

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**August 17, 2022**

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

Board members present: President Bendsen, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Castor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President Schneller; Treasurer Reed, and Secretary Allen

Board Members absent: None

Trustee Allen MOVED to approve the Minutes of the July 20, 2022, Public Meeting. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Reed, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; and Trustee Bendsen, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Castor MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and disbursements in the amount of \$143,169.40 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$57, 245.65 as presented. Trustee Schneller SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; and Trustee Reed, "AYE". Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:** No audience.

**PRIOR BUSINESS:**

**1. Appoint IACD (Illinois Association of Conservation Districts) Liaison**

President Bendsen corrected the agenda to read "Appoint IACD Liaison" instead of "Appoint Foundation Liaison". In previous meeting, this decision was tabled pending Trustee Allen learning more about the position. Trustee Allen agreed to serve as the IACD Liaison.

Trustee Castor MOVED to approve Trustee Allen as the new IACD Liaison. Trustee Reed SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Reed, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE" and Trustee Castor, "AYE". Motion carried.

**2. Trustee Tour Agenda**

The Trustee Tour is scheduled for Thursday, October 20, 2022. The Board Members agreed upon the following schedule:

8:00 Meet at Nature Center  
8:15 Homestead Prairie Farm – future barn site  
8:40 Rock Springs – Xander Property Addition  
9:15 Griswold Conservation Area – Restoration Discussion  
10:15 Grove Branch - Shooting Range  
11:30 Fort Daniel – New acquisition area  
12:15 Lunch  
1:30 Bois du Sangamon Nature Preserve  
2:45 Return to Rock Springs

### 3. Penhallegon Purchase

Jerry Culp reported that the purchase of the Penhallegon Property was settled on July 28<sup>th</sup> for the 236 acres next to Fort Daniel. Jerry Culp shared a map of the new property with the Board and will be a part of the tour. The current farmer will continue to farm for two years and then the third year restoration will begin. President Bendsen suggested that the Board think of some type of recognition for Pat Penhallegon and asked for it to be put on September's Board Agenda. Jerry briefly updated the Board on the history of the homestead. The homestead was purchased by Pat's family in 1941 and Pat took over the home in 1979 and refurbished the house to the correct period of time.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. Audit Presentation:**

Jene Row, auditor with MCK CPAs & Advisors gave a brief overview of the District's audit including the component unit, the Macon County Conservation Foundation. Jene pointed out to the Board that the structure of the auditor's report had changed to include the auditor's opinion in the first paragraph. MCK CPAs & Advisor's opinion found the financial statements were presented fairly, in all material aspects, the modified cash basis financial position of governmental activities, discretely presented component unit, each major fund and the aggregate remaining fund information for the Macon County Conservation District as of March 31, 2022. Jene reviewed the Statement of Net Position and Statement of Activities noting a change in net position of \$607, 219.00. Though the Foundation's separate audit was eliminated this year, the audit contained the same material as always for the component unit with even more footnotes than before. The decision to eliminate the Foundation's separate audit was a cost savings method recommended by MCK and approved by both the District and the Foundation Boards. Jene reported that no mismanagement of the District's funds was found.

Trustee Schneller MOVED to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 Audit as presented. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Reed, "AYE"; and Trustee Bendsen, "AYE". Motion carried.

### **2. Approve the Audit Payment to MCK CPAs & Advisors:**

The District was in the first year of a three year contract with MCK; and as per the contract, the amount due this year for the audit is \$12,000.00. Board approval is required to make the payment of \$12,000.00 to MCK CPAs & Advisors.

Trustee Schneller MOVED to approve the payment of \$12,000.00 to MCK CPAs & Advisors for the Fiscal Year 2022 Audit as per the agreement. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Reed, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; and Trustee Allen, "AYE". Motion carried.

### **3. Staff Reports**

Jerry Culp gave an update on the Nature Center Program and Office Space. Now that the Library had been relocated, the old Library will be converted to office space with the work being scheduled to begin in September. Staff would be meeting tomorrow (August 18<sup>th</sup>) with Upland Design to complete the concept plan for the outdoor classroom proposed for the east side of the building. Once the concept plan is finalized and approved by the Board, staff will begin looking for funding. Jerry attended the yearly Farm Bureau appreciation dinner and meeting where he learned a lot about the Bureau and met several of the members. Jerry met with Natalie Beck from the Community Foundation to review the summer camp grant success and discuss other possible funding to assist the District with future plans. Staff continue to work on the Prairie Pedal event for the Foundation.

Alysia Callison reported that July was another busy month for the Program Services Department. Summer camp had just ended a very successful season. Staff began work on the next exhibit which will be a "Birds of Illinois" exhibit. The concert series wrapped up on August 7<sup>th</sup> and the new location was well received. Staff have been busy finalizing and printing the flyers and posters for the Prairie Pedal and in the next few weeks will be working on signs and banners. The Fall Prairie Islander will be out at the end of the month. Alysia announced the next two events coming up: The Astronomy Jamboree and the Humming Bird Festival and encouraged the Board to attend.

Shane Ravellette's Operations staff have been busy at Griswold Conservation Area with forestry mowing honeysuckle and chain sawing hedge trees and other trees. Staff is pleased with the outcome thus far. Staff replaced Rock Springs parking lot lights with LED, renting a man lift for the process. The Friends Creek Shop office is entering the final stage working on insulation, drywall and having the HVAC installed. Flooding at Sand Creek delayed some long planned trail repairs but once completed the trails will be in better shape to handle regular non-flood rains. Rain and humidity have made it impossible to conduct growing season burns.

Pam Smith worked with the auditor to finalize the audit for presentation at the Board meeting. The District received their first tax levy distribution in the amount of \$1,080,828.00, which is approximately 50% of the levy requested. The funds, in the amount of \$3,863,961.38, were wired to the title company for the July 28<sup>th</sup> closing of the Penhallegon property. Pam gave a few highlights from the July financials giving kudos to the Program Services staff for doubling the school program revenue and tripling the library program revenue. Wi-Fi credit card readers were ordered to switch the online reservation system from Elavon to the new Vermont Systems "PayTrac" software. Pam continues to research and develop a disciplinary policy and inclement weather policy.

### **4. Other Business:**


No other business.

### **COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:**

No comments from Trustees.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, Trustee Castor MOVED to adjourn the Public Meeting at 6:12 p.m. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Reed, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor "AYE". Motion carried.

  
President

  
Secretary