

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
December 15, 2021**

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

Board members present: President Schnelller, 1st Vice-President Bendsen, Secretary Beckhart, and 2nd Vice-President Allen, and Treasurer Castor
Board Members absent: None.

Susie Ryan, the new Marketing Specialist, took a brief moment to introduce herself and give her background. The Board all welcomed her to the District.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Minutes of the November 17, 2021, Public Meeting. Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schnelller, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; and Trustee Bendsen, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Beckhart MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and disbursements in the amount of \$125,274.86 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$70,691.54 as presented. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; and Trustee Schnelller, "AYE". Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE: No comments from audience.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Board Policy Review and Approval

As per last Board meeting this agenda item had been tabled to allow more time to thoroughly read the new policy. Jerry Culp stated that he had spoken with Trustee Bendsen and made some minor changes in wording for better clarification. No other comments from the Trustees.

Trustee Allen MOVED to approve the Board Policy as presented with changes. Trustee Castor SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Schnelller, "AYE"; and Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor, "AYE". Motion carried.

2. Approval of Summer Camp Recommendations

These recommendations had previously been presented in a previous meeting but with no formal approval. There had been no changes since presenting the recommendations.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Summer Camp Recommendations as previously presented by Alysia Callison. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schnelller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; and Trustee Allen, "AYE". Motion carried.

3. Employee Health Insurance Update and Approval

Pam Smith gave an update on the health insurance that had been previously approved in the prior meeting. In the previous meeting, staff had recommended switching from United Health Insurance (UHC) to Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) in order to see a significant savings. However, Pam learned most recently that BCBS had made an error in their quote and had mistakenly quoted October 1, 2020 rates instead of January 1, 2022 rates. This significantly decreased the savings from what was originally quoted. In light of this change, staff recommended staying with UHC, which would save some employees from having to switch physicians since the BCBS plan did not include Springfield Clinic in their network. In the end there was only about a 2% difference in cost between the two plans, which staff felt was not significant enough to make such a drastic change in insurance. Staff recommended staying with United Healthcare for the benefit year January 1 – December 31, 2022.

Trustee Castor MOVED to approve the District remaining with United Healthcare Insurance for Employee Insurance for Calendar Year 2022 in light of new information presented by Pam Smith. Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, “AYE”; Trustee Allen, “AYE”; Trustee Castor, “AYE”; Trustee Schneller, “AYE”; and Trustee Beckhart, “AYE”. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Campground Report:

Shane Ravellette reviewed the Campground Report included in the Board Packet. He noted that they were excited about the upswing in attendance and the improvements that were being made. Shane pointed out that he had pulled out the capital from the general expenses as they skew the expense reporting. Staff recommended the following changes:

- Recommended a change in the fee structure by eliminating the out of county/in-county status and raising the fee to \$25.00 for 30amp sites and \$30.00 for 50amp sites. There will be no “non-electric” sites.
- Recommended contracting with ReserveAmerica for online registration as the current registration system is burdensome to the staff.

The electrical system is still being upgraded with the total cost being close to \$200,000.00, which includes dividing the picnic loop and campground as well as the upgrade.

Trustee Allen MOVED to approve the recommendations for the Friends Creek Campground as presented by Shane Ravellette. Trustee Castor SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Beckhart, “AYE”; Trustee Schneller, “AYE”; Trustee Bendsen, “AYE”; Trustee Castor, “AYE”; and Trustee Allen, “AYE”. Motion carried.

2. Approval of Campground Online Booking Service:

Shane Ravellette reported transitioning to an online booking service would free up valuable staff time. Most campgrounds have gone to an online booking system. Shane met with ReserveAmerica to discuss the possibility of making the move to online registration. This would simplify the process and allow campers to reserve the particular site that they want. There would be a \$3.50 fee per registration and they would handle all credit card processing eliminating the need for our staff to manage the ever changing security issues with using credit cards. The District's risk would be removed. There will be a 2.5% credit card fee which is comparable to the credit card fees already being paid by the District. There is some flexibility with the system and after one year, we can revisit and make a decision as to whether to continue or not with the system. Shane said that there will be a link on our website to the ReserveAmerica reservation system.

Trustee Allen MOVED to approve the District switching to an online booking service with ReserveAmerica for campground reservations at Friends Creek as presented by Shane Ravellette. Trustee Bendsen SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

3. Approval of Bid for Friends Creek Electrical Cable Supply:

At the time of the Board packet being organized, the bid numbers were not available. Only one bid was received in the bidding process and that was Springfield Electric in the amount of \$80,367.19. This bid was lower than the initial quote at budget time. The project is projected to begin in March 2022. Since this bid amount was above \$25,000.00, the District was required to publish the bid and all legal requirements were followed. Staff recommended accepting Springfield Electric's bid.

Trustee Beckhart MOVED to approve awarding the Friends Creek Electrical project to Springfield Electric for the bid amount of \$80,367.19. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; and Trustee Allen, "AYE". Motion carried.

4. Memorial Tree/Bench Program:

In looking at the current memorial process, Jerry Culp created new guidelines to simplify the process and make it easier for all involved. In addition to offering benches, he added a memorial tree option with a plaque included for either the bench or the tree. Jerry updated pricing to reflect current costs. This process is part of the Foundation's fundraising efforts so it's important to ensure there is no loss of money. Adjustments to the program can always be made. Trustee Schneller suggested creating a fillable form for access online. Staff recommends approving the Memorial Program as presented.

Trustee Allen MOVED to approve the Foundation's Memorial Tree/Bench Program as presented by Jerry Culp. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor "AYE". Motion carried.

5. Staff Reports:

Jerry Culp met with the City of Decatur Public Works to introduce himself and discuss how they can work together to mutually benefit each other. The new marketing specialist was hired, Susie Ryan. Jerry spent considerable time working on the fundraisers for "Wine in the Pines" and the 5K Run. The 5K Run is now open to online registration. It will be held on April 9th with a 5K run, one mile guided hikes and a 1/4 -1/2 mile kids run. He is still working on finalizing details for the "Wine in the Pines" with the Foundation Board. Jerry is scheduled to speak to Kiwanis and give an update on the District's current events. He updated the Memorial Bench/Tree Program to simplify the process. The Oglesby Board has been decorating for Christmas and preparing for the Christmas Tea event.

Shane Ravellette reported that the new acquisition at the south end of Fort Daniel is ready for seeding and plans are to seed 37 acres on Friday morning (December 17th) at 9:30 a.m. He invited the Board to help with the seeding if they had an interest and the time. The Deer Herd Management program ended for the season but the final numbers were not available at the time of this report but the number of permits sold is the highest in many years. The wetland at Sand Creek is 98% completed. The shop addition at Friends Creek is "dried in" and staff will begin working on interior walls.

Alysia Callison excitedly reported that the ECO Center remodel is 90% finished and will be doing a final walk-through. She is in the process of getting bids to replace the carpeting and Taylor Studios will be back in March to finish the project. The plan is to have a grand opening in March for the ECO Center. Program Services staff have the snow skis ready and prepped for the first snowfall. Several pairs of the ski boots were replaced. Alysia obtained a small grant from IPARKS to purchase new life jackets for the canoe programs. Several public programs were well attended in November with roughly 50 attending the Trobaugh-Good House annual Candlelight Tour.

Pam Smith reported that progress was made on the upgrade of the Foundation Donor Database (Exceed). The final stages will be setting up the web portion of the program with hopes of having that completed the beginning of January. Much work went into preparing the donor database to send to Trump for completion of the mailing. To date, approximately \$12,000.00 in year end gifts have been received. A new PDF editor program was purchased for staff to use in creating fillable PDF forms and editing PDF files. Employee recognition awards were received and staff seemed to really enjoy getting them. Only one award had to be returned for a new size but overall the process went very well. The District has received 95% of the tax levy requested at the time of this report.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES: No comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to go into Executive Session at 6:12 p.m. for the purpose of

1. **The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body.
5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (5)**

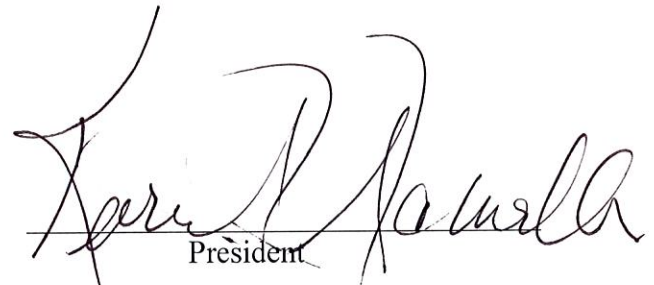
Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Beckhart, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Beckhart MOVED to return to the Regular Public Meeting at 6:45 p.m. Trustee Bendsen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Executive Session Minutes of December 15, 2021. Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Bendsen MOVED to adjourn the Public Meeting at 6:48 p.m. Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.



President



Secretary