

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

**November 18, 2015**

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 Jensen, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Smithson, Secretary Murphy, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President Elliott.

Trustee Jensen MOVED to approve the Minutes of the October 21, 2015, Regular Public Meeting. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Murphy MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and Monthly Disbursements in the amount of \$127,783.51 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$10,078.70 as presented. Trustee Elliott SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Smithson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Elliott, "AYE"; and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:** No comments from audience.

**PRIOR BUSINESS:** No prior business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Tax Levy:**

Director Paul Marien explained that the tax levy ordinance must be filed by the last Tuesday in December and requires Board approval. He stated that he felt the District should increase the levy by 5% (the maximum allowed without a truth in taxation hearing) due to pending property tax freeze legislation. Trustee Parish questioned if the 5% increase was based on what is levied or the extension. Director Marien informed the Board he had called the Treasurer's office and was told it was based upon the amount levied.

Trustee Murphy MOVED to approve the 2015 Tax Levy Ordinance as presented. Trustee Smithson SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Smithson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Elliott, "AYE"; and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

**2. Willow Branch Farm Lease:**

The current tenant farming the 52 acres at Willow Branch is requesting a change in cash rent. The ground doesn't produce the yields he thought it would. He is suggesting two options. The first option is at a fixed rate of \$290.00 an acre. The District is currently getting \$325.00 an acre. The other option is a flex plan that guarantees \$275.00 per acre with a 40% bonus of the net income if it's a positive net income. (Chart was included in the Board packet). If the District retains the current rate, the tenant will not renew the lease. Trustee Murphy questioned if the tenant has a preference of one plan over the other. Director Marien stated that the tenant does not have a preference but the District's farm manager recommends the flex plan. He informed the Board that

the current tenant has been a good tenant and he would like to keep him. The last time this property was put out to bid the bids came in from \$270.00 to \$325.00 an acre. Board approval is required for adopting either one of the options. Trustee Parish recommended going with the farm manager's preference.

Trustee Smithson MOVED to approve the Willow Branch Farm Lease at the flex rate of \$275.00 an acre with a 40% bonus from positive net income. Trustee Jensen SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Smithson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Elliott, "AYE"; and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

### **3. Engineers Proposal**

A revised engineering proposal was submitted by Blank, Wesselink, Cook & Associates (BWC) for construction on the Griswold maintenance shed. Last year it was proposed to build new instead of restoring the old building. Pending Board approval, staff hopes to break ground this winter. The new building would be a pole building with post frame and steel siding including a poured concrete floor. The drawings will be shared with the Board once they are received. Trustee Murphy questioned the amount budgeted for the project. Director Marien replied that \$100,000.00 had been budgeted for this project. Trustee Parish questioned if it was really necessary to involve an engineering firm with the project. Director Marien replied that he felt it would be better for an engineering firm to address property/building codes and oversee the construction. Shane Ravellette also reminded them that all public buildings should be handled by an architect.

Trustee Elliott MOVED to approve the engineering proposal submitted by Blank, Wesselink, Cook & Associates in the amount of \$8,750.00 for a new Griswold maintenance building. Trustee Smithson SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Smithson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; Trustee Elliott, "AYE"; and Trustee Murphy, "AYE". Motion carried.

### **4. Staff Reports**

Shane Ravellette, Operations Manager, highlighted the deer management program. To date, five deer had been harvested at Friends Creek, two deer at Ft. Daniel, eight deer at Sand Creek, and one at Rock Springs. The Sand Creek drainage project has been completed. Trustee Elliott commented on how wonderful the project looked.

Richie Wolf, Program Services Manager, gave an update on Summer Camp demographics as requested by Board members at last month's meeting. Earth Adventures had 67 different individuals enrolled in the program while Adventure club had 57 different individuals. Fourteen individuals were outside of Macon County. Trustee Murphy suggested marketing to these families throughout the year to keep them returning. Richie announced that Brenna Karcher, Camp Director, had resigned and a new Summer Camp Director would be appointed. He announced that the "Candle Light Tour" had the largest turn out in history of 101 attending the event and reminded the Trustees of the upcoming Volunteer Holiday Party on Thursday, December 10th and asked them to RSVP to Jenny Garver.

Director Marien updated the Board on the Foundation's Auer Trust and that the District's attorney was conducting a title search of the property mentioned in the trust. The Oglesby year-end letters had been mailed out and staff were currently working on the Foundation's year-end appeal. He also reported that Katherine Unruh, Marketing Specialist, was working with the webmaster on finding a new avenue for online donations.

**5. Other**

Trustee Smithson suggested that it would have been nice for memorial envelopes to be provided at Dr. Fritz's memorial service. Director Marien commented that the arrangements came so quickly at the last minute and didn't leave much time for preparation. Trustee Murphy suggested that the District provide envelopes to all the funeral homes.

**COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:**

Trustee Murphy raised the question how do projects get implemented. She was referring to foot bridges at Sand Creek. After some discussion of the possibility of installing foot bridges, the Board was in favor of getting more details. Staff will report back at the next meeting.

Trustee Elliot took a moment to remember Dr. Richard Fritz and what a wonderful member he had been. He served the Foundation and District well and will be sorely missed!!

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, Trustee Elliott MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 6:35 p.m. Trustee Murphy SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

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President

ATTEST:

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Secretary