1.0 CALL TO ORDER
The Special Call Meeting of the Finance and Administrative committee of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by Treasurer Henning on the evening of Monday, August 12, 2019 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

2.0 ROLL CALL
2.1 Roll Call
Trustees Present: John Henning, Treasurer
Carolyn Campbell, Secretary
Patrick Fritz, Trustee

Additional Trustees Present: Vern Scacci, President

Staff Present: 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
Laura King, Chief of Police

Others Present: William “Bill” Cook, Ringwood
Ron Jessup, Jessup Manufacturing, McHenry
Doug Martin, City of McHenry
Ben O’Dea, Sites Supervisor

President Scacci took this time to introduce Trustee applicant Bill Cook to those present.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS
There were no public comments.

4.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES PREVIOUS MEETING
4.1 July 24, 2019
A motion was made by Secretary Campbell, seconded by Treasurer Henning, to recommend approval of the minutes of the Finance & Administrative Committee from July 24, 2019. A verbal vote resulted in two ayes.
Motion passed unanimously.

5.0 NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS
5.1 City of McHenry and Jessup Manufacturing Company, McHenry, IL - Request for Property Tax Abatement (Rebate)
Doug Martin from the City of McHenry, introduced Ron Jessup of Jessup Manufacturing Company (“Jessup”). Mr. Martin stated that Jessup is looking to double their building in McHenry on Route 120 east of the Fox River at a cost of $6.3M plus

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the cost of extending a water main. They are also looking at locations in Wisconsin and Lake County.

Jessup is currently paying $75,000 in taxes and expect that they will increase to $102K once the building is completed and they are asking for a rebate on just the additional taxes for five (5) years which would come to about $2,441/year in reduced new development income to the District. Mr. Martin noted that the County has a different procedure and has approved a partial abatement. School District 156, the Fire Protection District, and the City of McHenry have approved the rebate. McHenry Township approved it after a couple of revisions. Jessup has asked to use and underutilized assistance program to commit to McHenry.

There was discussion by the Board members present and there was no clear consensus.

A motion was made by Trustee Fritz, seconded by Secretary Campbell, to recommend moving discussion on a request by City of McHenry and Jessup Manufacturing Company to the Committee of the Whole on August 15, 2019. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Additional questions were asked related to the rebate including if a partial rebate is possible.

Director of Finance & Administration Dylak explained to Mr. Martin and Mr. Jessup that the District has made a commitment to reduce the levy for two years which will cause a reduction in the District’s budget.

A motion was made by Trustee Fritz to recommend support of the request by the City of McHenry on behalf of Jessup Manufacturing Company which died for lack of a second.

5.2 Fox Waterway Agency - Chain O’Lakes Watershed Plan - Request for Stakeholder Participation, Letter of Support and Funding

Executive Director Kessler was asked if the Agency had provided additional information on the expected costs which were not yet received and there was further brief discussion on partnerships with the Agency which will be needed when we are able to budget for work at Lyons Prairie & Marsh Conservation Area and other areas.

A motion was made by Secretary Campbell, seconded by Trustee Fritz, to recommend moving discussion on a request from the Fox Waterway Agency for support to the Committee of the Whole on August 15, 2019. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.

Motion passed unanimously.

5.3 Investments in Public Safety Through Proactive Policing Efforts

Chief King began her presentation and spoke to sharing of positive messaging which can, but not always, affect the feelings experienced by users of District property. There is a need to feel safe in order to relax and in order to experience the wonders of nature.

Chief King then provided a comparison of “salary only” costs between existing District costs versus County Sheriff similar costs which showed a cost of $350k per year for salary and benefits alone and which does not include the salary and benefits for the existing Chief and administrative coordinator which functions already exist within the Sheriff’s Department. District staff and the County Sheriff are discussing alternative ways to possibly work together to save the tax payer money.
Chief King continued to encourage the Board members to consider the question of how to prevent crime from occurring rather than why is there a need for police because there is no crime. The Department is continuously focused on solutions as issues come up.

Without safety, there are no visitors and without visitors there is no support.

A question was asked as to how much more time proactive policing takes. In the case of an onsite accident it might take about 30 minutes more to determine the cause of the accident to possibly prevent future accidents. As an example, a recent accident at Glacial Park identified the need for an additional sign. Staff is also working with first responders to help responders find victims.

Executive Director Kessler asked the Board of Trustees if there was additional information needed in the position paper so it could be formally accepted by the board and distributed.

Treasurer Henning asked about what the upcoming budget would look like. Chief King indicated that most equipment is on a ten (10) year cycle and that they are looking at gun trade in programs at the moment and they were also looking to reviewing the policy of take-home vehicles to lower the mileage on each vehicle and to allow more hours in the field and is based on national studies. They are also looking at scheduling changes.

Chief King also explained the difference between security officers and armed patrol officers and access to information such as records of sexual predation. Unarmed security personnel are not able to access this information. Proactive policing by armed security personnel who have access to such information can change a fishing license check into an arrest for a sexual predator in a public park.

President Scacci asked that further discussion be held at the Committee of the Whole and would like to see more stats and less philosophy in the presentation. He would like to be able to have staff supply a shorter, focused presentation for the Finance & Audit Committee of the County Board.

Trustee Fritz asked about the use of security camera systems on sites to which Chief King reported that some cameras are used for targeted enforcement and ongoing issues.

Secretary Campbell indicated that she felt the face to face and visual presence of officers are needed for a sense of safety.

5.4 Natural Capital Improvement Plan (NCIP) Implementation & Communications Strategy

Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins shared that there are currently 112 agricultural leases and went on to explain the multiple types of leases. He then reviewed the leases coming up for renewal and the ones that are not being recommended for renewal. He noted that the Conservation Reserve Program is not being continued by the Federal Government.

All restoration costs provided on all documents are 100% related to the necessary seed (no labor) and since there are now more sources available, we are finding that the costs of seeds are coming down.

Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins then shared a pie chart noting that there has been no CAMP (Capital Asset Management Funds) used to date. President Scacci asked that the price tag for ongoing maintenance be provided. For example, if a site is converted to prairie and costs $X to plant it but what are the annual costs after that to maintain it after the initial planting and wants to see the cost of the entire plan in today’s dollars.
Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins explained the reason fourteen (14) parcels were planned to come out of agriculture and that they are all based on management plans for these sites and that large agriculture parcels are not being considered as the revenue is still needed. Even in 2025, there will still be over 5,000 acres in agricultural use with the current NCIP plan.

Executive Director Kessler noted that a meeting of staff and others on the agricultural program will take place after the first of the year. She also noted that Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins is representing the District at the food group meetings with The Land Conservancy. It was also noted that the Liberty Prairie Foundation has determined through their grant supported work, that there are over 40,000 agricultural acres under public ownership in the area.

5.5 Succession Planning - Staffing & Development Plan FY 2021
5.5a Realignment of Education Services
5.5b Position Description Modifications
5.5c Future Staffing Assessment

Executive Director Kessler explained that it has been the District’s standard operating procedure to evaluate positions as they become vacant and that announced retirements allow additional time to make those evaluations. The recommendation is to move the Education Services Department from Operations and Public Safety Division to create more synergy with the Marketing and Communications Division by forming the Marketing and Education Division. The Education Services Department has several new staff people and reassessing the metrics and understanding the science will help make the programming more effective at reaching the shared objectives. They would like to make the move effective October 1, 2019 as the process of hiring a new Education Services Manager begins. This move also initiated a revision of related job descriptions for the Education Services Manager, the Director of Marketing & Education, and the Director of Operations and Public Safety. It is anticipated that a review of the positions will need to take place again in a few months to evaluate the need for grade changes so that everyone is treated equitably.

Executive Director Kessler went on to share that her goal continues to be to complete the Succession Plan document before the end of the fiscal year. The plan will include definitions of skill sets needed and the risk of vacancies in key positions. It will also determine the core competencies, soft skills, and technical ones. This will include self-assessment and will help identify employees with high potential and help determine career development plans for those individuals. All of the information is currently confidential and she is working with Human Resource Manager Heider to create the plan.

President Scacci suggested bringing on a full-time person to support the agricultural program coordination and communication and which supports a large portion of the District’s revenue.

Secretary Campbell would like to see a more holistic approach to identifying the employee needs, especially since the Board of Trustees recent direction to bump the third-party employee evaluation from the FY 2021 budget. Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins stated that there might be funding through the Delta Institute for the short term to evaluate the need. Director of Operations and Public Safety Kremer stated that the part-time electrician is planning to retire permanently and that Maintenance Worker Nichols is in the process of becoming certified but this will pull him from other maintenance work and that they
need to continue to plan for succession for the institutional building function knowledge lost as staff moves on.
There was additional discussion about reviewing outsourcing results by newer board members who were not familiar with previous discussions.

5.6 Discussion on Purpose & Costs of Special Events
Executive Director Kessler used the Conservation Congress historical expenses to illustrate that the cost to produce some special events is reduced as time goes on. She is planning to bring forward the 50th Anniversary Event budget to the Board of Trustees in advance of the FY 2021 Budget as part of the celebration will take place in the upcoming fiscal year with the remainder in FY 2022.

Treasurer Henning would like to see a project code assigned for special events to keep an ongoing accounting of the costs. There is also a need to define what is classified as a special event versus programs that need to come before the Board of Trustees, such as the as the Conservation Congress, Great Outdoors Beer Trail, Festival of the Sugar Maples, First Friday Concert Series, etc.

The question was asked about deciding to have Special Events or taking down buildings.

6.0 OTHER
Executive Director Kessler asked for clarification on items discussed today such as to the Jessup Manufacturing request and whether they should be moved off consent agenda. The consensus was to move the Jessup Manufacturing request to the Committee of the Whole under New and Unfinished business while the rest of the items could remain on the Consent Agenda.

7.0 ADJOURN
A motion was made by Secretary Campbell, seconded by Trustee Fritz, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m. August 12, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

John Henning, Treasurer

Sept 24, 2019

Date