

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
McHenry County Administration Building  
667 Ware Road, Woodstock, IL 60098

MINUTES OF FRIDAY, JULY 9, 2010

Chairman McCann called the committee meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. The following members were present: Mary McCann, Chairman; Virginia Peschke; Scott Breeden; Pete Merkel, and Barb Wheeler. Yvonne Barnes and Anna May Miller were absent. Also in attendance: Pete Austin, County Administrator; Cassandra McKinney, Water Resource Manager; Pat McNulty, Patti Nomm and Kristy Hecke, Health Department; Dennis Sandquist and Mark Phipps, Planning and Development; Susan Burke, McHenry County Schools Environmental Education Program; interested public and press.

Mary McCann, Chairman	
Yvonne Barnes	JS "Scott" Breeden
Pete Merkel	Anna May Miller
Virginia Peschke	Barbara Wheeler

MINUTES: Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wheeler, to recommend approval of the minutes of the Natural and Environmental Resources Committee meeting of June 25, 2010. The minutes were approved as submitted with a unanimous voice vote of all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PRESENTATION: Chairman McCann moved that Agenda Item No. 6.3 be brought forward for consideration. *Presentation about the McHenry County Schools Environmental Education Program (MCSEEP):* Ms. Burke presented the Committee with handouts concerning this Program and introduced her four staff members. She gave a presentation summarizing the program and mentioned that to date, this Program is provided to 67 County schools. Their purpose is to bring current local and global environmental information to the County students and teach them to adopt life habits that promote solutions to environmental concerns in McHenry County and beyond. She reviewed their budget and their measures to cut expenses, but due to economic conditions, their budget has suffered. In order to meet their 2010-2011 budget, and not have to cut any additional teachers, they need a minimum of \$7,500 in funding. In order to continue to improve upon their lesson plans and program, approximately \$10,000 will be needed which will allow teachers to attend workshops and will enable them to update their curriculum. Discussion ensued about the importance of having this discussion about this Program now since decisions concerning County budgets will be in the near future. Several options were discussed which may help the Program find various companies and organizations to help fund this Program. After further discussion, Committee members agreed to further review this Program and bring it up for discussion at a later date.

OLD BUSINESS:

*Wind Turbine Review:* Mr. Sandquist summarized how the County currently regulates wind turbines. There is a state statute that sets the parameters for wind turbines. He proposed that the Planning & Development Department set up a wind energy task force and they have been in contact with several municipalities to see if they would like to join this task force. The Committee discussed the importance of addressing this issue sooner rather than later because of the impact wind turbines have on adjoining property owners. After further discussion, there was consensus that a moratorium be recommended to Planning & Development to be placed on large wind turbines at this time, until after the work of the Task Force.

NEW BUSINESS:

*Ordinance Implementing the Wetland Restoration Fund:* Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wheeler, to recommend the County Board approve an Ordinance Implementing the Wetland Restoration Fund. Mr. Phipps informed the Committee that the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance currently provides for the mitigation of impacts to isolated waters of McHenry County by a fee-in-lieu payment into a Wetland Restoration Fund (WRF). Currently two WRF's are established for McHenry County, those being a Fox River WRF and a Kishwaukee River WRF. This proposed Ordinance offers a third WRF option wherein it would allow the County to accept a fee, find a suitable spot within the watershed as close as possible, and create/restore a wetland. The fees would also include some long-term maintenance of the wetland. The Ordinance is for the collection of fees for the dispersal of funds from the WRF. After a lengthy discussion, the motion carried as submitted with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

*Requests for Comprehensive Solid Waste Removal Franchising:* Ms. Nomm informed the Committee that the Health Department has received requests from five subdivisions asking them to pursue franchises for solid waste removal. Two subdivisions are located in Crystal Lake, two in McHenry, and one in Fox Lake. The subdivisions contain between 89 to 400 homes. She mentioned that since the program began on February 1, 2010 they have only had 12 complaints and they have received many positive responses from residences. They would like to move forward with these requests in order to set up meetings with vendors. The length of the contract would be three years. They foresee being able to expand into the surrounding areas of these five subdivisions as this project expands; it will grow in unincorporated areas. After further discussion, the majority of the Committee members agreed that this program should be moved forward.

*Review of Water Resources Action Plan Technical Rewrite:* Ms. McKinney joined Committee members to discuss the rewriting of the McHenry County Water Resources Action Plan. She mentioned that the edited version of the Action Plan now has five sections which will allow for easier reading, and used the same formatting throughout the document. She has not inserted the final page numbers throughout the appendices, but she will do so when she receives final approval of the Plan from the Committee. Committee members commented on the overall organization of the Plan and that it appeared it would be easy for people to read. Committee members requested Ms. McKinney to remove pronouns (we, our) from the Plan as the Plan is being issued by the County and the Groundwater Task Force. The Committee asked her to finalize the Plan and have it posted to the County's website.

*Stream Gauge Monitoring Program:* Ms. McKinney informed Committee members that she recently sent a request seeking partners to help sponsor a portion of the long-term O&M stream gauges. The annual O&M for 2010-2011 is \$12,500 per gauge per year. The City of Marengo has offered to help fund a portion of the stream gauge for the Kishwaukee River main stem located in Marengo. She has not received any offers to help fund the Franklinville Creek. They have been working on installing telemetry on all the wells and are starting to do testing to make sure they are relaying information. Once the testing has been completed, the data will be able to be accessed on the public website. She informed the Committee that there could be a potential that not all of the \$280,000 received from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) may be spent and there could be funds leftover. Mention was made of possibly doing a third stream gauge on the upper branch of the Kishwaukee River and partner with both Lakewood and Woodstock. There would be funding partners on this project, but it would depend if there were funds leftover from the USGS. If there would be a small amount of funds leftover, Ms. Kinney mentioned that she has been in contact with the McHenry County Conservation District concerning the possibility of placing observation wells near MCCD's public parking lots and facilities. Signs would be placed at these areas showing what the water levels are below the ground.

She also informed the Committee that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10:00 a.m. on August 18, 2010 at the Prairieview Education Center with Congressman Manzullo.

#### REPORTS TO COMMITTEE:

*McHenry County Conservation District:* Mr. Merkel reported that the MCCD will seat two appointments at their next meeting, those appointments being Dave Brandt and Stephen Barrett. He also reported that the MCCD will hold a grand opening and open house on August 14, 2010 for the Lost Valley Visitors Center. The dedication for this Center will be held on August 13. He also mentioned that land acquisitions are moving along fairly well. He receives weekly updates from the MCCD and he will pass the information along to Committee members via emails.

*Agricultural Conservation Easement Farmland Protection Commission:* Ms. Wheeler reported that she will be obtaining a press release for the McHenry County Farm Day.

*Regional Water Planning Group:* None.

*Greenways:* Mr. Sandquist reported that the Planning & Development Department with IDNR has submitted a proposal to the Grand Victoria Foundation. If they obtain the funding, they will hire/retain a greenway expert who would facilitate a McHenry County Greenway plan, at the regional level. He will keep the Committee updated.

*Green Team:* None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

FUTURE TOPICS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wheeler, to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

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**RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD ACTION:**

Ordinance Implementing the Wetland Restoration Fund

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