McHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES OF MAY 17, 2018

1.0 CALL TO ORDER
The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by President Barrett on the evening of Thursday, May 17, 2018 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois.

2.0 ROLL CALL
2.1 Roll Call
Trustees Present: Steve Barrett, President
Dave Kranz, Vice President
Pete Merkel, Treasurer
Vern Scacci, Secretary
Dave Brandt, Trustee
John Henning, Trustee
Carolyn Campbell, Trustee

Counsel & Staff Present: Robert “Bob” Nowak, County Board Liaison
Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director
John Kremer, Director of Operations & Public Safety
Andy Dylak, Director of Administration & Finance
Ed Collins, Director of Land Preservation & Natural Resources
Anne Basten, Executive Assistant
Deb Chapman, Educational Services Manager
Jeff Diedrick, Police Chief
Jenny Heider, Human Resource Manager
Amy Peters, Planning Manager (arrived at 6:00 p.m.)
Val Siler, Land Preservation Manager
Brad Woodson, Natural Resource Manager

Others Present: Jim Lee, Neighbor
Greg Gantner, Neighbor
Edith Herwy, Neighbor
Mary McCann, County Board Member, District 6

3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS
Jim Lee, 2109 Paulson Road, Harvard, Illinois stated that he had been told by Mr. Brinkman that he was holding the “All American Shoot Out” on Saturday, May 19, 2018. He then shared a flyer that had been prepared for the event from the previous year, which had been cancelled, and which described the weapons being used including several high powered weapons and a Gatling gun. Mr. Lee stated that Mr. Brinkman had charged for the event in the past. He noted that Mr. Brinkman had been better with the neighbors but that this event is a “Day of Hell” to the neighbors as the shooting has been continuous non-stop from 9:00 a.m. in the morning until 3:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

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He stated he is most concerned about larger caliber weapons which can go through almost anything. Mr. Brinkman had visited Mr. Lee during the winter months and had said that he, Mr. Brinkman, was planning to reduce the number of shooting events.

Greg Gantner, 2517 Paulson Road, Harvard, Illinois stated that during the last shooting event he had counted 3,500 shots during the day and that there were a lot of people present. His concern was stated as the possibility of distractions causing shooters to miss the berm. He said that many of the neighbors are gun owners but all the neighbor gun owners are opposed to the excessive use of the gun range and the danger it poses. The trail has been redirected but the taxpayer/user safety is his biggest concern followed by property values.

Mary McCann, County Board Member representing District 6, shared that she had worked on an outline for a firearms discharge ordinance and asked for help from the District. The issue is not a shooting issue, but is a health and mental health issue including the health and mental health of horses using the trails. The public is impacted as the property use is limited and the notification time was short. The ordinance is out for thirty-day review and will most likely be extended for another 30 days.

Trustee Merkel asked County Board Member McCann about a previously proposed noise ordinance. She stated that the existing statutes do not allow the McHenry County Sheriff’s Department to issue tickets as it does not include a process or enforceable levels of violations. It is understood that land owners have the right to enjoy their own property. Trustee Merkel asked if this is a land use issue and was told that the land use issue is not included in the proposed noise ordinance.

5.0 DISCUSSION ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Trustee Henning asked about item 9.5 - Bid Award for ATV’s (Bid #0418.08.01) and inquired as to what happens to the ATV’s that are replaced. Staff shared that the replaced ATV’s are taken out of service and sold through public auction in an “as is” condition.

6.0 RESTRUCTURING OF COMMITTEES & MEETINGS

6.1 First Reading: Amendment to Administrative Policy #2.03 Standing Committees

Executive Director Kessler shared a proposed amended policy per the prior conversations and discussions with board members including creating committees made up of all seven (7) Trustees with the Treasurer running the Finance and Administrative Committee and the Secretary running the Advocacy and Outreach Committee portion and the Vice-Chair running Jt. Committee Meetings. Executive Director Kessler shared that during the most recent Leadership Team Meeting, it was suggested that the Joint Committee Meetings of Finance & Administration and Outreach & Advocacy be replaced with Committee of the Whole meetings for simplicity. Several trustees liked the revisions but others spoke in support of additional changes.

6.2 Proposed Structure/Format of Meetings

Trustee Henning suggested removing the consent agenda section and allowing all trustees to speak to all issues. Others opposed removing the consent agenda for routine items. Executive Director Kessler reviewed an annual timeline of routine board business which highlighted the fact that most items that come in front of the Board of Trustees to take action are not routine. She explained how items like the hunting directive could come before the board for discussion one month and the following month it could be voted on but there are not many items like this. It was noted that if the committees were disbanded, then some items such as the pulling of invoices for procedural review would need to be added to the agendas to remain compliant with our current procedures and oversight. It was suggested
that an Advocacy and Outreach item also be added to the agenda so that it does not get lost in other board discussion items.

Secretary Scacci stated that he believed the intent of Committee of the Whole was to allow for more in-depth discussions on items that may not necessarily be voted on until sometime in the future and as a way to provide unified direction to staff.

Additional discussion included various configurations including one meeting and one agenda versus a committee of the whole type meeting followed by a voting meeting. All configurations were a concern for public input and the consensus was that there still needed to be two (2) public comment items each evening so those who could not attend at 5:00 p.m. have a chance near the end of the meeting. The time of the second public comment could be an established time where the meeting would stop to hear public comments or could be at a point in the agenda and not at a set time.

The consensus was to try one meeting of all trustees led by the President which would start at 5:00 p.m. and end when all business is completed. Executive Director will revise the policy with the proposed changes and submit for second reading along with a revised meeting schedule for approval at the June 21, 2018 meeting.

6.3 Future Conversational Topics

Executive Director Kessler asked what topics the Trustees would like to spend more time on and the consensus was strategic planning.

Discussion then sidetracked to the new positions approved in the recent budget which were answered by Executive Director Kessler including that the McHenry County Conservation Foundation had approved sharing in the funding of the new Development Director position at fifty percent (50%).

There was a request to have presentations from the Divisions to present the details of projects including the time and costs similar to the recent hunting report. Others wanted to hear staff’s input on various projects and it could provide an opportunity for staff to show their important contributions to the District as a whole and could generate future topics of discussion. The consensus was that the topics should be presented by staff, not necessarily the Directors/Managers, and should provide a background to help in understanding the budgeted programs, activities, projects and services. The presentations are expected to be short and fact based. Executive Director Kessler shared that she would appreciate having the opportunity to have a conversation with the Executive Leadership Team and Leadership Team to cultivate suggestions for topics and frequency of presentations being cognizant and empathetic to organizational capacity as shared by the staff with the Board of Trustees during the March 2018 meeting.

7.0 OLD BUSINESS

7.1 Solar Farm Task Force

Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins explained the additional information they gathered directly from the solar companies they contacted and noted that they found the anticipated income to be closer to $800 - $1,000 per acre which is comparable to farm lease income. Staff also noted that the District is not an ideal candidate to host a community solar location.

The Solar Farm Task Force could support the idea of solar farms and could support it on District buildings and parking lots, the built environment, but not in natural areas or most existing farmland. There was discussion on whether the District should create a position paper on the topic and the consensus was that we did not, as every proposal will need to be reviewed from a natural resource perspective based on the site location and therefore could
neither take a position of support or opposition to all solar farms.

8.0 NEW BUSINESS
8.1 FY 2020 Budget & Strategic Planning
Executive Director Kessler explained that now is the time when new ideas need to come forward if they are to be considered for the FY 2020 budget. The consensus was to hold a separate meeting to discuss budget planning in July or August once the new Trustee has been appointed by Chairman Franks and approved by the County Board.

8.2 Neighbor Shooting Event
This item was added to update the Board of Trustees on the current status of the Brookdale trail east of Paulson Road after being verbally notified by the owner of adjacent property that he was hosting an all-day shooting event on his property next to the public holdings of the District and where he had suggested that the trail be closed. Executive Director Kessler reported that the District has delivered a letter to the landowner, Mr. Brinkman, earlier today reminding him that no ammunition can enter the property under the jurisdiction of the District. The multiuse trail on the east side of Paulson Road will be posted as closed for Saturday May 19, 2018 during the hours of his event, not at the request of Mr. Brinkman but as a matter of public safety for site users. The Board of Trustees requested that the District send a letter to Chairman Franks stating our intentions and that the District considers the use of the adjacent property as a shooting range as a public safety issue.

9.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION
There was no time to go into Executive Session and the business to be conducted at this time was postponed until the end of the next meeting this evening.

10.0 RECONVENE
There was no need to reconvene as they did not go out of session.

11.0 ADJOURN
A motion was made by Trustee Brandt, seconded by Vice President Kranz, to adjourn this meeting. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. May 17, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Vern Scacci, Secretary

Date

6/21/18