

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
May 18, 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 Schneller

Board members present: President Schneller, 1st Vice-President Bendsen, Treasurer Castor, and 2nd Vice-President Allen

Board Members absent: Secretary Beckhart

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

Trustee Allen MOVED to approve the Treasurer's Report and disbursements in the amount of \$160,557.43 and additions to disbursements in the amount of \$34,405.28 as presented. Trustee Bendsen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE: No comments.

PRIOR BUSINESS: No prior business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Deer Herd Management Report Approval:

Ethan Snively presented the Deer Herd Management Report. He briefly explained the program mentioning that it is an eight-week program utilizing four conservation sites with one disabled blind at Rock Springs Conservation Area. The purpose of the program is to reduce the deer population with a doe being harvested before a buck. Turkeys and coyotes have also been included in the hunt but with no turkey hunting permitted at Friends Creek Conservation Area. Hunters are required to sign in and out, trail cameras are not permitted and they must use a harness system for safety. There is no hunting allowed with 75 yards of a building or trails. Hunters must take a picture of the deer that they harvested and record it with IDNR. The maximum number of does harvested are four. Ethan shared his research and data with the Board stating that 16% of the total archery harvest in Macon County came from the District. There was a significant increase in new participants and participation. Three deer were harvested from the disabled hunting blind at Rock Springs. Reports from IDNR indicated that Macon County's archery season harvested numbers decreased from last season from 568 to 495 while the District's numbers increased from last year from 76 to 79. The District staff recommend the District continue its Deer Herd management program from October 21 to December 15, 2022, with two new changes to the program. One change is: Any child under the age of 18 will be allowed to hunt in the program during their parent's/guardian's hunting period. The child and parent/guardian must remain within eyesight of each other while hunting. The child will be required to purchase a MCCD Hunting Permit. All other rules apply.

The second change is: – Change wording of penalties from “will receive a lifetime ban” to “may receive a lifetime ban.”

Violation of any of the above rules may result in the suspension or revocation of hunting privileges on District property. The District reserves the right not to issue a permit to any person. A ban from the Deer Herd Management Program consists of no participation in hunting on District properties. This including participation in drawings, assisting a minor, retrieval of deer, etc.

Some discussion followed concerning the new rule stating “may” verses “will” and replacing the word “District” with “Executive Director”. All hunters have the right to argue their case before the Board. After some discussion, the Board agreed to leave the word “may” but replaced the word “District” reserves the right..... with “Executive Director” reserves the right.....

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the continuation of the Deer Herd Management Program with the change noted above to the recommendations. Trustee Castor SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, “Aye”; Trustee Schneller, “AYE”; Trustee Allen, “AYE”; and Trustee Bendsen, “AYE”. Motion carried.

2. Plans for District Property Barns/Houses Approval:

Shane Ravellette reviewed the various District’s barns and houses for approval as to the outcome of each showing pictures to the Board. Below are listed the various buildings in question:

1. Lebo Barn at the Sand Creek Conservation Area. This is the oldest barn the District owns. Almost ten years ago a cost analysis and evaluation was completed and the cost at that time was too great for the District (approximately \$200,000 to fix). The corner posts and foundation piers are in terrible shape and the barn has developed a lean in two different directions and currently a safety perimeter is fenced to keep the public away from it due to the danger it poses. The barn is a popular barn and five options were given as to its future. All of which were discussed with the Board.
2. The “White” Barn located at Friends Creek Conservation Area is the second of two barns that sat on the northern addition to Friends Creek. The roof is missing, has rotten beams, and most likely has lead based paint siding. This structure is a complete loss and the demolition process needs to be determined with two options given using a contractor to demolish the building or apply for a burn permit.
3. The Corn Crib and Drying Bins at the Friends Creek Conservation area also located at the north of Friends Creek. The corn crib is a galvanized metal crib with two modern grain drying towers. There is little value to the corn crib. The structure is in fair shape but the roof is deteriorating. Three options were given for its demotion.
4. The Franklin Barn located at Sand Creek Conservation Area and is a landmark and a bit of a local attraction for photographers. It was built as a replacement barn in the 1950’s after a tornado. The interior is balloon framed verses being timber framed. It has been a “store it and forget it” site for years. Three options were given with one being to have it demolished and two other options would be to either secure the exterior and to continue

to allow it to exist purely as an icon or continue to make repairs addressing the structural concerns of the interior.

5. The newly acquired Xander Property with a house and out buildings. The house is a 1950s brick ranch with a damp basement and the main floor has asbestos based tile covered by carpet. The two out buildings are a dirt floor old pole building and a small livestock shed. Currently the District does not need more residence storage and is not a good candidate for programs. Two option were given with one being to contract for the demolition or rehab the house and prepare for potential residence. The upfront cost with long term expenses will more than likely outweigh the cost of the demolition.

After some lengthy discussion, the Board made the following recommendations per site:

1. **Lebo Barn at Sand Creek:** Option #2 was chosen followed by #1:
Option 2 Contract with a salvage operation to dismantle the barn. The salvage contractor would retain anything of value. There are very few viable contractor that do this work. They may pass on it, if they can be found at all. The time to find these contractors may take months and the risk of collapse and danger increases every day.
Option 1 Contract to have the structure demolished. It will have an undetermined but possibly expensive cost.
2. **White Barn at Friends Creek:** Option #2 was chosen.
Option 2 Apply for a permit to burn it.
3. **Franklin Barn at Sand Creek:** Option #2 was chosen:
Option 2 Secure the exterior and allow it to continue to exist purely as an icon. Not even staff would have access unless an emergency or in the event further action is required in the future. The barn would never be truly secure from unwanted public access and would pose some limited danger. It will eventually require demolition or will collapse at a further date.
4. **Corn Crib and Drying Bins:** Option #2 and #4 – Salvage and then burn.
Option 2 Apply for a permit to burn it. The perforated galvanized metal will be a considerable mess to clean afterwards.
Option 4 Staff could rent equipment and use existing equipment to “demolish” it with the intent to salvage some of the oak boards for other uses, IF the boards survive the process.
5. **Xander House and Out Buildings:** Option #1 was chosen.
Option 1 Contract to have it demolished. Quotes are currently be explored.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the outcome as noted above for each of the buildings presented. Trustee Castor SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, “Aye”; Trustee Bendsen, “AYE”; Trustee Schneller, “AYE”; and Trustee Allen, “AYE”. Motion carried.

3. Information about upcoming Griswold Restoration Public Meeting:

Shane Ravellette shared with the Board the planned public meeting to be held at Griswold Conservation Area to present and hear feedback concerning the future restoration efforts at Griswold. The meeting is scheduled for June 9th. This will be a multiple year project to restore it to its natural state. Part of the proposed plan would be to leave some trees near the shelters, wetland and along the north side of the Kame. The remaining trees and those to be planted would be maintained in a savanna setting. Griswold has an immense problem with bush honeysuckle. Most of the site would be returned to a hill prairie containing flowering forbs and mixture of tall and short grasses. The public’s input would be closely listened to and evaluated before an action beyond our normal restoration work would go forward. The outcome of this

meeting will be presented to the Board later this summer. No action is required by the Board at this time but was presented to make the Board aware of the meeting so they will be informed if asked about the meeting.

4. Staff Reports:

Jerry Culp summarized his monthly report to the Board reporting that work continues on plans for the program space on the first floor of the nature center in preparation for summer camp expansion. Foundation Board Members' Orientation was completed with their first official Board Meeting being May 19th. Preparation for Prairie Pedal is underway and staff are also in the process of reviewing the outcome of the Rock Springs Ramble. Staff are working out the details with the United Way and the Boys and Girls Club for the proposed camp. The State announced that the funding for the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Grant (OSLAD) is higher than past years and grants are due in August. Staff are working on possible grants and will bring back to the Board. Jerry attended the Central Illinois Directors Meeting at Crystal Lake Park in Urbana. They have been finishing up a large renovation including a stream bank and shoreline erosion control using native plants. Staffing shortages were also discussed.

Director of Operations, Shane Ravellette, said the highlight of May was the opening of the Friends Creek Campground. The opening is always an undertaking but this year there was added stress with the new electrical grid and the online reservation system. Staff began clearing the newly acquired property at Rock Springs Conservation Area and addressed a garlic mustard bloom at the entrance to Rock Springs. The newest re-route of the trails at Sand Creek opened.

Director of Program Services, Alysia Callison, reported that April was very busy with school field trips along with two special events held at Rock Springs: the Rock Springs Ramble 5K Run and the Festival of Spring. Approximately 500 people attended the Festival of Spring and 180 attended the Ramble. The partnership with the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) continues to evolve with the anticipation of twelve children from the BGC to attend the Earth Adventures Camp. Summer camp counselors, Director of the summer camp and the historic intern have all been hired and will begin the end of May. Fifty pieces of Art were submitted for consideration in the Youth Art Contest. The first, second, and third place winners were chosen for each of four grade levels and will be on display in the Exhibit Hall through the end of August.

Director of Finance and Human Resources, Pam Smith, reported that year-end paperwork was completed and new fiscal year files created. At the time of this report, there was not a confirmed date for the auditor to be on site. Work was completed on the liability insurance renewal and once the invoice is received, it will be presented to the Board for approval. The Rock Springs 5K Ramble was a success with over \$12,000.00 in revenue and a net profit of \$9, 441.00. The manuals for the new Foundation Board members were completed for their orientation. The District's Dental Insurance remains unchanged for another year with Delta Dental. A certificate with First Bank of Pana was redeemed in the amount of \$285,628.67 and deposited into Gerber State Bank until we see an increase in deposit interest rates. We have been seeing a gradual increase in the Illinois Funds in the past month.

5. Other Business: No other business discussed.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES: No comments from the Trustees.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Trustee Castor MOVED to go into Executive Session at 7:14 p.m. for the purpose of

- 1) **The selection of a person to fill a public office, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the public body is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (3)**
- 2) **The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body. 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (5)**

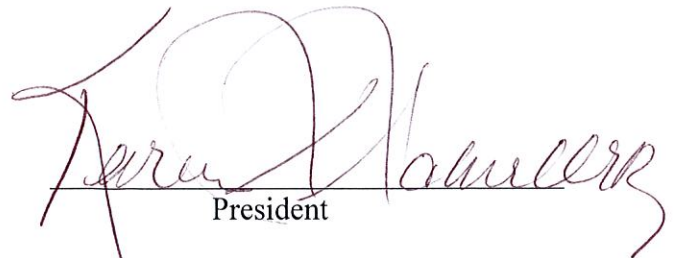
Trustee Bendsen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; and Trustee Allen, "AYE". Motion carried.


Trustee Bendsen MOVED to return to the Regular Public Meeting at 7:36 p.m. Trustee Allen SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Bendsen MOVED to approve the Executive Session Minutes of May 18, 2022. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Castor, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Schneller, "AYE". Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Allen MOVED to adjourn the Public Meeting at 7:37 p.m. Trustee Castor SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Schneller, "AYE"; Trustee Bendsen, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Castor "AYE". Motion carried.


President


Treasurer