

**Vermilion County Conservation District  
Headquarters: Kennekuk County Park  
Danville, IL**

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Wednesday, February 15, 2012  
4:30 p.m.  
White Oak Nature Center  
Kennekuk County Park  
Danville, IL**

President Call called the February Regular Meeting of the Vermilion County Conservation District Board of Trustees to order at 4:30 p.m. and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Roll call showed the following.

Trustees Present: Max C. Call  
Ken E. Green  
Brett K. Little

Trustee(s) Absent: Nikki A. Bogart  
Dan L. Danner

Also in attendance were Ken Konsis, Executive Director, Jamie Pasquale, Associate Director, and Amy Steeples, Recording Secretary.

Staff members present included Susan Biggs Warner, Lara Darling, Larry Gilliland, Lorna Konsis, and Ken Kuntz.

First order of business, agenda item number four, was the Adoption of, or Amendments to the Agenda.

*President Call moved to approve the agenda as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Green. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Agenda item number five was the Approval of the Minutes from the January 18, 2012 Regular Meeting. President Call asked for any corrections to the minutes.

*Trustee Little moved to approve the January 18, 2012, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Green. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

*Trustee Little moved to approve the January 18, 2012 Executive Session Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustees Green. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item number six, Audience Comments. There were no comments.

Agenda item number seven, the Treasurer's Report.

President Call asked if there were any comments or questions on items seven a. – seven d. There were none.

Agenda item seven e. President Call asked Executive Director Konsis to give the Report on Cash and Investments.

Executive Director Konsis reported that the current balance in the checking account at First Midwest Bank, Danville is \$70,990.00. Illinois Funds Investment Pool is \$3,400.00. The Illinois Funds Prime account remains at \$5,100.00. The Hoopston Money Market has a balance of \$198,700.00. The Preferred Checking Account (Hegeler account), has a remaining balance of \$2,370.00. The Money Market Passbook account at Central Illinois Bank has a balance of \$10,800.00. The certificate of deposit at the First National Bank of Catlin remains at \$200,000.00.

The grand total of cash and investments as of February 15, 2012, is \$491,360.00, which compares to \$577,150.00, at the same time last year. He noted that the \$250,000.00 DCEO Grant is not included in this cash and investment total, but listed on the report separately as a NOW account at the First Savings Bank currently earning .25%.

He asked if there were any questions from the Trustees. There were none.

*Trustee Little moved to approve the Current List of Bills from January 2012, in the amount of \$9,059.17 which included check #'s 30212 – 30234; the Manual Checks for January 2012 in the amount of \$33,234.62, which included check #'s 30125 – 30145 and #'s 30171 - 30200; the General Journal Entries for January 31, 2012; the January 2012 Budget Report and the Report on Cash and Investments. This was followed by a second from Trustee Green.*

President Call requested a roll call voice vote. The results:

Trustee Little	-	yes
Trustee Green	-	yes
President Call	-	yes

The vote was 3–0. Treasurer's Report, items seven: a – e were approved. Motion carried.

Agenda item number eight, Specific Items of Business to be Transacted.

Item eight a: Review Architectural and Engineering Proposal from Farnsworth and Associates for Education Center.

Executive Director Konsis introduced Rick McPhee, Architectural Manager from Farnsworth Group, Inc. He referenced a release, given to the Trustees regarding the education center, that is planned to be sent to the media on Tuesday of next week, pending approval of the contract tonight.

Executive Director Konsis gave an abbreviated history of the events since 1995, leading to current status of the education center. He asked for any questions. There were none.

In the audience, V.C.C.D. Foundation Chairman Gordon Thoennes was recognized and explained that the Foundation has spent approximately \$91,000 to date on the Kennekuk Environmental Education/Conference Center project. Gordon stated that the Foundation is doing their job and will continue to support the center, fundraising and promoting the project.

President Call referred to the letter from Gilbert Saikley, District Attorney, dated February 13, 2012 addressing his concerns with the A and E contract. *See attached letter.* Rick McPhee responded to each of the concerns.

In the Farnsworth Group, Inc. proposal:

- ◆ Paragraph 3.6.2.2 -- Farnsworth response: rather than strike the entire paragraph leave all statements in. V.C.C.D. agreed.
- ◆ Paragraph 3.6.3.2 -- Farnsworth response: stated a construction mgr. is not needed on a job of this magnitude. Farnsworth will provide two (2) visits. V.C.C.D. agreed.
- ◆ Paragraph 4.3.4 – Farnsworth response: responsibility for additional charges if the project is not completed within 12 months; Rick is fine with rewording by V.C.C.D. attorney, and would be willing to go 15 months. V.C.C.D. agreed.
- ◆ Paragraph 7.3.1 – Farnsworth response: agrees with the V.C.C.D. attorney comment. V.C.C.D. agreed.
- ◆ Paragraph 11.8.1 – Farnsworth response: agreed to provision of additional 10% of the reimbursable expenses be deleted. V.C.C.D. agreed.
- ◆ Paragraph 11.10.2 – Farnsworth response: a late payment fee is to be assessed, it is common business practice. However, President Call negotiated for a reasonable rate; Rick changed the late payment interest rate of 1½% per month to .75% per month. V.C.C.D. agreed.

The last three concerns listed in the attorney's letter were not applicable. Rick explained that the items were previously discussed.

President Call asked for comments and questions on the contract document.

The general liability insurance coverage was confirmed to be appropriate for a project of this size, according to Gordon Thoennes.

Mike Hannan, Vermilion County Health Department, was consulted regarding the building septic system. The soil and drainage on site is good and he foresees no problems.

There will be quite a bit of in-house work done on the project by V.C.C.D. staff.

The fee schedule in the proposal is for 2012 rates; they change each January. These rates will only be incurred if we run into additional services. The contract amount they are proposing already takes the lump sum quote into account.

Rick McPhee explained the contractor bidding process.

Question and answer period ensued on several contract aspects.

V.C.C.D. Foundation Chairman Thoennes stated that the Foundation has found Farnsworth to be fair in their billing practices; and he appreciates the Trustee's concerns.

Trustee Green commented that he has already fielded questions about the bidding process. He feels that he represents the taxpayers and needed to get answers.

V.C.C.D. Director Judy Sacotnik was recognized, and stated that one of the selling points of selecting Farnsworth Group, Inc. was that they avowed they were able to assist with procuring grants.

Rick McPhee agreed that they were able to procure some dollars. John Johnson is the person to speak with regarding grants. He will meet with him regarding this matter when he returns.

President Call asked for more comments or questions. There were none. There will be no movement on this tonight since two trustees are absent. It will be tabled for now. Rick McPhee was thanked for his cooperation on solving areas of concern and his patience in answering all questions to the Trustees' satisfaction.

Item eight b: Preliminary Report of the 2012-2013 Budget was made by Executive Director Konsis.

He explained the main components of the document. Beginning with projected revenues totaling \$1,309,500; total CPPRT is expected to be \$180,000, a \$49,075 decrease from last year. The revenue figure does include \$250,000 of the DCEO grant and the Wheeler Foundation balance of \$7,500.

The total expected expenditures will be \$1,315,000 for 2012-2013. That only includes the \$250,000 expenditures for the grant for now. Capital construction projects for this year include the purchase of a new HVAC system for the Kennekuk Visitor Center, road repair for Kennekuk entrance, the purchase of a used back hoe, retaining wall work at the Lake Vermilion Boat Ramp, and the replacement of the steps to Songer Pavilion.

The Insurance Fund will include revenues from any increase that the employees will bear. We won't know our new medical premium until the end of April. The District does not expect a large increase on general liability or workman's compensation policies.

IMRF and the Social Security Funds are finally stabilized after help from CPPRT funds. The Audit Fund has a large enough balance so that we may not wish to levy anything for

that fund this year. The Executive Director asked if there were any questions from the Trustees. There were none.

Agenda item number nine was Representative Reports.

Agenda item nine a: Associate Director Pasquale reported that the Executive Director and he attended the quarterly IACD meeting in Putnam County on January 19<sup>th</sup>. IDNR Deputy Director, Beth Penesis, attended! The main focus was planning the annual meeting in Springfield. There is no date set yet.

Executive Director Konsis added that legislation has been submitted by Representative Frank Mantino of Spring Valley to cull some of the oversight by IDNR to streamline their operations. Of that, conservation districts were recommended to be severed from IDNR. Currently, the V.C.C.D. only sends the audit to IDNR as mandated. Besides follow-up reports from IDNR grants, we have no other reporting duties. The question: will the Conservation District Act be revised?

This concluded the IACD Report.

Agenda item nine b; V.C.C.D. Foundation report was given by V.C.C.D. Foundation Chairman, Gordon Thoennes. As they consider the Phase I proposal by Farnsworth, he asked the Trustees to keep in mind that there are still two phases to go. Gordon gave the Trustees an informational handout on a professional fundraising company. In 2006, the Foundation met with a company who surveys the community to ascertain how successful fundraising efforts will be in the area. At that time their fee for this service was around \$25,000. The V.C.C.D. F. is willing to assume cost of their services. Foundation Chairman Thoennes requests that a V.C.C.D. Trustee be appointed to serve on the fundraising committee to listen and help decide whether to hire the firm.

This project will, of course, require some major fundraising and Chairman Thoennes is asking for serious consideration. The V.C.C.D.F. is willing to make that commitment, are the Trustees?

This concluded the report regarding the V.C.C.D. Foundation.

Agenda item nine c: There was no IAPD report.

Agenda item ten: There was no executive session.

Agenda item eleven: There were no amendments to the agenda.

Agenda item twelve a; Report From the Education Supervisor was given by Amy Steeples, in Gary Wilford's absence. She reported that the Traveling Naturalist Program has been to eleven schools since the last Board Meeting. Ten Day Visits have been scheduled at Forest Glen featuring the maple syrup production process and winter in the forest. Amy invited the Trustees to join in the program, stating Gary would be happy to have them join in the activities.

The Education Staff: Gary Susan, Lara, and she, have been working on this summer's camp advertisements; attempting a new method of getting the information out, saving the District several hundred dollars. Amy gave the Trustees information on a new program offered this year, Youth Conservation Summit. It is a five-day camp for teens. Gary is currently seeking sponsors for materials and camp participants. Keep in mind that the education staff will be utilizing the new education center for summer programs such as this, held at Kennekuk!

This concluded the Education Supervisor's Report.

Agenda item thirteen a; Report from the Associate Director.

Associate Director Jamie Pasquale reported the water level at Lake Mingo was lowered about 75 inches. The pipes and remaining dock sections at Stephen's Beach have been removed. This will be very aesthetically pleasing once the water level is returned to normal this spring.

He and Larry Gilliland have assisted the Forest Glen Crew in removing donated playground equipment from Holy Family School grounds for relocation to Forest Glen Preserve. The equipment will be a very nice addition to the play area at Forest Glen.

A used excavator was purchased with a trade-in of the Ditch Witch trencher for \$8,200. Difference of \$11,550 will be paid in the 2012-2013 budget year. The District has already used the excavator in removal of the playground concrete at Holy Family School, work at the beach, and removal of autumn olive.

Trustee Green asked about the fish attractors at Lake Mingo.

Associate Director Pasquale answered that the back attractors look good and seem to be in working order and will remain in place; the front attractors may need to be removed at some point.

This concluded the Report from Associate Director Pasquale.

Agenda item fourteen; Report of Executive Director.

Executive Director Konsis recognized Mike Hannan, in the audience, with the Vermilion County Chapter of Pheasants Forever. Mike thanked those who attended the Pheasants Forever Banquet on February 11<sup>th</sup>, attendance was around 300 persons and the night went very well. The final numbers will be posted on the Vermilion County Pheasant's website.

Kevin Green, also in the audience, commented that the V.C. Pheasants Forever made an announcement at that banquet that they will be making a donation of up to \$5,000 as a match donation for the Kennekuk Environmental Education Center.

Mike Hannan stated that the organization would like to use those funds to landscape the entrance with native plants, etc.

Executive Director Konsis began his report by stating that the Kickapoo Trail project purchase agreement was being reviewed by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District's attorney.

He met with National Walnut Council Executive Director, Liz Jackson, yesterday regarding the upcoming annual meeting in August.

The Lake Vermilion Water Quality Coalition is offering a nitrate workshop on February 21. However, registration is very low and it may be cancelled.

The V.C.C.D. Staff Retreat will be Friday, February 17, at the Gannett Center, Forest Glen. This serves as the state of the district report and update; this is an all day meeting with two speakers planned.

The next V.C.C.D. Board of Trustees meeting will be Wednesday, March 21; 4:30 p.m. in the Gannett Outdoor Education Center, Forest Glen Preserve. The only agenda item at this time will be to approve the tentative 2012-2013 budget.

Agenda item fifteen: President's and Trustee's Comments.

Trustee Green thanked Rick McPhee for coming; he appreciated his comments and presentation.

Trustee Little had no comment.

Rick McPhee replied that he appreciated the opportunity to come and speak to the Board, and if there were any other questions, please let him know.

President Call stated, "We look forward to working with you".

After a brief discussion, it was decided to hold a special meeting to include the two absent Trustees, so that they may be brought up to speed on the contract. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 29, 2012; 4:30 p.m. in the Zack Hickman Room, Kennekuk Visitor Center.

With no further discussion, and all business transacted, *Trustee Little moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Green. Meeting adjourned.*

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Nikki A. Bogart  
Secretary/Treasurer  
V.C.C.D. Board of Trustees