1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The scheduled Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District begun by President Pro Tem/Vice President Brandt on the evening of Thursday, July 16, 2020 at Brookdale Administrative Offices and via Video Conference by Zoom under Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation - Executive Order 2020-07 in response to COVID-19 (COVID-19 Executive Order No. 5), as amended by 2020-33- COVID 19 Executive Order No. 31) and as reissued and extended by Executive Order 2020-39 - Executive Order in Response to COVID-19 (COVID-19 Executive Order No. 37) Suspending the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2 &120/7) which limits remote participation of the public body and requiring a quorum be physically present in a public space. The meeting was available for public access through the same log-on and meeting code as the Trustees. Trustees were present at Brookdale Administrative Offices and were connected to Zoom through a shared connection on a laptop.

President Pro Tem/Vice President Brandt stated that he had determined that it was not practical or prudent to hold the public meeting of the Board in person with members of the public due to the current pandemic (PA 101-0640)

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District was then called to order at 5:04 p.m. by President Pro Tem Brandt on the evening of Thursday, July 16, 2020 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois 60098 and via Video Conference by Zoom. The meeting was recorded and was posted to www.MCCDistrict.org the following morning.

2.0 INTRODUCTORY ROLL CALL

2.1 Roll Call

Trustees Present: Dave Brandt, President Pro Tem/Vice President
John Henning, Treasurer
Carolyn Campbell, Secretary
Bill Cook, Trustee
Linda Thomas, Trustee

Trustees Absent: Patrick Fritz, Trustee
One Vacant Position Exists

Counsel & Staff Present: Andrew S. Paine, Counsel (Remote)
Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director
John Kremer, Director of Operations & Public Safety (Remote)
Andy Dylak, Director of Finance & Administration (Remote)
Ed Collins, Director of Land Preservation & Natural Resources (Remote)
Wendy Kummerer, Director of Marketing & Education (Remote)
Laura King, Police Chief (Remote)
Anne Basten, Executive Assistant
3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Pro Tem/Vice President Brandt.

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS
There were no public comments made.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS
5.1 Review of the July 21, 2020 Regular Meeting Agenda Items
President Pro Tem/Vice President Brandt asked why Item 13.8 did not have "Motion to Pass" in front of the Ordinance description and it was explained that the consensus to move forward had been made during the meeting on July 14, 2020 and that the final agenda will be revised prior to the meeting on July 21, 2020.
It was clarified that Land Administration and Preservation Manager Siler will be present at the meeting on July 21, 2020 to respond to questions related to the Villas of Boulder Ridge contract expiration and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission request for a new license related to office space at the Lost Valley Visitor Center.
A question was asked related to retroactivity on Item 13.3a. Executive Director Kessler explained the timing of the complaint and the length of review process with the results being that the comparative position at the Lake County Forest Preserve District of the Restoration Ecologist 2 instead of Restoration Ecologist 1 had been made at the time of the study and had it been correct, the salary increases would have gone into effect at the same time as other adjustments were made in April 2019.
There was a discussion about pay grades at the Federal level by members of the Board and how that works.
Executive Director Kessler asked if there was any discussion on the posted meeting dates for the balance of the calendar year. Treasurer Henning asked that since all members of this Board are also members of the Finance & Administrative Committee, the balance of the Finance & Administrative Committee meeting topics could be discussed in the related Committee of the Whole meetings. After further comments, the consensus was that the Committee of the Whole and the Regular voting meeting would be enough and the two other meetings already scheduled would be cancelled. No revised resolution will need to be adopted or posted.

5.2 Discussion on FY 2021- FY 2023 Strategic Plan Tactics
Executive Director Kessler shared a presentation covering the development of the goals and strategy. Staff was then tasked with creating the tactics which make up the work plan. The tactics were then reviewed for each goal which had been approved the prior month.
There was discussion on the Tactic 1.3a related to agricultural lands and the impact on water quality and infiltration and the work already being done to measure soil health and how the biofilter project through the Farm Bureau and other partners will benefit a lot of people.
Tactic 1.4b related to the Kishwaukee River and the BAAD grant and the need for a Memorandum of Understanding as this project moves forward guided by others.
Director of Land Preservation and Natural Resources Collins explained how the District was using small projects to reach the target number of 500 acres and not just taking land out of production. He stated that there would be no new large projects without funding for the work and long-term maintenance being identified in advance and brought to the Board of Trustees. In most cases, the District’s contributions to large projects is labor and in-kind services.

Items under Goal 2.3 improving opportunities for site use and accessibility are included in hopes that grant or other funding sources become available and allows staff to have shovel ready projects if the opportunities present themselves.

Item 2.4a related to the Hebron Trail and recent discussions with Hebron Township and others was discussed and it was explained that the District cannot legally direct people to land that the District does not own but we realize that the trail gap does need to be solved and that it can take a long-time to make it happen as we learned at Oak Street in Crystal Lake. This particular trail has wetland restraints and we have already applied for grant funding to hire engineers to guide our staff towards a viable solution. After a solution is identified, it will take additional time to implement and raise funds to make the connection.

Goal 3 inspiring Conservation Ambassadors was next to be discussed. Chief King has taken the lead on this project and explained that there is no direct cost for her proposed 8-10 week training program except in the presentation of one-hour programs by each of the departments for this education and awareness program.

Executive Director Kessler asked the Board to consider what level of celebration they would like to see for the District’s 50th Anniversary so that expenses could be included in the budget. Several suggestions such as hold a 30 min brainstorming, asking the County, asking members of McHenry County Council of Governments and other groups for input were made. Executive Director Kessler offered to come back with a few suggestions.

Executive Director Kessler explained the importance of cultivating and retaining a knowledgeable staff and the overall cost efficiencies gained through dedicated and responsive staff and proper succession planning identified in Goal 3.2.

Promoting Health and Wellness in Goal 3.3 was supported by Trustee Cook who recommended working with health professionals.

Executive Director Kessler noted the importance of partnerships and advocacy especially with the bonds being paid off in the near future. Additional discussion focused on other possible avenues for partnerships in addition to other like-minded groups. Secretary Campbell suggested working with more businesses to show how employees can live, work and play in McHenry County as witnessed through more people staying locally during the pandemic.

Our Stewardship was the final pillar discussed and focused on the identification and communication of deferred maintenance items, supporting the McHenry County Conservation Foundation, continuing to share facts with elected officials, and continued use of emerging technologies to support effectiveness in that communication, and fact sharing.

The tactics will come back to this board in August for acceptance.

5.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Executive Director Kessler shared that a meeting had occurred with IDOT, McDOT, Hebron Township, the railroad and District staff regarding recent inquiries.

The Willow tree at the Villas of Boulder Ridge had been cut down.
Lake and McHenry Counties are now their own Region within the State COVID-19 data presentations.

The District is managing under the COVID-19 budget cuts but we are really missing the seasonal staff and the work they do. The COVID-19 reimbursement grant application has been submitted.

Executive Director Kessler wrote an article for an upcoming issue of the Illinois Association of Park Districts’ magazine and the District will be applying for the IAPD Best of the Best award.

7.0 OTHER
There was a discussion about the monthly comp time report that the board members had been receiving. Treasurer Henning asked that it continue just a couple more months and then talk about it again in September. It could be summarized rather than broken down.

At 5:57 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Thomas, seconded by Trustee Cook, to go into Executive Session pursuant to 2C1 (Personnel), 2C11 (Pending Litigation), and 2C21 (Review of Closed Session Minutes) of the Open Meetings Act. A roll call vote gave the following results: Brandt-yes, Campbell-yes, Cook-yes, Fritz-yes, Henning-yes, Thomas-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

8.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS II
There were no public comments.

9.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION
At 7:06 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Thomas, seconded by Trustee Cook to go into Executive Session pursuant to Exception 2C1 (Personnel), 2C11 (Pending Litigation), and 2C21 (Review of Closed Session Minutes) of the Open Meetings Act. A roll call vote gave the following results: Cook-yes, Thomas-yes, Campbell-yes, Henning-yes, Brandt-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

10.0 RECONVENE
The meeting was reconvened to order at 8:30 p.m. by President Pro Tem Brandt on the evening of Thursday, July 16, 2020 at Brookdale Administrative Offices and via Zoom conference services.

10.1 Roll Call
Trustees Present: Dave Brandt, President Pro Tem/Vice President
John Henning, Treasurer
Carolyn Campbell, Secretary
Bill Cook, Trustee
Linda Thomas, Trustee

Trustee Absent: Patrick Fritz, Trustee
Vacant position

Counsel & Staff Present: Andrew S. Paine, Counsel (Remote)
Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director
Anne Basten, Executive Assistant
11.0 ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Treasurer Henning, seconded by Trustee Thomas, to adjourn the meeting. A roll call vote gave the following results: Henning-yes, Campbell-yes, Cook-yes, Thomas-yes, Brandt-yes.

Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m. July 16, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Campbell, Secretary

Date 8-25-2020