

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

March 19, 2014

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

Board members present: President Horn, 1st Vice-President Leonard, 2nd Vice-President Murphy, Treasurer Parish and Secretary Stahl.

Trustee Stahl MOVED to approve the Minutes of the February 19, 2014, Regular Public Meeting and the February 19, 2014 Budget Study session. Trustee Parish SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Parish MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and Monthly Disbursements in the amount of \$131,521.03 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$19,425.69. Trustee Stahl SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Stahl, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Horn, "AYE"; Trustee Leonard, "AYE" and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:

President Horn called for comments from the audience. None

PRIOR BUSINESS:

1. Other:

Trustee Parish questioned the status of the zoning at Friends Creek Conservation Area. Director Merner responded that this was no longer an issue.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Vision Renewal:

Director Merner reported that the District has received the employee vision insurance renewal for 2014-2015 and explained the premium increased 8% but the District had the option of increasing the copay by \$5.00 and lowering the premium. The alternative renewal rate would decrease the current premium by 3% instead of increasing it by 8%. The Board was in agreement that increasing the copay by \$5.00 was acceptable.

Trustee Parish MOVED to approve the alternative renewal rate with a \$5.00 copay increase. Trustee Leonard SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Stahl, "AYE", Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Horn, "AYE"; Trustee Leonard, "AYE" and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

2. Adopt Tentative Budget and Appropriation:

The Board received a copy of the tentative budget and appropriation for Fiscal Year 2015 in their Board packets. Director Merner, in answer to a question proposed at the Budget Study session, informed the Board that the Landscaping/Restoration account had been budgeted with an overall increase of \$11,000 from the previous year. Trustee Murphy questioned if it was normal to

not budget raises for employees, and Trustee Horn asked the Director what was normally budgeted for raises. Director Merner responded that part-time employees had been budgeted a raise in the proposed budget and that raises have normally been budgeted between 2-4%. After some discussion among the Board members, all were in agreement that a 2% pool for salary increases should be budgeted for full-time employees.

Trustee Parish MOVED to approve the Tentative Budget and Appropriation with the change in salaries as discussed. Trustee Stahl SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Stahl, "AYE", Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Horn, "AYE"; Trustee Leonard, "AYE" and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

3. Set Budget Hearing Date:

The Board agreed to set the Budget Hearing for April 23rd prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting. Trustee Parish reminded staff that the publication would have to be printed in the Herald and Review in order to meet the 30 day requirement.

Trustee Leonard MOVED to set the Budget Hearing for Wednesday, April 23, 2014 at 5:30 p.m., before the regularly scheduled Board meeting. Trustee Stahl seconded the motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

4. Authorization Leiby Hall Grant Application:

Paul Marien requested authorization from the Board to re-apply for the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Grant for improvements at Leiby Hall Conservation Area. The Grantor suggested adding a recreation component to the proposal, such as a horseshoe pit. Staff is suggesting implementing the idea of geocaching as a recreational activity, while still developing the site for hiking, fishing, and observation of wildlife. Board members questioned how many had applied for this grant. Staff responded that it was a very competitive process statewide. Last year there was twenty million dollars in funding available with thirty million in projects submitted.

Trustee Horn expressed his concern that the project does not go far enough to address habitat issues. He suggested additional commitment from the Board to improve the habitats as he was concerned with creating a trail leading into a poor quality habitat. Mr. Marien emphasized that more work would be generated on the property and that the District already has a steward doing restoration work. Staff will work on removing hay and planting prairie grass. Restoration is already on the agenda for the property. Staff requests that the Board approve submitting a resolution of authorization acknowledging the District has the resources to carry out the project in the given timeline. This resolution is the first step in the grant process.

Trustee Parish MOVED to approve the resolution for authorization. Trustee Leonard SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

5. Final Payout: Vieback Land Improvement:

Paul Marien reported that the contractor had done a great job of tree removal on the Willow Branch Conservation Area. The work is complete and they are now off site. Staff requests the Board's authorization for final payout of \$16,560.00 to Vieback Land Improvement.

Trustee Stahl MOVED to approve the final payout to Vieback Land Improvement in the amount of \$16,560.00. Trustee Leonard SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Stahl, "AYE", Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Horn, "AYE"; Trustee Leonard, "AYE" and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

6. Appoint Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee consists of the Vice-President and one other Board member. Trustee Parish willingly volunteered to serve as the other member on the Committee.

Trustee Leonard moved to appoint Trustee Parish as a member of the Nominating Committee. Trustee Stahl SECONDED the motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

7. Departmental Reports:

President Horn asked staff to comment on highlights from their reports submitted in the Board packet. Paul Marien, Richie Wolf, Pam Smith and Director Merner summarized the highlights of their reports.

Director Merner updated the Board on the property that borders the Friends Creek Conservation Area involving the County. Director Merner and Paul Marien walked the property and spoke with Bruce Bird and Gerber State Bank with a plan of action to consider. There are several buildings on site that would have to be removed with the exception of a machine shed. The property has a nice road and a creek that meanders through the property. Very little wildlife was seen on the property. Director Merner will get back to the Board with a plan.

8. Other:

Director Merner answered a question raised at the budget study session regarding the Greenway. Trustee Parish had asked if there was a plan for a bike trail along the river. According to the 1998 plan, there is nothing that follows the length of the river.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:

Trustee Parish encouraged other Trustees to attend the Volunteer Recognition dinner.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Stahl MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 6:28 p.m. Trustee Leonard SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

President

ATTEST:

Secretary