

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday, September 16, 2026 – 5:30 PM
Forest Preserve Headquarters



A G E N D A

A. ROLL CALL

B. PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES

Minutes for July 23rd, Paula Swanson Dedication and August 19

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

E. PRESENTATIONS

1. Capital Improvement Plan Overview (Dan Olson)
2. FY2026-27 Budget Updates (Steve Chapman)

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G. NEW BUSINESS

H. ACTION ITEMS

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 1. | 1. Bills for August |
| 3. | 2. Annual Budget and Appropriations Layover |
| 6. | 3. Annual Tax Levy Layover |
| 10. | 4. Ordinance for Abatement of Bond Levy |
| 14. | 5. Acceptance of Bids Atwood Pump Project |
| 16. | 6. Approval of Security, Wildlife and Ecological Monitoring and Meeting Recording Policy |
| 21. | 7. Approval of Agreement with Winnebago Community Historical Society |

I. DISCUSSION

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| 25. | 1. Strategic Plan Schedule |
|------------|----------------------------|

J. UPDATES and REPORTS

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| 26. | 1. Preserve Operations |
| 31. | 2. Natural Resource Management |
| 34. | 3. Golf |
| 40. | 4. Marketing |
| 42. | 5. Human Resources |
| | 6. Partner Groups |

K. CLOSED SESSION

1. Approval of closed session minutes dated:
 - a. December 16, 2014
 - b. January 21st, 2026
 - c. February 18th, 2026
 - d. March 18th, 2026
 - e. April 15th, 2026
 - f. May 20th, 2026
 - g. June 17th, 2026
 - h. July 15th, 2026
 - i. August 19th, 2026

L. ACTION ITEMS

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 43. | 8. Approval of resolution to release closed session minutes |
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M. ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

1. September 25 – Site Steward Volunteer Day: Butterfly Milkweed Collection at Deer Run Forest Preserve starting at 1:00pm.
2. October 10 – Site Steward Volunteer Day: Invasives Removal at Kilbuck Bluffs Forest Preserve starting at 9:00am.
3. October 23 – Site Steward Volunteer Day: Invasives Removal at Deer Run Forest Preserve starting at 1:00pm.
4. October 23-24 – Lincoln & Liberty at Macktown Living History.
5. November 14 – Site Steward Volunteer Day: Invasives Removal at Kilbuck Bluffs Forest Preserve starting at 9:00am.
6. November 20 - Site Steward Volunteer Day: Invasives Removal at Deer Run Forest Preserve starting at 1:00pm.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Budget Hearing– 5:15 PM on Wednesday, October 21, Forest Preserve Headquarters
Next regular Board Meeting– 5:30 PM Wednesday, October 21, Forest Preserve Headquarters

If you require assistance while attending our meetings, please call 815-877-6100 or email ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org no less than 48 hours prior to the Board meeting.

Anyone wishing to address the Board may call 815-877-6100 or email ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org in advance of the meeting.

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Authorization to Process Payment of Bills



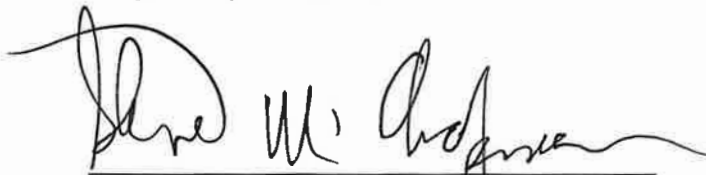
September 16, 2026

**TO: THE AUDITOR AND TREASURER OF THE
FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY.**

Your Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners, to whom were referred the following bills in the amount of **\$ 845,687.23** against the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, have reviewed and approved and therefore respectfully request that orders be drawn on the account of the Forest Preserve District for their payment:

CORPORATE FUND	3001	312,000.19
BOTANICAL GARDEN FUND	3120	7,888.90
HEALTH BENEFITS FUND	3185	44,228.15
SOCIAL SECURITY FUND	3192	24,115.49
RETIREMENT FUND	3193	21,329.58
IMPROVEMENT & DEV. FUND	3302	207,888.84
CORPORATE FUND	3402	<u>228,236.08</u>
		\$845,687.23

Respectfully submitted,


Steve Chapman, Finance Director

9/14/2026
Date

RESOLUTION

No. 25-0901

PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR AUGUST

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserve incurs annual and monthly operating and capital expenditures during its budget cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Finance Department compiled the attached invoices relating to Forest Preserve expenditures to be paid for the month of August; and

WHEREAS, our Finance Director, Steve Chapman, has reviewed the invoices and avows them to be accurate and appropriate for payment; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board authorizes the payment of the attached compilation of bills totaling \$845,687.23 to be paid by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County for the month of August, 2026.

Voting YES _____ Voting NO _____ ABSTAINED _____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 16th day of September, 2026.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION

No. 26-0902

Annual Budget and Appropriations Layover

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) fiscal year budget operates from November 1 – October 31; and,

WHEREAS, the District's Board of Commissioners (Board) has been presented the proposed 2026-2027 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for review and adoption; and,

WHEREAS, the District is required to layover the budget for a period of at least 30 days for public review and comment before it is adopted by the Board,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board will layover the 2026-2027 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for public review and comment until the October 21, 2026 Board meeting.

Voting YES _____

Voting NO _____

ABSTAINED _____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 16th day of September, 2026.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

September 16, 2026 – layover
October 21, 2026 – adoption
Rockford, Illinois

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE
No. 26-1002

for the fiscal period of November 1, 2026 through October 31, 2027

WHEREAS, the District staff in compliance with the provisions of the Illinois Municipal Budget Law, Illinois Revised Statutes, Section 70, paragraph 805 *et seq.*, has prepared an Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the District fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027; and

WHEREAS, the said Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance was submitted to the District Board of Commissioners on September 16, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County as follows:

Section 1. That the attached schedules, containing the estimated cash on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year, the estimate of the cash expected to be received during the fiscal year from all sources, the estimate of the expenditures contemplated for said fiscal year, and the estimated cash expected to be on hand at the end of said fiscal year, be, and they are hereby approved as, the budget for the District fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027.

Section 2. That the amounts stated for the objects and purposes specified in the attached schedules, or so much thereof as may be authorized by law, or as may be needed are hereby appropriated for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027, from the following funds: Corporate, Capital Improvement, Botanical Garden, Liability Reserve, Social Security, Retirement, 2016 Debt Service, 2025 Debt Service, Health Insurance, and 2025 Land Acquisition.

Section 3. That, except as otherwise provided by law, no personnel shall be added other than specifically stated in each department budget, and no further appropriation shall be made at any other time within said fiscal year; however, the Board of Commissioners may from time to time make transfers between object classifications in any fund not exceeding, in the aggregate, 10% of the total amount appropriated in said Fund, and the Board of Commissioners may amend said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance from time to time by following the same procedure employed in the adoption of this Ordinance.

Section 4. That the District Secretary is hereby directed to provide two copies of this laid-over budget available in the Forest Preserve District office for public review by Thursday, September 17, 2026.

Section 5. That the District Executive Director is, by way of layover, hereby directed to advertise and hold a public hearing at the District Headquarters at 5:15 PM Wednesday, October 21, 2026, to receive public testimony regarding this proposed budget.

Section 6. That the District Secretary is hereby directed to make publication of this Ordinance in a newspaper having general circulation in the District within ten days of adoption of this Ordinance; and said Ordinance shall take effect ten days following the date of said publication.

Section 7. That the Secretary of the Forest Preserve District is hereby authorized and directed to deliver copies of this Ordinance to the District Director, Treasurer, Director of Finance, and County Clerk.

Voting Yes

Voting No

Abstained

Judith Barnard

Judith Barnard

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Mike Eickman

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Gloria Lind

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Cheryl Maggio

Cheryl Maggio

Jerry Paulson

Jerry Paulson

Jerry Paulson

Emily Porter

Emily Porter

Emily Porter

Jeff Tilly, President

Jeff Tilly, President

Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

Jeff Tilly, President

Gloria Lind, Secretary

RESOLUTION

No. 26-0903

Annual Tax Levy Layover

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) fiscal year budget operates from November 1 – October 31; and,

WHEREAS, the District's Board of Commissioners (Board) have been presented a proposed tax levy that must be approved to finance the 2026-2027 Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance that has been presented to the Board; and,

WHEREAS, the District is required to layover the tax levy for a period of at least 30 days for public review and comment before it is adopted by the Board,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board will layover the tax levy for public review and comment until the October 21, 2026 Board meeting.

Voting YES_____ Voting NO_____ ABSTAINED _____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 16th day of September, 2026.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

LEVY ORDINANCE

No. 26-1003

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, pursuant to the requirements set forth in the Illinois Municipal Budget Law, adopted an Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027; and

WHEREAS, per the Truth in Taxation law, the aggregate levy listed below did not increase over 2025 by 2.70% or more; and

WHEREAS, the District Executive Director did cause said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance to be made conveniently available for public inspection on and after September 17, 2026; and

WHEREAS, all legal requirements in connection with the preparation, public display, public hearings and adoption of the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance have been complied with; and

WHEREAS, said Ordinance will become effective ten days after its publication.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County as follows:

Section 1. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of two million, six hundred six-seven thousand dollars (\$2,667,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a General Corporate Tax for the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Corporate 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 2. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of one million, two hundred five thousand dollars (\$1,205,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Capital Improvement Tax for the year 2026, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Capital Improvement Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 3. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of three hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$320,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Botanical Garden Tax for the year 2026, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Botanical Garden Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 4. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of three hundred sixty-four thousand dollars (\$364,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Liability Reserve Fund Tax for the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Liability Reserve Fund 2026-2027 appropriations

Section 5. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of one hundred ninety-nine thousand dollars (\$199,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as IMRF Tax for the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Retirement Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 6. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of two hundred ten thousand dollars (\$210,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Social Security Tax the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Social Security Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 7. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of two hundred fifty-eight thousand seven hundred twenty-six dollars (\$258,726) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago State of Illinois as a 2016 Bond Debt Service Tax for the year 2026 as set forth in the 2016 Land Acquisition Bond Ordinance, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purpose as set forth in the 2016 Debt Service fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 8. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of one hundred seventy-eight thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$178,750) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago State of Illinois as a 2025 Bond Debt Service Tax for the year 2026 as set forth in the 2025 Land Acquisition Bond Ordinance, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purpose as set forth in the 2025 Debt Service fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 9. That the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is hereby directed to make a certified copy of this Ordinance and file such certified copy with the County Clerk of Winnebago County, Illinois, no later than October 31, 2026; and

Section 10. That the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is hereby directed to deliver certified copies of this Ordinance to the District Executive Director, District Treasurer, and County Clerk.

Section 11. That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force and effect from and after its adoption by this Board of Commissioners.

Voting Yes	Voting No	Abstained
Judith Barnard	Judith Barnard	Judith Barnard
Mike Eickman	Mike Eickman	Mike Eickman
Gloria Lind	Gloria Lind	Gloria Lind
Cheryl Maggio	Cheryl Maggio	Cheryl Maggio

_____ Jerry Paulson	_____ Jerry Paulson	_____ Jerry Paulson
_____ Emily Porter	_____ Emily Porter	_____ Emily Porter
_____ Jeff Tilly, President	_____ Jeff Tilly, President	_____ Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

Jeff Tilly, President

Gloria Lind, Secretary

ORDINANCE
Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
No. 26-0904

AN ORDINANCE abating a portion of the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2026 to pay debt service on the Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016, of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners (the “*Board*”) of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois (the “*District*”), by an ordinance adopted on the 26th day of October, 2016 (the “*Bond Ordinance*”), did provide for the issue of Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016 (the “*Bonds*”), and for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal of and interest on the Bonds (the “*Taxes*”); and

WHEREAS, on the 1st day of November, 2016, a duly certified copy of the Bond Ordinance was filed in the office of the County Clerk of Winnebago County, Illinois (the “*County Clerk*”); and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined, and does hereby determine, that the District has funds on hand and lawfully available in the amount of \$70,024 (the “*Available Funds*”) to pay a portion of the debt service on the Bonds otherwise payable from Taxes levied for the year 2026 (and to be collected in calendar year 2027); and

WHEREAS, the Board has further determined, and does hereby further determine, that it is necessary and in the best interests of the District to apply the Available Funds to the payment of the Bonds and abate a portion of the Taxes levied for the year 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Available Funds are currently on deposit in bond funds established for the payment of the District’s Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2006 (Capital Appreciation) and Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2011A (together, the “*Prior Bond Funds*”), which bonds are no longer outstanding; and

WHEREAS, the Board has further determined, and does hereby further determine, that it is necessary and in the best interests of the District to transfer the Available Funds from the Prior Bond Funds to the bond and interest fund established pursuant to the Bond Ordinance for the payment of the Bonds (the “*Series 2016 Bond Fund*”):

NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Ordained by the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1. Incorporation of Preambles. The Board hereby finds that all of the recitals contained in the preambles to this Ordinance are full, true and correct and does incorporate them into this Ordinance by this reference.

Section 2. Transfer. Forthwith upon the adoption of this Ordinance, the Available Funds shall be transferred from the Prior Bond Funds to the Series 2016 Bond Fund.

Section 3. Abatement of Taxes. The Taxes levied for the year 2026 shall be abated by the amount of Available Funds. The amount of the Taxes levied in the Bond Ordinance for levy year 2026, the amount of such Taxes to be abated and the remainder of such Taxes to be extended are as follows:

ORDINANCE
Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
No. 26-0904

AN ORDINANCE abating a portion of the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2026 to pay debt service on the Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016, of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois.

LEVY YEAR	AMOUNT OF TAXES LEVIED IN THE BOND ORDINANCE	AMOUNT OF TAXES TO BE ABATED	REMAINDER OF TAXES TO BE EXTENDED
2026	\$328,750.00	\$70,024.00	\$258,726.00

Section 4.Filing of Ordinance. Forthwith upon the adoption of this Ordinance, the Secretary of the Board shall file a certified copy hereof with the County Clerk, and it shall be the duty of the County Clerk to abate a portion of the Taxes levied for the year 2026 in accordance with the provisions hereof.

Section 5.Severability. If any section, paragraph, clause or provision of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such section, paragraph, clause or provision shall not affect any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance.

Section 6.Repealer and Effective Date. All ordinances, resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith be and the same are hereby repealed and that this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its passage and approval as provided by law.

Voting Yes

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Voting No

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Abstained

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

September 16, 2026
Rockford, Illinois

ORDINANCE
Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
No. 26-0904

AN ORDINANCE abating a portion of the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2026 to pay debt service on the Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016, of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois.

_____ Jerry Paulson	_____ Jerry Paulson	_____ Jerry Paulson
_____ Emily Porter	_____ Emily Porter	_____ Emily Porter
_____ Jeff Tilly, President	_____ Jeff Tilly, President	_____ Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 16th day of September, 2026.

Jeff Tilly, President, Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary, Board of Commissioners

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS
COUNTY OF WINNEBAGO)

FILING CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the duly qualified and acting County Clerk of The County of Winnebago, Illinois, and as such official I do further certify that on the ____ day of _____, 20__, there was filed in my office a duly certified copy of an ordinance entitled:

AN ORDINANCE abating a portion of the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2026 to pay debt service on the Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016, of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois.

duly adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois, on the 16th day of September, 2026, and that the same has been deposited in the official files and records of my office.

I do further certify that the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2026 for the payment of the Limited General Obligation Bonds, Series 2016, as described in said ordinance will be partially abated as provided in said ordinance.

IN WITNESS WHERETO, I hereunto affix my official signature and the seal of said County, this ____ day of _____, 20__.

County Clerk of The County of Winnebago,
Illinois

(SEAL)

RESOLUTION

No. 26-0905

ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS FOR ATWOOD IRRIGATION MOTOR AND PUMP PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners approved the replacement of the Atwood Homestead Golf Course irrigation motor and well pump as part of the original 2026 Capital Budget and to be laid over into the 2027 budget, with \$101,000 budgeted for this project; and,

WHEREAS, a mandatory pre-bid meeting was held on site on Thursday, August 13th at 10:00am with four (4) well companies present; and,

WHEREAS, a formal bid opening was conducted at Forest Preserve Headquarters on Tuesday, August 25th, with four (4) sealed bids received and with four (4) qualified bids opened; and,

WHEREAS, staff is recommending that the qualified lowest bid be accepted for this project, which is Water Well Solutions, LLC of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin for a combined price of \$85,970; and,

WHEREAS, due to the nature of this project and that there may be variances in either the well depth and or the actual type of the pump, a 10 percent contingency of \$8,597 is being recommended: and,

WHEREAS, the base price of \$76,070, with upgrade option #1 of \$9,900, and the 10% contingency amount of \$8,597 provides a combined total \$94,567; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

Voting YES _____ Voting NO _____ ABSTAINED _____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 16th day of September, 2026.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

BID TAB
 DEPARTMENT: ATWOOD GOLF COURSE
 26-0801 ATWOOD IRRIGATION MOTOR AND PUMP PROJECT
 BID OPENING – AUGUST 25, 2026 AT 10:00 A.M.

VENDOR	BASE BID	UPGRADE OPTION #1	UPGRADE OPTION #2	COMPLETED WORK AS SPECIFIED ON OR BEFORE	RECEIVED ADDENDUM
Cahoy Pump Services, Inc.	\$87,349.00	\$8,636.00	\$3,798.00	March 1, 2027	1 of 1
Water Well Solutions Illinois, LLC	\$76,070.00	\$9,900.00	\$1,450.00	March 1, 2027	1 of 1
Layne Christensen Company	\$109,750.00	\$4,500.00	\$2,450.00	March 31, 2027	1 of 1
Midwest Well Services, Inc. dba Pumpstation Professionals	\$88,580.00	\$6,710.00	\$7,930.00	March 1, 2027	1 of 1

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
 5500 Northrock Drive, Rockford, IL 61103
 Phone: (815) 877-6100 | FPWC@winnebagoforest.org

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
ORDINANCE
26-0906
Security, Wildlife and Ecological Monitoring, and Meeting
Recording Policy

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (FPWC) recognizes that safety and security of its employees, visitors, and volunteers is of utmost priority; and,

WHEREAS, the protection of property, and natural resources is vitally important to the long-term sustainability of owned assets; and,

WHEREAS, the FPWC, uses surveillance recording equipment at facilities and preserves for security, ecological research, and meeting recording; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the FPWC to add a new policy to establish parameters and procedures for the installation and retention of recording devices; and,

WHEREAS, the current Employee Handbook does not address policy and procedures of the use of recording equipment,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County approve the attached Safety, Ecological and Meeting Recording Policy.

Voting YES

Voting NO

Abstained

Judith Barnard

Judith Barnard

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Mike Eickman

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Gloria Lind

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Cheryl Maggio

Cheryl Maggio

Jerry Paulson

Jerry Paulson

Jerry Paulson

Emily Porter

Emily Porter

Emily Porter

Jeff Tilly, President

Jeff Tilly, President

Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 16th day of September, 2026.

That this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Winnebago County Forest Preserve District Safety, Ecological and Meeting Recording Policy

PURPOSE

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) provides public space for all to use and promotes a safe, protected and welcoming environment. The purpose of the surveillance cameras is to help prevent any criminal activity and to assist in protecting the safety of individuals and District property while balancing individual privacy rights with the need for public safety. Surveillance cameras are not constantly monitored therefore, staff and the public should take appropriate precautions for their safety and security of personal property. The District is not responsible for loss of property or personal injury to the full extent as allowed by law.

This policy establishes guidelines for the placement, use, and management of surveillance systems, as well as the handling, access and release of recorded images.

The District's surveillance and video recording systems are categorized as follows:

1. Security Cameras – These systems will be primarily used for recording activity related to the safety and security of individuals and the protection of property.
2. Wildlife and Ecological Monitoring Cameras – These systems, often referred to as trail cameras, are placed to record wildlife activity, monitor ecological developments and collect scientific data.
3. Meeting Recording Cameras – These systems will be used to record meetings for training purposes, or to be placed on shared media for public viewing, such as public Board meetings.

PROCEDURES FOR SECURITY CAMERAS AND RECORDINGS

- Security cameras and recordings shall be conducted in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois.
- Security cameras will be used in various areas on District property including but not limited to parking lots, preserves, trails, buildings, entrances, roadways, reception areas, lobbies, gates, money exchange stations, and areas where safes are located.
- Security cameras shall not be installed in areas of the District where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as restrooms, locker rooms, shower facilities, changing rooms, individual campsites, nursing areas and individual offices not containing safes or money processing areas.
- Staff and employees shall be notified during orientation and in the Employee Handbook that District facilities may have security camera recording equipment in their work spaces that will be monitoring activity at that location.
- Buildings that contain security cameras shall have notification posted that recording is occurring.
- Security camera equipment shall be visible. Hidden security cameras will not be allowed.
- Security camera placement shall be agreed upon by the Director of Operations, facility managers, and/or security contractors. In the case of areas leased or operated by partner groups, the director of the partner group shall be consulted on the placement of the safety surveillance system.
- Audio recordings are prohibited for security cameras. Audio recording shall be disabled or turned off on those recording devices if they are equipped with audio recording.
- Monitoring of individuals based on characteristic of any protected class is prohibited.
- Biometric data may not be collected or recorded per the Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA).

- Security systems may be outsourced to third party vendors for recording purposes. Third party vendors must also abide by the laws of the state of Illinois and District policies. Agreements for third party vendors must be approved in accordance with District policies.
- The District employs Winnebago County Sheriff's Deputies through a law enforcement agreement. Deputies may have video and audio recording devices on their person and vehicles. Recording systems owned by the Winnebago County Sheriff's office are subject to Winnebago County Sheriff policies and procedures.
- Security cameras will not be used to directly or indirectly identify the activities of any visitor, patron, volunteer or staff member except as viewed in relation to a specific event, suspected criminal activity or suspected violation of District policies and local, state and federal laws
- Law enforcement officials or agencies may be provided access to recordings or images pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act request (FOIA), subpoena, court order or as determined by the District Executive Director. Law enforcement agencies that have a current services agreement with the District may be granted access to video without a FOIA request, subpoena, or court order.
- Staff shall refer all non-agency requests for video footage to the Executive Director.
- Any individual who tampers with or destroys security equipment will be subject to criminal prosecution and fines imposed by the District in accordance with federal and state laws and District policies and ordinances.
- Any individual altering or tampering security camera recorded imagery or causing it to be altered, will be subject to investigation and may be disciplined according to policies set forth by the District.
- Security camera records are considered confidential and shall be secured in a controlled area(s) and/or password protected.
- Video and imagery collected may be subject to the State of Illinois Freedom of Information Act. If a FOIA request is received, the District's FOIA officer shall contact legal representation to receive proper instruction on how to respond to the request.

PROCEDURES FOR WILDLIFE AND ECOLOGICAL MONITORING CAMERAS AND RECORDINGS

- District-owned wildlife and ecological monitoring camera placement shall be determined by the Director of Natural Resources or their designee(s).
- Individuals or groups wanting to place wildlife and ecological monitoring systems upon District lands, for scientific data collection purposes, may do so only with written permission from the District's Director of Natural Resources. Please note that there may be additional permissions needed from other agencies for monitoring including the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.
- Wildlife and ecological cameras and recording systems may use audio recording.
- Wildlife and ecological monitoring cameras may be camouflaged or hidden from view in order to reduce disturbance to wildlife.
- Audio and video recordings from wildlife and ecological monitoring cameras may be used, but not altered, without consent of the Executive Director.
- If a wildlife and ecological monitoring system records illegal, suspicious, or unsafe activities, the recordings shall be retained in a secure and restricted area, and the Executive Director shall be informed of the recording. Such recordings will be held in confidentiality until examined by the Executive Director and/or legal counsel. Notice shall be given that cameras are in use in preserves.

- Video and audio collected using wildlife and ecological monitoring cameras, may be subject to the State of Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). If a FOIA request is received, the District's FOIA officer shall determine how to respond to the request.

PROCEDURES FOR MEETING CAMERAS AND RECORDINGS

- If employees are recording an on-line session, notification shall be given to all participants prior to recording.
- If an in-person meeting is being recorded, participants shall be notified that recording will take place.
- Meeting recording device placement shall be determined by the Executive Director or their designee(s).
- Audio may be recorded during on-line or in person meetings as long as notification is given prior to the recording beginning.
- Video and imagery collected may be subject to the State of Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). If a FOIA request is received, the District's FOIA officer shall contact legal representation to receive proper instruction on how to respond to the request.

ACCESS TO EQUIPMENT AND RECORDINGS

- Access to safety surveillance equipment and recordings shall be limited to the Executive Director, the Director of Operations and or their designees.
- Access to wildlife and ecological monitoring equipment and recordings shall be limited to the Director of Natural Resources and/or their designees.
- Access to meeting equipment and/or recordings shall be limited to the Executive Director and/or their designees.
- Recorded illegal activity or violations of District policy must be reported immediately to the District's Executive Director. Recordings of these incidents shall not be shared, duplicated, destroyed or deleted.

RECORDING RETENTION

The District will store all surveillance records in a secure location with access by authorized personnel only. No attempt shall be made to alter any part of any original surveillance recording. Surveillance records will be retained subject to applicable maintenance and retention laws and standards as well as by District policy.

RESOLUTION
26-0907

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT AND THE WINNEBAGO COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (WCFPD) owns two structures at Severson Dells Forest Preserve known as the Holt House and Severson Barn; and,

WHEREAS, the WCFPD retained a consultant to research and complete a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, if feasible, for the structures; and,

WHEREAS, the Save the Holt House (STHH) citizens group was formed to research, determine the feasibility of reuse and fundraise for efforts towards the nomination; and,

WHEREAS, the Winnebago Community Historical Society (WCHS), an Illinois registered 501(c)(3), has a formal agreement with the STHH citizens group to be a repository of money fundraised by, or granted to, the STHH group; and,

WHEREAS, the WCFPD and the WCHS wish to formalize the exchange of funds raised for the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Holt House and Severson Barn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District in Winnebago County, Illinois, shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Winnebago Community Historical Society, for the purpose of funding the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Holt House and Severson Barn as outlined in the attached MOU.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the WCFPD Board of Commissioners as follows:

Section 1: Recitals. The recitals set forth above are incorporated as a part of this Resolution by this reference.

Section 2: Approval of Memorandum. The Memorandum, in substantially the form attached hereto as Attachment A, is hereby approved. The President of the District is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Memorandum.

Section 3: Effective Date. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

Voting YES _____

Voting NO _____

ABSTAINED _____

APPROVED this 16th day of September, 2026.

Jeff Tilly, President Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary Board of Commissioners

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between the
WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
and
WINNEBAGO COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE PURPOSE OF THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, is to define the roles of two parties to fundraise, receive donations, write grants and distribute monies for the nomination of the Holt House and Severson Barn in Winnebago County Illinois, to the National Register of Historic Places.

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (the “Memorandum”) is made and entered into as of this ____ day of _____ 2026 by and between the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (WCFPD) a local government agency in the state of Illinois, and the Winnebago Community Historical Society (WCHS), an Illinois not for profit, hereinafter referred to collectively as the “Parties” and individually as “Party”.

WHEREAS, both Parties wish to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the purpose of funding the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for the Holt House and Severson Barn; and

WHEREAS, the STHH Community Group has already raised private donations, secured a grant, and has asked for other community financial support to help with costs associated with the nomination process; and,

WHEREAS, the STHH Community Group has a formal agreement for services of WCHS to retain donated, gifted, and granted money given to the STHH Community Group; and

WHEREAS, the WCFPD has retained JLK Architects to act as consultants and writers for the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Holt House and Severson Barn; and,

WHEREAS, the WCFPD owns the two buildings and the land surrounding the buildings; and,

WHEREAS, both Parties recognize the valuable history and architecture of the Holt House and Severson Barn and have mutual desire to secure funding for the historical nomination; and,

WHEREAS, the Parties to this Memorandum are authorized to execute and implement this Memorandum.

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties, intending to cooperate in the financial management of the historic nomination of the Holt House and Severson Barn, state as follows;

OBJECTIVES

This Memorandum is intended to formalize a mutual collaboration and coordination between the Parties for the financial management and expenditure of monies dedicated to the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Holt House and the Severson Barn located at the Severson Dells Forest Preserve in Winnebago County Illinois. Through this Memorandum, the Parties will focus on collaboration that includes, but is not limited to fundraising, grant writing and distributing funds to pay consulting costs for the nomination process.

It is jointly recognized that financial management historic nomination process, are more effective and cost efficient if the Parties work together to coordinate efforts and share resources and information to improve management practices.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It shall be the responsibility of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District to:

1. Retain, oversee and pay a consultant to research and write a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Holt House and Severson Barn.
2. Pay out the initial \$10,000 budgeted in Winnebago County Forest Preserve District FY 2025-26 budget for the historic nomination.
3. Request in writing from the Winnebago Community Historical Society, the financial obligation to the consultants for the amount over \$10,000. The total request to the WCHS will not exceed \$ 6,760.00. The cost includes the fixed fee and reimbursables for JLK Architects for the nomination project.

It shall be the responsibility of the Winnebago Community Historical Society to:

1. Individually or jointly with another Party or third party, fundraise and write grants for the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Hold and distribute money received from the STHH Community Group specifically for the nomination process.

LIABILITY

No Parties and no officers, employees, contractors, or volunteers of a Party will be deemed an employee or agent of any other Party. To the extent required by law, each Party will be responsible for providing workers compensation coverage for its employees participating in any management activity under this Memorandum.

Each Party shall be responsible for the consequences of its own acts, errors, or omissions and those of its employees, volunteers, agents, boards, commissions, agencies, officers, and representatives and shall be responsible for any losses, claims, and liabilities which are attributable to such acts, errors, or omissions including providing its own defense. In situations including joint liability, each Party shall be responsible for the consequences of its own acts, errors, or omissions and those of its employees, volunteers, agents, boards, commissions, agencies, officers and representatives. It is not the intent of the Parties to impose liability beyond that imposed by state statutes or to waive any immunity or defense otherwise available.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Either Party shall have the right to withdraw from this Memorandum by giving 60 (sixty) days written notice to the other Party of its intent to terminate.

This Memorandum shall terminate three (3) years from the date of approval or until final payment has been made to the consulting firm, whichever is first.

SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Memorandum shall be adjudged to be unlawful or contrary to public policy, then that provision shall be deemed null and void and severable from the remaining provisions, and shall in no way affect the validity of this Memorandum.

WAIVER

Failure or delay on the part of either Party to exercise any right, power, privilege or remedy hereunder shall not constitute a waiver thereof. A waiver of any default shall not operate as a waiver of any other default or of the same type of default on a future occasion.

AMENDMENT & REVISION

All Parties to this Memorandum have the right to: 1) propose changes to the Memorandum, and 2) be notified of, and have the opportunity to comment on, any proposed changes.

However, no amendment shall be effective unless agreed to in writing by all Parties.

DISTRIBUTION

No Party may publish or otherwise distribute the Works of another Party without both the prior written consent of the other Party and crediting the other Party in such Works. This section does not prevent a Party from responding to a request for public records under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et seq., a lawful subpoena, a lawful document request submitted in litigation, or other statutorily authorized request (collectively, a "Statutory Request").

LOGO

A Party will not use the logo of another Party without the prior express written permission of the other Party.

CONFIDENTIALITY

During the course of the performance of this Memorandum, a Party may have access to materials, data, strategies, donor names, systems or other information relating to another Party and its information. If the Party that originates the information desires that it be kept confidential and not disclosed to the public or third parties, then that Party shall request in writing that the information be kept confidential, designating the specific information that it desires to keep confidential as "Confidential Information". Confidential Information shall not be used, published, or divulged to any person or entity,

in any manner or for whatever purpose, except

(i) with the originating Party's prior express written permission, which may be withheld by the respective Party at its sole discretion or (ii) if a Party receives a valid Statutory Request for Confidential Information, it may comply with applicable laws related to such Statutory Request after first notifying the Party that originated the Confidential Information within a time period that provides the originating Party a reasonable opportunity to object to or otherwise limit the Statutory Request. The Parties understand and acknowledge that this Memorandum is a "public record" as that term is defined in the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1, et seq.

OTHER COOPERATORS

This Memorandum does not preclude the Parties from establishing similar agreements and/or contracts with other individuals, corporations, agencies, and public or private organizations. The Parties recognize the importance of continuing to cooperate and work with others in programs of mutual interest and to be able to engage with others to participate in the activities implemented under this Memorandum.

NO JOINT VENTURE

The Parties agree that they have not entered into, and are not entering into, a legal partnership, joint venture or other such business arrangement. No Party shall refer to or treat the arrangements under this Memorandum as a legal partnership or take any action inconsistent with this Section.

ASSIGNMENT

No Party may assign or transfer its rights and obligations under this Memorandum without the prior written consent of the other signatory Parties.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

The Parties will observe all the applicable laws and regulations during the execution of the work implemented under the provisions of this Memorandum.

GOVERNING LAW

This Memorandum will be governed by, enforced by, and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois, without regard to the principles of conflicts of law thereof. If a lawsuit related to the performance or non-performance of this Memorandum, all Parties agree to submit to the jurisdiction and venue in Winnebago County Illinois.

PERSONAL LIABILITY

No employee, volunteer, chairperson, officer, elected or appointed official or agent of a Party shall be individually or personally liable in connection with this Memorandum.

ENTIRETY

This Memorandum, including any attachments and amendments, embodies the entire and complete understanding between all Parties relating to the matters set out above and supersedes all prior or contemporaneous communications and negotiations, both oral and written.

COUNTERPARTS

This Memorandum may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this Memorandum:

WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

By: _____
Jeff Tilly, President, Winnebago County Forest Preserve District

Date: _____

WINNEBAGO COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By: _____
Russell Kaney, Winnebago Community Historical Society

Date: _____

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

Strategic Planning Calendar

Planning Component	Who	When	Suggested length
Review Mission Statement	Full Board + Exec. Dir.	October (virtual session)	2 hours
Receive Interview results	Full Board + Exec. Dir.	December (virtual session)	2 hours
Develop Goals	Full Board + Exec. Dir. + Finance	January (in-person)	3-4 hours
Draft Objectives-Round 1	Senior Staff + Exec. Dir. + 3 other staff	February (in-person)	7 hours
Draft Objectives-Round 2	Senior Staff + Exec. Dir. + 3 other staff	March (Virtual)	2 hours
Present draft objectives to Board	Full Board + Exec. Dir.	March (Virtual)	1 hour
Identify strategies and timelines	Senior Staff + Exec. Dir. + 3 other staff	April (Virtual)	3 hours
Full Draft Plan Review	Full Board + Exec. Dir.	May (Virtual)	1 hour
Finalize Plan Content and out	DJ Case	June	

Preserve Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Matt Weik & Scott Wallace, Preserve Managers
August 2026 Activities Report

North Area

- Installed new directional and shelter house signs at Hononegah and Sugar River.
- Cleaned out shop and washed trucks on rainy days.
- Prepped Towering Pines shelter and picnic area for Summer Employee Picnic.
- Met with Jody and Dan about Strategic Planning process.
- Repaired potholes on roadways at Hononegah.
- Filled washout areas with gravel on Macktown Historic District roadway.
- Put gravel around outhouse at River Oaks shelter at Atwood.
- Sprayed cracks on hard path at Headquarters.
- Trimmed low hanging limbs above Colored Sands Bird Banding Station.
- Brush mowed roadways at Atwood.
- Ground down stumps at Two Rivers after storm damaged trees removed.
- Fixed clogged urinal in the men's restroom in Sugar River Shower House.
- Frinks pumped Dump Station, Shower House and Restrooms in main campground at Sugar River.
- Painted fuel tanks at Sugar River shop.
- Conducted interviews for North Area Ranger position.
- Dug put fire pits at Sugar River and Hononegah campgrounds.
- String trimmed river banks and boat/canoe launches.
- Removed rock from trail by wetland at Swanson trail.
- Power washed and greased equipment.
- Sharpened blades on mowers.
- Weekly mowing and trimming of preserves.
- Treated outhouse vaults with bleach and scent removal to mitigate smell and flies.
- Filled wood bins at Sugar River and Hononegah campgrounds.
- Removed hazardous tree from site 59 at Hononegah campground.
- Conducted monthly inspections.
- Cleaned up river bank at Atwood Homestead.

Preserve Operations

August 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

South Area

- Pressure washed Pecatonica River Playground equipment.
- Cleaned out campfire rings at Seward Bluffs campground.
- Replaced section of timber log edging at Blackhawk Springs playground.
- Added gravel to the Pecatonica River boat launch.
- Cleared multiple trees off of the Rotary trail system.
- Staff member assisted with the County Fair setup.
- Staff completed assigned safety trainings.
- String trimmed along the lake edges at Four Lakes.
- Added gravel to entrance drives at Funderburg and Cedar Cliff.
- Harvested black locust logs for use in the Grove at Severson Dells.
- Staff member worked a shift at the Forest Preserve booth at the fair.
- Pressure washed interiors of concrete outhouses at Kishwaukee River.
- Installed new decking material to observation platform overlooking the pond at Severson Dells.
- Completed monthly safety inspections.
- Patched holes in asphalt along a section of the hard path at Severson Dells.
- Removed damaged grill from Kilbuck Bluffs.
- Restocked firewood at Seward Bluffs Campground.
- Trimmed trees along roadway at Seward Bluffs Campground.
- Ongoing mowing of preserves and trail systems.
- Repaired damaged chain at Seward Bluffs playground.
- Updated South Area equipment inventory.
- Eight South Area outhouse vaults were pumped out.

Central Shop

- The vacant Equipment & Facility Maintenance Manager position has been posted with several applicants selected for first round interviews, which were conducted towards the end of the month. Follow-up second round interviews have also been conducted with some of the candidates, which involved facility tours and meeting the Central Shop employees. Process is continuing with final selection to be determined soon.
- The Director of Operations has assumed day to day oversight and management of the Central Shop team of employees until a new manager can be put in place.

Preserve Operations

August 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

- The annual inspections of all equipment trailers are being conducted along with repairs of any noted deficiencies. Some repairs that have been made include the replacement of worn and broken spring shackles, worn tire replacements, and repairing rust holes in fenders and loading ramps.
- Repairs were made to the golf clubhouse deck at Ledges with several deck boards getting replaced due to splits and rotted boards.
- Trades crew has been making repairs and re-staining information kiosks in various preserves. Additionally, a new information kiosk and various kiosk components are being built in the shop for use on future repairs and replacements.
- Annual inspections were conducted on the various equipment and vehicle lifts in the Central Shop. One of the lifts had significant fluid leakage from worn seals and will be required to get the cylinder seals replaced before it can be e-inspected for safe use. This work is scheduled with a certified company in the coming weeks.
- On-going routine engine oil and filter changes on vehicles and equipment have been consuming much of the shop time, as summer use has added significant hours and miles on vehicles and mowing equipment.

FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

November-August

	<u>2024-2025</u>		<u>2025-2026</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>
Small Shelter Res.	47	\$3,995	47	\$3,995
Small Shelter N/Res.	6	\$660	1	\$110
Large Shelter Res.	119	\$13,090	112	\$12,320
Large Shelter N/Res.	9	\$1,215	11	\$1,485
Electric Res.	156	\$19,500	161	\$20,125
Electric N/Res.	20	\$3,100	9	\$1,395
TOTAL	357	\$41,560	341	\$39,430
ONLINE	293	82%	234	69%
Over 300 Res.	0	\$0	0	\$0
Over 300 N/Res.	0	\$0	0	\$0
Ground Use/Tent Res	14	\$440	13	\$410
Ground Use/Tent N/Res.	2	\$90	2	\$90
Building Use Permits	5	\$500	3	\$300
Commercial Photography Permit	2	\$200	0	\$0
Special Use Permits	14	\$2,655	22	\$2,710
Rides	20	\$800	8	\$320
TOTAL	57	\$4,685	48	\$3,830
ONLINE	25	44%	9	19%
Equestrian Passes	Number	Total	Number	Total
Yearly Tag Res.	88	\$4,400	80	\$4,000
Yearly Tag N/Res.	35	\$2,450	33	\$2,310
TOTAL	123	\$6,850	113	\$6,310
ONLINE	49	40%	31	27%
Fly Field Passes	Number	Total	Number	Total
Yearly Pass Res.	38	\$1,330	41	\$1,435
Yearly Pass N/Res.	12	\$540	11	\$495
TOTAL	50	\$1,870	52	\$1,930
ONLINE	16	32%	18	35%
Metal Detecting Passes	Number	Total	Number	Total
Yearly Pass Res.	36	\$900	35	\$875
Yearly Pass N/Res.	9	\$315	8	\$280
TOTAL	45	\$1,215	43	\$1,155
ONLINE	14	31%	18	42%
GRAND TOTAL	632	\$56,180	597	\$52,655
ONLINE	397	63%	310	52%

**FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY
2023-2026
CAMPING REVENUE COMPARISON**

	<u>2023</u> (thru 8/28)	<u>2024</u> (thru 8/27)	<u>2025</u> (thru 8/26)	<u>2026</u> (thru 8/24)
CAMPGROUND				
Hononegah	\$27,448	\$25,307	\$28,110	\$21,834
Seward Bluffs	36,731	42,406	47,544	37,044
Sugar River	<u>61,151</u>	<u>63,149</u>	<u>58,958</u>	<u>54,156</u>
Campground Revenue	\$125,330	\$130,862	\$134,612	\$113,034

SCOUT/YOUTH CAMPGROUNDS

Hononegah	265	168	80	150
Pecatonica River	490	540	500	540
Rockford Rotary	340	174	235	165
Seward Bluffs	100	0	0	0
Sugar River	<u>195</u>	<u>478</u>	<u>231</u>	<u>185</u>
Scout/Youth Campground Revenue	\$1,390	\$1,360	\$1,046	\$1,040

EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUNDS

Oak Ridge	\$64	\$302	\$425	\$50
Seward Bluffs	<u>922</u>	<u>775</u>	<u>1,080</u>	<u>755</u>
Equestrian Campground Revenue	\$986	\$1,077	\$1,505	\$805

FIREWOOD

Hononegah	\$1,274	\$2,641	\$2,010	\$672
Seward Bluffs	2,632	3,049	2,683	2,000
Sugar River	<u>6,102</u>	<u>5,622</u>	<u>6,688</u>	<u>4,656</u>
Firewood Revenue	10,008	11,312	11,381	7,328

GRAND TOTAL	\$137,714	\$144,611	\$148,544	\$122,207
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NUMBER OF GROUPS AT REGULAR CAMPGROUNDS (DOES NOT INCLUDE EQUESTRIAN AND SCOUT/YOUTH CAMPING)	1,994	2,012	2,058	1,870
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Natural Resource Management

Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources

Mike Groves, Natural Resources Manager

Keith Krey, Stewardship Coordinator

Taylor Joray, Wildlife Biologist

August 2026 Activities Report

Natural Resources:

- Chemically treated invasive brush, oriental bittersweet, phragmites, multiflora rose, silky bushclover, Japanese knotweed, bird's foot trefoil, crown vetch, sweet clover, and teasel in preserves throughout the county.
- Collected seed from blue joint grass, purple meadow rue, royal catchfly, cream indigo, goat's rue, compass plant, monkey flower, wild bergamot, butterfly milkweed, golden alexanders, blue iris, sweet flag, sedges, bladder nut, and others from preserves throughout the county.
- Wicked woody plants at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Installed fuel tanks at new natural resource facility.
- Mowed new prairie plantings at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Processed harvested native seed as needed.
- Assisted with the set up and staffing of the District's tent at the Winnebago County Fair.
- Cleared beaver blockages from water control structures at Deer Run and Pecatonica Wetlands Forest Preserves.
- Attended closing for the 20 acre addition to Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve.
- Began work on project proposals for upcoming NAWCA grant application.
- Continued project coordination for the construction of the new natural resource facility.
- Coordination of various utility projects in preserve throughout the county.
- Continued working on the 2026-27 budget.

Wildlife

Blanding's turtle monitoring:

- Continued sampling for turtles and other aquatic organisms in preserves throughout the county.
- Recaptured **one new adult female** and an adult male Blanding's Turtle during our sampling efforts; **the female is notably younger (estimated to be ~14 to 20 years of age) than all other adult Blanding's Turtles captured to date and is the first female captured at the preserve in question; she was fitted with a transmitter and will be monitored for nesting activity into the future.**
- The newly documented female Blanding's Turtle received a health assessment as part of a multi-county collaborative disease study conducted by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, University of Illinois Wildlife Epidemiology Lab, and Brookfield Zoo.

Natural Resource Management

August 2026 Activities Report – Con't.

- Continued weekly VHF telemetry of all turtles with transmitters to document habitat use and annual movement patterns; two adult males had transmitters replaced due to transmitter damage/failure.

Smooth Greensnake Monitoring:

- Continued sampling preserves with historic records of Smooth Greensnakes; one new (i.e., unmarked) greensnake was documented.
- Continued monitoring greensnake nests.

Additional Work

- Scouted stretches of the Kishwaukee River and its tributaries for in-house mussel and fish surveys.
- Participated in fall migration bird monitoring and banding at the Sand Bluff Bird Observatory.
- Assembled an aquarium containing live aquatic plants, fish, and crayfish (collected and returned to the Pecatonica River Watershed) as an educational demonstration of the area's freshwater ecology for the annual Winnebago County Fair.
- Continued pilot water quality study across trap sites to begin documenting the impact of environmental changes/trends in preferred habitat of monitored aquatic species across sampled populations.
- Continued camera trapping efforts to document presence/absence of species in the preserves; likely badger activity is being monitored.
- Continued monitoring of artificial cover arrays for snake species of conservation concern.
- Monitored AH Drift camera trap system at Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve to document smaller-bodied wildlife.
- Developed electronic data collection forms (via ArcGIS Survey123) to facilitate efficient, georeferenced data collection for multiple projects in the field.

Stewardship

- Hosted six volunteer seed collection workdays for lead plant, bottlebrush grass, and wild bergamot at Four Lakes and Funderburg Forest Preserves.
- Staffed District table at the Machesney Park National Night Out.
- Hosted the Chicago Region Trees Initiative's community capacity team on a tour of the Kishwaukee Gorge's grant funded tree planting and invasive species removal project.
- Attended all staff strategic plan meeting.
- Cut and treated brush at Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve.
- Maintained blue bird nest boxes as needed.
- Controlled weeds around volunteer tree planting at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Staffed table at Winnebago County employee wellness fair.
- Assisted with staffing the District's tent at the Winnebago County Fair.

Natural Resource Management

August 2026 Activities Report – Con't.

Community Science Snapshot

- Eastern Bluebird Monitoring: 10 volunteers logged 51 hours.
- Bat Monitoring: 3 volunteers logged 8 hours.
- Bumblebee monitoring: 1 volunteer logged 8 hours.

2026 Statistics

A total of 288 volunteers have completed 3,483.25 service hours in 2026.

The monetary value of these service hours equals **\$125,884.65**. As of April 2026, the estimated national value of each volunteer hour is currently \$36.14 (based on the Independent Sector, April 21st 2026).

Golf Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Bobby VanSistine, Clubhouse Manager
Tyler Knapp & Mark Freiman, Golf Course Superintendents
Rose Mathews, Golf Food & Beverage Manager
August 2026 Activities Report

Clubhouse Operations:

- Cash control
 - Weekly cash deposits
 - Restock change bags at three courses
 - Monitoring cash over/shorts
- Headquarters Meetings
 - Strategic Planning
 - Food and Beverage Manager
 - Outing food and beverage
 - Weekly scheduling
- Schedules completed using When to Work software
 - Outside Attendant
 - Cashier
- Senior County Am Prep
 - Review Previous year tournament
 - Promoting tournament
- Managing staffing
 - Interviewing and hiring staff to replace students leaving
 - Additional training for areas needing improvement
- Meetings with outings
 - Planning 2026 events
 - Booking for 2027
- Outings
 - Birdies for Ben – 150 golfers
 - Par Tee Time – 120 golfers
 - Bennys – 100 golfers

Golf Operations

August 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

Food & Beverage:

Atwood

- One employee quit for a full-time position. Fortunately, other employees were able to cover his shifts. Plus, a new employee was hired who will cover some of those shifts going into September and October. She will also fill in at Ledges when available.
- August 21st, we had the Benny's Golf Outing. Despite the rain, we had \$2357.12 in sales between inside clubhouse and the beverage cart.
- I covered 4 shifts at Atwood in addition to helping with the Benny's outing.

Macktown

- Macktown employees are solid and cover 99% of the shifts. I covered only one shift for the month. On August 19th April and I prepared the monthly meal for the Men's Association. They had brats, cheesy potatoes, coleslaw, corn on the cob, and dessert.

Ledges

- August 8th, we had the Birdie's for Ben outing. Beautiful weather for the day. We had \$2757.68 in sales between inside clubhouse and the beverage cart. They had their own food which they cooked on a grill they brought.
- August 15th, we had the Par Tee Time outing. Again, it was a great day weather wise. 105 drink tickets were used and subsequently included on the invoice sent by Bobby. Inside clubhouse and beverage cart sales totaled \$1693.74. They also had 2 half barrels of beer on the course for their golfers.
- I covered 11 shifts at Ledges in addition to helping with the two outings.
- The fan in the women's bathroom went out. Wes from Central Maintenance was able to fix it by installing a new motor.
- Health Department came on Aug 25th. We had a few minor infractions. The guy will return to check a couple items (issue with the floor faucet and Allergen certification for myself).

Golf Maintenance:

Ledges

- Updated expense report for the 2026 season to ensure accurate, up to date tracking of all expenses.
- Repaired leaky irrigation mainline adjacent to the 13th fairway.
- Performed daily hand watering on putting greens to correct and prevent localized dry spot to ensure consistent turf quality.
- Mowed all waterways and pond edges using the boom mower to maintain visibility and enhance course appearance.

Golf Operations

August 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

- Cleaned screens on irrigation heads that supply water to greens and tees.
- Continued fertility program on greens, tees, and fairways.
- Tree removal and cleanup on hole #14.
- Removed fallen trees from the creek alongside the 13th fairway.
- Cut sod from the driving range and installed it in select fairway areas to repair bare spots.
- Replaced faulty OSMAC Base Station responsible for communication between the irrigation control computer and field satellites.
- Adjusted and reprogrammed irrigation schedules to better manage moisture levels as daylight hour's decrease and seasonal conditions change.
- Leveled low irrigation heads on 7 and 16 tee complexes.
- Installed irrigation conversion assemblies on the 12th and 14th hole.
- Replaced a non-functioning irrigation head on the 12th tee complex.
- Irrigation repairs including pilot valves and drive motor replacement.
- Edged bunkers and adjusted sand for proper playing depth.
- Burned brush pile.
- Attended the Employee Appreciation Picnic.
- Mechanic performed repairs and maintenance on equipment.

Macktown

- Installed new sprinkler head conversion assemblies on hole 17.
- Edged bunkers and adjusting sand for proper playing depth.
- Filled divots on par 3 tees with 7:2:1 divot mix and seed.
- Continued fertility program on greens, tees and fairways.
- Hand watered localized dry areas on greens and collars to maintain turfgrass health.
- Repaired and tested irrigation timing mechanisms.
- Scouted for turfgrass disease during adverse weather conditions.
- Hand watered golf greens to maintain turfgrass health.
- Updated expense report for the 2026 season to ensure accurate, up to date tracking of all expenses.
- Replaced non-function irrigation head on the 1st tee complex.
- Continued removal of hazardous trees and branches to improve safety.

Golf Operations

August 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

- Completed repairs and reinstallation of irrigation faceplates in numerous pedestals.
- Replaced irrigation risers in numerous green and tee heads.
- Attended the Employee Appreciation Picnic.
- Mechanic performed repairs and maintenance on equipment.

Atwood

- Spread topsoil and seed edge of new asphalt cart paths to match existing grade.
- Flushed cut tree stumps, grade and seed drainage swale on practice range.
- Removed and cleaned debris from large dead multi-stem white pine on hole 17.
- Held pre-bid meeting for Atwood irrigation pump replacement.
- Continued edging bunkers and adjusting sand depth for improved playing conditions.
- Continued fertility program on greens, tees and fairways.
- Hand watered greens, collars and approaches to maintain turfgrass health.
- Repaired and replaced multiple swing joints and malfunctioning irrigation heads.
- Attended irrigation pump replacement bid opening.
- Scouted for turfgrass disease during adverse weather conditions.
- Mechanic spun grinding greens mower cutting units.
- String trimmed all trees on golf course.

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Golf Course Revenue & Sales
November - July**

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>
<u>Atwood Homestead</u>				
Green Fees	\$160,283	\$182,619	\$189,904	\$175,498
Cart Rental	\$121,619	\$142,953	\$146,220	\$150,425
Merchandise	\$22,265	\$19,249	\$21,351	\$27,246
Discount/Gift Card	\$47,342	\$57,206	\$69,157	\$70,003
Capital Improvement Fee	\$14,651	\$15,132	\$14,863	\$17,899
Food & Beverage	\$72,094	\$67,066	\$77,656	\$97,945
Range Balls/Golf Club Rental	\$360	\$670	\$100	\$11,160
Video Gaming & ATM	\$2,736	\$2,872	\$288	\$0
Total Atwood Revenue	\$441,351	\$487,766	\$519,538	\$550,175
<u>Ledges</u>				
Green Fees	\$174,663	\$173,898	\$197,563	\$184,225
Cart Rental	\$135,149	\$133,980	\$154,386	\$153,083
Merchandise	\$20,837	\$16,814	\$20,076	\$24,182
Discount/Gift Card	\$53,501	\$54,947	\$56,099	\$58,681
Capital Improvement Fee	\$16,644	\$16,672	\$16,448	\$19,372
Food & Beverage	\$88,287	\$87,950	\$95,589	\$97,547
Range Balls/Golf Club Rental	\$320	\$340	\$580	\$6,404
Video Gaming & ATM	\$1,048	\$4,545	-\$347	\$0
Total Ledges Revenue	\$490,449	\$489,145	\$550,393	\$543,493
<u>Macktown</u>				
Green Fees	\$121,916	\$125,856	\$139,180	\$133,236
Cart Rental	\$98,790	\$98,589	\$109,217	\$108,416
Merchandise	\$13,435	\$10,156	\$11,982	\$14,326
Discount/Gift Card	\$63,096	\$62,431	\$75,659	\$65,869
Capital Improvement Fee	\$12,389	\$11,806	\$11,647	\$15,260
Food & Beverage	\$71,355	\$71,731	\$68,737	\$75,249
Golf Club Rental	\$120	\$80	\$150	\$210
Video Gaming & ATM	\$2,639	\$2,018	\$0	\$0
Total Macktown Revenue	\$383,741	\$382,666	\$416,570	\$412,565
<u>Headquarters</u>				
Discount/Gift Card	\$29,396	\$32,270	\$30,238	\$35,628
Golf Passes	\$314,585	\$327,640	\$352,645	\$402,960
Capital Improvement Fee	\$32,338	\$32,880	\$35,400	\$40,680
Outing/Tournaments	\$16,818	\$18,610	\$18,825	\$32,863
Private Golf Cart Registration	\$11,650	\$10,150	\$9,500	\$9,500
Total Headquarters Revenue	\$404,787	\$421,550	\$446,608	\$521,631
Total Golf Course Revenue	\$1,720,327	\$1,781,127	\$1,933,109	\$2,027,865

Budgeted Revenue	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>
<i>Golf Service Fees and Charges Budgeted Revenue</i>	<i>\$1,200,000</i>	<i>\$1,550,000</i>	<i>\$1,660,000</i>	<i>\$1,810,000</i>
<i>Sale of Merchandise and Concessions Budgeted Revenue</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>	<i>\$320,000</i>	<i>\$340,000</i>	<i>\$340,000</i>
<i>Golf Capital Fee Budgeted Revenue</i>	<i>\$80,000</i>	<i>\$92,000</i>	<i>\$90,000</i>	<i>\$92,000</i>
Total Budgeted Revenue	\$1,530,000	\$1,962,000	\$2,090,000	\$2,242,000
Budgeted Revenue Variance	\$190,327	-\$180,873	-\$156,891	-\$214,135

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Golf Course Revenue & Sales
November - July

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>
<u>Rounds Played</u>				
Atwood	15,533	17,309	18,946	20,822
Ledges	15,575	15,239	17,630	18,205
Macktown	14,302	14,298	15,011	15,972
Total Rounds Played	45,410	46,846	51,587	54,999
<u>Golf Passes</u>				
Premier Card Res.	28	28	33	35
Premier Card Res.-Refer-A-Friend	37	47	50	70
Premier Card Non-Res.	2	2	3	4
Premier Card Non-Res.-Refer-A-Friend	1	1	4	7
Player Card Res.	164	162	173	178
Player Card Res.-Refer-A-Friend	278	279	294	345
Player Card Non-Res.	9	11	15	13
Player Card Non-Res.-Refer-A-Friend	20	18	18	26
Student Card Res.	73	102	113	107
Student Card Non-Res.	10	10	7	6
Team Pass	0	1	0	2
Practice Range Res.	19	21	0	25
Practice Range Non-Res.	0	0	0	0
Total Passes	641	682	710	818
<u>Private Golf Cart Registration</u>				
Outside Storage	3	2	2	2
Home Storage	14	13	12	12
Total Private Golf Cart Registration	17	15	14	14

Marketing & Communication Relations

Sarah Lorenz, Communications Coordinator
August 2026 Activities Report

Marketing/Advertising:

- Meeting with agencies and vendors to plan 2027 ad schedules.
- General and targeted golf (Mid-West Family targeted display ads running seasonally).
- GoRockford advertising (Outdoor Activities, Family Fun).
 - Events and programs included in free community calendar
- Beloit Daily News (1/8th page ad, targeted towards golf).

Media Relations:

- Four Lakes Forest Preserve and fishing opportunities featured by Islands.com 8/15.
- Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve and fishing opportunities featured by Islands.com 8/19.
- Shirland acquisition picked up by FOX39, Rockford Register Star, My Stateline, Beloit Daily News.
- September digital newsletter to be sent to subscribers on 9/24.

Events/Programs:

- Past: Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Deer Run) 8/21, Guided Hike of Kishwaukee Gorge North with Natural Land Institute 8/29, Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Kilbuck Bluffs) 9/12.
- Upcoming: Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Deer Run) 9/25, Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Kilbuck Bluffs) 10/10, Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Deer Run) 10/23.

Presentations & Tabling

- Past: Winnebago County Fair 8/19-8/23.
- Upcoming: Lifescapes Senior Expo 9/19, Four Rivers Sanitation Authority Wellness Fair 10/2.

Print & Signage

- Booth materials for County Fair developed.
- Development of 2027 wall calendar continues.

Digital

- Website redevelopment project in Design Phase.

Marketing & Communication Relations

August 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

SOCIAL MEDIA (August 7 – September 3, 2026)

FPWC Facebook: 6,793 followers (+52)

- Reach: 27,390 (+62.1%)
- Engagement: 1,964 (+0.7%)
- Views: 76,519 (+8.1%)

FPWC Instagram: 2,233 followers (+47)

- Reach: 22,472 (+193.2%)
- Engagement: 693 (-22.2%)
- Views: 75,366 (+126.5%)

Human Resources

Jody Kennay, Human Resources Manager
August 2026 Activities Report

Full-Time New Hires	1
Full-Time Open Requisitions	2
Seasonal Hires	3 new
Resignations	0
Orientations	3 Orientations (seasonal employees)

Projects and Progress:

Seasonal Employees - efforts starting re seasonal employees who will be returning for the next season or those who will not be returning. Working with the County on processing status changes and with Managers to identify who will be returning.

Compensation Study - Analysis includes current state, pain points, research, compensation comparisons with similar agencies/organizations, recommendations for roll out, etc.

Staff Hiring - new Building and Maintenance Manager position filled. Employee will begin on September 21, 2026. 2 full time open positions that have been posted. Initial interviews ongoing.

Training for Employees - 100% compliance with first trainings required for Employees (Slips, Trips and Falls and Heat Exhaustion Prevention). Second round of training sent to Employees with a due date of September 30 for completion. The trainings are: Blood Borne Pathogens and Back Safety. More trainings will be delivered to employees in October.

RESOLUTION
No. 26-0908
RELEASE OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES AND
DESTRUCTION OF VERBATIM RECORDINGS

WHEREAS, pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), the Forest Preserve District of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners (the “Board”) has met and reviewed the minutes of all meetings of the Board dated below that are presently closed to the public; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds and declares that the minutes for closed sessions held on certain dates no longer require confidential treatment; and

WHEREAS, section 2.06(c) of the Open Meetings Act allows for destruction of closed session verbatim recordings more than eighteen (18) months old; and

WHEREAS, District staff and legal counsel have reviewed and made recommendations to the Board about the minutes of all meetings dated below.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT IN ILLINOIS, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE: The recitals set forth herein above shall be and they are hereby incorporated as if said recitals were fully set forth within this Section One.

SECTION TWO: The Board finds and hereby declares that closed session minutes or parts thereof of the following dates no longer require confidential treatment and can be released at this time:

December 16, 2014
July 15, 2026

SECTION THREE: The Board finds and hereby declares that the closed session minutes or parts thereof for the following dates cannot be released at this time because it remains necessary to protect the public interest or the privacy of an individual to keep said minutes confidential:

January 21, 2026
February 18, 2026
May 20, 2026
June 17, 2026
August 19, 2026
March 18, 2026
April 15, 2026

SECTION FOUR: The Board finds and hereby declares that the verbatim recordings of closed session minutes for the following dates may be destroyed by the recording secretary, as approved written minutes exist for those sessions:

December 16, 2014

SECTION FIVE: Any and all motions, policies or resolutions of the Forest Preserve District of Winnebago County in conflict with the provisions of this resolution shall be and are hereby repealed.

SECTION SIX: This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

PASSED THIS 16th day of September, 2026.

Voting YES _____

Voting NO _____

ABSTAINING _____

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners