

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

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

**Wednesday, March 20, 2019
4:30 p.m.
Gannett Outdoor Education Center
Forest Glen Preserve
Westville, IL**

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 to be present.

Trustees Present: Jonathan A. Myers
Randy A. Johnson
Charles B. Schroeder

Trustee(s) Absent: Shelley K. McLain
Doug R. Staske

In attendance was Executive Director Pasquale, Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox, and Amy Steeples, Recording Secretary.

Staff members present included: Cole Craft, Lara Darling 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.

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

Agenda item number five. Approval of the Minutes from the January 16, 2019, Regular Meeting.

With no corrections, Trustee Johnson moved to approve the January 16, 2019, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

President Myers stated that there was no meeting in February 2019; therefore no February minutes were presented for approval.

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 h. This included the bills, checks, journal entries & budget reports for January 2019 and February 2019.

With no questions or discussion, Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Current List of Bills from January 2019 in the amount of \$31,133.80, which included check #'s 39505 – 39517 and February 2019 in the amount of \$4,500.70, which included check #'s 39578 - 39589; the Manual Checks for January 2019 in the amount of \$46,487.84 which included check #'s 39394 - 39403, 39417 – 39420, 39443 – 39445, 39447 – 39459, and 39473 – 39477 and February 2019 in the amount of \$146,422.81, which included check #'s 39478 – 39484, 39497 – 39504, 39518 – 39521, and 39538 - 39545; the General Journal Entries for January 31, 2019, and February 28, 2019; and the January and February 2019 Budget Reports. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder.

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

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Schroeder	-	yes
President Myers	-	yes

The vote was 3 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item number seven i. Report on Cash and Investments. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox reported that the NOW checking account balance is \$62,400; Illinois Funds Investment Pool totaled \$222,000, the Illinois Funds Money Market balance remains at \$5,200. The money market passbook account at First Farmers Bank balance is \$190,200; and Central Illinois Bank has a balance of \$48,600. The HRA has a balance of \$5,600. First Savings Bank NOW account balance is \$108,200. The 3 mo. CD at Iroquois Federal at 2.28% interest has a balance of \$250,000. The 12 mo. CD at Central Illinois Bank at 2.25% interest balance remains at \$100,550. The remaining 6 mo. CD balance is \$100,000 at First Financial Bank at 2.20%.

The grand total of cash and investments less bond funds remaining is \$1,008,110.81. This compares to \$828,848. in March of 2018.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox stated that there is a balance of \$243,000 in dedicated funds. The Wagner Estate funds have been held for the past few years, the Whittaker Donation just the past six months.

President Myers commented that the District is still positive approximately \$80,000. There were no other comments. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox concurred.

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

Item eight a. Approval of Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Tentative Budget. Executive Director Pasquale stated that it may not look like a balanced budget due to the dedicated funds that may be expended, but actually revenue and expenses are balanced.

President Myers reiterated that the District and Vermilion County Conservation Foundation are partnering on the Gannett Outdoor Education Center and Sycamore Hollow Campus Project; the Foundation agreed to match \$75,000 of funding with the District for this project. The District also holds the Whittaker Donation of \$102,127.23 which can be used for improvements at Kennekuk.

Executive Director Pasquale referenced page eight, Capital Improvements; stating that there is \$12,500 for the Beech Grove Trail and the Middle Fork Audubon Society has applied for and was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Wheeler Foundation. The total project is estimated to cost \$27,445. and is broken down into two phases. The grant will reduce the amount the District will need to expense. There is also \$15,000 for Heron County Park Boardwalk repairs, and Trustee Johnson has found a grant to assist with that project.

Page nine, Insurance and Compensation. This is Executive Director Pasquale's best estimate, due to employee retirement(s) and new hires which are unknowns.

Page eleven, Audit Fund. The audit fee increased, so this began as a negative balance. The tax levy was slightly increased and \$5,000 of the CPPRT has been moved to this fund; working to adjust this cash balance.

Page thirteen, Debt Service Fund. Executive Director Pasquale explained that this is the bond payment statement. This fiscal year's principle is \$90,000 and interest of \$37,135 for a total payment of \$127,125.

When approved, this tentative budget will be available for public review for thirty-three days, through April 22, 2019. It may be revised for presentation and approval to the Board at the April 17, 2019, Board of Trustees meeting.

Executive Director Pasquale remarked that the true cash balances of each fund will be known and updated, and any other adjustments found to be necessary. The budget will be presented for approval at a public hearing at the May 15, 2019, Board of Trustees Meeting.

With no other questions or comments, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve Vermilion County Conservation District Tentative Budget and Appropriations For 2019-2020 Fiscal Year. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder.*

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

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Schroeder	-	yes
President Myers	-	yes

The vote was 3 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

There was no executive session required.

Agenda item nine a. VCCF Report. Amy Steeples reported that the Foundation plans to have the budget ready to approve at the April 12, 2019, meeting, 9 a.m., Kennekuk.

President Myers asked if the Foundation would provide the District Board with a copy of the approved budget. Amy will relay that request.

This concluded the VCCF Report.

Agenda item nine b. VCCD Education, Maintenance and Land Management Report. The reports were included with the Trustee's packets. The Forest Glen Archery Historical Report given to the Board today was incomplete and will be emailed to them this week.

This concluded VCCD Education, Maintenance and Land Management Reports.

Agenda item nine c. Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Phase II and III Feasibility Study Committee. Trustee Staske was not present. There was no report.

This concluded Representative Reports.

Agenda item ten: Report from the Executive Director. Executive Director Pasquale reported that the Maple Syrup Open House was Sunday, March 17; 807 people were served at the Pancake and Sausage Dinner. There were 681 adults and 126 kids served. Gross receipts for the dinner were \$4,557.00, syrup sales that day were \$5181.00 and there is still syrup available to sell. There were \$125 in donations at the Homestead Cabin and Nick Jeurissen sold a few souvenirs at the Sycamore Hollow Nature Center. Attendance for the dinner was in the top six historically, and the dinner price was raised from \$5 to \$6 for adults; \$2.50 to \$3 for kids under 12. Syrup price was also raised from \$12 per pint to \$15.

Charlie Rhoden reported that 86 gallons of maple syrup was made this year, and the trees are done producing the type of sap that makes good syrup. Forest Glen record year for syrup was 112 gallons; this was a good year. The worst year was only 26 gallons of syrup produced about 4 – 5 years ago. Charlie briefly explained the sap collection and syrup process. It is mainly weather-dependent.

Executive Director Pasquale stated that Trustee Schroeder attended the dinner, and he waited in line approximately 40 minutes.

The Turkey Hunting Draw at Kennekuk was held March 16, with 20 hunters signed up to hunt. Executive Director Pasquale, Associate Director of Administration and Personnel, and Cole Craft (VCCD Hunt Manager) were in attendance. More hunters signed up this week, filling the rest of the slots.

There should be mobilization of equipment this week for tree removal along the proposed Vermilion County section of the Kickapoo Rail Trail. They have until March 31 to complete the removal of the trees by contract. Executive Director Pasquale estimates that it should take 3 – 5 days, but he has not seen any evidence of this yet.

Trustee Johnson asked about IDNR putting out bids for the work on the trestle.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that IDNR is revising the plans right now and with the District as the lead agency (ITEP funding in the VCCD's name), the District has paid two engineering bills; IDNR is planning for an August bid letting with a spring of 2020 construction start date.

The Kennekuk Visitor Center will be closed to the public for renovations, on March 26-28 and again on April 4-5. The new front doors will be installed next week; epoxy flooring will be installed April 1-5.

There were no other comments or questions.

This concluded the Report of the Executive Director.

Agenda item ten a. Report from the Director of Administration and Personnel. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox invited everyone to visit the Kennekuk Visitors Center to see the improvements.

Friday, March 29, a Trail Town Connection meeting is scheduled and businesses as well as individuals are encouraged to attend to learn how the KRT can help their towns.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox and Executive Director Pasquale have been working with Woodard Computing to get Executive Director Pasquale networked online on QuickBooks so that there will be a backup for bookkeeping, in case of emergency. It is just good business practice.

Trustee Johnson commented that QuickBooks is great software.

There were no other comments or questions.

This concluded the Report of the Associate Director of Administration.

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

President Myers commented that his youngest daughter came to Forest Glen for a Maple Syrup Day Visit with Susan Biggs Warner. It was a wonderful day with a nature hike, Pioneer Cabin visit, sap collection and learning. This is done with many children in all the schools and he thinks it is really great. He wanted to compliment the education staff for the wonderful job they do!

Kevin Green, Vermilion County Board Member, VCCF Director and very active participant with the KRT, contacted President Myers and wanted to know about the sections of the trail that do not appear to become developed anytime soon. His suggestion was to open these sections, removing trees and general clearing for mountain biking, or a path for people to utilize.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that was addressed previously by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District regarding the Champaign County side. The CCFPD did not want to do that due to insurance regulations and liability issues. Executive Director Pasquale would need to look at the trees in question; the tree removal that is currently contracted is costing \$60,000. The tree removal in question may be too much for the VCCD to handle and we cannot afford to contract it out. He truly does not know.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox commented that safety issues exist now; so mowing and clearing to allow and encouraging public access creates liability for the District.

The VCCD Staff and Board agreed that it would be a VCCD liability issue, and not to pursue this.

Trustee Johnson commented that Forest Glen looked great.

Trustee Schroeder commented that the pancakes were great & thanked the staff.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *Trustee Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. All in favor by acclamation.*

Shelley McLain
Secretary
VCCD Board of Trustees