

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
October 15, 2025, 5:30PM**

PURSUANT to written notice given all members of the Board, the above meeting was called to order at 5:30p.m. by Treasurer Allen.

Board members present: Treasurer Allen, Secretary Rade, Trustee Chapman
Board Members absent: 1st Vice President Reed, President Schneller

Trustee Rade MOVED to approve the Minutes of the Regular meeting on September 17, 2025. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Chapman, “AYE”; Trustee Allen, “AYE”; Trustee Rade, “AYE”. Motion carried.

Trustee Rade MOVED to approve the Treasurer’s Report and Disbursements from September 2025, in the amount of \$278,781.87 as presented. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Allen, “AYE”; Trustee Chapman, “AYE”; Trustee Rade, “AYE”. Motion carried.

IV. COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:

No comments.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Annual Board Member Role Approvals

a. Appoint Foundation Liaison

Jerry Culp discussed that Kevin Chapman was needed to fill the position of 2nd VP and he accepted. Executive Director Culp discussed that a MCCF Liaison was needed. It was also suggested that the Board could take turns as well. It is typically the newest Board member.

Trustee Rade MOVED to approve Kevin Chapman as 2nd Vice President and to table the decision on the MCCF Liaison. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Allen, “AYE”; Trustee Rade, “AYE”; Trustee Chapman, “AYE”. Motion carried.

2. Annual Board Tour

A reminder was given that the annual Board tour is next Thursday 10/23 at 8AM.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **PDRMA Resolutions Approval**

Executive Director Culp discussed joining the PDRMA risk pool and their proposal for liability insurance and worker’s compensation insurance. Currently the District utilizes iParks and IPRF, respectively. PDRMA has met with the District extensively. They are very thorough and proactive. Their quote came back much cheaper than our current rates. Currently we pay about \$120,000 for both, and PDRMA will cost closer to \$80,000. The coverage is the same but the service is better. Staff recommends passing both the resolutions presented.

Trustee Rade asked if they see any downfalls, such as communication issues. Jerry Culp responded that he feels the communication is stronger. For example, they have already given us a checklist of things we need to work on to mitigate risk and increase safety.

Trustee Rade moved to approve the resolution authorizing the District's membership in the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) and a resolution recognizing and dedicating the District to PDRMA's loss control principles as presented. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Chapman, "AYE"; Trustee Rade, "AYE". Motion carried.

2. Approval of Updated Purchasing Policy

Finance Director Nicky Besser discussed updated to the purchasing policy for approval. There were two main reasons this was done. First, on August 1, 2025 Governor JB Pritzker signed Public Act 104-0114 into law. This established separate competitive bidding thresholds for work and supplies and materials. The bidding threshold for work remains unchanged at \$30,000. The bidding threshold for supplies and materials increases to \$60,000. All requests by MCCD staff at and above \$30,000 are still required to be presented for approval to the Board of Trustees.

Second, several practices have evolved internally that were not reflected in the former 2021 policy. Staff sought to update the policy to both reflect and provide guidance on current practice so employees have the information necessary and boundaries set to be proper stewards of the MCCD budget and tax payer funds. Some updates include a section of definitions, updates to employee spending limits, updates to methods of payments including adding ACH withdrawals, addition of use of a cash box, updated credit card procedures, and clear guidance on presenting requests to the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Rade moved to approve the Purchasing Policy Updates. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Rade, "AYE"; Trustee Chapman, "AYE". Motion carried

3. Approval to Designate Surplus Equipment

Phil Julius discussed gaining approval to declare the 2002 Ford F-250 with snowplow and the Eagle 2-45 Manlift as surplus equipment so it can be sold. The 2002 Ford F-250 with snowplow was replaced this summer with a new Ford F-350 with snowplow. The 2002 F-250 was replaced due to being over 20 years old and repair parts becoming harder to acquire. With the replacement truck, the district no longer has a need for the 2002 Ford F-250 with snowplow. The 2001 Eagle 2-45 towable lift was replaced in January of 2025 with a self-propelled Genie lift. This replacement was also due to aging equipment and the need for a self-propelled lift. With the replacement of the towable lift, there is no longer a need for the 2001 Eagle 2-45 towable lift. He also recommended a minimum selling price of \$5500 for the 2002 Ford F-250 with snowplow and \$2000 for the Eagle 2-45 towable lift at the sale.

Trustee Rade MOVED to approve declaring the 2002 Ford F-250 with snowplow and the 2001 Eagle 2-45 towable lift as surplus property and allowing the district to sell both items at auction as presented. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Chapman, "AYE"; Trustee Rade, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE". Motion carried.

4. Approval of Ft Daniel OSLAD Concrete Work

Executive Director Jerry Culp presented the approval of a contract for the concrete work associated with the Fort Daniel OSLAD Grant. As part of the grant, site improvements include the addition of a new pavilion/restroom, a parking lot,

and a small courtyard area adjacent to the house and pavilion. To complete the accessible concrete walkway from the parking lot to the new pavilion, staff contacted four local contractors to request proposals. The District received two responses:

- A&C Concrete Specialists (Decatur): \$25,050
- JG's Projects LLC (Elwin): \$30,240

After reviewing references and evaluating past work, staff determined that A&C Concrete Specialists has the necessary experience and qualifications to successfully complete the project. Funds are budgeted in the Capital Fund Account 6810-700 for this Project. There are sufficient funds in the Capital Account 6810-700 for this expense totaling \$25,050.

Trustee Rade **MOVED** to approve the proposal from A&C Concrete Specialists in the amount of \$25,050 to complete the concrete work associated with the Fort Daniel OSLAD Grant OS-24-2517 as presented. Trustee Chapman **SECONDED** the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Allen, "AYE"; Trustee Rade, "AYE"; Trustee Chapman, "AYE". Motion carried.

5. Staff Reports:

Jerry Culp, Executive Director:

Executive Director Culp discussed the Indoor-Outdoor opening and that the contractor retention is almost ready to be released. This will allow payouts to go out and for us to request all funds. At Ft. Daniel he and Phil Julius are working toward the Wetland Restoration and doing a lot of work out there. They have roughed in almost 2/9 of the wetlands. Staff are starting on the site work including ordering the pavilion, concrete work, and grading in and around the farmstead. Phil will be working on a water line as well. The Prairie Pedal was a success. Rock Springs/Scovill Park West bike trail is moving forward starting with engineering. We are hoping construction will start next summer. This coincides with another grant Phil wrote. The District is working toward a collective bargaining agreement. We have been working a lot on paperwork to get things moving forward with PDRMA. Jerry did a presentation at the Mt. Zion Chamber of Commerce and it was great to get people hearing about what we do.

Phil Julius, Director of Operations

Operations Director Julius discussed the nice, new paved Nearing Lane and noted that there was an issue with the lines and they will be redone next summer. A lot of mowing etc. has been put on hold because of the fire ban. The staff at Friend's Creek built a lean-to for their firewood. Staff also worked on the Prairie Pedal. Each of the district's disabled hunting blinds have had a food plot placed in front of them to try to attract deer and Mitch Lovgren, Natural Resource Manager, has been working hard to get them to grow. Operations staff have worked together to repair the concrete spill pipe in the bike trail pond. The concrete pipe has had plant roots grow into it, creating voids that allow the water to be released from the pond. The structure was cleared of debris around the base, and a temporary frame was built to allow for bentonite to be poured on the outside of the concrete to seal the voids. When the pond recovers from the drought conditions we are experiencing, we will see if the bentonite sealed the void.. Natural resources hosted a few volunteer seed collection events. One was general volunteers and one was with Millikin students. A lot of seed was collected.

Trustee Rade asked if we have run into any EHD problems. Mitch Lovgren said that they have not really seen anything concerning, which is a relief.

Alysia Callison, Director of Program Services

Director of Program Services Alysia Callison discussed that September was spent planning and preparing for fall. Specifically, there are two major events in October. Last weekend was the Fall Harvest Festival and this weekend was the Treat Trail. Everything was great. They also met with a staff and did planning for winter planning and worked on other concepts not only for winter but for the future. Once new things they are implementing are regular “walks” at some of the other sites to try to increase people going to other conservation sites. There was also a summer camp meeting to learn from last year’s programming. They have also started addressing program supplies and storage needs. They are planning to get rid of some unneeded things and seeing what needs are after that. As far as programs, there have been a few field trips and other groups as well as public programs. A few staff helped out with Prairie Pedal. Another big thing was the Star Lab training. One was a virtual training with a certified trainer, and the next day was the staff working on it to figure it out. They were supposed to do a soft launch of the star lab, but it was rescheduled for November. Jenny Garver helped to organize and also attended a volunteer event out at Richland community College. There has been a great influx of volunteers this year, which is great.

Ashton Dukeman, Marketing Specialist

Marketing Specialist Ashton Dukeman discussed that the Grand Opening of the Hidden Hollow went well. There was also a well-attended Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting and the Herald & Review did a great spread on it. There have been several rentals of the rooms with positive feedback afterwards. The new tree sign has been installed. Prairie Pedal went well, and they had about 141 riders. Registration went great and using the Hidden Hollow space made it a lot better of an event. People had a lot of fun, and it was great feedback. She did a booth at Mercy Market with about 66 visitors. Social media continues to go great.

Nicky Besser, Director of Finance and HR

Director of Finance & HR Nicky Besser discussed her work to update several policies including the purchasing policy voted on today as well as an upcoming vehicle use and CDL Drug Testing policy. She worked on the budget documents which staff are currently working on. There are several end of year renewals she is pushing forward and she has begun work on the tax levy. She has also appreciated some networking opportunities with the Park District. She attended the opening of the Indoor-Outdoor Classroom, collective bargaining negotiations, and a legal updated webinar with PDRMA.

VII. COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES:

There were no comments from the Trustees.

Trustee Rade MOVED to go into Executive Session at 6:22p.m. for the purpose of:

1. Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.
2. Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06.

Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Rade, “AYE”; Trustee Allen, “AYE”; and Trustee Chaman, “AYE”. Motion carried.

Trustee Rade MOVED to return to the Regular Public Meeting at 6:34 p.m. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Rade, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Chaman, "AYE". Motion carried.

Trustee Chapman MOVED to approve the Executive Session Minutes of October 15, 2025, as read aloud in closed session. Trustee Rade, SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Rade, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE"; and Trustee Chaman, "AYE". Motion carried.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Trustee Rade MOVED to adjourn the Public Meeting at 6:37 p.m. Trustee Chapman SECONDED the Motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Trustee Rade, "AYE"; Trustee Chapman, "AYE"; Trustee Allen, "AYE". Motion carried.

President

Secretary