

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Preserves Headquarters
July 21, 2021

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman
Jake Henry-Resigned
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind
Cheryl Maggio
Jeff Tilly

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Finance
Vaughn Stamm, Operations
Ann Wasser, Education
Kim O'Malley, Human Resources/Volunteer Program
Samantha Crooks, Communication

GUESTS

Alex Mills, Klehm Arboretum
Jack Armstrong

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM, by President Tilly. Recording secretary Kristy Knapp called the roll.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Gloria Lind led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA and MINUTES Minutes for June 16, 2021 were approved. No changes or additions were made to the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Jack Armstrong – 4519 Cleveland Ave, Rockford, addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the meaning of the Forest Preserves' Mission Statement and Purpose. He questioned the budget regarding the 39.3% that goes to golf and the 4.5% that goes to education. The next time the Board of Commissioners consider the budget and decide on budget items, Jack would recommend a little more for education. Jack mentioned that he has the golf numbers for the Rockford Park District if anyone would like to view them.

Klehm – Preliminary Plans for Entrance Fountain/Pond – Alex Mills addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding a potential project for the entrance at Klehm Arboretum. In 2019 Klehm was awarded a grant for \$15,000 by Horticultural Trust to get concepts designs done to develop new landscaping. One of the designs is for the entrance area. Alex provided concept drawings of the pond and fountain area. Klehm has contracted with Arc Design to facilitate construction documents. Alex is asking for a consensus from the Board of Commissioners to proceed with this project. The Board's consensus is to allow the project. This project would be solely funded by Klehm Arboretum. Alex mentioned that a local foundation would like naming rights and the Board does not see an issue with that.

Website Redesign – Samantha Crooks presented a revised website design to the Board of Commissioners. The new design will make the website user friendly and easier to navigate. Samantha mentioned that more pictures were added, a new blog will be used, the website will now be mobile friendly and the newsletter will be returning. The Board of Commissioners thanked Samantha. Judy Barnard recommended adding a 44 club for those that visit all 44 preserves and added something regarding the trail lengths.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Holan updated the Board of Commissioners regarding the Land Advisory Council meeting that was held last Friday. Mike told the Board that he updated the Land Advisory Council on the properties that were most recently purchased, what work has been done to those properties and they then went into

closed session to discuss the potential new properties and the ChemTool plant. Mike also mentioned that Dan Williams resigned from the Land Advisory Council and Jerry would like to know if the Board would like to appoint someone into his position. Mike mentioned that he could update the Board of Commissioners in closed session as to what was discussed regarding the ChemTool plant.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for June – Gloria Lind made a motion, and Mike Eickman seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for June in the amount of \$572,031.26. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Amendment of Personnel Policy – Kim O’Malley addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the amendment of the Personnel Policy. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County’s Personnel Policy, adopted February 17, 2021, establishes the general guidelines for employee conduct. From time to time it is necessary to amend the Personnel Policy for clarification or to better meet the needs of the employees and the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County. Internal review of the Personnel Policy identified needed modifications to the policy. The Personnel Policy shall be amended as follows: Section 4.6 Cell Phones – Non-exempt (Hourly) Employee Cell Phone Use. Unless designated as on-call staff per the department schedule, nonexempt (hourly) employees are neither required, nor expected, to use their agency or personal cell phones for work purposes outside of their normal work schedule without advance authorization from their supervisor. Jeff Tilly questioned the cell phone use. Vaughn Stamm clarified that the backup person will be the area manager and if the manager does not answer, the non-exempt person that worked the weekend will be the person on call. Section 5. Time Off – “Paid time off is not considered hours worked in the calculation of overtime.” Section 5.1 Holidays – Holiday pay is defined as payment received for the holiday, plus any additional hours worked. Seasonal employees will receive twice the regular rate of pay for hours worked on Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day. Section 8.2 Payment of Wages – Overtime. For purposes of overtime calculation, “hours worked” does not include paid time off. Pay for Holidays Worked. Nonexempt employees who are eligible for paid holidays but who may be required to work on a holiday (other than a floating holiday) will be paid for the holiday in addition to being paid for any hours worked on the holiday. If an exempt employee is pre-approved to work on a paid holiday, they will be compensated for those hours on a future date. Cheryl Maggio asked when they would have to use that extra day by and Mike Holan stated within that year. Judy Barnard made a motion to approve, Gloria Lind made a motion to Lay on the Table and Audrey Johnson seconded to Lay this resolution on the Table until the August Board Meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Klehm Asphalt Project Bid – Vaughn Stamm addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the Klehm Asphalt Project Bid. This project is for the replacement of roadway and parking lot asphalt at Klehm Arboretum. In March of 2021, a site review with a contractor provided for the general scope of the project and provided a basis for the dollar amount that would need to be allocated. As part of the budget amendment approved at the June 16th, 2021 board meeting, \$240,000 was earmarked for this purpose. A mandatory pre-bid meeting was held onsite at Klehm on July 7th. Five bids were opened on July 16th, with all bids meeting the required project specifications, but only four bids coming in under budget. Staff recommends awarding the Klehm Asphalt Project to Norwest Construction Inc. because they were the lowest bidder for this project in the amount of \$207,745. Additionally, an extra 10% (\$20,775) provision for cost overruns is recommended. Vaughn stated they are working with the contractor to get this done before the end of the fiscal year and they will be working around the events Klehm has schedule. Audrey Johnson made a motion and Mike Eickman seconded to approve the Klehm Asphalt Project Bid. **Motion passed unanimously.**

ComEd Green Regions Grant – Mike Holan addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the ComEd Green Regions Grant. This project is to correct the drainage issue and create a bioretention area, which Alex Mills presented drawings of the project to the Board of Commissioners. The Forest Preserves of

Winnebago County desires to apply for the grant and undertake the Rain Garden Project at Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden as part of the 2021 ComEd Green Regions Program. The Forest Preserve has received and understands the current ComEd Green Regions Guidelines. The Board of Commissioners will need to approve the project and authorize the application to the ComEd Green Region Program in the amount of \$10,000, and that the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County commits to the expenditure of matching funds in the amount of \$10,000 necessary for the project's success. Judy Barnard made a motion and Gloria Lind seconded to approve the ComEd Green Regions Grant. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Ann Wasser addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the fund development position. Severson Dells would like to add a full-time fund development position and make the part-time marketing/development position just a part-time marketing position.

STAFF REPORTS

Preserve Operations – Vaughn Stamm, Scott Stewart, Scott Wallace & Bryan Helmold submitted a written report. Vaughn mentioned that golf and camping are doing well this year.

Land and Development – Natural Resource Staff submitted a written report.

Golf Operations – Vaughn Stamm, Rich Rosenstiel, Tyler Knapp, & Mark Freiman submitted a written report.

Marketing – Samantha Crooks submitted a written report.

Environmental Education – Ann Wasser submitted a written report.

Human Resources/Volunteer Program Report – Kim O'Malley submitted a written report. Kim announced there is a R.E.A.P. Workday in August at Kieselburg Forest Preserve. Also, the Employee Appreciation Picnic will be on July 28th at the River Oaks shelter.

Law Enforcement – Sheriff's Department submitted a written report.

Judy Barnard asked if the Forest Preserve staff clears the Kishwaukee River. Vaughn Stamm stated they have done this in the past but only if staff feel comfortable would we help clear the river. Mike Holan stated the rivers are state owned and the state does not clear the rivers. Studies have shown that the native fish population have dropped when the rivers are cleared.

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session at 6:38 pm. At 7:47 pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

ACTION ITEMS

New Position-Severson Dells – The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County executed an Agreement in 2012 with its partner group Severson Dells Education Foundation. By means of the Agreement the Forest Preserve and Severson Dells mutually agree that four (4) Severson Dells education staff will be employees of the Preserves and SDEF will provide funds to help offset the Nature Center's operational and staff expenses and any future staff changes will be agreed upon by both parties. SDEF has requested the addition of a full-time Fund Development Specialist position to be employed by the Preserves and be included in the terms of the Agreement. The Preserves agrees to the Fund Development Specialist position provided SDEF funds the position in its entirety, including any and all costs associated with unemployment, retirement or workman's compensation. The attached Memorandum of Understanding will serve as Addendum #2 to the Agreement between the Preserves and SDEF allowing for the addition

of the Fund Development Specialist position per the mutually agreed upon terms. Mike Eickman made a motion and Cheryl Maggio seconded to take a vote on the resolution for the New Position at Severson Dells. Verbal vote taken. **Resolution does not pass by unanimous vote.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

July 28 - Employee Appreciation Picnic at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve (River Oaks Shelter), Wednesday from 11:30am – 1:30pm

August 21 – Nurture Nature at a R.E.A.P. Volunteer Workday at Kieselburg Forest Preserve, Saturday from 9:00am - 12:00pm

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Next board meeting, 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, August 18, Forest Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary