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 5:01 p.m. by President Kranz on the evening of Thursday, May 16, 2019 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

2.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
President Kranz led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 INTRODUCTORY ROLL CALL
3.1 Roll Call
Trustees Present: Dave Kranz, President
Vern Scacci, Vice President
Pete Merkel, Treasurer
Dave Brandt, Secretary
Carolyn Campbell, Trustee (arrived at 5:07 p.m.)
John Henning, Trustee
Benjamin Washow, Trustee

Counsel & Staff Present: Robert Nowak, County Board Liaison (arrived at 5:07 p.m.)
James D. Rock, Legal Counsel
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
Wendy Kummerer, Director of Marketing & Communications
Anne Basten, Executive Assistant
Deb Chapman, Educational Services Manager
Sara Denham, Wildlife Resource Center Manager
Shawna Flavell, Director of Development/Executive Director
McHenry County Conservation Foundation
Jenny Heider, Human Resource Manager
Laura King, Chief of Police
Amy Peters, Planning Manager
Val Siler, Land Preservation Manager
Perry Weborg, Sites & Fleet Manager
Ben O’Dea, Sites Supervisor
Kim Compton, Education and Visitor Center Services Coordinator
John Peters, Restoration Ecologist
Amber Ross, Education Program Assistant
Elizabeth Mays, Education Program Assistant
Andy Talley, Education Program Coordinator
Ian McCartney, Assistant Ranger Region 2
Others Present:  
Chris Christensen, County Board Member  
John Reinert, County Board Member  
Kelli Wegener, County Board Member  
Drew Zimmerman, Northwest Herald  
Cole Peters, Woodstock

4.0 CONSERVATION ETHIC  
President Kranz read Goal #6 and Secretary Brandt read Goal #5 aloud.

5.0 CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE  
Trustee Washow read the Conservation Stewardship Pledge introduction paragraph and Pledge No. 4 aloud.

6.0 TRUSTEE REPORT  
Secretary Brandt stated that he read every word of the budget document and hoped that the rest of this board had also. Trustee Henning apologized for the unintended interpretation of a previous comment.  
Treasurer Merkel complimented the Finance & Audit Committee members of the County Board for the thorough discussion and he hopes those discussions will continue.

7.0 COUNTY BOARD LIAISON REPORT  
County Board Liaison Nowak was not present at this time to make a report.

8.0 PRESIDENT’S REPORT  
President Kranz stated that he had been busy and appreciated the professionalism of the staff through the process.

9.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS  
There were no additional public comments made at this point in the meeting.

10.0 PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS  
10.1 Introduction of New Team Members  
Education and Visitor Center Services Coordinator Compton introduced Education Program Assistant Amber Ross who has started at Lost Valley Visitor Center.  
Education Services Manager Chapman introduced Education Program Assistant Elizabeth Mays who has started at Prairieview Education Center and noted that both new employees are National Association of Interpretation Certified.

Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins reported that Habitat Technician Brianna Roeser was not able to attend this evening due to a scheduling conflict.

Sites & Fleet Manager Weborg introduced Assistant Ranger Region 3 Ian McCartney.
10.2 Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA) - Community Partnership recognition - Education and Visitor Center Services Coordinator Kim Compton

Executive Director Kessler spoke about Kim Compton's leadership as a community service provider. Trustee Campbell and Secretary Brandt stated that the event was heartwarming.

10.3 Illinois Chief of Police Association Rising Shield Award - Sergeant Ryan Stewart

Chief King explained that Sergeant Stewart was not able to attend this evening as it was his first day off in twelve days. Sergeant Stewart had been nominated for his work in the creation, implementation and safety of the District's hunting program as well as his creation of a mentoring program within the department.

Vice President Scacci attended the event and stated it was one of the best organizational meetings he had attended and very elite officers were honored.

10.4 Illinois Prescribed Fire Council Leadership Award - Restoration Ecologist John Peters

Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins explained that Restoration Ecologist Peters had been recommended for the award for his ongoing commitment to making prescription burning safe and efficient; and for sharing that knowledge through training and mentoring of others. Restoration Ecologist Peters then invited Board members to come out and see the preparation, planning, implementation, and mop up of a prescription burn. He stated that his job is made easy by the combined years of experience of the staff involved.

10.5 McHenry County Bike Week 2019

A motion was made by Secretary Brandt, seconded by Treasurer Merkel, to adopt Resolution #19-15 in support of McHenry County proclaiming June 21, 28, 2019 as McHenry County Bicycle Week 2019 as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Scacci-yes, Washow-yes, Brandt-yes, Merkel-yes, Campbell-yes, Henning-yes, Kranz-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

10.6 Resolution #19-20 Recognizing the Retirement of Andy Talley

A motion was made by Secretary Brandt, seconded by Vice President Scacci, to adopt Resolution #19-20 Recognizing the Retirement of Andy Talley. A roll call vote gave the following results: Brandt-yes, Campbell-yes, Merkel-yes, Scacci-yes, Henning-yes, Washow-yes, Kranz-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

President Kranz read the Resolution and presented it to Andy Talley. Education Program Coordinator Talley then spoke about his passion to the job and shared that he was looking forward to moving to Colorado Springs to be near his grandchildren and sharing the wonders of nature and history with them.

A brief break was held so Board members could congratulate Andy Talley and speak with the new hires.
11.0 BOARD BUSINESS - CONSENT AGENDA

11.1 Approval of Minutes
   11.1a April 18, 2019
   11.1b April 23, 2019 - Special Call
   11.1c March 14, 2019 - Executive Session

11.2 Motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report for April 30, 2019.

11.3 Motion to adopt Resolution #19-16 authorizing the Executive Director to execute a Mutual Aid Agreement with the County of McHenry for participation on the McHenry County S.W.A.T Unit.

11.4 Motion to pass Resolution #19-18 authorizing the execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Crystal Lake regarding the moving of the Prairie Trail and other improvements near the intersection of Crystal Lake Avenue and Main Street.

11.5 Motion to adopt Resolution #19-19 authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding between the McHenry County Conservation District and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for mutual assistance on the planning and implementation of prescribed burns on District and Service lands within the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge.

11.6 Motion to adopt Resolution #19-17 authorizing the Executive Director to execute a Collection Services Agreement with Merchants’ Credit Guide Company Chicago, Illinois, to collect certain unpaid ordinance ticket fees for 28% of fees collected.

11.7 Motion to pass Resolution #19-21 authorizing the execution of the First Amendment to Agricultural Improvements Lease with Patrick J. Fitzgerald.

11.8 Motion to adopt Resolution #19-22 authorizing the execution of Memorandum of Understanding with the Hackmatack Conservation Partnership to cooperate on land protection and restoration efforts within the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge.

A motion was made by Secretary Brandt, seconded by Trustee Campbell, to approve the Board Business-Consent Agenda items as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Washow-yes, Henning-yes, Scacci-yes, Brandt-yes, Campbell-yes, Merkel-yes, Kranz-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

12.0 OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

12.1 Approval of Bills Payable for the Month of April 2019
   12.1a Treasurer’s Internal Audit
       Director of Administration and Finance Dylak had provided the requested information from the previous meeting in writing which was shared with the Board of Trustees in advance. All items were in compliance with the purchasing policy and procedures.
       It was requested that the following documents be pulled for review: B6214 Burris - $3,917.84; F8810 FP Mainline Solutions - $146.00; S5992 Shaw Media - $1,513.10.

   12.1b Motion to approve the payment of bills as indicated on the Submission of Bills Pending Report for the month ending April 30, 2019.
       A motion was made by Vice President Scacci, seconded by Treasurer Merkel to approve the payment of the bills with the exception of Conserve
FS, as indicated on the Submission of Bills Pending Report for the month ending April 30, 2019 as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Henning-yes, Scacci-yes, Campbell-yes, Washoye-yes, Merkel-yes, Brandt-yes, Kranz-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Secretary Brandt, seconded by Treasurer Merkel, to pay the Conservation FS invoices as indicated on the Submission of Bills Pending Report for the month ending April 30, 2019 as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Campbell-yes, Merkel-yes, Henning-abstain, Washoye-yes, Brandt-yes, Scacci-yes, Kranz-yes. Motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0 with 1 abstention by Trustee Henning.

12.2 Consideration of an Ordinance Amending the FY 2020 Annual Budget & Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year Beginning April 1, 2019 and ending March 31, 2020

President Kranz asked for a discussion of recent events resulting in the District’s budget not being on the agenda for County adoption and several articles which appeared in the newspaper. There was discussion about the need to stop putting off maintenance of sites and infrastructure and the history of the responsibility to the taxpayers supported by staff who are the leaders in this field. These events have put this board in a difficult situation as there is no alternative funding. Making a decision to reduce the budget and followed by an anticipated reduction in levy in 2019 will make it even more difficult for the next board to fund maintenance. Special interest and other group requests will need to move to a back burner while the focus on staff time will be on ongoing operations and maintenance of existing amenities or revenue producing items.

Without levy increases, the future boards should consider a referendum to cover operations or ask for a percentage of the bond money back by re-issuing bonds.

President Kranz reported that he had been given a verbal request from Chairman Franks earlier this same day which included a reduction to the budget but he does not know what the full County Board is expecting. It would have been nice to have information in advance of the budget process rather than the last minute.

Vice President Scacci stated a need to look at changing the process as this is the second time in his four years where a last minute change was requested by the County Board Chairman.

Trustee Campbell stated that she would be willing to support open communication but the District has followed the statutory process and the District did try to communicate and she did not appreciate fellow Trustees’ comments about thoroughly reviewing the budget as she and others read and understood the budgetary needs and there was nothing to hide.

President Kranz had asked counsel in advance to review our budgetary process and verify that everything was done according to the statute. Attorney Rock confirmed that a legal review confirmed that every step was followed appropriately according to statute.

Director of Administration and Finance Dylak then reviewed slides from several old presentations about the budget beginning in July 2018. He also showed the breakdown of the sources of the total increase to the wages category of 5.4% which was not based on individual pay increases of 5.4% but included several different factors.
including an economic adjustment of 1.9%, a merit pool of 1.1%, and the reactivation of
the Assistant Ranger position in Region 2 at 0.78%. The balance of the percentage was
made up of the addition of a few seasonal staff, ‘4/7’ adjustments, and the new salary
grade structure adjustments.

Director of Administration & Finance Dylak reviewed the capital outlays and the
capital budget items within the total budget which included replacement parts like
specialty tires for a larger piece of field equipment. He also outlined how this board
reached the decision to increase the 2018 Property Tax Levy explaining how the District
did not take any Cost of Living increases or other increases for prior years and how staff
attrition and reorganization allowed the District to do more with a net body count
reduction.

Director of Administration and Finance Dylak reviewed key forecast assumptions
and nine (9) scenarios that were presented to the board where they had recommended
Scenario 2 and which still had the District having an operating deficit of $45,391 in FY
2020. He summarized that the board is now looking at Scenario 2b without the
increased levy putting the District at an operating deficit of $128,056 for FY 2020 and
(-$372,494) forecast for FY 2021. He also explained that under the Conservation
District Act, the District can’t levy for capital expenses and that they must come out of
the general fund which is why the District budgets have included a ‘surplus’ designed to
create funding for capital expenses. He requested consideration that the District be
allowed to capture new development levy.

Secretary Brandt stated that since the amount of the reduction requested by the
County Board Chairman was basically the amount originally scheduled to go into
reserves for future capital expenditures, that capital is the place to make this
reduction.

County Board Liaison Nowak stated that he had spoken with Chairman Franks
and that he had been instructed to request a reduction of the 2019 Levy by the 2018
increase resulting in the (-$372,494) deficit but did not see why the District could not
take new growth which in 2018 was only $36,000 and is estimated to be about $45,000
in 2019. He also stated that the Chairman was expecting a budget cut of $206,000.

Trustee Washow offered a suggestion of a reduction of the debt levy by the
$206,000 however, the District can’t do this statutorily as bond debt must be used for
debt repayment and the rate is established at the time of the bond issuance.

There was a brief discussion about culverts along the HUM trail related to
capital expenses.

Vice President Scacci restated his recommendation that all Foundation staff
salaries be paid 100% by the Foundation.

Throughout the discussion County Board Member Christensen was in and out of
the meeting on his cell phone. He reported to Director of Administration and Finance
Dylak that the District could keep the new development portion of the 2018 Levy
increase which Director of Administration & Finance Dylak explained resulted in a new
2019 Levy reduction amount of $163,681. ($37,816.68 being the actual new
development amount.)

Ordinance #19-960 presented this evening would take $160,000 out of the
Hazard Mitigation line item with the balance from land acquisition.

The consensus was to authorize the Board President to work with Executive
Director Kessler and legal counsel to send a memo to the County Board Chairman and
County Board Members of the intention of this board to reduce the 2019 levy by
$201,000 minus new development for a total reduction of $163,681 and reminding them
that the debt service levy cannot be adjusted.
A motion was made by Trustee Henning, seconded by Trustee Washow, to adopt Ordinance #19-960 amending the FY 2020 budget Ordinance #19-959 with a reduction of $206,000 through reducing the Hazard Mitigation commitment by $160,000 and the balance from land acquisition and to authorize the Board President to send a memo to the County Board Chairman committing to reducing the 2019 levy by $201,000 minus new development of $37,816.68 for a total reduction of $163,681 of the PTELL levy. A roll call vote gave the following results:

   Merkel - No, after 38 years in parks and recreation it is important to get the funds needed to get the job done but understands the County Board’s reluctance.
   Brandt - regretfully Yes.
   Washow - Yes.
   Henning - Yes.
   Scacci - Yes.
   Campbell - Will vote yes in the spirit of collaboration.
   Kranz - No.
   Motion passed 5 to 2.

President Kranz thanked the County Board Members present and County Board Member Wegener apologized and committed to work to help fix the process. County Board Member Christensen thanked this board for the good work the District and this board does.

12.3 Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Process, Timeline, and 2019 Levy Discussion
   Executive Director Kessler suggested more meetings with representatives from the District’s Board of Trustees, County Board, Chairman and County Board Liaison before September.
   Trustee Washow suggested that the meeting be in June after the Operational Goals & Budget internal board discussion and County Board Liaison Nowak recommended before mid-July at the latest.
   There was additional discussion about Trustees being elected county-wide and the associated costs of up to $10,000 to run a county wide election campaign. This board was instructed to give it some serious thought in order to create a position paper with their recommendations.

12.4 Structure Demolition Update
   Director of Operations and Public Safety Kremer reported that all Priority 1 buildings are gone and some of Priority 2. Staff is planning to review the buildings again and reprioritize as there is at least one silo that is now leaning and will need to come down sooner rather than later. He expects to have about 10 buildings and cost figures in time for the budget.
   There are 168 buildings in use, 88 not currently in use, and 30 more that are occupied by others and ‘buildings’ includes actual buildings all the way down to shelters, restrooms, and concrete pads.
   Several Trustees asked about various buildings they consider eyesores including, Kling and Pichen to which Director of Operations and Public Safety Kremer stated that there are several underfunded buildings with heavy use that need attention but all are being reviewed with the new Facilities Maintenance Manager once he comes on board.
12.5 Consideration to Approve a Contract with Rosemann & Sons of Union, IL for emergency repairs to Lost Valley Visitor Center plus Alternatives 1 and 2 for a cost not to exceed $38,991, and as authorized by the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA)

A motion was made by Secretary Brandt, seconded by Trustee Campbell, to authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with Rosemann & Sons of Union, IL for emergency repairs to Lost Valley Visitor Center plus Alternatives 1 & 2 for a cost not to exceed $38,991, and as authorized by the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) as presented. A roll call vote gave the following results: Scacci-yes, Washow-yes, Brandt-yes, Merkel-yes, Campbell-yes, Henning-yes, Kranz-yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

13.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT
13.1 Legislative Update - Verbal
Executive Director Kessler reported that the Capital Bill was expected to start moving.

13.2 Strategic Planning
Executive Director Kessler passed out strategic planning documents for discussion at the June 6, 2019 meeting.

14.0 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS & REPORT
14.1 Trustee Reports on Conferences & Meetings Attended
14.1a Fox River Ecosystem Partnership (FREP)
Trustee Campbell reported that she was not able to attend the most recent meeting where Right of Way for Habitat was the presenter.

14.1b Water Resource Action Plan (WRAP)
Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins reported that there was a presentation on Chairmakers Rush on reducing road salt impact and a gravel operations presentation. He also reported that the Illinois Geological Survey is now testing for arsenic when doing groundwater well monitoring.

Kane and Will Counties are currently drawing more water than McHenry County. There is a meeting on June 12, 2019 about bioreactors and nitrogen reduction for tile water.

14.1c Chicago Wilderness
Executive Director Kessler had no report at this time.

14.1d McHenry County Farm Bureau
Trustee Henning reported that the Farm Bureau members had questions about the District’s budget and were favorable of the District. They continued to talk about drainage districts.

14.1e IACFPD/IAPD/NRPA
Trustees Brandt reported that the trip to Springfield at the end of April for Parks Day and Legislative Conference was a blur as there was so much going on. Trustee Campbell agreed.
14.1f McHenry County Conservation Foundation
Secretary Brandt reported the group modified the mission and vision, committed to Hackmatack partnership, entered into a grant agreement with Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation (ICECF) for $27,000 for a project in Glacial Park Conservation Area, and are sponsoring camp scholarships for twenty disadvantaged kids and they are hiring a bus to get them there.

The Pedal, Paddle, Saddle sponsorship increased by 60%.

14.1g McHenry County Council of Governments
Executive Director Kessler spoke about the District’s role in protecting and preserving McHenry County’s water, wildlife and way of life. The event was held at Crandall’s in Hebron with Trustees Kranz, Brandt and Campbell attending. The next meeting was scheduled to be a social at Boulder Ridge Country Club.

14.1h Green Drinks Crystal Lake
Trustee Brandt reported that the presentation was by Nicky Strahl from IDNR and the next one will be Trustee Campbell and her husband.

14.1i Conservation Congress 2020
There was nothing new to report.

14.1j MCCG Shared Investment Study & Algonquin/Cary Subarea Plan Steering Committee
Executive Director Kessler reported that the subarea plan open house had been the previous evening.

14.1k MAPP
Director of Operations and Public Safety Kremer stated that the meeting had been cancelled and the next one is being hosted by the District at the Kishwaukee Headwaters Conservation Area.

14.1l Other Outreach Contacts
Trustees Campbell and Brandt attended to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission meeting where preliminary approval for a buffer at Lake in the Hills Fen had been given as well as a half-acre prairie parcel in Livingston County that was fantastic. The District’s Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve designation gained final approval and staff was recognized for all the work on the project.

Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins reported that he was meeting with the Illinois Natural History Survey as they have been contracted by the State to review the TriCounty roadway and will be inventorying the portion of land within Glacial Park boundaries.

15.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS II
There were no public comments.
16.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION
At 8:02 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Henning, seconded by Trustee Washow, to go into Executive Session pursuant to exemption 2C1 (Personnel), 2C6 (Lease of Real Estate), and 2C21 (Review of Executive Session Minutes) of the Open Meetings Act. A roll call vote gave the following results: Brandt-yes, Campbell-yes, Merkel-yes, Scacci-yes, Henning-yes, Washow-yes, Kranz-yes.

17.0 RECONVENE
The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District was reconvened to order at 9:24 p.m. by President Kranz on the evening of Thursday, May 16, 2019 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

18.1 Roll Call
Trustees Present: Dave Kranz, President
Vern Scacci, Vice President
Pete Merkel, Treasurer
Dave Brandt, Secretary
Carolyn Campbell, Trustee
John Henning, Trustee
Benjamin Washow, Trustee

Counsel & Staff Present: James D. Rock, Legal Counsel

19.0 ADJOURN
A motion was made by Vice President Scacci, seconded by Trustee Washow, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m. May 16, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Brandt, Secretary

Date 6/20/19