

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

**February 20, 2019**

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

Board members present: President Jensen, Secretary Johnson and Treasurer White, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President Schneller, and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Parish  
Board members absent: None

Trustee Parish MOVED to approve the Minutes of the January 16, 2019, Public Meeting as presented. Trustee Schneller SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee White MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Trustee Schneller SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee White, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee White MOVED to approve the monthly Disbursements in the amount of \$124,500.10 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$26,967.94. Trustee Schneller SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee White, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:**

Representative from the Macon County Farm Bureau was in attendance. He commented how much he likes visiting the Rock Springs Conservation Area and from his perspective the District is doing a great job!

**PRIOR BUSINESS:**

**1. ECO Center Upgrades**

A conference called was held including Paul Marien, Richie Wolf and Alysia Callison with Taylor Studios. A resource analysis has been completed asking staff what resources are available to them to begin design of the project. Trustee Jensen inquired as to how different the new plan will be. Paul stated that the center piece will have minor adjustments made including some taxidermy work. The outer peripheral edge will be upgraded including the Blue Stem Theater. Paul did emphasize that they want Taylor Studios to look at the entire Macon County natural features and not just emphasizing the Rock Springs Conservation Area. The history of the bottling plant is one resource that the District would like to see emphasized in the remodel. Taylor Studios will be on-site for three days next week to develop concept ideas. Paul commented that he would like to see Taylor Studio's facility in Rantoul, Illinois, where they construct the displays.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. New Trustee Introduction**

Darrel Parish is completing the term of Anne Elliott who resigned in December. Darrel's term will end June 30, 2020. Darrel briefly introduced himself to the Board of Trustees as someone that has lived his entire life here in Decatur and has previously served on the Board for two terms. He stated that he is looking forward to serving on the Board for the next 1 ½ years. All members welcomed Darrel.

**2. OSLAD Grant:**

Paul Marien announced that the District has been awarded a grant from the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) for \$75,000.00 for improvements to the Cattail Pond. The Grant will cover 50% of the project. The project will include adding fishing docks, handicap accessibility, shaping the banks, removing the dirt causeway, canoe launch for Program Services and a small parking lot. The ponds will be drained down and a fish structure will be constructed on the bottom of the pond for habitat purposes. Shane Ravellette commented that the banks around the pond are fairly shallow and that will be modified. Once the Cattail Pond improvements are made this will finish off "the campus area" look according to Paul. Trustee Schneller wondered if the ponds would have to be restocked and Paul assured the Board that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will restock the pond and they always stock the pond with rainbow trout in the fall. Shane reported that there will be slight modification to the depth of the pond.

**3. Set Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget Study Session:**

The general consensus of the Board was to hold the Budget Study session at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2019, before the 5:30 p.m. regularly scheduled meeting. Only one Trustee will be unable to make the meeting at that time. The Budget study session will be posted in the local newspaper and on the website for Wednesday, March 20, 2019, at 4:00 p.m.

**4. Approve Engineers Agreement – Bike Trail Improvements:**

Chastain and Associates have been contacted for specification drawings for the Bike Trail improvement project grant award. As per the agreement in the Board Packet, the projected cost for architectural and engineering services is at a cost of \$26,573.00

Trustee Parish MOVED to approve the agreement with Chastain & Associates for their architecture and engineering fees in the amount of \$26,573.00 for the bike trail improvements. Trustee White SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee White, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Jensen, "AYE"; Trustee Parish, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

**6. Surplus Equipment Disposal Approval**

Staff compiled a list of surplus equipment needing Board approval to be auctioned off. All equipment listed is no longer useable. Shane Ravellette explained that the chain saws and line trimmers no longer work and some items such as table saws had been upgraded to include safety features. The old farmer's plow that was in the barn at Spring Valley was donated and never used. Shane was told by the auctioneer that they would take the equipment. The auction company is Central Illinois Auction. All equipment has been fully depreciated. Staff recommends sending the items listed in the Board packet to auction.

Trustee Johnson MOVED to approve the surplus equipment disposal as presented. Trustee Schneller SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

**7. Staff Reports:**

Paul Marien reported that a conference call was held with Taylor Studios and will be meeting with them next week on site. The Master Plan has finally been printed and is ready for distribution. The FY2020 Budget has been reviewed by administrative staff and is being put together for Trustee review. Paul had an appointment with Decatur's Historic and Architectural Sites Commission (HASC) and received approval for the Oglesby Mansion south entry renovation.

Pam Smith reported that the District had received their final tax levy distribution check and the District had received 99% of the amount requested. The signatories for the Macon County Conservation Foundation were required to be changed after a change in slate of officers. Pam and part-time staff, Bill Weiss, completed entering the spring online registration programs in Joy Potter's absence. It was a good learning experience.

Shane Ravellette reported that operations staff mostly dealt with the weather in January removing snow and ice with the Bike Trail being closed twice. He reported that a long planned project for the eastern section of Rock Springs Conservation Area has been completed. The old barn that had become extremely dangerous was demolished and the ground has been graded to a more natural condition. Plans are being discussed to plant a forest meadow or glade in native grasses and forbs. It is approximately 1/3 of an acre.

Richie Wolf reported that with the heavy snowfall one weekend, cross-country skiing was a popular attraction. The new exhibit of nature art, headed by Alysia Callison, is now displayed in the exhibit hall. The Prairie Islander Newsletter was mailed out this past Tuesday. The Festival of Spring will be held on April 27, 2019.

**8. Other:**

Trustee Jensen commented on the article provided in the Board packet on Oak Trees and how informative it was. Paul Marien informed the Board that Ethan Snively, Natural Resource Specialist provides the monthly articles for their reading.

**COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:**

Trustee Jensen thanked Paul Marien for his great presentation at the Sertoma meeting. Trustee Schneller commented on the good news of assistance from the Oglesby Board for the new renovation and thanked Paul for circling back around to speak with them. All Trustees were in agreement.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, Trustee Schneller MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 6:10 p.m. Trustee White SECONDED the Motion. All members of the Board present voted, "AYE". Motion carried.

Norman H. Jensen  
President

ATTEST:   
Secretary