

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

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

**Wednesday, October 16, 2019
4:30 p.m.
Gannett Outdoor Education Center
Forest Glen Preserve
Westville, IL**

First Vice President Schroeder called the October Regular Meeting of the Vermilion County Conservation District Board of Trustees to order and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Agenda item number three, Roll Call showed the following to be present.

Trustees Present: Michael P. Arbuckle
Randy A. Johnson
Charles B. Schroeder
Doug R. Staske

Trustee(s) Absent: Shelley K. McLain

In attendance were Executive Director Jamie Pasquale, Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Kim Fox, and Recording Secretary Amy Steeples.

Staff members present included Cole Craft, Lara Darling, Mike Kotcher and Gary Tyrl.

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

First Vice President Schroeder asked for amendments to the agenda.

Trustee Johnson moved to approve the agenda as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Agenda item number five. Approval of the Minutes from the September 18, 2019, Regular Meeting.

With no corrections, Trustee Staske moved to approve the September 18, 2019, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Item number six. Audience Comments. First Vice President Schroeder stated each person has a maximum of three minutes, total maximum of 30 minutes for audience comments.

There were no comments.

Agenda item number seven, the Treasurer's Report. First Vice President Schroeder asked if there were any questions on items seven a through d. This included the bills, checks and journal entries for September 2019.

With no questions or discussion, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Current List of Bills from September 2019 in the amount of \$9,838.83, which included check #'s 40343 – 40362; the Manual Checks for September 2019 in the amount of \$363,730.11 which included check #'s 40231 - 40243, 40263 – 40267, 40287 – 40304, and 40326 – 40328; electronic funds transfer of IMRF contributions for September and the General Journal Entries for September 30, 2019. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

First Vice President Schroeder requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
First Vice President Schroeder	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item number seven e. Report on Cash and Investments. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox reported that as of October 16, 2019, the NOW checking account balance is \$120.830; Illinois Funds Investment Pool balance is \$239,470, the Illinois Funds Money Market Fund totaled \$5,300. First Farmers Bank Money Market Passbook account balance is \$247,430; Central Illinois Bank Money Market passbook account balance is \$248,800. The Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) balance is \$6,800. First Saving Bank NOW account balance is \$28,420; the new NOW account at Catlin Bank has a balance of \$150,000. The 7 mo. CD at Central Illinois Bank at 1.95% interest balance is \$102,250; 3 mo. CD [Whittaker Funds] at Iroquois Federal at .70% interest balance is \$102,315; the 3 mo. CD [Wagner Funds] at Iroquois Federal at .70% interest has a balance of \$140,600.

The grand total of cash and investments for October 16, 2019: \$1,612,215., less bond funds of \$2,600. remaining is \$1,609,614.94. This compares to \$1,633,510. in October of 2018.

First Vice President Schroeder asked if there were any questions regarding the Budget Reports for October 2019. There were none.

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

Item eight a. Election of Officers. First Vice President Schroeder stated that election of officers had been tabled until the new trustee was appointed and present. He reported the current slate of officers.

First Vice President Schroeder opened the floor for nominations.

Nominations for president. *Trustee Johnson moved to nominate Charles Schroeder for the office of VCCD Board President. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske. Nominations closed. Vote all in favor by acclamation, motion passed to elect Charles Schroeder VCCD Board President.*

Nominations for first vice president. *Trustee Johnson moved to nominate Doug Staske for the office of VCCD Board First Vice President. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. Nominations closed. Vote all in favor by acclamation, motion passed to elect Doug Staske VCCD Board First Vice President.*

Nominations for second vice president. *Trustee Staske moved to nominate Randy Johnson for the office of VCCD Board Second Vice President. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. Nominations closed. Vote all in favor by acclamation, motion passed to elect Randy Johnson VCCD Board Second Vice President.*

Nominations for secretary. *Trustee Johnson moved to nominate Shelley McLain for the office of VCCD Board Secretary. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske. Nominations closed. Vote all in favor by acclamation, motion passed to elect Shelley McLain VCCD Board Secretary.*

Nominations for treasurer. *Trustee Johnson moved to nominate Michael Arbuckle for the office of VCCD Board Treasurer. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. Nominations closed. Vote all in favor by acclamation, motion passed to elect Michael Arbuckle VCCD Board Treasurer.*

This concluded the election of officers.

Item eight b. Approve employee health insurance plan & benefits. Gordon Thoennes, Dimond Brothers Insurance representative was recognized.

Gordon explained the current employee health insurance plan, POS 400 Silver; with Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) benefits. The current plan expires November 30, 2019. The HRA is a benefit for both the employee and employer, with regard to insurance deductible costs and pays \$1,000 of the deductible. The District now pays 100% of the employee premium; the employee pays 30% of spouse or dependent child coverage premium.

Insurance carriers no longer offer plan designs with a \$4,000 deductible and 80/20 coverage, so a comparable plan was found. Gordon has compared carriers and found HealthAlliance to be the most economical and best option. He offered information about other carriers. The Trustees were provided with detailed information regarding the District's current plan and proposed renewal plan from Health Alliance. HRA's may be designed in any way by the insured.

Extensive discussion ensued.

Executive Director Pasquale commented that \$35,000 was budgeted to the HRA; any unused funds remain in the Insurance Fund and stay in the cash balance for the following year.

Trustee Arbuckle asked if the HRA was an interest bearing account.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox responded that only a small balance is kept in that account, transferred only when necessary. The current balance is only \$6,800.

With no further comments or questions, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Health Alliance POS 3700 Silver Plan as presented; to increase the employee portion of the dependent/spouse coverage benefit (paid by the employee) by 10%; and to amend the Health Reimbursement Account (arrangement) to cover an additional 10% of the 30% of the 70%/30% coverage. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

President Schroeder requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
President Schroeder	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Item eight c. Approve Ordinance No. 152, ordinance abating taxes levied for Alternative Revenue Source Bonds for 2019. Executive Director Pasquale explained that the bond funds received in 2017 automatically levied taxes each year, guaranteeing payment of principal and interest. This is an ordinance abating this tax levy, since the District is fiscally responsible and able to make the payment without any levy. An error was found on page two of the levy, first sentence, "...to abate said tax levied for the year 2018" should be amended to "year 2019".

With no other comments or questions, *Trustee Staske moved to approve Ordinance No. 152, as amended, abating the tax hereto levied for the year 2019 to pay the principal of and interest on General Obligation Bonds, Series 2017, of the Vermilion County Conservation District, Vermilion County, Illinois. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson.*

President Schroeder requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
President Schroeder	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item eight d. Approve Ordinance No. 153, ordinance for annual tax levy for 2019 taxes payable in 2020. Executive Director Pasquale stated that this was based on the insurance proposal previously approved. The Insurance Fund was lowered \$30,000 and moved to the Corporate Fund and additional funds of \$28,000 were added to the Corporate Fund as well. The tax levy recommended here is 2.4%. Vermilion County's equalized assessed valuation increased, lowering the District's rate from last year.

Executive Director Pasquale stated that the levy does not have to be filed until the second week in December, and the ordinance signature pages will have to be corrected to reflect the new officers for signature purposes.

With no further discussion, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve Ordinance No. 153, as amended for signature purposes, annual tax levy of the Vermilion County Conservation District in the County of Vermilion, of the State of Illinois for 2019 taxes payable in 2020. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

President Schroeder requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
President Schroeder	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item eight e. Approve salary of Lake Vermilion & Kennekuk Superintendents and Natural Resources Technician/Facilities Repair.

Agenda item eight f. Approve full time employee's salaries.

Trustee Johnson moved to retire to executive session pursuant to Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/2 (C)(1); Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/2 (C)(2) as stated at 5:11 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

The Board returned from executive session at 5:34 p.m. There was no action taken in executive session.

Agenda item eight e. *Trustee Johnson move to approve the hiring of Cole Craft, Lake Vermilion Superintendent, salary at \$45,500; Gary Tyrl, Kennekuk County Park Superintendent, salary at \$44,500; and Nick Jeurissen, Natural Resources Technician/Facilities Repair, salary at \$38,500. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

President Schroeder requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
President Schroeder-		yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item eight f. *Trustee Johnson moved to approve all other remaining (full time) staff a raise in the amount of \$1,500 effective December 9, 2019. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

President Schroeder requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
President Schroeder	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item nine a. VCCF Report. Gordon Thoennes, Chairman of the Vermilion County Conservation Foundation reported that he has been proud to serve as chairman for the VCCF for 15 years, and will not seek re-election for 2020. Some of the big highlights during that time are assisting the District and Pheasants Forever in acquiring the property

now named, Busby-Meyer Wildlife Area and the existing Kennekuk Environmental Education Center. He is glad that the Kennekuk convention center construction (Phases II and III) was halted and did not occur; it was the best decision in the end.

He is happy to report that the VCC Foundation is now debt-free; with funds dedicated and pledged to the Gannett Classroom Renovation Project, the Kickapoo Rail Trail and Beech Grove Trail Projects. In the future, he hopes that the Foundation can supply the District with other needed items.

President Schroeder stated that Gordon has done a wonderful job chairing the group and the VCCD is much better having him on the Foundation Board. The Board appreciates his service as chairman.

This concluded the VCCF report.

Agenda item nine b. VCCD Education, Maintenance and Land Management Report. The reports were included with the Trustee's packets.

Lara Darling added that the Kickapoo Rail Trail Fundraiser at Sleepy Creek Winery is November 15; tickets are available at the Kennekuk Office.

There were no comments. This concluded VCCD Education, Maintenance and Land Management Reports.

Agenda item nine c. Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Phase II and III Feasibility Study Committee. Trustee Staske had no report and added that once there was full board attendance he would like to discuss how to proceed.

This concluded Representative Reports.

Agenda item ten: Report from the Executive Director. Executive Director Pasquale reported that the Kickapoo Rail Trail (KRT) construction of the first section is basically done; some signage needs to be installed, some seeding needed. There are still seven days left on the 80-day contract. The next section will be from Gray's Siding Road to Vermilion County Fairgrounds and includes the trestle. IDNR owns the trestle, and bids to complete the trestle work came in around \$600,000 over budget. After IDNR and IDOT discussed issues and negotiated, IDNR who was struggling with the funding, and IDOT came to an agreement regarding the ITEP Funding. An additional \$270,000 was awarded through ITEP for the trestle project. Official completion date is scheduled for 150-working day contract, finishing in 2021; the contractor expects to finish in 2020.

The Vermilion County section now is 1.8 miles, with the addition to the fairgrounds it will be close to 4 miles.

Trustee Staske asked about any development plans for the east side of the trestle.

Executive Director Pasquale responded the trail will stop at Fairgrounds Road. IDNR owns an easement on the west side of the trestle off 150. They have \$500,000 in separate funding to build a trailhead with a parking lot and restroom facility. They are very committed to the KRT project.

Executive Director Pasquale has information regarding road work at Kickapoo State Park. There is a \$7M budget for road improvements there. Trustee Johnson asked about the mowing issue along the KRT that Kevin Green brought to the Board at the September 18, 2019 meeting.

Executive Director Pasquale answered that he will be meeting with Kevin on Friday, October 18.

The next VCCD Board of Trustees Meeting will be Wednesday, November 20, 4:30 p.m.; Kennekuk County Park.

Agenda item ten a. Report from the Director of Administration and Personnel. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox gave no report.

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

Trustee Arbuckle introduced himself as a manager for Electricians Local in Danville, and a resident of Georgetown. All Trustees welcomed him to the Board.

President Schroeder thanked Gordon Thoennes for his service to the VCCF Board, attendance at the VCCD Board Meetings and all the help given to the VCCD.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *Trustee Staske moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation.*

Shelley McLain
Secretary
VCCD Board of Trustees