately \$125,000.00 for a complete makeover. Trustee Jensen questioned how much the playground was being used. Paul stated that he just saw two busloads of school children unload yesterday and during their free time, they are all over the playground. After some discussion, the Board members were all in agreement that they liked the new design and gave Paul authority to proceed. They complimented him on a great job. The concept design will need to be presented to the Foundation Board. Trustee Murphy commented that she had spoken with Nancy Fritz and she expressed an interest in Richard Fritz's memorial funds to be designated toward the playground. Trustee Murphy suggested a plaque on the rock.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Archer Deer Herd Management Program Recommendations:

Natural Resource Specialist, Ethan Snively presented the Deer Herd Management report to the Board reviewing the process. The season was from October 21 through December 16, 2016 with a pre-season drawing held. Individuals not drawn at that lottery could enter into the weekly drawing. Deer harvest was down from last year but the population remains stable. Fewer participants and warm weather contributed to the decrease. Trustee Jensen wondered how the hunters know their boundaries and Ethan informed him that all hunters receive maps for each site outlining the hunting boundaries. He reported that all materials are also available online. He emphasized that hunting does not interfere with the public. Trustee Parish questioned what happens if all the hunters hunt at the same time and same place but Ethan assured him that there is never ten hunters at the same spot at the same time. Staff recommends continuing the program with the same parameters as the 2016 program with one change that tree stands removed by the District staff because of rule violations will be held for 30 days, after which it will be considered abandoned property and will be disposed of. Ethan reported he was pleased with the job Joy Potter had done in streamlining the application process and was happy how smoothly the program is run. The application process had been changed from having to complete four different applications to completing one for all hunting sites. Trustee Murphy complimented him on the data collected and the charts presented in his report.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve Ethan's recommendation to continue with the program with the change in handling of deer stand removals as presented. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

2. MCK CONTRACT RENEWAL:

Pam Smith presented the contract renewal for technology services with May, Cocagne, & King, P.C. (MCK). The District has been with MCK numerous years and have been pleased with the service they provide. With the assistance of Helen Ferguson, it was determined that the number of hours needed for their services would be 75 hours. This year the District will be installing a new server so more hours will be required than what was used last year. Last year 51 hours were budgeted and almost all those hours were used. Pam recommends renewing the contract with MCK for 75 hours at the hourly rate of \$110.00 an hour, which remains the same as last year's rate.

Trustee Murphy MOVED to approve the annual contract with May, Cocagne & King for 75 hours at \$110.00 an hour as presented. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE", and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

3. Delta Dental Renewal:

Pam Smith reviewed the Delta Dental renewal for another two years, July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019 at the same rate as the current rate. The current rate is \$24.65 per single employee and \$77.34 for family coverage. The monthly premium will remain at \$1,279.96 including the part-time employees. Pam reported that there have been no complaints about the insurance and recommends renewing the contract for another two years.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the two year agreement with Delta Dental as presented. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE", and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

4. Tractor Purchase:

Shane Ravellette reviewed the need for the District to purchase a new John Deer 5100E land management tractor with loader to replace a 1994 Ford 5640 tractor/loader. This piece of equipment is not large enough and is uncomfortable to operate. This equipment is needed for the Friends Creek Conservation Area. Shane is proud of the excellent care that the staff has given to the equipment and a trade-in value of \$12,500 reflects the care it was given. The purchase will be from SAHW of Monticello through the Rock Island County Grounds Care Equipment negotiated purchase contract.

The base price is \$64,820.64 which Shane is comfortable with especially since it is below the anticipated price. The net cost to the District will be \$52,320.00, which has been budgeted. Staff recommend purchase of the John Deer tractor for land management at the Friends Creek Conservation Area.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the purchase of the John Deer 5100E Tractor with loader from SAHW of Monticello for \$64,820.62 with a trade-in price of \$12,500.00 for a net cost to the District of \$52,320.00. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE", and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

5. Auer Property Easement Option Proposal:

Paul Marien received a proposal from Prairie Power, Inc., to purchase right-of-way easement to replace power poles at the Auer Property. Although this is Conservation Foundation property, Paul wanted to present the proposal to the District Board since he would like for the District's attorney to review the proposal. Paul had the District's farm manager with Busey Bank, Nick Suess, review the proposal and he had questions that he felt needed to be addressed by an attorney. They will be replacing pole for pole but because of federal regulations for higher voltage they are requesting 50 feet. There will be no concrete foundation or digging involved. Paul was unsure how they came up with the dollar amount and wants to be sure there is no violation of the Auer Trust. After some discussion, the Board agreed for Paul to proceed with having the attorney review, as well as having Trustee Parish review in addition to the attorneys on the Foundation Board. There were no objections to having Paul proceed.

6. Energy Contract Renewal:

Paul Marien reported that the current energy contract ends in December and Dale Synder with Seven Utility Management Consultants recommends locking in a rate now for 36 months. Paul reviewed a report provided by the consultant indicating a \$340.00 annual savings. It is a little higher but will be locked in for three years, not knowing what will happen to the rates going forward. Staff recommend renewing the three-year contract at the current rate.

Trustee Murphy MOVED to approve renewing the 36 month contract with Homefield Energy at the current rate as presented. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE", and Trustee Elliott "AYE". Motion carried.

Dale Synder is also requesting a new client agreement with the Conservation District to update signature from Kathy Merner to Paul Marien. Board approval is needed for the change.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve updating the signature on the contract to Paul Marien. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

7. Staff Reports:

Shane Ravellette gave highlights for the month of May for his operations staff: Rock Spring Conservation site tech drove the tractor for the Spring Festival wagon rides; the old maintenance shop was torn down at Griswold Conservation Area, staff have been removing invasive species at Sand Creek Conservation Area and staff were busy getting ready to open the campground at Friends Creek Conservation Area.

Richie Wolf reported that the Festival of Spring was a success. The Monarch exhibit is now open and the murals completed by the school competition will be on display through September. Staff have ordered live caterpillars to have on display. Trustee Murphy asked for staff to notify her when they have arrived. Richie reported that summer camp begins June 5th and the first concert of the new "concert series" will be held on June 4th. Herald and Review will be doing a story on the series.

Paul Marien gave a summarized Director's report. The Illinois Association of Conservation Districts held their annual meeting but there was not much to report from the meeting. A spring wildflower hike was held on May 5th, sponsored by the Macon County Conservation Foundation. There were twenty registrants and Jeff Tish did a great job leading the hike. Paul spoke at the Izaak Walton League's annual meeting. The local chapter donates \$500.00 to the District annually. The Macon County Conservation Foundation was awarded a Public Amenities & Event Grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation. The grant will pay up to \$5,000.00 for an improvement at Willow Branch and up to \$500.00 to sponsor an event at the site. The District is planning on installing a small parking lot at the site and host a school event.

Pam Smith reported that most of the month was spent preparing for the audit to be conducted on May 24th and May 25th. The administrative office is now equipped with an EMV card reader (a reader that will accept the new "chip" cards). This will shift the liability of fraud from us to the vendor. The FY2018 Budget & Appropriation Ordinance was filed with the County and published in the Herald & Review.

8. Other:


Paul Marien announced that the District had been accepted for the Clean Energy Grant to purchase the Rannebarger Property. The District will receive \$368,000 toward the purchase and should close on the property by the end of June. Trustee Parish asked if the grain bins will be removed that is located on the property. Paul stated that after his crop this year the tenant will remove all equipment at which time the District can start the restoration process. The District will receive half the proceeds from the crops. All the structures located on the property will be removed but Paul is hoping to find someone who may have an interest in the lumber. Paul stated that a photo mount will be set up to get before and after pictures of the process. The District has 24 months in which to complete the requirements of the grant.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:

Trustee Murphy asked if the Board's nomination of David White for the new Board member was on schedule. Trustee Parish reported that he had delivered the nomination to the County Board and will be next month (June) before officially approved. It was suggested that David White be invited to the June Board meeting and receive a packet as well.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Jensen MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 6:46 p.m. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.



President

ATTEST: Norman H. Jensen
Secretary