

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Preserves Headquarters
May 17, 2023

PRESENT

Judy Barnard-via phone
Mike Eickman
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind- arrived 5:34pm
Cheryl Maggio
Jerry Paulson
Jeff Tilly

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Director of Finance
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager
Renee Pixler, Communications Coordinator

FPWC ATTORNEY

Roxanne Sosnowski-via phone 5:35pm-6:03pm

GUESTS

Alex Mills
Ann Wasser
Liz Wiener
Jillian Neece
Debbi Hamilton

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM, by President Tilly. Recording secretary Kristy Knapp called the roll.

PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE Mike Eickman led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL of AGENDA and MINUTES Audrey Johnson made a motion, Mike Eickman second to approve the minutes for April 19, 2023. Roll call vote taken. **Motion passed 6-0 (Gloria Lind absent).** No changes or additions were made to the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mike Holan asked to play a video from Arbor Day that Renee Pixler recorded of Jim Larson at Roland Olson talking about his favorite Bur Oak Tree (Robin Hood Oak). The video had 52,105 views, 1,964 reactions and 21 comments between Facebook and Instagram.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS / DISCUSSION

Severson Dells Agreement Committee Report and Update – Jeff Tilly updated the Board of Commissioners on the lease agreement since the last Board meeting. Jeff stated Severson Dells Education Foundation (SDEF) and their attorney reviewed the lease and responded to the Forest Preserve with four items of concern. Jeff mentioned he spoke with each Board member individually regarding the items of concern. The consensus from the Board was to donate \$30,000 to SDEF to help offset their programs this fiscal year, which is subject to the execution of the lease. The consensus was also that SDEF should be responsible for utility cost and custodial services for the Nature Center and lastly, since the canoes are not part of the lease, those can be negotiated at a later time once the lease is executed. If negotiated, this will be done as a mutually beneficial transaction. Those responses were given to Chris Samuelson, which he presented to the SDEF Board. Their response was to be given by May 12th in order for the Forest Preserve Board to be able to process everything and be brought to the Board this evening. After reaching out to Chris Samuelson, the SDEF responded with six new items that were in question on the lease agreement. The concerns consisted of issues with wording in the “Use of the Premises” section, renewal terms in the “Term of Lease” section, the expiration date in the “Surrender” section, issues with wording in the “Quiet Enjoyment” section, and the Court selected in the “Governing Law” section. After Jeff Tilly and Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski

reviewed the changes, it was indicated by Chris Samuelson that those changes would be acceptable. They hoped to have a signed copy by Monday, to be able to post a resolution on the agenda for this evening but no signed copy has been received as of yet. As of today, it was indicated that the lease agreement would be reviewed at the SDEF Board meeting tomorrow and anticipate we'll have a signed copy by tomorrow. If a signed copy is received, the Board gave consensus to authorize President, Jeff Tilly and Executive Director, Mike Holan to execute the lease agreement. If a signed copy of the lease agreement is not received by Friday, a Special Board meeting will be needed to decide on how to proceed. Audrey Johnson stated she sees no problem with this lease, if this is what they want. Audrey also questioned if SDEF would hesitate in reconsidering a partnership, which would be like the partnership that the Forest Preserve has with Klehm, which is wonderful. Jeff Tilly also stated it was interesting to know there was a campaign, so to speak, on how to disparage the Forest Preserve. It was also confirmed there is possibility of SDEF purchasing Elliott Golf Course from the Park District. Jerry Paulson asked if Mike Holan contacted NRPA regarding the transfer of the canoes and Mike Holan stated he did contact them and we have the ability to turn those over to another group. Roxanne Sosnowski clarified that a resolution would need to be passed declaring those as surplus property and finding that they didn't have any useful life left over. That would give the Forest Preserve the ability to transfer or auction those if chosen to do so. Mike Holan stated that the typical process the Forest Preserves takes is to put surplus items up on a government auction.

NEW BUSINESS

Finance Report – The Interim Financial Results and the Corporate Fund Details for November 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023 were distributed to the Board of Commissioners. Steve Chapman reviewed the finance reports with the Commissioners. Jeff Tilly thanked Steve.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for April – Gloria Lind made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for April in the amount of \$599,903.82. Roll call vote taken. **Motion passed 7-0.**

Local Government Efficiency Committee – Mike Holan addressed the Board regarding the Local Government Efficiency Committee. Mike stated in June of 2022 an Act was signed requiring government agencies to adopt an Efficiency Committee and a resolution has to be adopted by June 10th. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (FPWC) is required to form a Committee on Local Government Efficiency (Efficiency Committee) pursuant to 50 ILCS 70/1 et seq. (the Act). Pursuant to the Act, the Efficiency Committee shall: (1) study the Forest Preserves' governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State of Illinois, (2) collect data, research, and analysis as necessary to prepare a written report that includes recommendations with respect to increased accountability and efficiency, and (3) provide a written report to the administrative office of each county board of the county in which the governmental unit is located. The Efficiency Committee shall consist of the elected members of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, at least two residents from the district appointed by the President of the Board of Commissioners and approved by the Board of Commissioners, and the Executive Director of the Forest Preserves. The President desires to appoint two resident members of the Efficiency Committee, to be named by the July Board of Commissioners meeting, with the advice and consent of the Board of Commissioners. The Efficiency Committee shall meet at least three times and shall operate as a public body pursuant to the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act. The Efficiency Committee shall provide a written report to the administrative office of the Winnebago County Board no later than eighteen months after the day of the Efficiency Committee's formation. At that time the Efficiency Committee will be dissolved after it has made a written report to the Winnebago County Board and all other statutory requirements have been satisfied. The Board of Commissioners hereby forms its Committee on Local Government Efficiency consisting of the following individuals: Jeff Tilly, Board President, Judy Barnard, Commissioner, Mike Eickman, Commissioner, Audrey Johnson, Commissioner, Gloria Lind, Commissioner, Cheryl Maggio, Commissioner, Gerald Paulson, Commissioner, Michael Holan, Executive Director and Two resident members to be named. Jeff Tilly shall serve as the chairperson

of the Efficiency Committee and the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County's Board Secretary, Open Meetings Act Officer, and Freedom of Information Act Officer shall serve the Efficiency Committee in those respective roles. The Board of Commissioners should send Mike Holan any recommendations of citizens of Winnebago County they would like to recommend for the Efficiency Committee. The Efficiency Committee shall perform its duties in accordance with 50 ILCS 70/1 et seq. and the Board of Commissioners shall provide a written report to the Winnebago County Board no later than November 18, 2024, which is eighteen months after the day of the Efficiency Committee's formation. Gloria Line made a motion, Jerry Paulson seconded to adopt the resolution forming a Local Government Efficiency Committee. Roll call vote taken. **Motion passed 7-0.**

Accepting Funds from Conservation Fund – Mike Holan addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the acceptance of funds from the Conservation Fund. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (FPWC) purchased the 868.6-acre R. Robert Funderburg Forest Preserve on August 11, 2020. A FPWC volunteer detected the ultrasonic vocalizations of an Indiana Bat on the adjacent Severson Dells Forest Preserve via a Wildlife Acoustics Ecometer. The Conservation Fund has agreed to award FPWC \$50,000, or any greater amount that may be available, in funds from the Flanagan South Pipeline Mitigation Fund for FPWC's R. Robert Funderburg Forest Preserve Habitat Restoration for the Indiana Bat project. Jerry Paulson made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to accept the funds of \$50,000, or any greater amount that may be available from the Flanagan South Pipeline Mitigation Fund for FPWC's R. Robert Funderburg Forest Preserve Habitat Restoration for the Indiana Bat project. Roll call vote taken. **Motion passed 7-0.**

STAFF REPORTS

Preserve Operations - Vaughn Stamm, Scott Stewart, Scott Wallace, and Bryan Helmold submitted a written report.

Land and Development – Mike Brien, Mike Groves and Keith Krey submitted a written report.

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

Marketing – Renee Pixler submitted a written report. Renee announced the guided birding hike in partnership with Wild Birds Unlimited on May 21st at Colored Sands. A Guided walk on June 3rd with UW Heath and UIC Medicine of Rockford focused around health of wellness. June 10th will be the Hooked on Fun kids fishing derby and June 13th will be a Natural Resource focused guided hike at Colored Sands. Cheryl Maggio wants staff to know how much the Board appreciates the guided hikes and activity.

Human Resources/Volunteer Program Report – Sherry Winebaugh submitted a written report.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

May 21 - FPWC Guided Birding Hike at Colored Sands Forest Preserve from 9:00am – 11:00am

June 3 - Step into Spring Guided Walk with UW Health at Oak Ridge Forest Preserve from 9:00am-10:00am

June 10 - Hooked on Fun! Kid's Fishing Derby at Four Lakes Forest Preserve from 9:00am – 12:00pm

June 13 - FPWC Guided Hike at Colored Sands Forest Preserve from 5:30pm – 6:30pm

Mike Holan asked to host the Board meetings at Klehm in June and Macktown Living History in August.

Mike Holan announced the retirement of Deputy Tim Speer from the Sheriff's Office after almost 30 years of service. Deputy Speer hopes to continue his guided hikes in the Forest Preserves as a volunteer.

ADJOURNMENT

Audrey Johnson made a motion, Gloria Lind second to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 PM. Roll call vote taken. **Motion passed 7-0.**

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, June 21, 2023, Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary