

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

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

**Wednesday, March 15, 2017
4:30 p.m.
Gannett Outdoor Education Center
Forest Glen Preserve
Westville, IL**

A public hearing concerning the issuance of General Obligation Bonds for the purpose of financing the acquisition, preservation and maintenance of wildlife, other open land, scenic roadways and pathways for the education, pleasure and recreation of the public for the payment of the expense incident thereto, at 4:30 p.m.

President Myers read a statement regarding the issuance of General Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$1M for the purpose of expenses for deferred maintenance and improvements of District infrastructure. Prompted by public comment, the District administration found it compulsory to evaluate the District's physical cash flow and establish a prioritized list of projects and equipment deemed necessary to correct the deferred maintenance. After review of this list, the administration and board agreed that returning the infrastructure to full strength would not be fiscally nor operationally possible, given the current funding level in the budget. After careful consideration and extensive evaluation, and planning, it was decided to seek bonding. President Myers explained the bonding procedure thus far.

An affirmative decision today will begin the bond underwriting process.

Executive Director Konsis presented the list of prioritized projects in need, verbally. The list was compiled by administration and staff; reviewed, revised, and redrafted many times. Estimated costs were attached each project or purchase. *See attached.*

During remarks and comments, the Trustees were in agreement that the projects and equipment listed were in fact, essential and necessary.

There were no audience comments or remarks.

Executive Director Konsis presented the public petition against the issuance of general obligation bonds which had no signatures.

Open discussion and/or agreement of proceedings yielded no comments or remarks.

President Myers asked for a motion to begin the bond underwriting process.

Trustee Cooke moved to proceed with the \$1M general obligation bond underwriting. This was followed by a second from Trustee Jaynes.

President Myers called for a roll call vote. The results were as follows.

Trustee Cooke	-	yes
Trustee Jaynes	-	yes
Trustee Schroeder	-	yes
President Myers	-	abstain

The vote was 3 – 0, with one abstention. Motion carried.

The public hearing was now closed.

President Myers called the March 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: Allen E. Cooke
Perry Jaynes
Jonathan A. Myers
Charles B. Schroeder

Trustee(s) Absent: B. Dirk Porter

In attendance were Ken Konsis, Executive Director; Jamie Pasquale, Associate Director and Amy Steeples, Recording Secretary.

Staff members present included Susan Biggs Warner, Cole Craft, Lara Darling, Mike Kotcher, and Charlie Rhoden.

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

President Myers asked for amendments to the agenda.

With no corrections, Trustee Jaynes moved to approve the agenda as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Cooke. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Agenda item number five was the Approval of the Minutes from the February 15, 2017, Regular Meeting.

Trustee Jaynes noted that he was not recorded as absent.

Trustee Jaynes moved to approve the February 15, 2017, Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. This was followed by a second from Trustee Cooke. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Item number six a. Audience Comments. There were none.

Agenda item number seven, the Treasurer's Report. President Myers asked if there were any questions on items seven a through d.

With no questions or comments, *Trustee Cooke moved to approve the Current List of Bills from February 2017 in the amount of \$3,551.33, which included check #'s 36696 -36708; the Manual Checks for February 2017 in the amount of \$32,075.66 which included check #'s 36571 – 36578, 36596 – 36600, 36619 – 36632, and 36650 – 36656; the General Journal Entries for February 28, 2017; and the February 2017 Budget Report. This was followed by a second from Trustee Jaynes.*

President Myers requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Cooke	-	yes
Trustee Jaynes	-	yes
Trustee Schroeder	-	yes
President Myers	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item number seven e. Executive Director Konsis reported the grand total of cash and investments as of March 15, 2017, was \$667,075.00. This compares to the grand total of \$654,430.00 March 2016. The balance in the Illinois Funds Investment Pool has increased due to the CPPRT payment for March. This was more than expected after the State of Illinois reported that a calculation error occurred and repayment would be made through a reduction in subsequent payments each month for the next two years. No adjustment will be made regarding the budgeted amount.

The grand total does not reflect accounts receivable farm income of \$55,000. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

He asked if there were any questions from the Trustees regarding any of the accounts or investments.

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

Item eight a. Approve Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. Executive Director Konsis reported that the anticipated cash balance for the Corporate Fund, including the farm account receivable is \$505,265. Major revenue items, excluding the bond include:

- real estate tax levy \$756,500; slightly less after exemptions and abatement are removed.
- CPPRT \$150,000; using last year's figures with no increase and including the 23% payback (decrease) due the state.
- Farming \$89,900; three payments during this fiscal year.

Executive Director Konsis paused to address the current farm income account receivable. The District has a signed contract with the farmer for \$54,600.00 for rent on 182 acres at \$300 per acre. The farmer has been in contact with us, and could not obtain an operating loan for this spring. In the past, once he procures an operating loan he makes the contractual payment to the V.C.C.D. and each of his contracts. This year the bank has cut farmers off. He has asked each of his five contracts if they will defer payment until the fall. The V.C.C.D. has a new signed contract, each of the Trustees has a copy, stating that the

farmer will make three payments before November 1, 2017 totaling \$55,600.00. If payments are not made by November 1, 2017 in total, the District is free to seek another renter. There have been no problems in the past, and the ground is broken up into multiple plots – and the District definitely prefers to stay with the current contract.

Trustee Schroeder questioned as to what the District gains if the farmer fails to make the payment.

Executive Director Konsis responded that there is a lien on the crop. Since it is so late this spring, we could not find another farmer at the point. Therefore, we would receive no income. This way, at least the District would have the income of the crop guaranteed.

There were no more questions regarding farm income.

Total revenue is estimated, without the bond, to be \$1,301,390.

On the expenditure side, salaries were increased from 2016-2017 by \$14,000. This was not due to full time staff, but hiring additional seasonal staff to complete bond projects. Other notable expenses include:

- administrative \$85,000; bond payment
- Forest Glen \$100,100; most is equipment or vehicle repair, which will decrease with purchases of new vehicles and equipment.
- Kennekuk \$107,000; most is equipment or vehicle repair, which will decrease with purchases of new vehicles and equipment.
- Lake Vermilion \$12,950; based on current budget figures.

Capital Improvements are all bond funded, and total \$1,023,500. Vehicle purchases are all bond funded.

Total expenditures minus the \$1M bond are \$1,189,470.

Total Revenue is \$1,301,390.

This leaves a positive budget balance of \$111,920 which offsets the negative balance of \$80,000 in fiscal year 2016-2017.

There were no questions on the Corporate Fund.

The cash balance for Insurance Fund at March 31, 2017 was (\$5,610.) In actuality, it is estimated to be \$70,345. This was due:

- 1) the general liability insurance premium expense decreased by about half
- 2) medical insurance was kept the same due to employee participation
- 3) \$10,000 was moved from the Corporate Fund

The estimate for FY 2017-2018 is \$50,420.

Total revenue is \$270,075, all from real estate taxes.

Insurance Fund expenditures are:

- general liability \$50,000
- unemployment and workman’s compensation \$175,00; retirees and hiring a younger person.
- HRA \$35,000; present budget indications.

Total expenditures are \$290,000.

This represents \$20,000 over revenue, but this would be absorbed by our high cash balance.

There were no questions regarding the Insurance Fund.

IMRF cash balance was budgeted at \$100,408 on March 31, 2017. Now, it is estimated to be \$109,140.

Total revenue is \$59,455; expenditures are \$52,000. This increases our cash balance, which we are trying to reduce. This will be corrected over the next two years by reducing the tax levy here.

There were no questions.

The Audit Fund cash balance budgeted for next year is \$2,960.

There were no questions.

The Social Security Fund budget for next year is \$16,665.

There were no questions overall.

President Myers will need a motion to place the tentative budget out for public review for the required 33-day period.

Trustee Schroeder moved to place the 2017-2018 Budget and Appropriations Ordinance on public review for a period of 33 days as required, March 20, 2017 through April 21, 2017, at the Forest Glen Staff Office, Kennekuk Visitor Center, Lake Vermilion County Park Maintenance Building, and on the V.C.C.D. website. This was followed by a second from Trustee Cooke.

President Myers asked for a roll call vote. The results:

Trustee Schroeder	-	yes
Trustee Cooke	-	yes
Trustee Jaynes	-	yes
President Myers	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Item eight b. Resolution to Authorize the Executive Director to take plants on V.C.C.D. properties as may be listed by the IDNR as threatened, endangered, or otherwise.

Executive Director Konsis explained at the recent IACD Conference, he learned that a Board has to authorize a representative of authority over management of lands and therefore the taking of said species of plants during routine maintenance. Executive Director Konsis will act as the authority.

Trustee Cooke moved to approve Resolution No. 17-1 pertaining to the Vermillion County Conservation District's authorization of the Executive Director to serve and maintain authority of the management of these lands and the incidental taking of said species of plants. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Agenda item number nine was Representative Reports.

Agenda item nine a: IACD Report. Associate Director Pasquale reported that there will be an IACD planned for April, in Springfield, but there are no details.

Agenda item nine b; V.C.C. Foundation Report. In the absence of a Foundation representative, Amy Steeples gave a brief update. The next meeting will be Friday, April 7th, Kennekuk Education Center, 9 a.m., rescheduled from Friday, April 14. The Sportsman's Banquet was a great success with an attendance of over 220 people who were very generous in their auction item bidding. Final figures were not available now; approximately over \$9,000, was collected from the live auction not including "pick of the litter" and silent items. Executive Director Konsis expects \$20,000 revenue.

This concluded the V.C.C.F. Report.

Agenda item nine c: IAPD Report. Executive Director Konsis stated that three of the four trustee present received information about "Trustee Boot Camp". Information will be given to the other trustee. If interested, please register online.

Agenda item nine d: V.C.C.D. Revenue Producing/Expense Reduction Committee Report. President Myers had nothing new to report.

Agenda item nine e: Health Insurance Committee Report. Trustee Jaynes had no report.

This concluded Representative Reports.

Agenda item ten: There was nothing for executive session.

Agenda item eleven. Report from the Education Staff Representative. Both Susan Biggs Warner and Lara Darling were present.

Susan reported that Maple Syrup Visits here at Forest Glen went over great, this being her first time running the long time venue previously offered by Gary Wilford. The sap has not been running, so the theme has been more toward "Winter Wildlife" and visits to the Homestead Cabin with talks on pioneer life. Groups have ranged from 25 – 65. Plans have begun regarding WWII Remembrance Days at Kennekuk, and she has been in contact with Senator Scott Bennett's office regarding his attendance and short speech at the event. She gave a Shiitake Mushroom Program for the public at the Danville Library, which was well attended and currently is preparing for the Maple Syrup Open House.

Lara reported that the Traveling Naturalist Program wraps up this week. She and Susan visited almost every grade school in Vermilion County during January, February and March. Registrations for District Summer Camps have begun to come in; information was sent to District 118 for inclusion in their Summer Opportunities Brochure. Conservation Olympics has gotten great response from schools, including Rossville and Southview. Outdoor School is starting in two weeks at Kennekuk, three weeks at Forest Glen. She is currently working with a high school AmeriCorps group to volunteer time at the parks. One option would be to water seal/wood seal the boardwalk at Heron County Park.

Upcoming programs/meetings she will be involved in and attending: Homeschool Fair on March 18; IACD Conference Wrap-up Meeting on March 21; Dark Skies Light Pollution program for INPS and Middle Fork Audubon Society on March 30; V.C.C.D. Volunteer Fair on April 2; Full Moon Hike, Kennekuk on April 11; Photography Class, Kennekuk on April 15; and Earth Day Activities on April 22.

A V.C.C.D. promotional banner has been ordered from Dean's Graphics and will arrive in time for the Maple Syrup Open House.

This concluded the education staff report.

Agenda item twelve: Report from the Associate Director. Associate Director Pasquale reported that the repair of the Lake Mingo Dam is nearly complete. The gates are closed and the lake is up approximately two feet in a week and a half.

The Jordan Creek Wildlife Sanctuary working on the WHIP as well as the newly instituted CRP pollinator program. Mowed about 75 acres of ground previously used as farm ground now enrolled in the program. There are 60 acres that need a controlled burn, weather permitting. There are 550 total acres at Jordan Creek.

Trustee Cooke asked if Jordan Creek was open to the public.

Executive Director Konsis responded that it was donated to the Foundation with the stipulation that it remain in a natural state, not open to the public.

Associate Director Pasquale continued that he has been pricing equipment and building repair costs. A draw for turkey hunting at Kennekuk will be held at the Kennekuk Education Center, Rotary Classroom at 9 a.m. this Saturday.

This concluded the report of the Associate Director.

Agenda item thirteen: Report From Executive Director. Executive Director Konsis reported that a new educator has been chosen, Nick Jeurissen from Tolono, IL. There were three finalists, one dropped out because of the salary. The remaining two gave presentations to classes at Oakwood Elementary on Monday, immediately followed by a second interview conducted by Susan Biggs Warner and Lara Darling. Both applicants did very well; Nick was the unanimous choice. Nick's base office will be at the Kennekuk Education Center, but will teach Outdoor School at Forest Glen Preserve and will have an office there as well. His start date is April 1, 2017.

Forest Glen's Maple Syrup Open House is Sunday, March 19, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Thirty gallons of maple syrup was made this year, we will have some to sell to volunteers then the public.

The V.C.C.D. Staff Retreat has been rescheduled for Friday, April 21.

The Conservationist, V.C.C.D. newsletter was mailed out today. The Maple Syrup Open House was advertised, and the District calendar of events was published. Lorna's memorials totaling \$5,665 are planned to go toward the Kickapoo Rail Trail expenses.

The survey work at Kennekuk shows that Rick Beyers owns the culvert and the portion of our Lake Mingo Trail. The survey has been extended to the township road.

David Hall, part-time patrol employee at Forest Glen and full time employee at Bunge, has procured a guard house building no longer used by Bunge. It may be used by the District as the new Lake Vermilion Concession Building or a storage building.

Executive Director Konsis' upcoming meetings include: DACC Horticulture Advisory Board on March 17; Walnut Council Foundation, Springfield, March 20; National Walnut Council, Springfield, March 21; IL Public Risk Loss Control, March 23, Kennekuk; IL Walnut Council, Macon County Conservation District, March 28; Audubon/INPS, Kennekuk, March 30. Also, the Pheasants Forever, Vermilion County Chapter Banquet is Saturday, March 25th at the Riggle Banquet Center.

The next Board of Trustees Meeting will be Wednesday, April 19, 2017; 4:30 p.m. at the Kennekuk Environmental Education Center.

Trustee Schroeder will not be in attendance at the April meeting.

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

President Myers had no comment.

Trustee Cooke had no comment.

Trustee Schroeder had no comment.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.*

Allen E. Cooke
Secretary
V.C.C.D. Board of Trustees