

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

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

**Wednesday, May 19, 2021
4:30 p.m.
Cellular One Classroom
Environmental Education Center
Kennekuk County Park, Danville, Illinois**

A public hearing was conducted for the Budget and Appropriations Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, Ordinance No. 158, at 4:30 p.m.

Executive Director Pasquale presented the final budget. He noted the following amendments from the tentative budget which was approved in March 2021 and placed on public display. Last year, 2020, the District was very careful with expenses due to unknown circumstances related to and caused by the Coronavirus19 Pandemic.

Cash Fund Balances were updated to reflect actual end of year balances. There was a typo on page no. 1, last line: the date should be March 31, 2022. With conservative spending and revenue earnings better than anticipated, the District was left with an increase of \$260,000 in the ending cash balance for 2021.

Page two through eight, Estimated Expenses: increased by \$30,375, line items affected: Forest Glen fence and sign repair, General hand and power tools, Other-Farming expense and Capital Improvements \$23,875.

Total revenue is \$1,250,000; estimated cash for expenditures is \$3,459,227; total estimated Corporate Fund Expenditures is \$2,567,575.

Page 9 through 13 were corrected due to updated April 1, 2021 cash balance.

This represents an unbalanced budget due to reduced expenditures and revenue that exceeded budget expectations. Expenditures for 2020 exceeded revenues by \$30,075.

Trustee Arbuckle inquired about the debt service fund account.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that was the bond taken out in 2017. This is a 10-year bond.

There were no other comments or questions from the Trustees; there was no audience.

President Schroeder asked for adoption of Budget and Appropriations Ordinance No. 158. *Trustee Johnson moved to adopt Ordinance No. 155 for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 as presented this date May 19, 2021. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain.*

President Schroeder asked for a roll call vote.

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

The motion to adopt Ordinance No. 158 passed with a 5 – 0 vote.

This concluded the public hearing. *Trustee Arbuckle moved to close the public hearing for May 19, 2021. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, hearing closed at 4:42 p.m.*

President Schroeder called the May 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 six, Roll Call showed the following to be present.

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

Trustee(s) Absent: none

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

Staff member present: Lara Danzl and Gary Tyril.

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

President Schroeder asked for amendments to the agenda.

Trustee Arbuckle 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 eight. Approval of the Minutes from the March 17, 2021, Regular Meeting. The April regular meeting was canceled.

With no comments or corrections, *Trustee Gast moved to approve the March 17, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes. This was followed by a second from Trustee Arbuckle. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

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

Agenda item number ten, the Treasurer's Report. President Schroeder asked if there were any questions on items seven a through i. This included the bills, checks and journal entries for March 2021 and April 2021.

With no questions or discussion, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Manual Checks dated March 2021 in the amount of \$34,943.39, which included check #'s 41386 – 41401 and 41409 - 41425; the current list of checks dated April 22, 2021 in the amount of \$8,675.33, which included check #'s 41446 – 41456; the Manual Checks dated April 2021 in the amount of \$41,080.71, which included check #'s 41426 – 41445 and 41457 – 41470; Manual Checks dated May 20, 2021 in the amount of \$8,683.98, which included check #'s 41490 – 41503; and the General Journal Entries for April 30, 2021. 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 Gast	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
President Schroeder	-	yes

The vote was 5 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item number ten i. Report on Cash and Investments. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox included reports dated April 21, 2021 and reported that as of May 19, 2021, the NOW checking account balance is \$206,680; Illinois Funds Investment Pool balance is \$146,447, the Illinois Funds Money Market Fund remains at \$5,400. First Farmers Bank Money Market Passbook account balance is \$249,041; Central Illinois Bank Money Market passbook account balance is \$245,528. The Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) balance is \$5,590. First Saving Bank NOW account balance is \$248,725; the NOW account at Catlin Bank balance is \$249,260. The 3 mo. CD [Whittaker Funds] at Iroquois Federal at .20% interest balance is now \$57,428; the 3 mo. CD [Wagner Funds] at Iroquois Federal invested at .20% interest balance is \$50,721.

The grand total of cash and investments for May 19, 2021: \$1,464,820. This compares to \$1,255,055. in May of 2020.

The Iroquois Federal Certificate of Deposit [Wagner Fund] was renewed; \$50,000 of that was transferred to the First Midwest checking account to be used for the Gannett Outdoor Education Center remodel. It will be listed on the May balance sheet under restricted cash Wagner Estate in your packet for June.

Executive Director Pasquale anticipates the first payment of real estate taxes in July.

Trustee Gast queried about the increase in the investment pool.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox answered that was CPPRT dollars are deposited via automatic deposit. The majority of this goes toward the bond payment.

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

Item eleven a. Discuss/approval of cash rent lease extension for VCCD farm ground. Executive Director Pasquale stated that the District farmer, Andrew Blackford has asked for an extension on his lease. He went on to explain the reasons. Executive Director Pasquale recommends extending the lease, the 2021 rent is \$170/acre, with Mr. Blackford increasing the rent by \$5.00/acre each year. This year some areas need field tile work. In all, tiling in other areas as well, the expense may be \$50,000.

The District soil is not high quality; current average for good ground is about \$200/acre.

Current payment from him was due May 1, 2021, which was a little late, has been received.

There has been little interest from other farmers in the tracts, mainly due to fact that the ground is in six different tracts. The Board agreed that Mr. Blackford has been a good steward of the land.

Discussion ensued, regarding term of the extension, and increase of rent.

With no more comments or questions, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the extension of the farm ground least with Andrew Blackford for a period of five (5) years, current 2021 rent at \$170; increasing the rent each year by \$5.00/acre with renegotiation after year three (3) with the Vermilion County Conservation District. This was followed by a second from Trustee Staske.*

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

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

The vote was 5 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

There was no executive session.

Agenda item twelve. Report from the Executive Director. Executive Director Pasquale began by reporting that Moreman Co. has begun roofing at the Atwood House using 3-tab shingles keeping in line with the period. Next they will roof the Print Shop and Barber Shop.

The Kennekuk Nature Center has been demolished, with only some dirt work and seeding remain. Most of the concrete from that building was hauled by two VCCD dump trucks to Forest Glen. It was utilized as erosion control for the Willow Creek Dam Spillway. Executive Director Pasquale estimated that 500 tons was transported. The Nature Center had a old stone foundation.

A \$10,000 donation from an individual was dedicated to be used at the Boardwalk to help replace the hand railing. There is additional money in the budget. About one-third of the galvanized railings have been ordered.

The Lake Vermilion Concession Stand was opened Saturday, May 15th. Hours are 7:00 a.m. – 6 p.m., seven days/week. Along with snacks and gas they sell VCCD boat decals.

Nick Jeurissen has been primarily working on the Gannett Outdoor Education Center remodel. The restrooms are gutted with plans for ADA compliant stalls, employee bathroom and storage area. The HVAC will be moved to the attic. The June Board of Trustees meeting may be at Maple Grove Lodge, dependent on construction progress.

The District did receive \$588,000 reimbursement from the State, therefore the IDOT invoice has been paid. He expects another large invoice soon.

The next VCCD Board of Trustees Meeting will be President Schroeder's last meeting of his five year service on the Board. It will be Wednesday, June 16, 4:30 p.m., Forest Glen Preserve, building to be determined.

Trustee Arbuckle asked about restrictions for shelter rentals.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that currently 250 people are allowed, no mask mandates.

There were no more questions. This concluded the Report from the Executive Director.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox reported that she composed and mailed letters regarding lease payments in arrears from businesses along the Kickapoo Rail Trail as directed by the Board. There were provisions for rent increases in each lease based on the Consumer Credit Index. The time period for the invoices was 2014 – 2021; she calculated each business' individual amount.

To date the District has received:

Midwestern Gas	\$ 1,541.36
Insight Communications/Time Warner Cable/Comcast (4 leases)	\$26,185.00

She has had no response from Illinois Bell/AT & T; they owe \$60 per year. Amounts received went into Restricted Cash Kickapoo Rail Trail. The Trustees were very appreciative.

Agenda item ten. President's and Trustee's Comments.

President Schroeder inquired about the Dining Car status.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that there has not been any interest. He plans to try to scrape the car this winter; estimating there will be 95% metal. Neither Bryant's nor Mervis have been contacted regarding values.

Trustee Gast stated that he would like to explore the IPARKS Board Member Development Program.

He requested the stairs that have been painted located on Lookout Point Trail not be painted again. This makes them very slick and a risk to hikers. He suggested removing the stairs and incorporating a switchback there instead.

Lara Danzl responded that she is aware of the problem and does not know what to do to solve this issue.

Trustee Gast volunteered to help work on that area.

Lara stated, in 2020 there was a Boy Scout Troop that had volunteered to do work on the trail, but then COVID-19 hit. She now has a pledge from the Vermilion County Bobcat Hockey Team to adopt Lookout Point Trail, but they will not be available until Fall.

Trustee Staske had no comment.

Trustee Arbuckle had no comment.

Trustee Johnson had no comment.

This concluded President & Trustee Comments.

Executive Director Pasquale stated that he has not heard anything from the Vermilion County Board regarding a new replacement trustee for President Schroeder's vacancy.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *Trustee Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Trustee Arbuckle. All in favor by acclamation. The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 p.m.*

Michael H. Gast
Secretary
VCCD Board of Trustees