

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

December 21, 2016

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, Treasurer Elliott and 2nd Vice-President Johnson

Board members absent: 1st Vice President Murphy

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve the Minutes of the November 16, 2016, 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 \$147,837.40 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$4,120.75. 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: None.

PRIOR BUSINESS:

1. Rock Springs Playground

Paul Marien reported that he had hired Massie & Massie to draft a concept for the playground at Rock Springs Nature Center. A drawing of the concept was presented to the Board members for review. Paul commented that it was a completely new design and the architect took out the "squareness" of the current design. The design included rock climbing, a treehouse, tree stump walkway and would expand the site to connect to each of the two pavilions. The architect included a stone/concrete edging that would provide seating around the play area. He reported at this point, he did not have an estimate of the cost of the plan. Trustee Parish questioned if there would have to be much re-grading done. Paul reported that very little would have to be done and very little tree removal would be required. Trustee Elliott suggested a sculpture garden and Paul stated that it could be optional. Trustee Parish and Trustee Jensen also suggested adding a line rope bridge to the area. After some discussion, the Board unanimously like the design and gave Paul authority to continue with the design phase. Paul reported that he would forward the design to Trustee Murphy.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Campground Report:

Shane Ravellette reviewed the Campground Report for the summer of 2016 and reported it was similar to last year's report. He reported that two contributing factors to a good summer was first, that the weekend weather was very pleasant and secondly, that there was no turnover in staff this year. The revenue generated was the second strongest year but did incur some higher expenditures due to remodeling of the comfort station. The result of the remodeling contributed to campers staying longer. Shane reminded the Board that the District doesn't operate with a profit in mind but does keep track of the financials from year to year and he reported that there has been an upward climb. Trustee Johnson wondered if there was a dumping charge for individuals if they didn't camp at the campground, and Shane's response was "no." Staff did not have any recommendations for changes for the next summer but would continue to operate as efficiently as possible.

2. Lake Decatur Emergency Action Plan:

Shane Ravellette and Paul Marien attended a meeting at the Civic Center to discuss the City of Decatur's Lake Decatur Emergency Action Plan in case of dam failure. The District's role in the plan would be relatively minor in event of public safety regarding the bicycle trail. Defining communication would play an important factor. There is already a communication plan in place for notifying the District when the City is releasing water from the dam and the city constantly monitors water levels both up and downstream. At the moment the City is releasing water to obtain winter pool levels. Some discussion followed concerning the estimated time needed to prepare for disaster. Paul will keep the Board apprised of updates in the future.

3. Chestnut Agreement:

Pam Smith briefly explained that the District just completed their second year offering the Employee Assistance Program free to employees. The second year did see a slight increase in usage. The contract with Chestnut Global Partners is renewed each January for the calendar year. It is time for the District to renew the contract for January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017, for \$1000.00, which is the same cost as the previous years. The cost to use their training services will increase from \$200.00 an hour to \$250.00, but we are not obligated to use their training services. Staff recommends renewing the contract with Global Chestnut for the 2017 calendar year for \$1000.00.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the one-year agreement with Chestnut Global partners for \$1,000.00 for January 2017 thru December 2017. Trustee Johnson 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:

Richie Wolf reported that management had decided to close the Rock Springs Nature Center at noon on Saturday due to the icy weather. Richie reported that there were 108 in attendance for the Volunteer Holiday Luncheon and commended Jenny Garver on doing a fantastic job. He reported that six murals had been received for the Monarch Mural contest and the winner will receive an all-expense paid trip for the class to Rock Springs Nature Center. Sue Scherer sponsored the program. The winner will be announced on January 4, 2017. As far as upcoming projects, he reported that new

carpeting would be laid downstairs and in the part-time naturalist's office. Plans are also being considered for remodeling the information island.

Shane Ravellette reported that his staff had been busy clearing trails at Sand Creek, and plans are underway for oak tree replacement at Friends Creek. The Natural Resource staff have been busy collecting prairie seeds. He reported that ADA automated doors were to be installed at the entrance of the Nature Center due to a memorial donation given to the District. This was a much needed improvement.

Pam Smith reported that the District had received notice that the transitional relief for small groups had been extended to December 31, 2017 and after that the District will have to have an ACA (Affordable Care Act) compliant plan by January 1, 2018. The District can lock their current rate it for another three months from October 2017 through December 2017. According to our broker, she was predicting a 29% increase to switch to an ACA compliant plan so this will help save the District money for another three months.

Paul Marien reported that the Masseys had evacuated the property and left it in good condition. Locks on the doors and gates will be changed by maintenance. Busey Farm Management will manage the new cash rent lease for the Auer Property that is now owned by the Foundation. The sludge lagoon has been seeded and mulched.

5. Other:

Paul Marien reported that he spoke with Bill Clevenger with the Park District and plans are underway to host another legislative breakfast. The Park District is willing to host the event. Trustee Parish thought it was a good idea and suggested if it is unsuccessful, there is the opportunity to meet with them one on one.

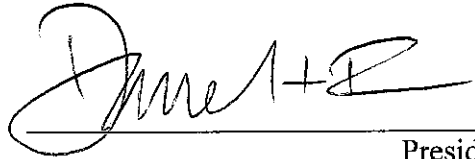
Paul also reported that Trustee Murphy will miss both the January and February Board meetings and Trustee Elliott will be gone for the January meeting and possibly the February meeting. It will be imperative for the remaining Board members to attend those meetings in order to have a quorum.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:

Trustee Parish reported that he enjoyed attending the Volunteer Holiday Party and Trustee Jensen agreed with him. It was a nice event.

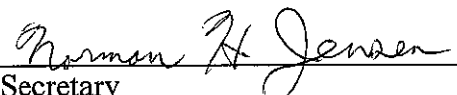
ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Jensen MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 6:30 p.m. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.



President

ATTEST:



Secretary