

**Vermilion County Conservation District
Headquarters: Kennekuk County Park
Danville, IL**

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Wednesday, April 16, 2014
4:30 p.m.
Zack Hickman Room
Kennekuk county Park
Danville, IL**

President Little called the April Regular Meeting of the Vermilion County Conservation District Board of Trustees to order and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Roll call showed the following.

Trustees Present: Nikki A. Bogart
Ken E. Green
Perry A. Jaynes
Brett K. Little
B. Dirk Porter

Trustee(s) Absent: None

In attendance were Ken Konsis, Executive Director and Jamie Pasquale, Associate Director.

Staff members present included Lorna Konsis, Lara Darling and Gary Wilford.

First order of business, agenda item number four, was the Adoption of, or Amendments to the Agenda.

Trustee Bogart moved to approve the agenda as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Green. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Agenda item number five was the Approval of the Minutes from the March 19, 2014, Regular Meeting. President Little asked for any corrections to the minutes.

Trustee Bogart said that she had some corrections, but they have been corrected.

Trustee Green moved to approve the March 19, 2014, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Bogart. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Item number six, Audience Comments. There were none.

Agenda item number seven, the Treasurer's Report. President Little stated that we will address items seven a. through d., hear the Executive Director's Report on Cash and Investments, then approve items a – e at once.

President Little asked if there were questions from the Trustees.

Trustee Bogart asked about the memorial bench. The Executive Director answered that Jennifer Fry, a former resident of Danville and now living in Scotland, wished to donate a bench in memory of her 12 year old son who passed away last year in a drowning accident. He loved to visit Kennekuk, so she suggested purchasing a bench as a memorial. The Executive Director assisted her with ordering the bench and suggested that it be placed on one of the overlooks on the Wheeler Nature Trail. Since we have an account with the company, we purchased the bench and then were reimbursed by her.

Trustee Bogart next asked about the payment to Precision Engraving. This was for the display box on the counter in the Visitor Center to display the commemorative medallions for the education center. The Executive Director also answered that normally, the invoice is given directly to the VCCD Foundation for payment, but he was not in the office the day Larry Lovett delivered the item and invoice. Our Financial Secretary did not realize that this was to be paid by the Foundation.

Trustee Bogart next asked about the invoice for the legal ad for the job opening. The Executive Director answered that we must advertise for all full-time positions, by law. We recently hired Gary Tyrl to the Kennekuk Maintenance Staff. Gary has been a seasonal worker for us for the past eight years.

Trustee Bogart then commented that she is concerned about our Insurance Fund being in the red, however she is glad to see improvement in the FICA Fund.

With no other questions, President Little asked the Executive Director to give the report on cash and investments for April 16, 2014.

The Executive Director began his report by stating that our current checking account balance is \$78,950. We recently moved \$50,000 from Illinois Funds to checking. This was the result of the April CPPRT allocation, which was 6% higher than the April 2013 allocation. This was good news since we projected a 6% increase for the upcoming budget. The second Illinois Funds account shows no movement and has a balance of \$5,000. The Hoopston money market maintains a balance of \$123,900. The Preferred Checking account (Hegeler account) remains at \$2,200. The CIB passbook account has a current balance of \$123,400. Our Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) has a balance of \$6,860. We recently renewed our certificate of deposit with Iroquois Federal for another

three months at the same .5% interest rate. Our First Savings Bank has a balance of \$400, which is the interest from the DCEO grants.

The grand total of cash and investments as of April 16, 2014, is \$446,560, which compares to \$451,300, at the same time last year.

He asked if there were any other questions from the Trustees. There were none.

Trustee Green moved to approve the Current List of Bills from March 2014 in the amount of \$8,968.55 , which included check #'s 32187 - 32210; the Manual Checks for March 2014 in the amount of \$28,185.94 which included check #'s 32106 – 32122 and #'s 32149 - 32172; the General Journal Entries for March 2014; the March 2014 Budget Report and the April 16, 2014 Report on Cash and Investments. This was followed by a second from Trustee Jaynes.

President Little requested a roll call voice vote. The results:

Trustee Jaynes	-	yes
Trustee Bogart	-	yes
Trustee Green	-	yes
President Little	-	yes

The vote was 4–0. Treasurer’s Report, items seven: a – e were approved. Motion carried. *[Note: Trustee Porter had not yet arrived and therefore was absent from the vote.]*

Agenda item number eight, Specific Items of Business to be Transacted.

Item eight a: Presentation of Red Oak School Ledger by Dave Jarvis. Trustee Green introduced Dave, who he worked with for 35 years at Illinois Power Company. Dave had attended Red Oak School and presented the original school ledger to Lara Darling. The ledger contains historical accounts of the school and will be on display at Red Oak School.

Agenda item eight b. Approval to advertise for bidding General Liability Insurance/Approve RFP Specifications. The Executive Director stated that the Trustees were sent a copy of the RFP specifications in their board packet. Changes from last year are the dates and the addition of the education center and our portion of the Kickapoo Rail Trail. We will also have available the past five years of loss runs. This will not take affect until September 1, but because of the 60 day notice to terminate with IPARKS, we must open the bids at the June meeting and award the bid by June 30.

There were no questions from the Trustees; *therefore Trustee Jaynes moved to approve the RFP specifications to advertise for bids. This was followed by a second from Trustee Green. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Agenda item number nine was Representative Reports.

Agenda item nine a: IACD President, Jamie Pasquale reported that the next IACD Meeting will take place on May 1, at Starved Rock State Park in Utica.

Agenda item nine b; V.C.C.D. Foundation Report. Since no VCCDF Board Members were present, the Executive Director gave the report. The Foundation had a meeting on April 11. Reports were given on the Kennekuk Education Center, the Kickapoo Rail Trail, and the Cheeseburgers and Fun event. Kevin Green also reported on the activities of the Kickapoo Rail Trail Fundraising Committee. They have just printed a brochure to be used for fundraising purposes.

The Foundation also approved the amendment to their Articles of Incorporation.

Committee Reports were heard from Mark Pittman concerning the Jordan Creek WHIP progress. The prairie burn was successful and 1,000 tree seedlings will be planted this spring.

Membership Chair, Cheryl Vergin, reported that the *Marsh* newsletter is ready to be printed. Chairman Thoennes volunteered to have 200 color copies made.

There were no other reports, but the Environmental Education Center Fundraising Committee met after the board meeting. The Foundation meeting concluded with Executive Director Konsis showing the slide show of the construction, chronologically, of the education center. The next VCCDF board meeting is schedule for Friday, June 13, 9 a.m., in the Zack Hickman Room, Kennekuk County Park.

Agenda item nine c: IAPD Report. The Executive Director reported that the IAPD sent out the results of their recent annual meeting in Chicago. We also received our renewal invoice, which had no increase from last year.

Agenda item ten: There was no executive session.

Agenda item eleven. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Agenda item twelve. Report From the Education Supervisor. Gary Wilford reported that Outdoor School was up and running well. Next week will be our first major conference held at the new education center, the Environmental Education Association of IL (EEAI) Conference. He asked Lara Darling to report on this conference.

Lara reported that this conference rotates around five regions of the state each year. To date, there are eighty registrants. Field sessions will be at Heron Co. Park, a canoe trip down the Middle Fork River, a trip to the Homer Lake to view their natural "playscape", and a trip to our Collins Site. There will also be 1-2 hour concurrent indoor sessions. The conference begins on Thursday, April 24, and concludes Saturday, April 26. The theme is "Off the Grid" and there also will be a silent auction held.

Gary continued his report by suggesting that the exhibit area in the education center have a "Wildlife Conservation" theme without duplicating the Visitor Center exhibits. A taxidermied wolf was added to the space with the bison, and Ken Hannan donated a turkey mount. A mountain lion, elk, deer, and black bear plan to be added.

The library exhibit is in its eighth year and travels to most of the libraries in the county in the summer months. We will again open the exhibit at the Oakwood Rest Area on Interstate 74 on May 5th through the 8th.

There will be two Boy Scout Eagle projects conducted at Heron County Park. Wildlife nest boxes will be placed for wood ducks and owls. The trail will also be rerouted and a viewing platform will be built near the heron rookery.

The Forest Glen Archery Deer Hunt is also up and running. We already sold some tickets. Summer programming is moving along as planned. In three weeks, we will have Conservation Olympics on Friday, May 9. Gary then passed out the Olympic schedule to the trustees. This will be our 31st year for this event.

President Little added that he had the opportunity to pass out medals at last year's Olympics. It was very exciting to watch the kids in action and he urges the trustees to attend if at all possible.

This concluded the report for the education supervisor.

Agenda item thirteen: Report from the Associate Director. Associate Director Pasquale reported on the recent turkey draw. About 30-35 people were in attendance, which is normal. The season is currently going on, and the first season ends tomorrow. We have four zones and allow two hunters per zone per season. We also offer a Youth season, but that is over.

Mowing has been done in the entrance and also many acres have been burned. The reasons are to control exotic species. (autumn olive in the open fields and bush honeysuckle in the wooded areas), promote prairie growth, and to open areas to be used for Phase of the Moon parking.

Maintenance staff has also been cleaning up limbs, trash, and other debris around buildings and lawns.

Two weeks ago, the Associate Director attended the electronic recycling day at DACC and took in one half of a truckload of broken computers, printers, etc. He has also attended the VCCD Foundation meeting, the Lake Vermilion Water Quality Coalition meeting, and took part in the Kickapoo Rail Trail Tour, sponsored by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. He served as host for the Vermilion County portion. There were twenty people in attendance and the tour ended with a picnic lunch at Homer Lake.

This concluded the Associate Director's Report.

Agenda item fourteen: Report From Executive Director. He began with the Kennekuk Education Center report. We have a single \$30,000 payment left after architect, Scott Burge approves the punch list for the building. He will do a preliminary assessment next week. This includes keying the hallway door to match the main doors, install door handles on the exterior classroom doors and re-caulk the cracks in the floors.

The weekend staffing has been handled mainly by the Foundation Directors and visitations have averaged 12-15 people per day.

The VA Medical Center has donated furniture that included wooden office chairs, a computer desk, a regular office chair, and a double office waiting room chair.

The grant to the Vermilion Health Care Foundation has been submitted. The grant is for \$25,000 per year, for five years. It was written for the roof garden. Mel Meyers inspected the building with Gordon Thoennes and Mel reported that there are twelve applicants.

The Executive Director next gave the Kickapoo Rail Trail report. The IDNR closed on the Kickapoo portion of the trail on Thursday, April 3rd in the office of Vermilion Title. Attendees included the Executive Director, Brett Little, Gil Saikley, Connie Waggoner and Todd Retig of the IDNR Office of Realty. The closing was conducted by Ryan O'Shaughnessy. The \$209,000 payment was wired to the Conservation Fund.

The final paperwork for the IDNR Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant has been submitted. This will be in the amount of \$295,000. Signage acknowledging the IDNR is required and two signs are currently being made at Dean's Graphics.

Mary Ellen Wuellner of the CCFPD, has submitted final paperwork to Scott Lackey of IDOT. This grant will go to the CCFPD and then turned over to us for a \$76,000 payment to the Conservation Fund.

The CCFPD received word this past Monday that they were awarded their half of the \$2.2M ITEP grant that we received last year for trail development. Mary Ellen stated that the required match funds will be raised for our portion first, \$440,000 is needed. So far, the trail fundraising committee has raised \$65,000.

The Executive Director next reported on the progress of Phases of the Moon. Everything seems to be on schedule so far. The organizers have been on site at least twice per month. They will be here Monday through Wednesday of next week if any trustee wishes to come out to meet them.

The Security and Emergency Plans have been submitted to the Vermilion County Health Department for their approval. A list of current bands signed to contract is available.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 2014 in the Zack Hickman Room of the Visitor Center, Kennekuk County Park. Agenda items so far include passage of the budget and a report on the proposed bass fishing regulations from IDNR Fish Biologist, Mike Garthaus.

This concluded the Executive Director's Report. He next presented a slide show of the construction, chronologically, of the new education center. He asked if there were any questions.

President Little requested that the May Board Meeting be moved to the new education center. The Trustees agreed.

Agenda item fifteen: President's and Trustee's Comments.

Trustee Jaynes reported that the Danville Kiwanis have a donation for the Kennekuk Education Center exhibit area.

Trustee Bogart commented that the VCCD should be proactive about opposing the ash ponds at the shuttered Dynegy Plant. This was a topic at a Vermilion County board meeting and there is a lot of concern over the ponds polluting our national scenic river.

The Executive Director added that this was in the news recently and Prairie Rivers Network is working on it.

Trustee Bogart suggested that the Board draft a letter in opposition. Possibly, the Executive Director can bring some ideas to the Board.

Trustee Green, being a retiree from Illinois Power Co. (Dynegy), said that the primary pond will be very difficult to fix. The other pond is lined with bentonite. The request is to have Dynegy haul away the ash. This will cost \$4M to correctly seal the ponds that have 14% ash content.

Trustee Bogart requested that this be an agenda item for the May meeting.

Trustee Green reported that the park looks nice and is greening up. It's good to see the burning to control the exotic species and he commends the staff for a job well done.

Trustee Porter had no comment.

President Little reported that he talked to Susan Biggs Warner about aging our maple syrup in whiskey barrels. He purchased some and it was very good.

He also passed around a photo of two kids on a dock. He said this epitomizes what we are about and this could be customized to be used in a funding brochure.

With no further discussion, and all business transacted, *Trustee Green moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:26 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Bogart. Meeting adjourned.*

Perry A. Jaynes
Secretary
V.C.C.D. Board of Trustees