

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County  
**BOARD MEETING**  
Forest Preserve Headquarters  
April 16, 2025

MINUTES of a regular public meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois, held at the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District Headquarters Office, 5500 Northrock Drive, Rockford, Illinois at 5:30 o'clock P.M., on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2025.

**PRESENT**

Judy Barnard  
Mike Eickman  
Gloria Lind – Arrived at 5:43pm  
Cheryl Maggio  
Jerry Paulson  
Emily Porter  
Jeff Tilly

**STAFF**

Mike Holan, Executive Director  
Steve Chapman, Director of Finance  
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations  
Sarah Lorenz, Communications Coordinator  
Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resource  
Jody Kennay, Human Resources Manager

**GUESTS**

Becky Maier    Debbi Hamilton    Ann Wasser  
Alex Mills    Ethan Schultz

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM, by President Jeff Tilly.

**PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE** Judy Barnard led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL** Recording secretary Emily Wendlandt called the roll. President Jeff Tilly, Judy Barnard, Mike Eickman, Cheryl Maggio, Jerry Paulson, Gloria Lind and Emily Porter were present.

**APPROVAL of AGENDA and MINUTES** Emily Porter made a motion to approve the minutes for the Board Governance Training from March 29<sup>th</sup>. **Motion passed unanimously.** Emily Porter requested to amend the minutes for the March 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to reflect that she had voted no on the Amended Employee Agreement resolution under Action Items. Emily Porter made a motion to approve of the March 19<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AWARDS, and PRESENTATIONS**

**Baker Tilly Audit Results** – John Rader & Aaron Galvan presented the Board of Commissioners the 2023/2024 fiscal year audit results.

**Jody Kennay Introduction** – Mike Holan introduced the Board to Jody Kennay, the new Human Resources Manager. The Board welcomed Jody.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Jeff Tilly let the Board know of the meeting that was had between himself, Gary Anderson and Mike Holan regarding to the Holt House.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Bills for March – Steve Chapman presented to the board the bills for March. Gloria Lind made a motion to authorize the payment of the bills for March in the amount of \$562,071.40. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration of an Ordinance Providing for the issue of Approximately \$2,000,000 of General Obligation Limited Tax Bonds for Land Acquisition, Providing for the Levy of Taxes to Pay the Bonds and Authorizing the Sale of the Bonds to the Purchaser Thereof. -The President announced that the Board of Commissioners would consider the adoption of an Ordinance Providing for the issue of Approximately \$2,000,000 of General Obligation Limited Tax Bonds for Land Acquisition, Providing for the Levy of Taxes to Pay the Bonds and Authorizing the Sale of the Bonds to the Purchaser Thereof. Steve Chapman presented to the Board the Ordinance. Gloria Lind made a motion to approve of the Ordinance, seconded by Judy Barnard. After a full and complete discussion thereof, the President directed that the roll be called for a vote upon the motion to adopt said ordinance. Upon the roll being called, the following commissioners voted Aye: Jeff Tilly, Judy Barnard, Mike Eickman, Gloria Lind, Cheryl Maggio, Jerry Paulson, Emily Porter. The following commissioners voted Nay: None. Where upon President Tilly declared the motion carried and the ordinance adopted, approval and signed the same in open meeting. Ordinance was filed in the records of the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois.

Acceptance of Bids for Atwood Homestead Paving Project– Vaughn Stamm presented to the board the bids for the Atwood Homestead Paving Project. Judy Barnard made a motion to accept the bids. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bids for Pecatonica River Asphalt Paving and Drainage Project – Vaughn Stamm presented to the board the bids for the Pecatonica River Asphalt Paving and Drainage Project. Mike Eickman made a motion to accept the bids. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bids for Severson Dells Farm Building Demolition – Mike Holan and Mike Brien presented to the board the bids for the Severson Dells Farm Building Demolition. Gloria Lind made a motion to approve of the bids. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Authorization to Apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant to Acquire Land Along the Sugar River– Mike Brien presented to the board the resolution to apply for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Jerry Paulson made a motion to accept the resolution. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Extension of the Current Severson Dells Nature Center Lease – Jeff Tilly presented to the board the resolution to extend the Severson Dells Nature Center lease. Emily Porter made a motion to accept the resolution. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Authorization of Change Order for Nature Playground at Klehm Arboretum – Mike Brien presented to the board the resolution for a change order for the Klehm Nature Playground. Judy Barnard made a motion to accept the amended employee agreement. **Motion passed unanimously.**

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Preserve Operations - Vaughn Stamm, Matt Weik, Scott Wallace, and Bryan Helmold submitted a written report. Vaughn Stamm announced to the Board that the campgrounds and equestrian trails are open.

Natural Resource Management – Mike Brien, Keith Krey and Liz Hucker submitted a written report. Mike Brien let the board know that the spring prescribed burn season has concluded. Mike also notified the Board that all of our Architectural Services proposals have been received for the new Natural Resource shop.

Golf Operations – Vaughn Stamm, Rich Rosenstiel, Tyler Knapp, and Mark Freiman submitted a written report. Vaughn Stamm mentioned to the board that the Atwood and Macktown golf courses are open for the season. Vaughn explained the Golf Revenue report.

Communications Coordinator – Sarah Lorenz submitted a written report.

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

Partner Group – Alex Mills from Klehm Arboretum showed the board a photo of the Nature Play Area construction site and gave a progress report of the organizations most recent projects. Mike Eickman spoke on behalf of the Sand Bluff Bird Observatory to announce that their open house will take place on May 10<sup>th</sup> weather permitting.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS**

1. April 17 – Bee Spotter Training at Headquarters Forest Preserve starting at 5:00pm.
2. April 19 – Bat Monitor Training at Headquarters Forest Preserve starting at 10:00am.
3. April 25 – City Nature Challenge Hike at Deer Run Forest Preserve starting at 5:30pm.
4. April 26 – Arbor Day Tree Planting at Kishwaukee Gorge North Forest Preserve starting at 10:00am.
5. May 3 – Bird Scaping Program and Hike at Headquarters Forest Preserve from 10:00am-12:00pm.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

At 6:33 PM Gloria Lind made a motion to go into closed session to discuss lease of property and personnel. Judy Barnard made a motion to go back into open session at 7:51 PM. Roll Call taken. No action was taken while in closed session.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mike Eickman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM; **motion passed unanimously.**

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025 at Preserve Headquarters.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Emily Wendlandt  
Recording Secretary