1.0 CALL TO ORDER
The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Heinsohn on the evening of Thursday, February 16, 2017 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

2.0 ROLL CALL
2.1 Roll Call
Trustees Present: Bona Heinsohn, President
Stephen Barrett, Vice President
Brandon Thomas, Treasurer
David Kranz, Secretary
Vern Scacci, Trustee
David Brandt, Trustee

Trustee Absent: Pete Merkel, Trustee

Counsel & Staff Present: Robert K. Bush, Legal Counsel
Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director
John Kremer, Director of Operations & Public Safety
Ed Collins, Director of Land Preservation & Natural Resources
Wendy Kummerer, Marketing & Communications Manager
Anne Basten, Executive Assistant
John Berg, Facilities Maintenance Manager
Deb Chapman, Educational Services Manager
Sara Denham, Wildlife Resource Center Manager
Jeff Diedrick, Police Chief
Jenny Heider, Human Resource Manager
Amy Peters, Planning Manager
Val Siler, Land Preservation Manager
Perry Weborg, Sites & Fleet Manager
Jean Gerstbrein, Accounting Supervisor

3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
President Heinsohn led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 CONSERVATION ETHIC
Trustee Brandt read the Conservation Ethic aloud and Trustee Kranz read Goal number 5.
5.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS
There were no public comments presented this evening.

6.0 PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS
6.1a IPRA 2017 Agency Showcase: First Place - Print Communication: 2017 Calendar
6.1b The Eppley Institutes for Parks & Public Lands - Great Lakes Park Training Institute - 2017 Great Lakes Park, Facility and Recreation Program Award for the Tryon Creek Woods Land Preservation Partnership

Executive Director Kessler explained that the two awards were announced last month. The 2017 Great Lakes Park, Facility and Recreation Program Award is for the Tryon Creek Woods Land Preservation Partnership with The Land Conservancy of McHenry County, the McHenry County Conservation Foundation, Grand Victoria Foundation, and two private landowners near Glacial Park. Marketing & Communications Manager Kummerer noted that the 2017 District Calendar was given out at the Tap Into Your Wild Side event last October 2016 and that it promotes lower visited sites. Community Relations Specialist Lora Petrak was acknowledged for her design and editing of the award-winning calendar.

7.0 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS & REPORT
7.1 Trustee Reports on Conferences & Meetings Attended
7.1a Fox River Ecosystem Partnership
Trustee Scacci reported that he and Trustee Brandt attended the February meeting in Kane County. Forest Preserve District of Kane County is working with the Conservation Foundation to put forward a $50 million dollar bond referendum. It was noted that 34 of the last 39 ballot measures for parks have passed in the state. The next meeting will be in Wisconsin.

7.1b Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins reported that there were a number of presentations related to the 2040 plan including one on flooding and infrastructure damage. The group also discussed bicycle and walking trail expansion.

7.1c Chicago Wilderness
Executive Director Kessler reported that the Chicago Wilderness Executive Committee discussed emerging environmental policies on the federal and state level. The next meeting will be April 19, 2017 at the Lost Valley Visitor Center. She stated that the group has added new "Force of Nature" Awards to bring recognition to people and organizations whose conservation, restoration, advocacy and/or educational activities are inspirational examples for others. The Force
of Nature Awards are to complement the Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program (EERP), which focuses on high quality restoration of remnant ecological landscapes of 100 acres or more.

7.1d Agricultural Conservation Easement and Farmland Protection Commission
President Heinsohn reported that there had been no meetings in February.

7.1e IACFPD/IAPD/NRPA
President Heinsohn reported that the District was not represented at the last IACFPD meeting but attended the IAPD/IPRA awards luncheon. Executive Director Kessler and Marketing & Communication Manager Kummerer presented a session earlier the same day.

7.1f McHenry County Conservation Foundation
Trustee Brandt reported that the Foundation is preparing for the Pedal, Paddle, Saddle event on Sunday, June 4, 2017 and donations continue to come in for the “Close the Gap” campaign.

7.1g McHenry County Council of Governments
Vice President Barrett did not attend the most recent meeting.

7.1h Green Drinks Crystal Lake
Director of Operations and Public Safety Kremer reported that the District popped up quite frequently in the presentation from Jaki Berggren of Visit McHenry County especially as a destination for biking and paddling.

7.1i Conservation Congress - State of Conservation
President Heinsohn thanked the Board members for attending the event on February 9, 2017 at the Lost Valley Visitor Center and shared that the District would begin planning for the next Conservation Congress which will be held on February 10, 2018 at the McHenry County College.

7.1j Other
There were no other reports.

7.2 Finance & Administrative Committee
Treasurer Thomas reported that the finance reports were reviewed and are favorable with a small amount of funds uncommitted to land acquisition. The committee reviewed the variance reports and the draft finance policy revisions. The committee recommended acceptance of all reports and approval of the FY 2018 Tentative Budget to allow for posting of the public hearing notice and noted that the public hearing will occur on March 23, 2017.
7.3 Outreach & Advocacy Committee - Scheduled Meeting Cancelled
Secretary Kranz reported that the five meetings to date with new County Board members have gone well with the District answering all of their questions and offering to act as a resource. The committee discussed the First Friday concert series and are recommending that there be no changes to the event.

8.0 COUNTY BOARD LIAISON REPORT
President Heinsohn reported that Robert Nowak has been tentatively appointed as the County Board Liaison which will be confirmed at the County Board Meeting on February 21, 2017.

9.0 BOARD BUSINESS - CONSENT AGENDA
9.1 Approval of Minutes
9.1a January 19, 2017
9.1b January 19, 2017 - Committee of the Whole
9.1c February 9, 2017 - State of Conservation on McHenry Public Lands
9.2 Board Committee Minutes to be Received and Placed on File - None
9.3 Motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report for January 31, 2017 as presented.
9.4 Motion to authorize the preparation of specifications and letting of bids for the FY 2018 HMA (Asphalt) Replacement Projects throughout the construction season between June and October 2017 (Bid #s: 0217.09.01, 0217.09.02, 0217.09.03 & 0217.09.04).
9.5 Motion to award a contract to Excavating Concepts Inc. of Woodstock, IL, the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, for dismantling, salvaging and removal of the two-story block and frame barn, shed, two silos, frame barn and all concrete on the Alden parcel for a cost not to exceed $39,000 (Bid #0117.15.01).
9.6 Motion to award the bid for a one-year contract with the option to renew for an additional year to the second lowest qualified bidder Hagg Press of Elgin, IL for the printing and mailing of the District’s Landscapes Magazine for an annual printing cost not to exceed $27,340.
9.7 Motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute a twelve (12) month Professional Services Agreement beginning April 1, 2017 and ending March 31, 2018 with Baxter & Woodman Control Systems Integration, LLC of Crystal Lake, IL, for IT and computer support services at an estimated average monthly cost of $6,250.

A motion was made by Vice President Barrett, seconded by Trustee Brandt, to approve the Board Business - Consent Agenda items as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Scacci-yes, Kranz-yes, Brandt-yes, Thomas-yes, Barrett-yes, Heinsohn-yes.
Motion passed unanimously.
10.0 OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

10.1 Approval of Bills Payable for the Month of January 2017

A motion was made by Treasurer Thomas, seconded by Vice President Barrett, to approve the payment of bills as indicated on the Submission of Bills Pending Report for the month ending January 30, 2017 as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Brandt-yes, Barrett-yes, Scacci-yes, Thomas-yes, Kranz-yes, Heinsohn-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

10.2 FY 2018 Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance

The Board of Trustees commented that the document was well written. Executive Director Kessler, covering for the absent Director of Finance and Administration Dylak, gave a presentation on the proposed budget beginning with the three funds that receive property tax funding.

The District’s budgeting methodology is “zero based” where each budget is built line by line starting with zero for each category in each branch budget. The General Fund (Operating Budget) is balanced with expenses equal to expected revenues.

The District maintains a 25% minimum General Fund fund balance which represents 25% of the total annual operating expenses.

The FY 2018 Tentative Operating budget is balanced at $8,953,192 plus unfinished approved project commitments and unanticipated expenditures of $208,000 carried over from prior year for a total appropriation of $9,161,192 of which $7,505,106 is requested through the 2016 levy for the General Fund to cover Corporate & Social Security expenses.

Executive Director Kessler then reviewed the limitations under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) and past levies with $19,511,368 having been levied in 2016 to cover the Corporate & Social Security Fund, Insurance Fund and Debt Service Fund. $7,505,106 is included for the General Fund. Alternative Non-Tax Revenues for FY 2018 are estimated to be $143,024 and about evenly distributed over hunting permit fees, camping and shelter fees, and Educational programing fees. Farm Lease revenues are expected to result in $986,823 in income. Non-tax revenue has increased by 49% since 2015.

Departmental operational budgets have decreased by 6% over the past 8 years and the CPI has increased by 14.1% over the same period while land holdings and public improvements have increased. The proposed FY 2018 operating expenses for contractuals and commodities includes a -3.9% reduction ($83,301).

Employee related expenses were reduced over the last four fiscal years by -51.7%. The employee insurance rate increased by 5.2% for FY 2018 and will be passed on to the employees with no reduction in benefits. The FY 2018 proposed budget includes a 2% wage increase for non-contractual/non-bargaining employees. A new salary grade structure will be based on a 2016 compensation study which will affect approximately 30% of the employees. All salary grades will also be increased 2%. Bargaining employees include the
Local 150 employees who are contracted for a 2% increase, while the Fraternal Order of Police contract is currently under negotiation. The proposed FY 2018 budget expenses for employee wages and benefits is $6,727,557.

New capital outlays from the General Fund are reduced to $157,725 and $163,000 will be carried over from the FY 2017 budget and includes approved expenses for projects that are not expected to be completed before the end of FY 2017.

The presentation then switched to the Debt Service Fund. The 1998 general obligation bond issuance will be paid in full with the 2016 levy. The remainder of the outstanding debt was issued through voter referendum approval and issued strictly for land acquisition, site and trail improvements, and protection and restoration of natural habitats. The debt was refinanced in 2014 and resulted in $14.1 million dollars in savings to the taxpayers and is expected to be paid off in 2026. The 2016 levy for this fund resulted in a ($168,989) reduction compared to the 2015 levy.

The Insurance Fund FY 2018 budget is $282,108. The total requested Levy for 2016 was $19,511,368 to cover all three funds. This is a reduction of -0.3% from the previous year.

The next set of Funds are not levied.

The Capital Asset Management Plan (CAMP) has been revised and includes the repair and replacement of public access infrastructure. Staff has budgeted for $1.3 million dollars in projects for FY 2018 to be funded through the Capital Improvement Plan Fund (CIP). The Dedicated Accounts Capital Fund includes funding through grants and donations which have not yet been identified but are estimated to be about $2.6 million dollars and cannot be expended until the funding is committed. Existing funds are budgeted for current land acquisition contracted commitments and site & trail improvements.

Once approved, the FY 2018 Tentative Budget will be published to the District's website with a public hearing to be held at the March 23, 2017 Board meeting. The County's Planning, Environment and Development Committee is expected to discuss the budget in March/April 2017. This board will approve a final FY 2018 Budget and Appropriation Ordinance at their meeting on April 20, 2017 with the County Board Finance and Audit Committee reviewing it at their April/May 2017 meeting. The full County Board will have the ability to accept or reject the budget in May 2017.

A motion was made by Vice President Barrett, seconded by Trustee Brandt, to pass Ordinance #17-925 approving the Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for FY 2018 as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Kranz-yes, Thomas-yes, Scacci-yes, Brandt-yes, Barrett-yes, Heinsohn-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

10.3 Bid Award - Fox Bluff Conservation Area - Demolition of Structures
Director of Operations and Public Safety Kremer confirmed that the Board of Trustees had received the results of the bid opening from earlier in
the week and had read the information provided. He explained that Alternate 3 had been added to cap and seed the footprint areas due to the timing and the reduced staff resources available at the time it would need to be done due to already normally scheduled field work. The project will include asbestos remediation on all thirty five (35) structures and the demolition of nine (9) structures including the Dining Hall, Arts and Crafts, Riverview Lodge, Save, Office, Dorm #1, Dorm #3, Ward and Highland buildings for a bid price of $272,185. The total estimated project cost including all of the related consultants, contingencies, etc. should be around $353,876 and be paid out of the budgeted FY 2017 demolition funds and the FY 2018 building demolition tentative budget item. The Trustees appreciated the addition of a few more structures through the economies of scale.

A motion was made by Trustee Brandt, seconded by Secretary Kranz, to authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract to Signature Demolition Services Inc. of Bridgeview, IL, the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, for asbestos remediation of thirty-five (35) structures and demolition of nine (9) structures at Fox Bluff Conservation Area for a cost not to exceed $272,185 (Bid #0716, 15.01). A roll call vote gave the following results: Kranz-yes, Thomas-yes, Scacci-yes, Brandt-yes, Barrett-yes, Heinsohn-yes.
Motion passed unanimously.

11.0 PRESIDENT'S REPORT
President Heinsohn noted the thankfulness from the newer County Board Members upon learning more about the District.
President Heinsohn also thanked all the District Board members who were able to attend the follow up Conservation Congress event and was excited to see how engaged the participants were in the conversations.

12.0 TRUSTEES' REPORTS
Secretary Kranz stated that the Conservation Congress group he attended had good conversations and new ideas to share with others.
Trustee Brandt thanked President Heinsohn for making all the phone calls to schedule meetings with County Board Members.
Vice President Barrett reported that he and others had attended an IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference. He reported on an educational session he attended on urban wildlife and the issues in feeding wildlife including birds, and why they should not be fed as feeding some animals leads to attracting other wildlife that may not be as wanted such as skunks. He also asked about the 350-year old oak tree mentioned in the local paper which the Land Conservancy of McHenry County is working to preserve.

13.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS’ REPORT
Executive Director Kessler reported that the Sites and Fleet Branch was busy opening the sites this week due to the nice weather and that set up for the Festival of the Sugar Maples starts the following week.
Executive Director Kessler also reported that there is an ICC hearing coming up for the improvements to the Oak Street crossing in Crystal Lake.

The McHenry County Board held a long-range strategic planning retreat at Lost Valley Visitor Center earlier today and will be back tomorrow. Executive Director Kessler attended the first day of the meeting and reported that the County Board had a great discussion on various topics and highlighted the importance of open space, outdoor recreation and conservation in their “Preliminary Summary of Key Themes” exercise.

Marketing and Communications Manager Kummerer had been contacted by WBBM about the recent warm weather and early site openings.

Sandhill cranes have been seen in Glacial Park two weeks earlier than in the past.

14.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:07 p.m., A motion was made by Vice President Barrett, seconded by Trustee Brandt, to go into Executive Session pursuant to Exception 2C2 (Collective Bargaining), 2C5 (Real Estate), and 2C21 (Review of Closed Session Minutes) of the Open Meeting Act. A roll call vote gave the following results: Thomas-yes, Barrett-yes, Kranz-yes, Brandt-yes, Scacci-yes, Heinsohn-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

15.0 ACTION ON ITEMS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no action taken on items discussed in Executive Session.

16.0 ADJOURN

A motion was made by Vice President Barrett, seconded by Trustee Brandt, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.

Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m. February 16, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kranz, Secretary

Date 3/28/17