

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ROCK RIVER WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT  
FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2016**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Rock River Water Reclamation District convened at 2:00 p.m. at the District Administration Building, 3501 Kishwaukee Street, Rockford, Illinois.

Trustee Rick Pollack stated the meeting was being held in honor of retiring District Director, Steve Graceffa. Trustee Pollack welcomed everyone.

Trustee Pollack stated, "I have gone through retirement and I think I understand what Steve is feeling today. There are three phases of life. The first is growing up within your family and getting your education. Today we are talking about the time of life that we have a work family. It's a great group of people here today, and we're all family.

"Steve has been here a very long time. I thought about 46 years and what that means. This was a sad day for me because I only got to work with Steve three years. Many of you have had many more years with him. This is a happy time for Steve, as he can do some things now that he wants to do.

"From the Board of Trustees I want to say to Steve, 'Thanks to you for the 46 years of service and we wish you well in your next phase of life.'"

District Director Steve Graceffa thanked Trustee Pollack. "Trustee Pollack is right; some of you have been my family. As you go through this process, you think back to the early days. In those early days I brought my boys to the District on Sundays under the disguise that I would do paperwork; the boys played on the equipment. So even my children had experience in their younger days as we worked together as a family. As we look at the pictures on the back wall of the Trustees that have been on the Board over the years, I worked with all of those people.

"The Board I have worked with closely as Director essentially gave me the keys to the District and trusted me and senior staff to do all of the things that we have done. We talk about the projects, but the projects certainly aren't mine. It has been said that it takes a village. It does take a village; all of you have been a part of the village. Thank you to the Board for dinner this week, the plaque, and the watch in recognition of 46 years. I really appreciate it.

"The most difficult part of saying thanks is that in doing so you will forget somebody. I can't mention everyone in the room, of course, but here today are our former attorney, Attorney John Roseberg and his wife Carol, Linda's Aunt Molly and Uncle Jim, and lots of people who have been participants over the years.

"Thanks to senior staff: Debbie Lyons, Dana Carroll, Larry McFall, David Cook, Frank Papke, and Mike Robertson. I could not have done this without them; it takes a village. The

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employees are part of the village. I haven't worked with all of them, but I can share that at one point in my career I did those jobs. The first couple of years that I did that kind of work, my wife said the clothes I wore needed to be put in a garbage can with a tight lid. There was no question about where I worked. We remember some of the dirty jobs. This isn't a glamorous job but it is one that is necessary. We have done well, I think, over the years.

"A newspaper reporter asked what project I was most proud of. That is a tough question, because there is not one project that stands out. We do have a much cleaner river, a modern treatment plant, and a reliable sewer system. This was done not by me, but by all of you.

"The question calls to mind some projects; one is this administration building, a real effort by the Board, by some of the staff, and the engineers who accomplished it. This is a marvel all by itself.

"And then there are the property acquisitions that we have made, the cogen engines that finally work, centrifuges that we recognize its time to replace them when we have major issues, codigestion, electrical upgrades, Snow Avenue upgrades, Village of Winnebago sewer takeover, aeration mixers, sewer rehabilitation, sewer preventative maintenance, the North Facility, the I-39 and Baxter Road sewer, just to mention a few.

"Remembering the early days and the unreliable systems, every time we had a flood it was all hands on deck with everyone working all night, all weekend, or whatever – those days aren't exactly gone, but we have a more reliable system now such that it doesn't happen like that any more, so we're grateful.

"Again, 46 years, truck driver to Director – it's been a good ride and I wish you all the best."

Steve Graceffa introduced his family and friends to those present.

"Our family came from the grocery business, and one of the things instilled in us as grocers was: the customer is always right. That is a tough thing to do in government, but we have tried to hold that close to the vest. The customer probably isn't always right in government, but we try to give them a fair shake.

"Thank you again, everyone.

"Chairman Christiansen, welcome."

Winnebago County Chairman Scott Christiansen stated, "What a great career; what a great individual. It has been my absolute joy and pleasure to work with Steve. The thing he did the best was customer service. Any time we had issues we were able to get together and get them worked out. Not everybody was always happy, but they knew that in the solution we were trying to do the right thing. I can tell you there isn't a better person around that I have worked with than Steve. I wish you much happiness in the future."

Senator Dave Severson stated, "Congratulations! In Springfield when we sit in committees the most interesting things come up about communities. One of those is that this is a District that gets talked about a lot in Springfield as a model District. So when we talk about things, they'll say, 'We did it like Rockford did it.' It makes you proud when you hear those kinds of stories about the kind of work you guys do here.

"In honor of your service, we have a little resolution that we passed in Springfield on your behalf about all the years you've served."

Senator Severson read the "resolution" recalling some of Steve's accomplishments over his 46 years of service. Beginning his career at the District in 1970, Steve's responsibilities quickly grew, and he became supervisor, then manager, and finally District Director. Steve was instrumental in moving the District from a small collection system to a collection system estimated to be the second largest in the State, accomplished with the assimilation of several neighboring communities. Steve established a five-year cleaning plan for the District which has now been in place for 35 years and is used throughout the United States as a standard for collection system management. Steve has always been first in implementing new technology in the field of rehabilitation and collection systems, including the lining of sewer mains, services, and manholes, rehabilitation, and a number of other technologies and methods, all in the pursuit of improving the collection system. Steve's community involvement and contributions include President of IAWA, 16 year J.U.L.I.E. Board member, and Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful. We congratulate and honor Steve for his 46 years of service and commitment to our community.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

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Clerk