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MCHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2020  
SPECIAL CALL MEETING  
6:30 P.M.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Semel called the September 21, 2020 Special Call Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District and the Board of Directors of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation to order at 6:33pm. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

2.0 INTRODUCTORY ROLL CALL

2.1 Foundation Directors Present:

Brad Semel, President (Remote)  
Kevin Ivers, Vice-President (Remote)  
Martie Gorman, Director (Remote)  
Dennis Dreher, Director (Remote)  
Ray Eisbrener, Secretary (Remote)  
Kim Becker, Treasurer (Remote)  
Pamela Althoff, Director (Remote)

Counsel and Staff Present:

Andrew S. Paine, Counsel (Remote)  
Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director  
Shawna Flavell, Director of Development/Executive Director of McHenry County Conservation Foundation (Remote)  
Yvonne Semel, Administrator (Remote)

District Trustees Present:

John Henning, President (Remote)  
Dave Brandt, Vice President (Remote)  
Bill Cook, Treasurer (Remote)  
Carolyn Campbell, Secretary (Remote)  
Patrick Fritz, Trustee (Remote)  
Linda Thomas, Trustee (Remote)  
Chris Dahm, Trustee (Remote)

## 2.2 Remote Participation

President Semel made a motion to allow the Board of Directors of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation and the Board of Trustees of the McHenry County Conservation District 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. Vice-President Ivers seconded the motion. All were in favor.

## 3.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments at this time. Advisor Kessler was at Brookdale Administrative Offices in case someone from the public showed up for the meeting.

## 4.0 BOARD DISCUSSION

President Semel thanked everyone for participating in this meeting and commented on the opportunity to have the two Boards, the McHenry County Conservation District and McHenry County Conservation Foundation meet together. He reviewed the history of the Foundation from its origin in 1999 until now. Through his explanation of the role of the Foundation over the years, he hoped that he could help the District Board know how the Foundation has been involved with the District over the years. He mentioned changes that had taken place in the Foundation since its inception. The Foundation began as a support for the District and other conservation organizations in the County. The Foundation's first project was the 1<sup>st</sup> Bond Referendum for \$68.5 million dollars in 2001. The Referendum passed. The Foundation began applying for grants to support open space initiatives. Several grants were awarded and many projects were funded for the District through those grants. President Semel commented on many of the projects that the Foundation funded. The Foundation then ran a 2<sup>nd</sup> Bond Referendum for \$73 million dollars in 2007 under the umbrella of education and this referendum also passed.

With the change in economic times and the politics of the area, a 3rd Bond Referendum has not taken place. The Foundation began purchasing and selling property. After the Board held several strategic planning sessions, it was decided that they would hire an Executive Director to pursue more grant and fundraising options. District projects have been funded through several fundraising events - Tap Into Your Wildside and Pedal/Paddle/Saddle. More than 3 million dollars have gone to the District to help fund projects along with the two successful referendums. The Foundation is working to grow their Board and Pam Althoff is the newest Board member.

Vice President Brandt thanked the Foundation for their part in two major projects that were recently funded. He suggested that everyone introduce themselves. Everyone from the District and Foundation introduced themselves to each other by sharing their name, years on their board and what they do.

Director Althoff asked how the District will approach the Foundation to work on a project or help to support them. Executive Director Kessler responded to this question and described how different projects were determined and presented to the Foundation. There is an application process that is filled out and presented to District staff. After approval of the projects by the District board, draft budgets are developed and eventually presented to the Foundation Board. The Foundation board will then determine which projects they would like to provide funding for. President

Semel explained the hope was that the projects presented would cover different District priority areas so as to appeal to different types of donors. A comment was made that the goal was to improve the communication between the two Boards.

President Semel commented on the desire of the Foundation board to develop a larger board that has more diversity, including someone in the business community and possibly a lawyer. He commented on previous District board members that have come on as members of the Foundation board. Executive Director Kessler commented on the importance of integration between the District and the Foundation. Trustee Cook commented on the upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the District and to include the Foundation in the celebration of the anniversary. He suggested finding a way to incorporate fundraising for the Foundation into the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Executive Director Flavell added that this idea has been pursued. President Semel commented that one of the projects that the Foundation is pursuing is a book about the 50 years of the District.

Director Althoff suggested a conversation on video discussing the correlation between the District and the Foundation so that the different roles can be understood. There was some discussion about the Passport to Lost Valley display that should soon be installed at Lost Valley Visitor Center. The project invites the public to be interactive through the displays and gives them ways to enjoy the park. Secretary Eisbrener commented on what the Foundation does differently than any other organization is that they focus solely on supporting public lands in McHenry County.

Executive Director Flavell said she would put together for the District board a one page fact sheet about the Foundation. Director Dreher recommended that the District should take advantage of the current popularity the District parks have during this time of Covid and remind the public that the parks have stayed open for the public to get outside and enjoy the health benefits that the District parks offer.

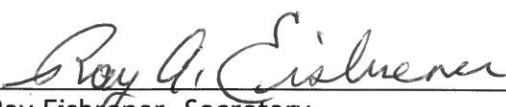
President Semel commented on the benefits of this meeting together and the hope that both boards can integrate more with each other. President Henning thanked the Foundation for their support over the years. Vice President Ivers suggested that the Foundation Board look over the survey that was put together by the District.

#### 10.0 ADJOURNMENT

President Semel asked if there were any other comments or questions. There being none, President Semel made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice-President Ivers seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at Lost Valley Visitor Center at 6:30pm. (if needed)

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Ray Eisbrener, Secretary