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MCHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
JUNE 9, 2020
6:30 P.M.

GUBERNATORIAL DISASTER PROCLAMATION - EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-07
EXECUTIVE ORDER IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19
SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC BODY PHYSICALLY PRESENT AND LIMITING REMOTE PARTICIPATION

TELEPHONIC
Dial 1-312-626-6799
Meeting Code: 830 1397 1940
Password: 057660

VIDEO CONFERENCE
<https://zoom.us>
Meeting Code: 830 1397 1940
Password: 057660

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER
President Semel called the June 9, 2020 meeting of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation to order at 6:39pm. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

- 2.0 INTRODUCTORY ROLL CALL
2.1 Roll Call
Brad Semel, President
Kevin Ivers, Vice-President
Marti Gorman, Director
Dennis Dreher, Director
Ray Eisbrener, Secretary
Kim Becker, Treasurer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Shawna Flavell, Development Director /Executive Director of McHenry County Conservation Foundation
Yvonne Semel, Administrator
Vern Scacci, Board President, McHenry County Conservation District
Anne Basten, McHenry County Conservation District
Pamela Althoff, Guest

Linda Thomas, Liaison, McHenry County Conservation District
Laura King, Police Chief, McHenry County Conservation District

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

None

2.2 Remote Participation

President Semel made a motion to allow the Board of Directors to attend remotely through electronic participation. The basis for a meeting via electronic conference call is per the State of Illinois Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation - Executive Order 2020-07 & 2020-18 suspending requirements that members of the public body must be physically present. Director Dreher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments at this time

4.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 4.1 April 14, 2020 - Regular Meeting - After reviewing the minutes of the April 14, 2020 Meeting, President Semel made the motion to accept the minutes, Secretary Eisbrener seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- 4.2 April 14, 2020 - Executive Session - After reviewing the minutes of the April 14, 2020 Executive Session, President Semel made the motion to accept the minutes, Director Gorman seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- 4.3 April 20, 2020 - Special Call Meeting - After reviewing the minutes of the April 20, 2020 Special Call Meeting, President Semel made the motion to accept the minutes, Treasurer Becker seconded the motion. All were in favor.

5.0 OFFICER'S REPORTS

5.1 President's Report

President Semel

5.1a Introduction of Pamela Althoff, McHenry County Board Member and Former Illinois State Senator

President Semel welcomed Pamela Althoff to the meeting. He provided a brief introduction and background. Ms. Althoff served as Mayor of McHenry and as State Senator from 2003-2017. She serves on the McHenry County Board, on the board of United Way and volunteers with the non-profit, JourneyCare.

President Semel asked the Board to introduce themselves.

5.1b Marengo Ridge Update

President Semel commented on the 15-acre parcel of land that the Foundation is in the process of acquiring thanks to a very generous donor. The paperwork is nearing completion. The land survey left an acre of vacant land that was secured with a quick claim deed. The Foundation should be closing on the land very soon. Attorney Roger Stelle and Val Siler, Land Preservation Manager for the District, have been very helpful in making this land acquisition go smoothly.

5.2 Treasurer's Report

5.2a Financial Review

Treasurer Becker discussed April and May's financial summary. She discussed a large donation in April and again in May from the individual who is helping to acquire the Marengo Ridge tract. Donations over the past couple of months included both restricted and unrestricted contributions. Director Dreher asked how the recent land acquisition shows up on the balance sheet. Treasurer

Becker explained that it shows up as restricted net assets. There was \$215,000 provided for purchase of the property and an additional \$10,000 to cover legal fees.

5.2b Current Account Activity

Vice-President Ivers asked Treasurer Becker's thoughts on the current interest rates on our different accounts. Treasurer Becker said that interest rates are very low right now. She feels we need to wait through this time and maybe in August look at interest rates and make any changes dictated by changes in the market. President Semel commented that most of our assets are very secure. Treasurer Becker agreed.

6.0 DIRECTOR AND BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- 6.1 McHenry County Conservation District Report: District Liaison Thomas
- McHenry County Conservation District President Scacci said that the fiscal year ended and April 1st began fiscal year 2021. There is concern about the budget given the current state of affairs with COVID-19. The Board is looking at various repayment options for the Pitchen property. Everyone is working remotely and probably will through the end of the year. District Liaison Thomas did not have anything else to add. Vice-President Ivers asked if District site usages are up and District President Scacci answered that they are way up. This may level off once state parks begin to open. He said many people complimented the District on their sites and were very grateful that the sites were opened during "Shelter in Place." Director Dreher commented that the District has likely become more visible during this time. He wondered if there is a way we can take advantage of this new interest. The District Facebook page has had increased followers as well. Anne Basten said that a lot of the people visiting District sites are from outside of McHenry County. President Scacci asked if the Foundation has any flyers of printed information at the District sites. There was some discussion about how the Foundation's name could receive more visibility. Pamela Althoff suggested some viable ideas on how to further promote the Foundation.

7.0 BOARD BUSINESS

- 7.1 Consideration to Adopt the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget
- Executive Director Flavell shared the Budget on screen in Excel. Director Dreher asked if she would walk through the 2021 fiscal year budget to discuss and highlight any changes or additions. A large part of the income this year was the restricted donation for land acquisition. Director Dreher confirmed with Executive Director Flavell that the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle would be included as a special event for 2021. District President Scacci asked where the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle is included in the budget. Executive Director Flavell discussed contributions to supported organizations - the District projects to be supported and the amounts. Director Dreher commented that the contribution requests would eliminate all of the Foundation's funds in two years and Executive Director Flavell responded that much of the proposed funding is contingent on grant awards. If the Foundation does not receive a grant for the project, they will not be able to fund it. There was some discussion as to how funds would be allocated. More unrestricted funds need to be brought in to cover administrative costs. Pamela Althoff asked if there have been conversations with donors about the use of donations to help cover administrative costs. We have retained administrative fees for some grants and donations. Vice-President Ivers commented on the original plans to build on unrestricted individual donor contributions. He is hoping that this will increase over time. Executive Director Flavell feels this category will increase as we build relationships with individuals who have capacity to give at the major gift level.

President Semel asked if anyone had any further concerns about the 2020-2021 budget. Being none, President Semel moved that the 2020-2021 budget be approved. Vice-President Ivers seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- 7.2 Consideration to Fund the Purchase of a Technology-Based Safety App for the District's Public Hunting Program in an amount not to exceed \$10,969.29
- President Semel was uncertain why this moved to Board business rather than enter the District project proposals through the new protocol. Police Chief Laura King spoke about a grant the District applied for to support a technological way to improve public hunting safety. Initial costs were incurred for app development and, unfortunately, the grant was not successful. The app is downloaded on a phone, allowing hunters to check in and check out. It will allow staff to track hunting hours and hunters' take. Chief King said that this app will save hours of work for District employees and also help keep track of where hunters are located: it has a GPS tracking system. This app can also be expanded and can track hikers as well through GPS technology. Director Dreher asked if this is custom technology. Chief King said it is completely custom designed. President Semel wondered if this would be approved by hunters or would they feel it was too intrusive? Chief King said the hunters are frustrated by the current management system and this will make it easier for hunters. Secretary Eisbrener spoke about how he felt it would be well-received. He also felt this would be a big advantage for hikers, especially seniors who might be out on the trails. District President Scacci said there are about 500 hunters who participate in hunting each year, so it is a substantial group. Secretary Eisbrener commented that the information gathered would be more confidential than gathering information on a clipboard in a parking lot. He suggested that the Foundation be recognized for providing this new technology. Treasurer Becker commented on how quickly these funds can be saved by saving manpower hours. Chief King said it would pay for itself within a year. The data will be more accurate as well. District President Scacci said the hunting program costs the District about \$40,000 a year to run and he believes this will help cut costs.

President Semel made the motion to fund the purchase of a Technology-Based Safety App for the District's Public Hunting Program in an amount not to exceed \$10,969.29. Secretary Eisbrener seconded the motion. All were in favor.

District President Scacci said the District will invoice the Foundation upon delivery of the completed App. Chief King was thankful for the support.

8.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

8.1 Strategic Plan Implementation

8.1a FY 2020 Fundraising Progress

Executive Director Flavell discussed donor contributions and levels of restricted and non-restricted funds donated last year. She also commented that there have been a number of monthly donors that have signed up for non-restricted donations. This year there have been 139 new donors who did not give in Fiscal Year 2019 and they contributed \$44,500. These were all first time donors. These are people who we should be developing relationships with. Director Dreher commented on other environmental organizations that had held virtual fundraisers given all events were cancelled due to COVID-19.

9.0 ADDITIONAL BOARD BUSINESS

- 9.1 Consensus for Project Proposal Requests for Projects Listed on McHenry County Conservation District Fiscal Year 2021 Project List
Everyone received a list of projects from the District that covers a wide range of fields and interests. This list can inform conversations with potential donors. Vice-President Ivers mentioned the 50-Year-Anniversary book as a possible priority for funding. President Semel thought that would be timely. Executive Director Flavell will reach out to Advisor Kessler and get more information for the August meeting. Executive Director Flavell also mentioned the native seed nursery that would be open to the public. Director Dreher asked if this is a place where people could harvest native seeds for their own landscaping - the answer being yes in hopes that this would encourage more interest in the Foundation. Director Dreher mentioned four projects - The Checkerspot Project, Seed Harvester Purchase, From Corn to Compass Plants - Glacial Park and Boger Bog Restoration. President Semel explained that we may not be able to do a project just by picking it because we will need to be certain it could be completely funded by donations, or funded by the Foundation's reserves. He also mentioned it would be better if partial funds are given for a project, the Foundation could match those funds to complete the project.

- 9.2 District Fall Event Update and Pedal, Paddle, Saddle 2020
Executive Director Flavell informed the Board that we will not be able to host the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle this fall as the District will not be hosting any large events for the remainder of the year. She mentioned the possibility of having a virtual event that could be presented to encourage people to get out and exercise and will include an event t-shirt. Executive Director Flavell was not sure that a virtual event would work with the group of people that attend the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle. Director Gorman confirmed that the draw of the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle is the event itself and not necessarily that it supports the Foundation's mission. President Semel feels he would like to keep the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle as-is and not try to go virtual with it. He said he feels that a virtual event would not work well with our current attendees. Secretary Eisbrener suggested that the Pedal/Paddle/Saddle be reevaluated and perhaps energy be spent on a different fundraiser approach instead. President Semel said we can re-evaluate that in February 2021 when we typically initiate planning. District President Scacci suggested next year that corporations be encouraged to bring teams to the event and encourage this kind of participation.

Executive Director Flavell said that she has started a conversation with Nicor along this line, and is encouraging volunteers from different companies.

District President Scacci and District Liaison Thomas signed off.

- 9.3 *Passport to Lost Valley Visitor Center* Installation Update and *Join the Journey* Wall Installation is on track to be completed this fall. The District wanted to have an unveiling event that the Foundation would be part of but that is currently on hold. Executive Director Flavell raised the question of if the Join the Journey should be re-envisioned as a major donor wall with the names of people who have given to the Foundation. Director Dreher liked this idea to acknowledge recent major donors. President Semel agreed that it would be a good idea to start to work on adding some people to the donation wall - names of people who have donated significant amounts over the past couple years. President Semel asked Executive Director Flavell to come up with donation level breakouts for different donations. She will do that and will also come up with the costs for those pieces.

- 9.4 Adopt-A-Trail Summer Clean Up Schedule

Executive Director Flavell heard from a couple of Board members about date availabilities. The District is slowly raising restrictions for volunteer efforts. She believes that they should be lifted sometime in July. She was looking at the last weekend of each month. She will email the dates and asked Board members to sign up for one of those weekends. President Semel suggested a Doodle poll be set up. Executive Director Flavell hoped that volunteers would be included in the cleanup. She planned to put a registration on the website or in *Landscapes* for signing up for the cleanup dates.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

President Semel asked if there was any other business. There being none, President Semel made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Dreher seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 11, 2020 at Lost Valley Visitor Center at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Ray Eisbrener, Secretary