

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

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

**Wednesday, September 15, 2021  
4:30 p.m.  
Cellular One Classroom  
Environmental Education Center  
Kennekuk County Park, Danville, Illinois**

President Staske called the September 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  
Michael H. Gast  
Randy A. Johnson  
Doug R. Staske

Trustee(s) Absent: none

In attendance were Executive Director Jamie Pasquale and Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Kim Fox.

Staff members present: Lara Danzl and Gary Tyrl.

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

President Staske asked for amendments to the agenda.

*Trustee Johnson moved that item eight a. be relocated to item seven; item seven therefore, would become items eight a. through i.. This was followed by a second from Trustee Arbuckle. All in favor by acclamation, motion to approve the agenda as amended carried.*

Agenda item number five. Approval of the Minutes from the July 21, 2021, Regular Meeting. The August regular meeting was canceled.

*With no comments or corrections, Trustee Arbuckle moved to approve the July 21, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item number six. Audience Comments. President Staske stated each person has a maximum of three minutes, total maximum of 30 minutes for all audience comments. There were none.

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

Item seven a. Presentation and approval of the Vermilion County Conservation District 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Audit.

Karen Crowder, Crowder CPS's Ltd., was recognized and stated that the Vermilion County Conservation District had an unqualified audit, which is the best type of report you can receive.

Each Trustee had been given a copy of the VCCD Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021.

Pages three through ten contain management's discussion and analysis of the District's financial activities for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021. This narrative clarifies the financial statements included in the annual report.

Pages ten through eighteen are fund financial statements regarding expenditures, revenues, assets, liabilities and net position.

Page fifteen shows the District's income statement. The third line from the bottom of the page, net change in funds balances, is really the net income. This report compares revenues to expenditures; all are positive balances with the exception of IMRF Fund and Debt Service Fund. In the year-ended totals for 3/31/2021, Karen pointed out the ITEP income of \$209,367 is reimbursement for the Kickapoo Rail Trail. The net change in fund balance total for the fiscal year is \$135,233. Operationally this was a good year.

President Staske asked if accounts receivable and payable were all caught up.

Executive Director responded, "Yes, and the District is waiting on a final bill,"

Pages nineteen through thirty-nine are the notes of the financial statements.

Karen continued reporting that the District received \$82,597 grant money through the CURE program. Among other expenses this assisted with salary and sanitation costs. Page fifty-four is the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Consolidated Year-End Report. This is the detail of the Local Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency [CURE] and Economic Support Payments Grants Program.

Karen reported that letters were included with the audit to explain any significant deficiency. There were less findings this year than last. One of 2019-2020 fiscal year deficiencies was a lack of follow-up on locating the lease owners along the Kickapoo Rail Trail for potential income. Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox did contact several lease owners and procured over \$14,000 of lease income in arrears. One deficiency is always listed and involves the limited number of personnel, and the lack of segregation of duties in the accounting function. However, she stated the VCCD Staff has good internal controls and follows procedure.

Trustee Arbuckle inquired about the over budget items for Forest Glen and Kennekuk Maintenance expenses. Forest Glen was \$77,931 over; Kennekuk was \$70,461 over.

Executive Director Pasquale stated that was the replacement/repair cost of roofs needed after hail damage.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel added that insurance money was recorded in restricted cash, moved to insurance proceeds; as the District received an additional \$2,600 from insurance payments.

Trustee Johnson asked if Karen had any further recommendations.

She replied that she did not, Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Kim Fox does a very good job.

With no other questions or comments, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Vermillion County Conservation District 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Audit as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Gast.*

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

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Gast	-	yes
Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes

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

Agenda item number eight, the Treasurer’s Report. President Staske asked if there were any questions on items seven a through h. This included the bills, checks and journal entries for July 2021 and August 2021.

*Trustee Arbuckle moved to approve the Manual Checks dated July 2021 in the amount of \$599,991.65, which included check #'s 41588 – 41604 and 41617 - 41641; the current list of checks dated August 19, 2021 in the amount of \$12,882.76, which included check #'s 41667 – 41680; the Manual Checks dated August 2021 in the amount of \$199,560.24, which included check #'s 41643 – 41666 and 41681 – 41708; Manual Checks dated September 16, 2021 in the amount of \$5,877.90, which included check #'s 41723 – 41734; and the General Journal Entries through August 31, 2021. This was followed by a second from Trustee Gast.*

Trustee Gast asked about the payments to Pro Concrete. Was that only for Lake Mingo?

Executive Director Pasquale responded that the Lake Mingo Dam had worse than anticipated erosion issues at the concrete spillway. He reviewed several businesses that perform polyurethane jacking and found the cost to be about the same per square foot. Polyurethane is guaranteed for 10 years. Unfortunately, there was extensive erosion under the surface resulting in a larger than expected expense of \$103,014.00. The face of the dam is good. The erosion issue was brought to the District’s attention during the last inspection three years ago. The next inspection is September 16, 2021.

With no other questions or comments, President Staske requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Arbuckle	-	yes
Trustee Gast	-	yes
Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 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 August 18, 2021 and reported that as of September 15, 2021, the NOW checking account balance is \$187,863; Illinois Funds Investment Pool balance is \$217,651, the Illinois Funds Money Market Fund balance is \$5,401. First Farmers Bank Money Market Passbook account balance is \$149,084; Central Illinois Bank Money Market passbook account balance is \$245,634. The Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) balance is \$5,529. First Saving Bank NOW account balance has decreased to \$48,742; the NOW account at Catlin Bank

balance is \$249,346. The 3 mo. CD [Whittaker Funds] at Iroquois Federal at .20% interest balance is now \$57,456; the 3 mo. CD [Wagner Funds] at Iroquois Federal invested at .20% interest balance is \$50,748. A new 3-month certificate of deposit was acquired for \$250,000 at Longview Bank at .20% interest. A new 2-year, with 6-month option was acquired at Illinois National Bank for \$250,000, with an average annual percentage rate of .46%

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

Trustee Johnson asked about the decrease in the balance from August to September in the First Farmer's Bank account.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox responded that \$100,000 was moved to First Midwest Savings Checking Account. Money was also moved from First Savings Bank. These accounts were both close to the FDIC limit.

President Staske requested a narrative listed for accounts on the Cash and Investments Report, including why there is are different accounts, changes in the account and where funds are coming from.

There was no executive session.

Agenda item nine. Report from the Executive Director. Executive Director Pasquale reported that he had not heard anything about a new VCCD Trustee appointment yet. No applications have been turned in to the Vermilion County Board. He added that Trustee Johnson would be eligible to serve a full term when his current term is done. He was appointed to fill the vacancy of trustee who resigned.

He is still waiting for the lawyer to give the write-up of changes in the current VCCD Personnel Policies. He also has an intergovernmental agreement pending.

There has been construction progress along Denmark Road. The construction company had to build a temporary entrance, at their expense, to the Lake Vermilion shop office.

Oil & chip road work is completed by Ribbe at Forest Glen along the Westfall Prairie area, past the Visitor Center and past the Maintenance Shop. Moreman & Son Construction laid asphalt in the front entrance and exit roads as well.

A rest node along the Kickapoo Rail Trail has been graciously provided by donors outfitted with a concrete pad, bench, sidewalk and bike rack. There is still a 10 mile stretch to be designed and constructed in Vermilion County.

Work at the Gannett Center continues, focusing on the bathrooms. Outdoor School begins soon.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox and Cole Craft, Supervisor of Lake Vermilion and Heron County Parks, have been working on a DCEO tourism and events grant to get a new dock system. It is a 50% match grant.

Recently hired employee [March 2020] Jennifer Krainock, Environmental Educator has left the District to teach at VASE. Rhonda Orndorff, Kennekuk Secretary, also left the District to work elsewhere for more pay. Executive Director Pasquale is concerned with future hires, and would like to design a salary plan to entice people to work for the District.

President Staske inquired how openings are posted.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that they are posted with Vermilion Advantage. In past years the VCCD received 100's of applications, now only a few each year. This seems to be a common problem right now among all businesses.

President Staske commented on the Indiana Master Gardener Program held at Doris Westfall Prairie, and asked if the District offers many out of county/state programs?

Executive Director Pasquale stated that there used to be a lot of out-of-county programs done, but not many requested at this time. Lara Danzl added that areas outside of Vermilion County do not have resources to go to. There are only five Conservation Districts in Illinois.

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

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

Trustee Gast asked about the crystallization of the maple syrup and if there will be a Maple Syrup Open House next year.

Executive Director Pasquale replied that crystallization is a natural process that happens to some syrup; it only needs to be reheated to boiling and it will liquefy. He does not know if the Maple Syrup Open House will be held.

President Staske commented that the new handrails at Heron County Park Boardwalk are quite an improvement. He also encouraged the board to come up with ideas to raise awareness about the Kickapoo Rail Trail, thus raising dollars for the remaining portion.

Executive Director Pasquale stated that more handrails were ordered, but have not arrived yet.

Trustee Gast also volunteered to help clear areas along the trail so the public would take notice.

Trustee Johnson stated that the park looks awesome. He complimented Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox for her good work with the audit report. He asked how park rental building reservations were going.

She replied that they were going well.

This concluded President & Trustee Comments.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

---

Michael H. Gast  
Secretary  
VCCD Board of Trustees