

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
June 16, 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 Schneller.

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

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Minutes of the May 19, 2021, Regular Public Meeting and the May 17, 2021 Special Meeting. Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; and Trustee Bendsen, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Johnson MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and disbursements in the amount of \$138,235.57 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$8,328.69 as presented. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:

Mike Brown, Maroa, Illinois, was the spokesman for a group of campers who regularly camp at the Friends Creek Campground. He emphasized that the campground had a great host and grounds keeper. The campground's main competitor is Weldon Springs and the group of campers had suggestions for the campground that would enhance the campground to be more competitive. A few of the suggestions are noted below:

- Adding a third dumpster for the amount of trash that is collected
- More mowing around the playground so children are in line of sight for their safety or move the playground to a more open area such as behind the shower house or adjacent to the pavilion
- Place new pond across the road to provide safety for children
- Mowing the tall grass (habitat patches) to allow sight of children and limit mosquito breeding

Kelly Chick, Argenta, Illinois, made a few additional recommendations:

- Lighting issue – provide more lighting around the campground such as at the entrance, dump station, shower house, and lighting site numbers so they can be readily visible, particularly to emergency personnel.
- Expressed concern over the control of the new 50 amp sites that are to be installed such as prioritizing who needs the 50 amp and expressed long-term campers using them when they do not camp through the weekend
- Placing a diagram of sites at the campground entrance and an exit sign for clarity of the flow of traffic through the campground
- Adding a baby changing station in the shower house

- Consider placing a covered pavilion in the open area behind the shower house with lighting and electrical outlets

Don Jones, Forsyth, Illinois, also expressed specific concern about the first come first serve policy allowing tents to be placed on some of the longest pads as well as specifying who uses the 50 amp verses the 30 amp service

The overall consensus of the Board was that the public comments were presented in a constructive manner and all in attendance clearly expressed how happy they were with the campground and were not there to complain but offer suggestions for improving the campground.

Ron Copsy, neighbor to Fort Daniel Conservation Area, expressed concern regarding the ATV and golf carts being used on the trails at the Fort Daniel Conservation Area. He recommended that the trail signs needed to be replaced as the stickers were worn out. The pit toilet doors need to be replaced as they are not working. He complimented the recent seasonal that left employment and the great job that he performed in keeping the grounds in great condition. He expressed concern that he should be replaced and recommended the seasonal to work Tuesdays through Sundays.

PRIOR BUSINESS:

1. Signatory Resolution:

MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT SIGNATORIES RESOLUTION June 16, 2021– April 21, 2022

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Macon County Conservation District that Executive Director Gerald Culp, President Karen Schneller, 1st Vice-President Nina Bendsen, Secretary Dave Castor, and 2nd Vice President Jim Beckhart be authorized to endorse all checks and depositories for the Macon County Conservation District for all the District funds at all applicable banks, effective June 16, 2021.

Approved this 16th Day of June, 2021

Paul Marien emphasized that this resolution had been delayed pending the selection of the new Executive Director. No further comments were made.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Signatory Resolution as presented. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor, "AYE". Motion carried.

2. Access to Kaufman Property:

Paul Marien reported that he met with Tim Bailey to clarify his request for access across the Kaufman Lakeside Conservation Property. His plan is to construct a shore wall on the Lake Decatur property and eventually place a boat dock there. He is needing a foot path to access the dock. Paul stated that typically this is not agreed upon unless there is a benefit to the District. Paul spoke with the attorney who suggested doing a non-transferrable license which would not transfer to the next property owner and could be terminated at any time by either party. The impact to the District is minimal but would provide a benefit in helping stop the erosion along the shoreline. Construction will take place from the lake side of the property. After a brief discussion, the overall consensus was to approve the non-transferrable license.

Trustee Johnson MOVED to approve accepting the non-transferrable license for access across the Kaufman Lakeside Conservation Area with Tim Bailey as drawn up by the District’s attorney. Trustee Bendsen SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, “Aye”; Trustee Schneller, “AYE”; Trustee Beckhart, “AYE”; Trustee Johnson, “AYE”; and Trustee Bendsen, “AYE”. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. New Trustee Appointment:

Paul Marien updated the Board on the status of the recommendation of the new Trustee to the County Board. The nomination will not be added to the County Board Agenda until the chairman has time to speak with the nominee. The County Board Chairman has not been able to reach the nominee by phone. Some of the Trustees offered to follow up with the nominee. Hopefully the newly appointed Trustee will be on the District’s July agenda.

2. Sand Creek Trail Run:

Shane Ravellette reported that he had received a request to use the trails at Sand Creek for a trail run. This event is held every year and this year it will be held on October 2nd. Sand Creek will be closed from 7:00 a.m. until sometime in the early afternoon. The District has never had any problems with this group in the past and recommends allowing the event to take place.

Trustee Johnson MOVED to accept the application for the trail run to be held at Sand Creek on October 2, 2021, as presented. Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Beckhart, “AYE”; Trustee Johnson, “AYE”; Trustee Schneller, “AYE”; Trustee Bendsen, “AYE”; and Trustee Castor, “AYE”. Motion carried

3. Staff Reports

Paul Marien gave an update on Richie Wolf’s memorial stating that another \$600.00 had been received and he had spoken to Richie’s wife, Jolanta. Her wishes in

addition to a memorial bench would be to establish a scholarship for those pursuing an education in a conservation related field. A decision would need to be made as to how to set up the scholarship and distribute the funds. He also reported that Gary Goeken asked for continued use of the Nature Center to conduct boater safety classes as had been done in the past. The District only provides the space for the classes to be held at no cost.

Pam Smith reported on the excitement of being able to hire and complete the paperwork on summer camp counselors, which didn't happen last year due to COVID. An all staff harassment training was held as per the State of Illinois requirement. This opened an opportunity to place the Harassment Policy into the hands of all employees in attendance. The few that were not in attendance were required to take the online harassment training provided by IPARKs. The District had a good month for revenue with Friends Creek camping generating over \$6,000, a large property replacement tax distribution in the amount of \$62,467.00 and a \$3,000 donation received from the Audubon Society. Pam also gave some highlights from the last Foundation meeting. Their Fidelity Investment account has performed very well earning approximately \$293,000 in earnings for FY2021. The Board decided to hold the 5K run again next year on April 9, 2022. The Board accepted MCK CPAs & Advisors proposal to combine the Foundation's audit with the District's audit for FY2022, 2023, and 2024. The Prairie Pedal event is to be held on September 26, 2021.

Alysia Callison reported that May was a busy month for Program Services. Summer camp registration was going very well and they had held a couple of school programs along with several library programs. The Prairie Homestead reopened for visitors. A new display in the exhibit hall was completed entitled "*The Evolution of Rock Springs Nature Center*" which explores the many changes of the Nature Center. The ECO Center remodel project contract was signed with Taylor Studios. Staff training week was held for CPR/First Aid Training, Harassment training, Safety/Driving training, Hikes and games as well as volunteer training. It was exciting to have such a busy week with the reopening of summer camp.

Shane Ravellette reported that the highlight of May was the completion of the Cattail Ponds project with the exception of awaiting the arrival of the gangplank walkway to the floating ADA Kayak/Canoe launch. Staff kept busy with mowing and Natural Resources kept busy with exotic control.

4. Other

Paul Marien presented Trustee Doug Johnson with a plaque for his past five years of service to the District. All present congratulated Doug and remarked how much he would be missed.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES: No comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to go into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. for the purpose of

1. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee to determine its validity. **5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1)**

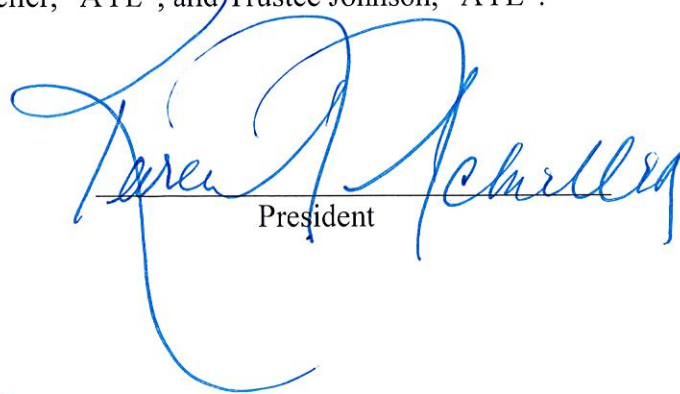
Trustee Beckhart SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; and Trustee Beckhart, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to return to the Regular Public Meeting at 7:10 p.m. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 21, 2021. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Johnson, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Bendsen MOVED to adjourn the Regular Public Meeting at 7:15 p.m. Trustee Johnson SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Beckhart, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; and Trustee Johnson, "AYE". Motion carried.



President



Secretary