



**COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, July 18, 2016
Blackhawk Hills Regional Council Office
309 First Avenue
Rock Falls, IL**

MINUTES

Attendance

Ed Juracek, Carroll County SWCD
Steve Rutz, Jo Daviess County Board
William Tonne, Jo Daviess County SWCD
Tim Deem, Lee County Board
Janice McCoy, Lee County Area Rep.
Ron Colson, Ogle County Board
Marcia Heuer, Ogle County SWCD

Mike Reibel, Ogle County Area Rep.
Sam Newton, Stephenson County Board
Glen Kuhlemier, Whiteside County Area Rep.
Theresa Wittenauer, Executive Director
Dan Payette, Outreach Coordinator
Andy Shaw, GIS Specialist
Julie Jacobs, Office Manager

Call to Order

Ed Juracek, President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

Minutes

Minutes to the May 23, 2016 Council Meeting were emailed out prior to the meeting and were also handed out. Mike Reibel made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Tim Deem seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Finances

Glen Kuhlemier, Treasurer, presented the financial report which was handed out. The balance in the general checking account is \$3,969.82, the project funds account is \$36,174.65, and the economic development account is \$4,955.90. Steve Rutz made a motion to place the financial report on file for audit. Ron Colson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business (Progress Reports and Actions)

Executive Director's Report – Theresa Wittenauer's report was emailed/mailed out prior to the meeting. Theresa added to her report that the Illinois Department of Transportation will be releasing Rural Planning funds. We will not be receiving the extra \$3,000 from the Economic Development Administration as they originally indicated. An amendment to our EDA application had to be made. Theresa presented the Council with a letter of resignation effective August 6, 2016. Theresa was offered the Lee County Administrator position. With regret, Glen Kuhlemier made a motion to accept the letter of resignation. William Tonne seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tim Deem recommended the

Council offer Theresa a stipend if her assistance is needed after she starts her new job. The remaining staff is well informed of the projects and committees that Theresa is involved in.

Planning Manager's Report – Dan Payette's report was handed out.

GIS Mapping & EZ Specialist's Report – Andy Shaw's report was emailed/mailed out prior to the meeting. The State's EZ Committee recently met to run through ranking but the meeting had to be postponed. The Lee-Ogle County EZ application should be strong. Andy's written report included data showing exemptions and tax abatements given statewide and by our four area zones. Andy shared commuting pattern data for our counties.

Office Manager's Report – Julie Jacobs' report was emailed/mailed out prior to the meeting. Julie mentioned that a Finances & Personnel Committee meeting will be scheduled to discuss the Executive Director position. Julie warned the Council that the SWCDs may need more assistance with outdoor stewardship days. Due to the financial situation that the SWCDs are facing they have to cut back on some of their programs. Jo Daviess County SWCD has voted to not fund education projects. This will impact the Tri-County Conservation Field Day (Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Whiteside Counties).

New Business

Annual Meeting – The annual meeting was held on June 9, 2016. A quorum was not present at that meeting so the 2015 Annual Meeting minutes still need Council's approval. Glen Kuhlemier made a motion to approve the 2015 Annual Meeting minutes. Ron Colson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Measure Proposals – No new proposals were submitted.

Next Council Meetings – The next Council Meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2016 at 6 PM at the Lanark Heritage Center in Lanark, IL.

Round Table Discussion

Tim Deem announced that the Nelson Power Plant is adding two Peaker units. The output of the plant is to increase 50 percent.

William Tonne expressed his support to the conservation education programs. He also informed the council that Paul Bradshaw, Jo Daviess County SWCD board member, had passed away.

Sam Newton announced that Stephenson County has a new administrator. Also, Berner Foods is expanding.

Tim Deem reported that Sensient Flavors in Amboy and Wahl Clipper in Sterling have both expanded.

Steve Rutz reported that we recently met Gary Camarano, Whiteside County's Economic Development Director and he was really impressed with him. Steve also announced that he was moving to Farley, IA in August. This would be Steve's last attendance at our Council Meeting. Steve enjoyed serving on our board.

Janice McCoy reported that the Whiteside County 4-H just wrapped up. She encouraged everyone to attend the county fairs to see what the kids are doing.

Dan Payette reported that Blackhawk Hills will receive additional funding from the City of Freeport for the Stephenson County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Dan also encouraged the board to stay involved with the conservation programs for the students.

Marcia Heuer gave an update on the Ogle County SWCD staffing. Brian Lundquist, Resource Conservationist, was laid off and Sterling Taylor, County Conservationist, is only working three days a week. The SWCD is still waiting on state funding. Ogle County has a new health department director, engineer, county clerk, and FOCUS director. Jeremy Ciesiel is the new engineer.

Ron Colson reported that Ogle County will be building a new jail near the judicial center. Proposing to have capacity to house juveniles which other nearby counties may have interest in using

Marcia Heuer added that Ogle County bought a facility in Rochelle to house probation and a satellite health department.

Mike Reibel mentioned he heard from Ogle County landowners that a solar company is looking for a location for a solar farm.

Glen Kuhlemier reported that a Rock Falls detective is in the Lee County jail for taking money from a deceased man to pay her utility bill. On a happier note, he reported on some positive developments in Rock Falls. The public area and trail along the river is being developed. The new hotel is operating. The city hired a consultant to develop thirty five acres of farmland near Route 40 and 88. Casey's is being built on Route 30 and Dunkin Donuts is planning to build on Route 40. Things are looking up for Rock Falls. Glen also was impressed by Gary Camarano's experience.

Tim Deem stated that if the Geronimo Wind Farm lawsuit gets resolved it could be a big tax boom.

Ed Juracek announced that there are eight AmeriCorps people staying at the Campbell Center that will be doing some work in Carroll County. Ed will be meeting with them on Wednesday evening.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.