

**McHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2019**

**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 5:08 p.m. by President Scacci on the evening of Thursday, September 5, 2019 at the Brookdale Administrative Offices, 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

**2.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Scacci led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3.0 INTRODUCTORY ROLL CALL**

**2.1 Roll Call**

Trustees Present: Vern Scacci, President  
Dave Brandt, Vice President  
John Henning, Treasurer  
Carolyn Campbell, Secretary  
Patrick Fritz, Trustee  
Bill Cook, Trustee

Counsel & Staff Present: Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director  
Andy Dylak, Director Administration & Finance  
Ed Collins, Director Land Preservation & Natural Resources  
John Kremer, Director of Operations & Public Safety  
Wendy Kummerer, Director of Marketing & Communications  
Laura King, Police Chief

**4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments at this time.

**5.0 BOARD BUSINESS**

**5.1 FY 2021-FY 2023 Strategic Plan**

Executive Director Kessler provided a roadmap for the evening's workshop which included three goals: (1) obtain consensus on the Strategic Direction/Purpose, Goals and Tactics under each of the four pillars of Our Water, Our Land, Our Community, and Our Stewardship as refined by the District's Vision Engagement Influencers, Executive Leadership Team and Leadership Team; (2) solicit feedback on the proposed stakeholder survey/conversations which will be facilitated in October/November on the District's envisioned strategic direction, purpose and goals; and (3) establish metrics to evaluate success.

Discussions were held on each of the four pillars beginning with 1.0 - Our Water. Under Goal 1.3 it was suggested that surface water be added. The goal statement will be amended to Maximize Surface and Groundwater Quality: Assess the positive impact of 25,000 acres of public open space on the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater. Tactic 1.3c was modified to "re-evaluate" versus evaluate

salting practices. Under Goal 1.4 - Water Activities a discussion was held on 1.4c regarding the Paddle the Kish and the District's involvement with this initiative. President Scacci noted that there was confusion at the County Board regarding our involvement and the potential of sending mixed messages with the Letter of Support provided on the IDNR BAAD Grant for canoe/kayak launch areas. Executive Director Kessler stated that the Board of Trustees approved the Letter of Support at a prior meeting and the purpose of placing this item under this goal is to ensure the District's role/responsibilities are defined through a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure explicit communication about our intent since the District does not have resources to contribute to this initiative at this time.

Goal 2.0 - Our Land did not raise significant questions as it was noted that the Board of Trustees and staff had already numerous discussions on the proposed tactics.

Goal 3.0 - Our Community required clarification on the intent of 3.1 Inspire Conservation Ambassadors: Energize, educate and empower community citizens and active volunteers. Executive Director Kessler explained that the purpose is based on the recently adopted McHenry County's Conservation Bill of Rights and to move individuals forward on the conservation stewardship continuum. Chief King was asked to highlight what was envisioned under the tactics 3.1a-d regarding the Conservation Ambassadors Program. It was reported that the Conservation Ambassadors Program is envisioned to be a program where individuals become more familiar with the internal operations of the District, therefore, empowering them with knowledge so they can speak with confidence through first-hand experience. It was also envisioned that this program could potentially lead to new ambassadors but also future Trustees of this board or Directors of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation.

President Scacci raised a question on whether there should be a specific tactic related to the District's relationship with The Land Conservancy of McHenry County based on recent events at the County during the budget approval process. Clarification was offered that the District has a good working relationship with The Land Conservancy of McHenry County and that the issue was specific to a grant submittal and the fact that the District was awarded a grant for Goose Lake. The Board of Trustees suggested an amendment to goal 3.4 Influence Advocacy: Initiate and advocate for legislative/public policy objectives by working with other conservation agencies that protect, safeguard public lands, water, wildlife and way of life in McHenry County. Executive Director Kessler suggested that a tactic be added to address the specific issue of concern but suggested a larger coalition of conservation/environmental groups within McHenry County, similar to Chicago Wilderness.

Goal 4.0 Our Stewardship did not raise significant questions and the tactics aligned with current Board of Trustee strategic discussions currently underway.

The Board of Trustees inquired as to the financial impact of the proposed goals and tactics. Executive Director Kessler shared that as the plan is fine-tuned, the items identified in the plan would come forward as part of the annual budgeting process. She noted there was great effort to focus on less and to include items that were strategic and/or items the District could manage effectively given the limited organizational capacity and resources. The proposed FY 2021-FY 2023 Plan is much more manageable than has been in prior plans. It was emphasized that if there was something on the plan that the Board of Trustees had concerns about that it be raised at this time for discussion and resolution. There were no additional comments made.

Executive Director Kessler discussed the proposed stakeholder process and updated the Board of Trustees on the proposed timeline with the adoption of the FY 2021-FY 2023 plan coming forward to the Board of Trustees in final form in February 2020 with the approval of the Final FY 2021 Budget.

Executive Director Kessler then led a discussion on metrics - key performance indicators (KPIs) and provided some examples. The Board of Trustees requested that staff develop these KPIs and bring them back for future discussion and consideration.

#### 5.2 Property Tax Levy 2019 Discussion

Director of Administration & Finance Dylak presented an overview on the District's 2019 Property Tax Levy Calculation and the framework for which the District agreed to operate within for the upcoming year. The Board of Trustees had a discussion on the 2017 versus 2019 Property Tax Extension Levy, outstanding debt, and fund reserves. Director of Administrative & Finance Dylak provided a brief overview on the District's funds and their purposes and statutory restrictions so that the Board of Trustees had a better understanding of the District's limited financing flexibility.

#### 6.0 NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

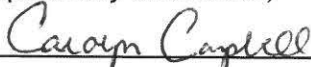
Vice President Brandt inquired about the meeting held prior to this meeting with Executive Director Kessler. President Scacci stated that he and Treasurer Henning met with Executive Director Kessler to discuss an item which will come forward to the entire Board of Trustees for consideration later this month. There was concern expressed regarding protocol, lack of communication and re-establishing trust after coming off of a difficult and contentious budget approval process. Executive Director Kessler provided a brief explanation of the meeting and shared that it was vitally important for her to be able to meet with the Board President and have conversations with Trustees in order to seek their counsel on areas of expertise. She emphasized how the Board of Trustees has functioned as a highly-effective board and restoring trust needs to be a shared priority.

#### 7.0 ADJOURN

A motion was made by Treasurer Henning, Seconded by Trustee Fritz, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.

Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m. September 5, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Carolyn Campbell, Secretary

10-22-19  
Date