

**MINUTES**  
**McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2010, 4:00 P.M.**  
**GOVERNMENT CENTER, ROOM 404**  
**115 EAST WASHINGTON STREET, BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS**

**Members Present:**

Carl Teichman, Chairman; George Benjamin, Vice-chair; Bill Doud, Mary Jefferson, Neale McCormick, Linda Olson, Tari Renner, Tim Strader

**Members Absent:**

Joe Butcher, Jhun Medina, Jay Reece

**Others Present:**

McLean County Regional Planning Commission: Paul Russell, Executive Director; Rick Nolan, Community Planner; Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner; Teresa Casselman, Office Manager.  
McLean County Farm Bureau: Kelly Francis.

**Call To Order:**

Mr. Teichman called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum.

**Presentation by Roger Anderson:**

Mr. Teichman introduced Roger Anderson, who updated the Commission on the activities of the ParkLands Foundation.

Dr. Anderson explained he was a retired biology professor and a longtime board member of the ParkLands Foundation. Dr. Anderson described the natural vegetation and historic conditions of McLean County and explained the goal of the work of ParkLands was to restore the land to its historic natural condition. Dr. Anderson said McLean County is situated on the eastern side of a large grassland located in the central United States. He explained McLean County historically contained a mixture of tall-grass prairies, savannas, and forests. The forested areas, including savannas, open forests, and closed forests, were located along the waterways and glacial moraines in McLean County. Dr. Anderson explained that topography and fire frequency determined the natural vegetation. He explained McLean County was historically about 90 percent tall-grass prairie, or approximately 683,000 acres, with only 4 acres currently remaining.

Dr. Anderson explained that the forested areas in McLean County were not converted to agricultural use to the same extent as the prairie. He explained that in the 1970's ParkLands Foundation was created to acquire and preserve natural forested areas. He noted the original intent was to turn over the management to a public entity, but they have chosen instead to manage the property themselves. He reported ParkLands owns approximately 3,000 acres in McLean and Woodford counties. He indicated ParkLands had 15 preserves and two conservation easements in McLean County, and nine preserves and three conservation easements in Woodford County, and described the location and size of the tracts. He reported ParkLands has ten miles of frontage on the Mackinaw River with four canoe launches.

Dr. Anderson explained the work of ParkLands is performed by volunteers and described the ongoing tasks and work of ParkLands. He detailed the savanna restoration in their preserves.

Ms. Olson inquired about the total acreage goal of ParkLands. Dr. Anderson explained there was no target acreage goal, but ParkLands wanted to purchase land to protect it from development whenever practical. He added that in recent years the price per acre had increased dramatically. Ms. Olson asked how to find the ParkLand properties. Dr. Anderson indicated that more information about ParkLands is available on their website at [www.parklandsfoundation.org](http://www.parklandsfoundation.org). Mr. Benjamin inquired about the sources of funding for the foundation. Dr. Anderson reported donations were the primary sources of income.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

No requests for removal of items from the consent agenda were made. Mr. Renner moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Ms. Jefferson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **Regular Agenda:**

##### Intergovernmental Agreement with IDOT for maintaining the Region 6 HSTP

Mr. Russell advised the Commission members that the contract was a 3-year contract to manage the Human Services Transportation Plan for a 6-county region, including rural McLean County. He advised it involves working with transit providers, social service agencies, and county governments to help ensure facilities are available to meet rural transportation needs. He indicated the contract was consistent with the adopted Unified Work Program.

Mr. Benjamin moved to approve the contract. The motion was seconded by Mr. Renner and passed unanimously.

#### **Items of Information or Discussion:**

##### Article from May 2010 issue of *Governing* titled "Parks and Re-Cessation"

Mr. Russell stated the article pointed out that, while it may be more politically viable to shut down state parks than make other budget cuts, it usually costs states more in revenues than it saves, not considering quality of life costs. The article reported that nationally the costs of closing state parks exceed the costs of keeping them open and maintaining them, with state parks generating \$20 billion in annual revenues, but requiring about \$2.3 billion in expenditures to maintain.

##### Biographies of Prospective Speakers for 2011 Information Forum

Mr. Russell said biographies had been included for some of the leading prospects compiled by Rick Nolan to date. He indicated speaking fees for Ed McMahon were \$2,500, which was not an unreasonable fee, although the last two speakers did not charge. He asked for input from the Commission members.

Ms. Jefferson indicated she preferred Mr. Schoemehl with the topic of light rail. Mr. Renner added Mr. McMahon should be good also. Mr. Benjamin indicated he thought Mr. Lamb sounded interesting, and Ms. Olson said she thought Mr. Kulash sounded interesting as well. Mr. McCormick said many of the speakers were connected to light rail. He said the local airport was an important, but sometimes under appreciated community amenity, and he would like a speaker that could underscore the importance of the airport to the local community. Mr. Russell indicated prospects that could speak to the importance of airports would be added to the list of prospective speakers and reported back to the Commission members at their next meeting.

##### Cancellation of July Meeting

Mr. Teichman said the Commission sometimes canceled the July meeting, considering the holiday and the limited amount of Commission business typically around the holiday. Mr. Renner moved the July meeting be cancelled. Ms. Olson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commission Attendance Requirement

Mr. Teichman reminded the Commission members that attendance at seven meetings annually was required per the bylaws.

**Adjournment:**

Ms. Jefferson moved for adjournment. Mr. Renner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

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Teresa Casselman  
Office Manager