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MCHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL CALL MEETING
MINUTES OF MAY 26, 2021
6:30 P.M.
LOST VALLEY VISITOR CENTER AND VIRTUAL BOARDROOM

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Semel called the May 26, 2021 special meeting of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation to order at 6:38 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Open Meetings Act, I as President of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation have determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent at this time because of the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and Governor Pritzker's related disaster declaration. President Semel made the motion for the meeting to be virtual, Director Gorman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken - President Semel - yes, Vice-President Ivers - yes, Secretary Eisbrener - yes, Director Althoff - yes, Director Gorman - yes, and Director Dreher - yes. All were in favor.

2.0 INTRODUCTORY ROLL CALL

2.1 Roll Call

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Shawna Flavell, Executive Director of McHenry County Conservation Foundation
Yvonne Semel, Administrator
Elizabeth Kessler, Advisor, Executive Director of McHenry County Conservation District

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

None

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments at this time.

4.0 BOARD DISCUSSION

4.1 Fundraising and Development Plan

President Semel passed the discussion to Executive Director Flavell. Executive Director Flavell reviewed the existing Strategic Plan including the Vision and Mission Statement. Executive Director Flavell commented that two “pillars” that she wanted to focus on were 1) Growth of the Foundation through donor engagement and retention and, 2) Develop and Diversify the Board of Directors. She discussed the donations made between fiscal year 2019 and fiscal year 2021. Secretary Eisbrener asked about the large funding level for fiscal year 2020, which was restricted. President Semel commented on how a significant donation for special projects may give a false impression of donor growth. Several questions were asked about the way that the donation statistics were gathered.

Executive Director Flavell mentioned the need to update the Strategic Plan, which ends with fiscal year 2022. She discussed the 2021 Fundraising and Development Plan and broke it down in to three areas: Donor Acquisition, Engagement, and Retention. Director Althoff mentioned the need for teamwork and having a “pitch.” President Semel mentioned that the Foundation should emphasize the noted increase in the use of the District parks and trails during the pandemic and how valuable those amenities are to the county as a whole.

Director Althoff said that these conversations need to be taken to a broader ranging audience through organizations. President Semel suggested putting together a PowerPoint of projects that have been supported by the Foundation. Director Althoff suggested a Board member should attend presentations that Executive Director Flavell gives about the Foundation. Director Dreher pointed out the financial value of having open spaces where people of McHenry County live and own their homes. Advisor Kessler mentioned that when things open up more the Foundation Board and the District Board will plan another meeting together. Executive Director Flavell suggested launching a donor thank you/engagement event. Director Dreher asked if there was an opportunity to have a special event this year while people are getting back into doing things outside. There was also mention of partnering with a local business to get a percentage of items purchased during a particular time frame. Director Dreher commented on the possibility of promoting eco-tourism (promoting the Foundation) through Visit McHenry County. Director Gorman mentioned partnering with PedalPalooza to distribute Pedal, Paddle, Saddle fliers.

Two events a year was the general suggestion for donor engagement. In regards to the Strategic Plan development, Advisor Kessler suggested the Foundation make adjustments to the current strategic plan for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 and then develop its next strategic plan to coincide with the District’s fiscal year 2024 - 2026 plan. Director Dreher would like to focus on bringing in more Board members as soon as possible to bring in new ideas for the proposed Strategic Plan. The Board would like to see a minimum of two new Board members in the next year. There was further discussion of when the Foundation should put together an updated Strategic Plan in relationship with the District’s Strategic Plan.

4.2 Draft Budget FY22 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022)

Executive Director Flavell proposed a budget and provided detailed accounting. She discussed proposed income versus expenses. The proposed budget reflects a continued deficit, most of which is due to costs already approved for District projects.

5.0 PRESIDENT’S UPDATE

5.1 Land Acquisition Status: 160+/- Acres of Real Estate

Executive Director Flavell turned the meeting over to President Semel to update everyone on the current land purchase. There were concerns for potential contaminants associated with two above ground storage tanks, so a Phase II Environmental inspection had been scheduled. The closing is still scheduled for June 30.

6.0 BOARD BUSINESS

- 6.1 Authorization to Execute a Project Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding with the McHenry County Conservation District for the Acquisition, Restoration, Management, and Future Transfer of Real Estate.
President Semel made the motion for Authorization to Execute a Project Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding with the McHenry County Conservation District for the Acquisition, Restoration, Management, and Future Transfer of Real Estate of Camp Lakota. Director Dreher seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- 6.2 Authorization to Execute a Grant Agreement with the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation for the Acquisition and Restoration of Real Estate.
Director Dreher suggested a press release being put together for the Northwest Herald when the purchase is complete. President Semel made the motion for the Authorization to Execute a Grant Agreement with the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation for the Acquisition and Restoration of Real Estate. Director Dreher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

President Semel asked if there was any other business to discuss. There being none, President Semel made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice-President Ivers seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken - President Semel - yes, Vice-President Ivers - yes, Secretary Eisbrener - yes, Director Althoff - yes, Director Gorman - yes, and Director Dreher - yes. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 13, 2021, 6:30 p.m., at Lost Valley Visitor Center (if needed).

Respectfully submitted,


Ray Eisbrener, Secretary