

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

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

**Wednesday, October 17, 2018  
4:30 p.m.  
Environmental Education Center  
Kennekuk County Park  
Danville, IL**

President Myers called the October 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 to be present.

Trustees Present: Jonathan A. Myers  
Randy A. Johnson  
Shelley K. McLain  
Doug R. Staske

Trustee(s) Absent: Charles B. Schroeder

In attendance were Executive Director Pasquale and Amy Steeples, Recording Secretary.

Staff members present included: Cole Craft, Kim Fox, Mike Kotcher, Jeff Lete and Gary Tyrl.

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.

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

Agenda item number five a. Approval of the Minutes from the September 19, 2018, Regular Meeting. With no corrections, *Trustee Staske moved to approve the September 19, 2018, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item number six. Audience Comments. President Myers stated each person has a maximum of three minutes, total maximum of 30 minutes for 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.

Trustee McLain inquired about the time period billed for check #39018 for \$3,960 to Saikley, Garrison Colombo and Barney on the Manual Check Detail.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that was for one month of legal fees; he believed it was for personnel policy and farm lease advisement and documents, among other duties.

Trustee McLain asked about cell phone booster, surge protector item, check #39063 to VISA on the Manual Check Detail.

Executive Director Pasquale answered that the district purchased a cell phone booster so there would no longer be a monthly charge for that item from Nextel.

With no other questions or comments, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Current List of Bills from September 2018 in the amount of \$10,556.57, which included check #'s 39135 - 39150; the Manual Checks for September 2018 in the amount of \$40,930.93 which included check #'s 39011 – 39019, 39021 – 39028, 39055 - 39063, and 39086 – 39096; the General Journal Entries for September 30, 2018; and the September 2018 Budget Report. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

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

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Trustee Johnson | - | yes |
| Trustee Staske  | - | yes |
| Trustee McLain  | - | yes |
| President Myers | - | yes |

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

Agenda item number seven e. Executive Director Pasquale reported that the NOW checking account balance is \$538,790; Illinois Funds Investment Pool totaled \$189,530, the Illinois Funds Money Market balance remains at \$5,200. The money market passbook account at First Farmers Bank balance is \$248,390; and Central Illinois Bank has a balance of \$148,500. The HRA has a balance of \$5,000. First Savings Bank NOW account balance is at \$148,100. The 6 mo. CD at Iroquois Federal at 2.05% interest remains at \$250,000. The 12 mo. CD at Central Illinois Bank at 2.25% interest remains at \$100,000.

The grand total of cash and investments less bond funds is \$1,525,387.99. This compares to \$799,300 in October of 2017.

Executive Director Pasquale noted that the October 2018 total includes the Wagner Estate Funds of \$141,104 from the Catlin Bank CD, and the second installment of real estate taxes has been received; in October 2017, the second installment had not. The NOW and checking accounts balance also include the Whittaker bequest of \$102,127.23. He reported soon, a short term certificate of deposit will be taken out in the amount of \$100,000 to \$250,000 at the best interest rate available.

President Myers asked if there were any questions from the trustees regarding any of the accounts or investments. There were none.

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

Item eight a. Open sealed bids for general liability insurance and approve/award bid. Executive Director Pasquale stated that only one request for specifications and one bid were received. This was from IPARKS. The bid was opened; it was \$22,876.70.

Gordon Thoennes, representative from Dimond Brothers, LLC, was recognized and stated that this bid from IPARKS (Illinois Parks Association Risk Services) was approximately \$6,000 less than last year, and was for a three year contract. He added that this policy “holds on a unit cost”, which means the rate will adjust depending on vehicle and equipment covered at the renewal date each year. He noted that he included numbers to increase the liability insurance coverage to \$5M, \$6M and \$7M. The District currently has \$4M in liability coverage; his recommendation would be that the Board consider raising the coverage to \$7M. If agreed upon, this would increase the policy rate quote by \$3,681. He also stated that the District Trustees and Foundation Board Directors are also covered by this policy as part of the package, at onsite as well as offsite events.

Discussion ensued. Gordon answered many questions regarding the policy. The trustees expressed their views on increasing the coverage amount.

With no further questions or comments, *Trustee Johnson moved to reject the specified bid for general liability insurance for \$4M submitted by IPARKS for \$22,876.70, and accept the bid from IPARKS for general liability insurance increasing the liability limit coverage to \$7M for \$26,557.70 for a three year contract. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

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

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Trustee Johnson | - | yes |
| Trustee Staske  | - | yes |
| Trustee McLain  | - | yes |
| President Myers | - | yes |

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

Item eight b. Approve Ordinance No. 148, ordinance addressing sexual harassment policy. President Myers asked for a motion to table item eight b. due to the ordinance not yet completed.

*Trustee Staske moved to table item eight b. approval of Ordinance No. 148 sexual harassment policy. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight c. Discuss VCCD Personnel Policy. Trustee McLain reported that there was nothing new to report, work continues on the policy.

Item eight d. Approve Ordinance No. 149, ordinance abating taxes levied for Alternative Revenue Source Bonds for 2019. President Myers elucidated that the alternative revenue source bond is a combination of a bond and promissory note. To make the bonds marketable, the District is asked to file a property tax levy ordinance each year with the county clerk’s office in the event the District would not be able to make the required payment. Since the VCCD is capable of making the payment by the due date, Ordinance No. 149 will abate any tax levy for 2018 to pay principal and interest due on the alternative revenue source bonds.

With no comments, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve Ordinance No. 149 abating the tax hereto levied for the year 2018 to pay the principal and interest on General Obligation Bonds (Alternative Revenue Source), Series 2017, of the Vermilion County Conservation District, Vermilion County, Illinois. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain.*

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

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Trustee Johnson | - | yes |
| Trustee McLain  | - | yes |
| Trustee Staske  | - | yes |
| President Myers | - | yes |

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

Item eight e. Discuss/Approve intergovernmental agreement with Illinois Department of Natural Resources for the Kickapoo Rail Trail. Executive Director Pasquale explained that this re-establishes an interagency agreement between IDNR and VCCD for execution of the project. At one point IDNR was forced to exit a previous agreement during a state budget impasse.

Trustee Staske inquired to the timeframe to have this agreement in place.

Executive Director Pasquale responded this needed attention as soon as possible so that Fehr Graham can begin the engineering plans. The VCCD is the lead agency, responsible for administering the engineering and construction services. This agreement will also allow the VCCD to be reimbursed by the state, and he feels the agreement is comprehensive.

Discussion ensued.

Trustee Staske attended the KRT meeting with Executive Director Pasquale, IDNR, Fehr Graham, and others and was impressed with the commitment and knowledge exhibited.

With all questions answered, *Trustee Staske moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Vermilion County Conservation District and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for the Kickapoo Rail Trail. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight f. Discuss/Approve resolution requesting a public hearing for riverbank armoring along the Middle Fork River by Vistra Energy Corp. President Myers explained that the Eco-Justice Collaborative had previously come to the VCCD Board requesting support of coal ash pond clean-up due to leakage along Illinois' only scenic river, The Middle Fork. The VCCD had given their full support.

Kevin Green, Vermilion County Soil and Water, was recognized in the audience and presented a synopsis of the resolution. If agreed upon, the VCCD would support a public hearing on the Vistra Energy Corporation's permit application plan submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to stem the erosion of the riverbank next to their coal ash storage facility in Vermilion County. Kevin explained the plan with help from Kristen Camp, member of Eco-Justice Collaborative, also in the audience.

With all questions answered, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the resolution requesting a public hearing on the Vistra Energy Corp. permit application to the U.S. Army Corps of*

*Engineers. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight g. Approve out of county residency for current full time employee. Executive Director Pasquale stated that Cole Craft, currently living in Vermilion County, has asked for the option to be approved for residency outside Vermilion County. Current policy requires employees to reside within Vermilion County.

Trustee Staske remarked that this was granted to another full time employee this year.

*Trustee Staske moved to suspend in-county residency for current employee Cole Craft. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight h. Discuss 2018 tax levy for taxes payable in 2019. The trustees received a draft of Ordinance No. 150 along with a worksheet of VCCD tax levy and EAV history over the past sixteen years. Executive Director Pasquale is proposing a 3.24% levy, and would like input from the Board. The insurance cost could be decreased as an option, which could make the total rate decrease. The District is in good financial position now, still having bond funds. However, bond payments will still exist after those dollars are spent, not leaving much for any capital improvement projects or unexpected expenses.

President Myers stated that the equalized assessed value is not expected to increase in Vermilion County, since it has not happened in eight years.

Discussion ensued.

Trustee Staske asked about personnel cost.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that the District is down two employees from last year at this point.

Trustee McLain wished to know if the IMRF Fund was in good shape.

President Myers answered that it was fully funded.

The trustees concurred that 3.24% seemed adequate for the VCCD 2018 tax levy. The ordinance will be formally approved at the November meeting.

Item eight i. Approve salary and announcement of VCCD Associate Director of Administration and Personnel.

*Trustee Johnson moved to retire to executive session in conjunction with Illinois Open Meeting Act 5 ILCS 120/2 (C)(1) as stated. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

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

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Trustee Johnson | - | yes |
| Trustee Staske  | - | yes |
| Trustee McLain  | - | yes |
| President Myers | - | yes |

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, retired to executive session at 5:14 p.m.

The Board returned from executive session at 5:38 p.m. No action was taken in executive session.

*Trustee McLain moved to approve to hire Kim Fox as the Associate Director of Administration and Personnel as of October 28, 2018, at the salary amount of \$53,000 per year. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson.*

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

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Trustee McLain  | - | yes |
| Trustee Johnson | - | yes |
| Trustee Staske  | - | yes |
| President Myers | - | yes |

The vote was 5 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item nine a. VCCF Report. Vermilion County Conservation Foundation Chairman, Gordon Thoennes was present to give the report. He asked Kevin Green, VCCF Director, to report on an upcoming event. KRT at Sleepy Creek will be held on November 16, 2018, 7 – 10:30 p.m. at the Dragonfly Event Center, Oakwood, IL. This fundraiser is for the Kickapoo Rail Trail in conjunction with the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. Tickets are \$50 each; sponsorship for a table of 10 persons \$450. Tickets are available at the Kennekuk Visitor Center and the Champaign County Forest Preserve Office.

Foundation Chairman Thoennes reported that he will give a Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Fund report at the November VCCD Board Meeting, apologizing that he did not have that available now. The Foundation Sportsman’s Banquet, held October 6, netted a profit of \$15,000. He has met with Executive Director Pasquale regarding proposed improvements to the Gannett Center classroom at Forest Glen, which will be discussed at the next Foundation Meeting on October 19.

This concluded the VCCF Report.

Agenda item nine b. VCCD Education, Maintenance and Land Management Report. The trustees were provided with this report in their board packet mailing.

Cole Craft responded to Trustee Staske’s comment regarding dead ash tree removal, stating that they will be more to follow, unfortunately.

President Myers asked about the Revolutionary War Re-enactment on September 22-23.

Executive Director Pasquale responded the crowd was very good; weather was good too – which helps a great deal.

Amy Steeples reported Pioneer Craft Day was held on the 23 with rail splitting, candle dipping, spinning and weaving demonstrations, rope making, and kids games; apple cider, sassafras tea and fry bread samples were given away. About 25 camps were portrayed with cavalry as well. Donations are procured and take care of the expenses for this program.

Trustee Staske inquired if the re-enactors pay a fee to use the grounds.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that they do not. Charlie Rhoden is a re-enactor and is very involved with this special event bringing people out to the park. Together, the re-enactors and staff work to procure donations, and at this point have a surplus to help with next year's event.

Trustee Staske asked for more information about the lily pads at Heron County Park.

Cole Craft explained that there are native and non-native species there. The non-native species with a purple flower can be up to six feet tall, the native is a smaller version with a white-ish flower. It is recommended to eradicate the non-native so that balance can be restored. To do that, however, would be labor intensive and expensive. Cole plans to try to find funding for this project.

Agenda item nine c. Health Insurance Committee. President Myers met with the VCCD Insurance Committee last Wednesday to get feedback in procurement of a new policy. The committee discussed deductibles, HRA, HSA, spouse and dependent coverage; as well as policy coverage. Members will speak with other employees and continue to gather information.

Agenda item nine d. Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Phase II and III Feasibility Study Committee. Trustee Staske reported that Executive Director Pasquale and he toured Forest Glen Preserve looking at the facilities there. He plans tours at Kennekuk and Lake Vermilion as well.

Agenda item nine e. Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Phase II and III Construction Committee. Trustee Johnson stated that until needs are identified, there is nothing to report.

This concluded Representative Reports.

Agenda item ten: Report from the Executive Director. Executive Director Pasquale reported that Cross Construction has moved some equipment to the Kickapoo Rail Trail project area in Oakwood. Dirt work, tree removal, and siltation fence installation are planned to begin soon and the bulk of the construction will start next year.

Kim Fox and he have conducted interviews for the part time office assistant at Kennekuk.

Before demolition can begin on the old nature center, Kennekuk, the fiber optic line that runs to the building need to be relocated. He is working with Gibson Tel-data.

Negotiations continue with Illini FS to provide motor fuel services for the parks, including installing new tanks and pumps with trackers for fuel usage on vehicles and equipment. They are not requiring us to sign a contract.

The City of Danville has cancelled their Haunted Happenings on October 27. They had problems recruiting enough volunteers for the event.

Executive Director Pasquale has been working with Aqua Illinois to lower the lake level at Lake Vermilion so that we can repair the concrete at the boat ramp; possibly 12".

Trustee Staske suggested that the City of Danville needed to be contacted, so that they may plan a bridge inspection and other work while the lake level is lowered.

LED lighting was installed in the Kennekuk Visitor Center and he is in the process of changing the Environmental Education Center with LED lights. A 35' TV tower was placed at the Kennekuk Visitor Center to raise the height of the receiver internet antenna above the trees. New siding and insulation at the Kennekuk Visitor Center will also be installed as time allows.

The next VCCD Board Meeting will be Wednesday, November 14, 2018; 4:30 p.m., Environmental Education Center, Kennekuk County Park. This is earlier due to Thanksgiving.

There were no comments or questions.

This concluded the Report of the Executive Director.

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

President Myers congratulated Kim as Associate Director of Administration and Personnel.

Trustee McLain stated that the Board should support events at the parks, such as Haunted Happenings. She feels that the VCCD staff runs the parks, and the Board exists to help, direct and encourage the employees; getting people out to the parks should be one of the board's objectives. She realizes events are a lot of work, and loved hearing about the Revolutionary War Re-enactment. As a trustee, events are something that they as a board need to encourage putting time to explore and put effort into.

Trustee Johnson commented that he would like to compliment the staff on how nice the parks look. He visited Forest Glen - it looks great, and as he drove through Kennekuk today it looks fantastic.

Trustee Staske commented that he wished to echo Trustee Johnson's comments. As he toured Forest Glen, he realized that there is a lot to maintain for the size of the staff the District has.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *Trustee Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain. All in favor by acclamation.*

---

Shelley McLain  
Secretary  
VCCD Board of Trustees