

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

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

**Wednesday, May 17, 2023
4:30 p.m.
Kennekuk Environmental Education Center
Cellular One Classroom
Danville, IL 61834**

A public hearing was conducted for the Budget and Appropriations Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2023 - 2024, Ordinance No. 164, at 4:30 p.m. President Staske called for the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Agenda item number one. Executive Director Pasquale presented the final budget. He noted the following amendments from the tentative budget which was approved in March 2023 and placed on public display.

The only changes made were to reflect actual cash fund balances from the estimated balances that were in the tentative budget. These were highlighted in the copy the Trustees were given.

Actual Cash Balance on April 1, 2023 is \$1,152,701; Insurance and Compensation Fund \$308,678; Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund \$148,999; Audit Fund \$7,364; Social Security Fund \$102,073; and Debt Service Fund \$692.

Executive Director Pasquale suspects that the Corporate Personal Property Tax Revenue will be down a little from the budget figure. Capital Improvement items may have to be cut from the budget if there are shortfalls in revenue.

Agenda item number two. There were no comments or questions from the Trustees; there was no audience.

Agenda item number three, President Staske asked for adoption of Budget and Appropriations Ordinance No. 164. *Trustee Johnson moved to adopt Budget and Appropriations Ordinance No. 164 for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 as presented this date May 17, 2023. This was followed by a second from Trustee Augustson.*

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

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Augustson	-	yes
Trustee Gast	-	yes
President Staske	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0. Motion to approve Ordinance #164 carried.

Agenda item number four, President Staske called the May Meeting of the Vermilion County Conservation District Board of Trustees to order.

Agenda item number six, Roll Call indicated the following:

Trustees Present: Jessica Augustson
 Michael H. Gast

Randy A. Johnson
Doug R. Staske

Trustee(s) Absent: Michael P. Arbuckle

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

Staff members present: Lara Danzl and Gary Tyril.

Agenda item number seven, was the Adoption of, or Amendments to the Agenda. President Staske asked for amendments to the agenda.

Trustee Johnson moved to approve the May 17, 2023 agenda as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Gast. All in favor by acclamation, motion to approve the agenda carried.

Agenda item number eight. Approval of the Minutes from the March 15, 2023, Regular Meeting. With no comments or corrections, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the March 15, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Gast. All in favor by acclamation, motion to approve the minutes carried.*

Item number nine. Audience Comments. Audience member Bill Cole was recognized. He asked if there were any plans to add campgrounds at Kennekuk; if not then could primitive campsites be considered. There are much better fishing opportunities at Kennekuk than Forest Glen.

Executive Director Pasquale responded that to his knowledge there have never been any plans to add camping to Kennekuk. Perhaps in a past VCCD Master Plan. There is much work to add a campground, permits must be obtained including Illinois Department of Public Health certification. It is not a simple decision and would require more maintenance from the staff, and would be very costly.

President Staske thanked Mr. Cole for attending and his input. Meetings are always open to the public and he appreciates his participation.

Agenda item number ten, the Treasurer's Report. President Staske asked if there were any questions on items seven a through f. This included bills, checks and budget report for April and May 2023.

Trustee Gast questioned whether equipment purchased was capitalized, he noted check #42592 on March 2023 Manual Check Detail.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox answered that the auditors take care of that procedure.

Trustee Gast asked about check #42596 to Gibson Teledata for \$8,875.99.

Executive Director Pasquale explained they provide phone service; the internet provider is Starlink.

Trustee Johnson asked what services are included with the Illinois Association of Park District's Membership; check # 42598 in the amount of \$3,248.30.

Executive Director Pasquale elucidated IAPD provides District insurance, legislative updates, workshops, and information on procedure guidelines. The membership fee is based on the budget of the organization.

With no other comments or questions, *Trustee Gast moved to approve the Manual Checks dated March 2023 in the amount of \$114,525.27, which included check #'s 42558 – 42570, and 42578 – 42603;*

Voucher Checks dated April 20, 2023 in the amount of \$4,266.79, which included check #'s 42618 – 42630; Manual Checks dated April 2023 in the amount of \$338,292.09, which included check #'s 42604 – 42617, and check #'s 42631 - 42648; Voucher Checks dated May 18, 2023 in the amount of 16,268.34, which included check #'s 42666 - 42678. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson.

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

Trustee Gast	-	yes
Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Augustson	-	yes
President Staske	-	yes

The vote was 4 – 0. Motion to approve Treasurer’s Report carried.

Agenda item number ten g. Report on Cash and Investments. Director of Administration and Personnel Fox reported, as of May 17, 2023, the NOW checking account balance is \$157,189. Illinois Funds Investment Pool balance is \$242,366. The Illinois Funds Money Market Fund balance is \$94,479. First Farmers Bank Money Market Passbook account balance is \$243,668. Central Illinois Bank Money Market passbook account balance is \$146,313. The Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) balance is \$4,129. First Saving Bank NOW account balance is \$49,020. The NOW account at Catlin Bank balance is \$146,738. The 3 mo. CD [Whittaker Funds] at Iroquois Federal at 3.0% interest balance is \$20,562; and the new 3 mo. CD at Iroquois Federal at 3.03% interest is \$225,000. The CD at Longview Bank was moved to Iroquois Federal. The 2-year CD, with 6-month option acquired at Illinois National Bank is now at \$250,941.

The grand total of cash and investments for May 17, 2023: \$1,583,405. This compares to \$1,779,230 in May of 2022.

Associate Director of Administration and Personnel Fox noted that the Old National Bank account is the District’s general checking account; Illinois Funds Investment Pool is where all the Corporate Personal Property and Replacement Tax revenue is deposited; and the Money Market accounts are for depositing additional funds such as the Real Estate Tax allocations. The Central Illinois Bank is closing its branch here, and transferring business accounts to Urbana. The funds from Longview Bank were moved to Iroquois Federal to earn a higher interest rate. There is always an attempt to use local banks.

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

Item eleven a. Discussion/Approval of resolution to form local government efficiency committee. The Trustees were given a copy of the resolution and a fact sheet from IAPD. Executive Director Pasquale stated that only certain municipalities are required to form this committee. Once the committee is formed, meets three times, and submits a written report to the county, the requirement is met and is good for ten years.

He suggests the committee meet either before or after a regularly scheduled board meeting

With no other comments or questions, *President Staske moved to approve Resolution No. 23-1, Forming a Committee on Local Government Efficiency for the Vermilion County Conservation District. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson.*

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

President Staske	-	yes
Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee Gast	-	yes
Trustee Augustson	-	yes

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

There was no executive session.

Agenda item twelve. Report from the Executive Director. The District received a grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the replacement of Lake Vermilion docks. The docks will be totally replaced at an estimated cost of \$150,000. They are about 95% complete and 100% useable, with only a few minor finishing touches remaining. The original docks were placed in early 2000's.

The Board congratulated the staff on the grant award.

The docks had to be closed for a few days, and the project will be completed by Memorial Day Weekend.

The new Kennekuk playground is under construction. More mulch is needed and swings need to be hung. Plans are to add a sidewalk, fencing on at least two sides, and a small patio with picnic table and bench(es). The second set of equipment was ordered months ago and will be arriving soon. This set will be constructed in Forest Glen Preserve near either the campground or Edgewood Center. Everything is required to be ADA compliant. The VCCF is committed to purchasing 4 sets, 2 each for Kennekuk and Forest Glen. Plans are progressing to place the 3rd order soon.

Friends of the Kickapoo Rail Trail will be meeting next week with the Village of Oakwood to discuss construction of a shelter or two and additional parking area in Oakwood. The village is very excited and involved in their section of the trail, handling the mowing, maintaining trash cans, and even opening a public restroom.

Many trees were planted along the trail by Dr. Halloran. Most are still living, some of the redbuds did not survive.

There is no update on the appointment of a new board member from the Vermilion County Board. President Doug Staske's term will end June 21, 2023.

Regarding KRT funding, as of now the District participates in as many Zoom Meetings as possible which are held once a month. The VCCD is still waiting on an invoice from IDOT.

President Staske questioned about any news from the rail crossing at St. Joseph.

Lara Danzl explained that once the funding is released from Department of Economic and Commerce (DECO), Champaign County Forest Preserve (CCFP) is going to begin construction, forcing the hand of Union Pacific Railroad. CCFP has clear jurisdiction for the crossing.

Executive Director Pasquale continued, stating the 3 electric trucks on order must be approved by Ford Company. An interview was conducted by Ford regarding usage of electric vehicles (EV) and how they will fit in the plan of work. The successful completion of the interview does not guarantee you will receive one, it is a step. June of 2023, will be one year since the EV's were ordered; the gasoline trucks have been on order for 9 months. The EV's will be for Patrol/Security shifts, and one for Executive Director Pasquale who drives the most miles. He is currently driving the Ford Escape Hybrid and getting approximately 110 miles to the gallon.

Starlink internet business class cost was nearly \$1,000/mo. providing up to 2 terabytes. After review, the District was using much less than 2 terabytes per month. Starlink offers a new 1 terabyte plan for \$250/mo.; the District is now on that plan. Starlink is very reliable and the phones are running well.

Lara Danzl reported that Conservation Olympics, held on May 12th, went great! Fifteen teams representing 6 schools were in attendance, accounting for almost 300 students. Salt Fork came in 1st.

Gary Wilford, who began the program 39 years ago, was in attendance to award the Gary L. Wilford Sportsmanship Trophy to Schlarman and pass out medals. There are nine events.

Trustee Johnson asked for any updates on the proposed mountain bike trail extension on the on the old Dynegy property.

Executive Director Pasquale did not have any official word.

Lara Danzl responded that IDNR has contracted someone to conduct an official survey of the property in question. Kickapoo Mountain Bike Club cannot begin any work in the construction of the proposed Mountain Bike Trail until after the survey is conducted and reviewed for approval.

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

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

Trustee Johnson remarked that the park looks great!

Trustee Gast stated that he has been hiking the trail (trail steward) but has not submitted his report. He hiked the eastern portion of the River Ridge Backpack Trail, Forest Glen, and noted 5 or 6 areas where a chainsaw is needed. Also, will the beaver dams near the Kennekuk Education Center be dismantled or left?

Executive Director Pasquale responded that this usually takes care of itself; at some point staff may have to go in and do something. Along with the marsh, the dam is considered a great educational tool and is used during Outdoor School and for Summer Camps.

Trustee Augustson had no comment.

President Staske had no further comments.

This concluded President & Trustee Comments.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *Trustee Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:17 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Gast. All in favor by acclamation, meeting adjourned.*

Michael H. Gast
Secretary
VCCD Board of Trustee