

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

MINUTES OF FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2010:

Chairman McCann called the committee meeting to order at 8.35 a.m. The following members were present: Mary McCann, Chairman; Pete Merkel; Yvonne Barnes and Virginia Peschke. Barb Wheeler, Scott Breeden and Anna May Miller were absent. Also in attendance: Pete Austin, County Administrator; Cassandra McKinney, Water Resource Manager; Dennis Sandquist, Maryanne Wanaski and Mark Phipps, Planning & Development; Patti Nomm and Jim Davidson, Health Department; Barry Valentine, EMA; interested public and press.

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

MINUTES: Committee members reviewed the minutes for the Natural and Environmental Resources Committee of October 8, 2010. Ms. Barnes made a motion, seconded by Mr. Merkel, to recommend approval of the minutes as presented. The minutes were approved as submitted with a unanimous voice vote of all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PRESENTATION: None.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Approving the McHenry County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and Continuation of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee: Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Merkel, to recommend the County Board approve the above resolution. Mr. Valentine presented the plan and informed committee members that the task force has been working on this plan for over a year. The plan has been approved by IEMA (Illinois Emergency Management Agency) and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and they are now requesting approval by the County Board and local municipalities. Mr. Phipps stated that there were a few comments by municipalities asking if they adopted this plan, are they committed to solving problems identified with the plan within a set time frame. The answer was "no". Local governments need only to solve problems as their resources allow. Mr. Valentine added that we had very good participation from the municipalities. Mr. Merkel questioned if the Municipalities must adopt the plan in order to be eligible for Federal funds. They were informed that they must adopt the plan in order to qualify for funding. Chairman McCann requested that Mr. Valentine change references to the Planning and Development Committee be changed to the Natural and Environmental Resources Committee. Chairman McCann will work with Mr. Valentine on the specific changes. This Resolution is scheduled to go before the County Board on December 20th. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a roll call vote (Barnes, Merkel, Peschke and McCann).

OLD BUSINESS

Update on Snow and Ice Workshop: Committee members were informed that almost 200 operators attended the two Snow and Ice workshops, including 30 private operators. EPA staff was thrilled with the workshops and felt the training was a great use of EPA funds and an example they want to try to replicate in other counties.

Sub-Section B6-Snow and Ice – next steps: The big picture issue remains on how to reduce salt usage on a county wide basis. There were two goals they felt they should work towards:

1. Require all operators, both public and private, to be certified, and
2. Make sure salt storage is handled properly. Currently only larger storage facilities are permitted and there are smaller piles of salt that are often handled improperly.

Committee members discussed the fact that private operators and the improper storage of salt are the real problem so there is not an easy solution. Chairman McCann wondered if a salt co-op might be the solution to this issue. She stated we could call together the private operators to get their ideas, as well as create an awards program for those private operators storing salt properly. Committee members made clear that they would like to ask the State's Attorney if the County has the authority to require certification of private operators.

Sub-Section B2 – Land Use and Zoning: Committee members discussed the role of the County, if any, in notifying municipalities and unincorporated residents regarding the impact of high capacity wells that may be installed. A recent Senate Bill was passed this past session by the General Assembly that seems to put that responsibility on the Soil and Water Conservation District. Mr. Sandquist recommended that the County work with the Soil and Water Conservation District to determine what role the County may have. It was stated that it may be possible for the Health Department to look and see if the County can require an impact assessment on high capacity wells before wells are permitted. Chairman McCann suggested that the County recommend the Northwest Water Planning Area examine the Public Act, as amended by this Senate Bill, to make clear the County’s role and authority. It was suggested that the County invite Mr. Ed Weskerna in to discuss how we can work together to use this new legislation, to work together with the Soil and Water Conservation District. Ms. Nomm estimates there are between 35,000-40,000 private wells in the County. The Health Department has a goal of implementing an inventory and monitoring program for these wells. Ms. Nomm also described the program for improving the onsite waste-water treatment systems. She stated that consideration should be given to establishing a standardized process for evaluation of existing onsite wastewater treatment systems and water wells for real estate transactions and property refinancing.

REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

McHenry County Conservation District: The Conservation District has stated they had a very successful Trail of History. Ms. Kessler presided over the National Parks and Recreation Conference in Minneapolis.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Farmland Protection Commission: The ACE Commission has had a couple of interesting presentations recently on the transfer of development rights. They have also begun discussions on the role they may have in establishing and working with Food Councils.

Regional Water Planning Group: The MCCOG appointed two people to the Northwest Water Planning Group.

Green Team: None.

McSWCD Drainage Workshop: The Drainage workshop went well. There was a nice “generational” idea sharing among those present.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

FUTURE TOPICS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Merkel, to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 a.m. The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

* * * * *

RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD ACTION/APPROVAL:

Resolution Approving the McHenry County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and Continuation of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee

:ksf