

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

MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011:

Chairman McCann called the committee meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. The following members were present: Mary McCann, Chairman; Donna Kurtz; Pete Merkel; Bob Nowak, Virginia Peschke and Kathleen Bergan Schmidt. Marc Munaretto was absent. Also in attendance: Peter Austin, County Administrator; Kristy Hecke and Jeff Levato, Department of Health; Dennis Sandquist, Cory Horton, Alicia Law and Cassandra McKinney, Planning & Development; Dave Christensen, EMA; Nancy Schietzeit, Environmental Defenders of McHenry County; and interested public.

Mary McCann, Chairman	
Donna Kurtz	Pete Merkel
Marc Munaretto	Bob Nowak
Virginia Peschke	Kathleen Bergan Schmidt

MINUTES: Ms. Schmidt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Nowak, to approve the minutes of September 14, 2011. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote of all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PRESENTATION: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

*Resolution Adopting the McHenry County Water Resources Action Plan:* Ms. Schmidt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Nowak, to recommend the County Board approve the above resolution as submitted. Ms. Kurtz requested that a statement be included in the resolution indicating that even at this time we are experiencing water shortages. They may be periodic, but there are water shortages being experienced in the southeastern portion of the county. She would like this statement included in one of the "whereas" paragraphs because she feels that they need to express a sense of urgency and a recognition of the problem of water shortages. Ms. McKinney mentioned that the real time monitoring observation wells have shown a decline in water levels in the southeastern portion of the county, even with this year's increase in precipitation. She has not been informed that there are water shortages. Ms. Kurtz requested to modify her request to reflect that there are declining water levels in the county. Mr. Sandquist suggested that the following wording be added to the first "Whereas" paragraph of the resolution: "water well monitoring has indicated instances of declining water levels, and..." It was the consensus of the committee that this language be added to the resolution. Mr. Merkel mentioned that everyone is worried about the future growth of the county drawing down the water when there are currently over 300,000 people living in the county that are using water right now. We can make the greatest savings of water through conservation and efficiency. He read the following statement from *Preserving Recharge* "If McHenry County, Illinois adopted water efficiency standards for toilets, faucets, showerheads and clothes washers, the water savings could be over one billion gallons of water per year. At current rates of groundwater withdrawal, this savings could support more than 42,000 additional households in the county." It is not going to be the incoming residents to the county that will have the largest impact for water usages, but rather the residents currently living in the county need to change their water use if this issue is going to be solved.

Concerning the Water Resources Action Plan (WRAP), Ms. Kurtz suggested that a brief one-page summary explaining what the WRAP is, and how it will be used, be added to the cover of the matrix of the WRAP. This summary will be prepared and added to the WRAP before it is presented to the County Board. Ms. Schmidt suggested that their fellow County Board members review the WRAP matrix first and if they have further questions regarding the WRAP, they should then review the full text of the WRAP provided on the accompanying CD. It was the consensus of the committee that a presentation providing an overview of the WRAP be placed on the October 18, 2011 County Board agenda. On a roll call vote, the motion carried with all members present voting aye (Kurtz, Merkel, Nowak, Peschke, Schmidt and McCann).

NEW BUSINESS:

*Resolution Authorizing Adoption of Letter of Understanding Between McHenry County and the McHenry County Conservation District.* Mr. Merkel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Peschke, to recommend the County Board approve the above resolution as submitted. Mr. Horton mentioned that this is the second Letter of Understanding (LOU) to expedite permitting for certain MCCC projects. The first LOU was for restoration projects and this LOU is requesting an expedited permitting process for MCCC projects that restore, create or enhance natural areas. This will allow them more

flexibility to do their developments with conservation design standards in a simplified manner. Mr. Sandquist mentioned that the proposed LOU allows MCCD to have a larger impervious surface area provided that it is less than 2% of the overall site. Referring to the resolution, Ms. Kurtz suggested that "SMO" referenced in the first "Whereas" paragraph be spelled out (Stormwater Management Ordinance) and then have "SMO" following those words. She would also like to have "SMC" in the "Background" paragraph of the accompanying memorandum be spelled out (Stormwater Management Commission) and then have "SMC" following those words. These changes will be made to the resolution before it is presented to the full County Board. On a roll call vote, the motion carried with all members present voting aye (Kurtz, Merkel, Nowak, Peschke, Schmidt and McCann).

*Recommendations for Strengthening the Illinois Water Act's Newest Section on High Capacity Wells:* Chairman McCann stated that there is an Environmental Health Advisory Committee (EHAC) that meets quarterly. Mr. Sandquist mentioned that the scheduled meetings for this committee will be changing and they will not be meeting quarterly, but rather meeting bi-monthly. Chairman McCann mentioned that in August they looked at the Water Act and high capacity wells. Amendments to the Water Act went into effect as of January, 2011. The EHAC recommends that the Act be amended to require notification to all individuals and entities that may be impacted by the installation of a high capacity water well. Ms. McKinney mentioned that the proposed notification system would state that any new proposed high capacity water well that would draw more than 100,000 gallons in any 24-hour period now has to be reported before they are allowed to be installed. There will then be a water inventory done from the Illinois State Water Survey (ILWS) to say if there is enough water for the withdrawal. If there is not enough water for the withdrawal, then they will recommend to the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDA) a restriction to either not take as much water, or devise a different plan for water withdrawal. Currently there is not funding for the intermediate step from the ISWS to perform the impact assessment. Therefore, there are not any recommendations being forwarded to the IDA for restrictions if there is not a sufficient amount of water for the water withdrawal because the intermediate step is not being done.

Mr. Nowak left the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

The Health Department is working to make sure the notifications of new high capacity water wells are being done. They are also working with the ISWS to try and have the impact assessments done. Mr. Levato mentioned that they have been successful in asking the applicants for the permit to demonstrate that the high capacity water well will not negatively impact neighboring properties with private water wells or sensitive receiving environments, fens or wetlands. The Health Department does require that a survey evaluation be completed by a professional engineer or a geologist to demonstrate that they have looked at the available material of the aquifer and the proposed drawdown to make sure the well will not have a negative impact. This is something that is cited out of Article 9, which is the well code for the county, and it has been confirmed from the state health department that the county's health department does have a regulatory authority to ask for this information before issuing permits. Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kurtz, to forward the recommendations to clarify Illinois Water Use Act PA096-0222 as amended to the Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. On a roll call vote, the motion carried with all members present voting aye (Kurtz, Merkel, Peschke, Schmidt and McCann).

Mr. Nowak returned to the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

*EMA Coordinating Council:* Mr. Christensen mentioned that the Coordinating Council was a vision of his before the July 11, 2011 storm. After the storm, they discovered a disconnect with communications between communities, the County, and public safety entities. At the time of the storm there were 24 weather spotters and after the storm the weather spotters reported preliminary damage assessments. The EMA Coordinating Council will discuss what emergencies have happened or are happening in the County. This information will then be presented to the State of Illinois and possibly to the Federal Government if disaster aid is required. The Coordinating Council will meet at 10:00 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month. Their first meeting was last month which was attended by members from public safety, public works, and police and fire departments. The local township commissioners had a meeting during the same day and time, and they will be invited to the next Coordinating Council meeting. They plan to have various training sessions during their meetings. Federal and state grant coordinators will be attending the next meeting to provide information concerning grants. He stated that the City of Crystal Lake and the Village of Fox River Grove have received a Certificate of Completion as an Emergency Management Agency which allows them to receive Federal dollars because they have a certified emergency operations plan. The Coordinating Council will assist other cities and villages in the County to obtain certification as an EMA. Ms. Peschke questioned if school districts have been invited to become involved in this council

and Mr. Christensen mentioned that they will be invited to future meetings. Mr. Merkel questioned if local townships have attended the NIMS (National Incident Management System) training program. Mr. Christensen mentioned that some have, but most have not attended the NIMS training. Both Mr. Ellsworth and Mr. Christensen are certified instructors of the NIMS program.

*Environmental Legislation Follow-up:* Chairman McCann stated that this matter will be discussed at a later date.

#### REPORTS TO COMMITTEE:

*Groundwater Taskforce:* Ms. McKinney reported that the Taskforce had a meeting yesterday concerning regulated recharge areas which has a special sub-committee meeting scheduled. They also discussed the Northwest Water Planning Alliance and the ability for anyone to participate in those meetings. There was a suggestion from the Taskforce to have a better system in place for the County to notify municipalities of abandoned wells and they will be working on a better notification system. The next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2011 where the entire Taskforce will be reconvened and they will reevaluate what has been accomplished in the last 4 ½ years and set priorities for the future of the Taskforce.

*Solid Waste:* Ms. Hecke provided a report on the residential electronics waste collection event that was held on June 20, 2011. This year they collected 96,276 lbs. out of which 90,316 lbs. were electronic components. The other weights were non-conforming waste. They negotiated a \$.03 per pound return from SIMS Recycling Solutions which totaled \$1,959 for the Health Department. There is a list of electronic recycling centers on the IEPA website. The Computer Recycling Center in Crystal Lake will frequently accept dropped off residential electronics. They plan to have another electronics waste collection event next spring.

Concerning landfills, Ms. Hecke stated that information concerning landfills is available on the IEPA website under "Bureau of Land". Reports for previous years have been very detailed, and this year's report contains a small summary with a list of available landfills in Region 2, which is where the County is located. A few landfills located in Cook County have recently been closed since 2008. The statewide average of landfill capacity is approximately 23 years, and in Region 2 the landfill capacity is approximately 14 years. There has been an approximate 15% decrease in buried waste from 2010. The majority of the County's garbage is transported to a landfill located approximately 50 miles west of the County. DeKalb County is trying to expand their landfill and the Will County landfill is currently expanding. Palm Springs, Florida recently spent \$600,000 million on a plasma arc waste disposal system for their county. With this type of waste disposal system, you are able to dispose of any type of waste and it allows you to have controlled emissions of the system. The remaining ash from the incineration process is reported to not be hazardous and can be used in a cement kiln process.

Ms. Hecke mentioned that the County's solid waste plan is scheduled for an update in 2012. There will be subcommittees created to work on the 2012 update. A main goal will be to reduce the amount of solid waste and maximize recycling.

Ms. Hecke stated that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) will hold a national "medication take-back" initiative on October 29, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at participating law enforcement sites. Prescription and over-the-counter solid-dose tablets and capsules may be brought to participating drop-off sites. Police departments participating include Algonquin, Cary, Crystal Lake, Fox River Grove, Harvard, Huntley, Johnsburg, Lakewood and Woodstock. The Village of Johnsburg and Fox River Grove Police Departments continue to operate long-term collection sites at their facilities. She mentioned that there is pending legislation which will allow funding sources for law enforcement agencies to have long-term collection sites beginning in 2012. They may assess a levy on drug offense charges in the state and the money collected will be set aside for grant opportunities for local law enforcement agencies to use to provide collection boxes for the collection of medications.

*Northwest Water Planning Alliance:* None.

*Green Team:* None.

*McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD):* Mr. Merkel reported that the annual "Trail of History" will be held this weekend, October 15 and 16, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The upcoming meeting for the National Recreation and Park Association will be held in Atlanta and representatives from the MCCD will be attending to represent McHenry County.

*Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan:* None.

*Agricultural Conservation Easement Farmland Protection Commission (ACE):* Chairman McCann reported that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 19, 2011. Ms. Schietzeit reported that the food shed process is moving forward. Open Lands has taken on the task of being the lead agency and a website is being created. An intern with Open Lands is conducting the survey interviews with 81 local producers. Surveys will also be sent to local restaurants who are users of local foods. Lastly, there is a survey being prepared for consumers. They will be able to obtain a broad spectrum from citizens of the County concerning their use of local foods. Chairman McCann stated that Boone County has a food shed program and they have a staff member who is very knowledgeable concerning what other counties have done with their food shed programs. Ms. Schietzeit mentioned that Ms. Kolner from the Planning & Development Department will continue to fill the role of staff liaison for the food shed program. She will continue to send emails containing meeting agendas and the meeting minutes.

*NPDES: National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems:* Ms. McKinney mentioned that they passed their review in the spring. Approximately every three years the EPA will inspect the systems.

*Watershed Updates:* Chairman McCann reported that the Silver Creek Watershed Report is expected to be completed in January, 2012. Ms. Schietzeit reported that The Defenders, the lead agency who coordinate all of the watershed groups in the County, will have a meeting tomorrow.

*Stormwater Updates:* Mr. Sandquist reported that they submitted a budget request for stormwater to change/convert a vacant GIS manager position to a second stormwater engineer. Their second stormwater engineer has been with the P&D Department for approximately 18 months. The stormwater department is continuing to struggle to keep up with permit turnarounds for stormwater and building permits. A suggestion from the P&D Committee was to use a consultant for the review of stormwater and building permits. The addition of another full-time stormwater engineer would be ideal for the P&D Department. He mentioned that they will be presenting to the P&D Committee next week a proposed revised fee schedule which would bring in extra revenue which could be used directly to pay for another engineer, or add to the budget for stormwater consulting. Expediting fees will be proposed to the P&D Committee which would provide applicants the option to pay additional fees to expedite having their permits reviewed by a consulting engineer. A handout outlining the stormwater activities for the dates of December 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011 was provided to committee members. During this time period there were 509 building permits for the stormwater engineers to review.

*Shredding:* Ms. Peschke mentioned that the Consumer Credit Counseling Service of McHenry County will hold a free shredding event at their location from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 22, 2011. This will be held in conjunction with "Protect Your Identity" week. Everything that is shredded will be recycled and will not be put into a landfill. They will also be providing information concerning identity theft during the event.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None.

**FUTURE TOPICS:** Ms. Kurtz mentioned that she has spoken with Chairman Heisler, Chairman of the Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (LIA) Committee, concerning coal tar. She requested a future discussion concerning coal tar and after the discussion, the subject of coal tar would be taken to the LIA Committee for further discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Merkel, to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

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**RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD ACTION/APPROVAL:**

Resolution Adopting the McHenry County Water Resources Action Plan  
Resolution Authorizing Adoption of Letter of Understanding Between McHenry County and the McHenry County Conservation District

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