

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

September 20, 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 Murphy, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board members present: President Murphy, Treasurer Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Jensen and Secretary Elliott

Board member absent: 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President White

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve the Minutes of the August 16, 2017, Regular Public Meeting as presented. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and Monthly Disbursements in the amount of \$141,944.05 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$24,836.64. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:**

**PRIOR BUSINESS:**

**1. Playground Project:**

Paul Marien updated the Board on the playground fundraising project. Letters have been sent to various Foundations with a second letter being mailed out to individuals by the end of September. Along with the letter soliciting for donations, a playground brochure, a sponsorship form, and self-address stamped envelope were included in the mailings. Paul reported that one Foundation has already pledged \$19,000.00. Foundation Directors will be following up with the recipients of the letters.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Playground Project Bid Approval:**

An invitation seeking bids was published in the local newspaper with two bids being received. There were three bid options with the base bid including the main components of the playground. Alternative bid one included construction of the eastern portion of play area and playground equipment and alternative bid two included installation of the stone steppers, balance net and landscaping. Staff recommends awarding the bid to Kinney Contractors for the base bid in the amount of \$83,950.00 and bid alternate #1 for \$40,500.00. The architect gave a vote of confidence in the contractor. Kinney Contractors has done other municipal work

and Trustee Johnson reported that the Illinois Department of Transportation were happy with their work.

Trustee Elliott questioned if the costs were for construction only and Shane Ravellette replied that the District was getting ready to order half of the playground equipment tomorrow. Paul Marien did explain that money was budgeted for the playground but not enough. The line item will show a negative balance.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve playground equipment bid from Kinney Contractors, Inc., for base bid in the amount of \$83,950.00, and bid alternate #1 in the amount of \$40,500.00 for a total amount of \$124,450.00. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

**2. Treasurer's Statement:**

Each year the District is required to complete the Treasurer's Statement and file it with the County Clerk within six months after the fiscal year as ended. The Treasurer's Statement was included in the Board packet and no questions were raised by the Trustees.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Statement as presented. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

**3. Master Plan RFQ:**

Paul Marien presented the draft of the request for qualifications that will be sent to consultants to update the Master Plan. At this time, it is for discussion purposes only and will be sent out to consultants at a later time. Paul was looking for feedback from the Board. Paul reviewed the expected outcomes with the Board including such items as updating background and statistics from the community, market research specific to the District needs to support programs, updating guidelines used in resource management, developing a ratio or formula to use in future land exchanges, adding areas that were not originally included in plan and much more. Trustee Murphy inquired into the Board's role in the project as well as that of the staff. Paul commented that the Board would sit on the steering committees and be involved in the selection of the consultant and all departments will be interviewed for input into the process. There was some discussion on the cost of the project and Paul informed the Board that the budgeted range would be \$60,000.00 to \$80,000.00. The last Master Plan cost the District \$90,000.00. When applying for grants, particularly through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), an updated Master Plan is required to have been completed within the past five years. The Master Plan is both a steering document and guide. Paul asked the Board to inform him of any changes and/or additions they wanted to include in the document.

**4. Trustee Tour Agenda:**

Paul Marien reviewed the following agenda for the Trustee Tour and reminded them to wear appropriate shoes as the tour will include some walking.

Macon County Conservation District  
Annual Board of Trustees Tour  
September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017

8:00 - 8:30	Coffee and Donuts – Nature Center
8:30 - 9:00	Walk to and inspect Trobaugh Good House
9:00 - 9:45	Load into Transit and inspect Rock Springs Bottling Plant
9:45 - 10:15	Drive to Bois du Sangamon
10:15 – 11:15	Hike Bois du Sangamon and review management plan
11:15 – 11:30	Drive to Friends Creek Conservation Area
11:30 – 12:00	Tour Upland Game Hunting Area restoration
12:00 – 12:30	Tour Ranneberger addition
12:30 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00	Return to Nature Center

**5. Approve MMLP Agreement:**

Paul Marien informed the Board that the Trobaugh-Good home was in dire need of some foundation work. The home currently sits on the ground and is needed to be put on a foundation to prevent further deterioration from termites. Melotte Morse Leonatti Parker (MMLP) Architect did the last upgrade but it needs major work. The home was built in 1860 and is currently being used every weekend during the summer for tours and three major events are held annually, not to mention it is a popular school program. Staff recommends hiring MMLP to provide a scope of work to design repairs and improvements to the structure.

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve the agreement with MMLP for the design repairs and improvements to the sub structure of the Trobaugh-Good House for a total of \$6,900.00 to \$7,900.00 as presented. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the motion. . Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, “AYE”; Trustee Jensen, “AYE”; Trustee Murphy, “AYE” and Trustee Elliott, “AYE”. Motion carried.

**6. Approve Seed Purchase:**

Staff has received a quote to begin phase one restoration of the Ranneberger property for purchasing seed to convert the agricultural land to native plantings. The method to be used will be one large broadcasting (similar to what was done at Willow Branch). The cost of the seed will be \$31,993.44 for the 35 acres. The Clean Energy Grant will reimburse \$10,000 toward restoration costs. Since the dollar amount exceeds the bid limit, Paul Marien consulted with the District’s attorney. The attorney confirmed since the seeds are specialized and cannot be purchased from just any vendor there is a municipal code allowing exemption of the bid process for specialized items.

The seeds will be ordered and payment required upon delivery. The seeds will be hand broadcasted after the first frost. Staff needs Board approval to move forward in purchasing the seeds from Prairie Moon.

Trustee Johnson MOVED to approve seed purchase from Prairie Moon for the Rannebarger property at the cost of \$31,993.44 as presented. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the Motion. . Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

**7. Nature Center Roof Payout #1:**

A payout was finally submitted to the District for the roof project for the work done in July. This payout request is for \$88,772.40. Ten percent will be held from the total payout until the job is completed. The architect has reviewed the work completed and is satisfied with the work. The skylight still remains an outstanding issue. Another company had to be contacted after the first company could not obtain the skylight. The drawings have been approved and it will take twelve weeks to build the skylight. The skylight is for the main entry and currently is a clear glass allowing direct sunlight into the building. Staff decided that with the replacement of the roof, it would be a good time to replace the skylight with an opaque class to cut down on the amount of heat and light that enters the building. Staff needs approval for the payout to Top Quality Roofing for \$88,772.40.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the first payout for work completed on the Nature Center roof to Top Quality Roofing for \$88,772.40. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. . Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

**8. Staff Reports:**

Shane Ravellette reported that the pads for installation of the new automated gates on the Rock Springs Nature Center maintenance lane had been poured. Within the next few weeks, pads for the wetland and Nearing Lane will be poured. As mentioned previously, Site Supervisor, Doug Kerr retired and his successor was just named on Monday, Adam Reef. This leaves Adam's position open. Camping is going very well at Friends Creek due to outstanding staff and a great camp host. Staff are still patching up the bottomlands at Sand Creek and Fort Daniel. Natural Resources staff have been busy taking down old fences at the Rannebarger property and taking the scrap to Mervis Recycling.

Richie Wolf reported on various programs for his department including the summer concert series which attracted over 2000 individuals over six concerts. If Board agrees, Richie will continue with the concert series next summer. The general consensus was that it was a good idea and brought new people out to the Rock Springs Conservation Area. Both the Astronomy Jam and Hummingbird festival were a success. Approximately fifteen hummingbirds were banded at the event. The Monarch Madness event sponsored by the University of Extension Office attracted

over 150 individuals. Richie explained how they captured monarchs and banded them by using a tiny, tiny sticker that was no threat to the Monarchs. Two new staff have been hired, Alysia Callison for Senior Naturalist and Jenna Ward as part-time Naturalist. The Audubon Society once again donated twenty free buses for school programs. Shortly after the announcement all twenty buses were taken. Trustee Jensen who currently is a member of the Audubon said thanks to the Nearings who made this possible.

Paul Marien reported that Prairie Pedal was just days away and praised Katherine Unruh for her great organization of the event. He reported that the planning of the IACD (Illinois Association of Conservation Districts) Conference for next February was well underway. The Foundation has begun the fundraising project for the new playground at Rock Springs Conservation Area. Paul reported that the Decatur Transit Authority used information he had submitted to them about the Rock Springs Nature Center to submit a grant to expand their bus routes.

Pam Smith reported that May, Cocagne & King (MCK) had successfully moved the email service from Kestrel to their company with only minor glitches thus far. Both Paul Marien and Pam held a meeting with the executive director for Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund (IMET) to listen to options for investing District Funds. The Annual Treasurer's Statement was completed and public notice of the availability of the audit was published in the Tribune.

**9. Other:**

Paul Marien informed the Board that the District was in receipt of a letter from Bill Faber expressing his concern that Sand Creek was being used by Millikin and Mt. Zion cross country running practices. Mr. Faber felt that Sand Creek was riding trails and by them using the trails created safety issues for the horses on the trails. Paul expressed his opinion that the District cannot limit the use of Sand Creek to just horses, that it serves multiple uses. There was some discussion concerning posting signs warning riders but Paul said that there were trail etiquette signs posted. Paul did speak with the Mt. Zion coaches reminding them to be attentive to others using the trails. He had not spoken to the Millikin coaches. The Board members were all in agreement that it was for multiple uses and restrictions could not be implemented on the use of the trails.

**COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:**

A brief discussion followed concerning promotion of the Foundation's Prairie Pedal event.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Trustee Jensen MOVED to go into Executive Session at 6:50 p.m. for the purpose of

**1. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee to determine its validity pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).**

Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to return to the Regular Public Meeting at 6:55 p.m. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Murphy, "AYE" and Trustee Elliott, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Johnson MOVED to approve the Executive Session Minutes of September 20, 2017. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, Trustee Jensen MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 7:02 p.m. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

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President

ATTEST:

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Secretary