

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Preserves Headquarters
March 16, 2022

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind
Cheryl Maggio
Jerry Paulson

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Finance
Vaughn Stamm, Preserve Operations
Ann Wasser, Education

ABSENT

Jeff Tilly

GUESTS

Alex Mills – Klehm Arboretum
Curly Thompson

ROLL CALL

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

PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE Audrey Johnson led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL of AGENDA and MINUTES Minutes for February 16, 2022 were approved. Personnel was added to closed session and Alex Mills was added under presentations.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Veteran's Discount – Curly Thompson – Curly Thompson addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the possibility of giving a Veteran's discount on the County golf passes. He asked that the Veterans be recognized by giving a discount for their service.

Alex Mills addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding a grant Klehm is interested in pursuing through the DNR's Museums Capital Grants Program. The grant would be used to remodel the restrooms in the Clarcor building. The minimum amount to be awarded is \$250,000 and the maximum would be \$750,000. Klehm would apply for the grant in the next couple months and should hear around this time next year if they were awarded the grant. Alex also mentioned that there is no match required for this grant. Cheryl Maggio stated that the grant is a reimbursement grant and was wondering if the Forest Preserve could help with some of the initial funding. There will be more discussion in the next couple months regarding the funding. If the grant is awarded, Alex mentioned that the construction would most likely happen in the fall of 2023. The Board gave a general consensus to proceed with the grant and construction if awarded.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

At last month's Board meeting Jerry Paulson asked if the Rockford Airport would be willing to pay for the property they want to use for mitigation. Mike Holan mentioned he contacted Zach and let him know that any request should come through the Board but also asked the questions about paying for the property. Zach responded and let Mike know that mitigation may not be needed. They may be able to put money into a fund, which anyone would be eligible. Zach also mentioned to Mike that they have also talked to other forest preserves and private entities about the mitigation.

Jerry Paulson wanted to address the different drainage types that were brought up at the solar farm presentation. He would like other options other than just sheet flow or point source. Jerry is wondering if they would consider either a stormwater treatment train or a bioswale instead. Mike Holan mentioned the company only addressed the two options but may consider other options.

NEW BUSINESS

Judy Barnard mentioned that there is a letter that was handed out to each Commissioner. The letter was brought forth by the Bell Bowl Prairie in efforts to show support to save the Bell Bowl Prairie. Judy asked the Commissioners if they would be willing to have the Forest Preserves' signature on the letter and the Board agreed to sign the letter. Judy also mentioned that there was a wonderful piece in National Geographic regarding the Bell Bowl Prairie.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for February – Judy Barnard made a motion, Gloria Lind seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for February in the amount of \$376,857.16. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Special Purchase of Greens Mower – Vaughn addressed the Board regarding the special purchase for the greens mower. This item is for the replacement of a greens mower for Ledges Golf Course. \$37,000 was allocated for the replacement of one greens mower for the Ledges Golf Course in the 2022 budget in the Capital Equipment Fund. The current greens mower is a 1997 Toro Greens Master 3100 with 6,800 hours, and is in rough condition, due to age and hours. Staff initially researched the possibility of doing a complete rebuild of this unit, however not all of the critical replacement components needed are available any longer. Due to the current market conditions only one vendor has indicated that they will be able to provide a greens mower that meets the desired specifications in the current 2022 fiscal year. Therefore, staff is requesting the board approve forgoing the normal bid process, in order to move forward in the most efficient and effective manner as a result of these unusual market conditions. Staff recommends awarding the purchase of one John Deere 2400 Precision Cut Triplex Mower to Revels Turf & Tractor, in the amount of \$36,452.11. Gloria Lind made a motion, Jerry Paulson seconded to approve the purchase of the Greens Mower. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Special Purchase of Golf Utility Carts – Vaughn addressed the Board regarding the special purchase for the golf utility carts. This item is for the replacement of three golf ranger utility carts for Atwood, Macktown, and Ledges Golf Courses. Of the current carts in use, only two of the three units remain operational and the remaining two are in rough condition as well, due to age and hours. \$30,000 was allocated for the replacement of three golf ranger utility carts in the 2022 budget in the Capital Equipment Fund. Due to current market conditions only one vendor has indicated that they will be able to provide a ranger utility cart that meets the desired specifications in the current 2022 fiscal year. Therefore, staff is requesting the board approve forgoing the normal bid process, in order to move forward in the most efficient and effective manner as a result of these unusual market conditions. Staff recommends awarding the purchase of three Toro Workman GTX EFI carts to Reinders Inc. in the amount of \$32,633.64. As a result of some budgeted equipment not being able to be purchased in the 2022, there are sufficient funds available in the 2022 Capital budget, in order to provide for the additional \$2,633.64 over the base \$30,000 amount budgeted. Judy Barnard made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to approve the purchase of the Golf Utility Carts. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Mike Holan let the Board know that staff is looking to regroup the capital equipment and capital projects due to the issues with production and availability. New items may be brought to the Board that were not originally on the capital list and approved in the budget.

STAFF REPORTS

Preserve Operations - Vaughn Stamm, Scott Stewart, Scott Wallace, and Bryan Helmold submitted a written report. Vaughn mentioned that staff is working on the 100 year anniversary event and that May 14th is still a go. There are plans in place for a meeting next week with staff.

Land and Development – Natural Resource Staff submitted a written report. Mike Holan mentioned that the pictures in the report are of staff from the Deer Management program and the pallets are of meat that was donated.

Golf Operations – Vaughn Stamm, Rich Rosenstiel, Tyler Knapp, and Mark Freiman submitted a written report. Mike Holan mentioned that Atwood opened today, Ledges plans to open next week and Macktown to follow. This will depend on weather conditions and what work can get done at the courses.

Environmental Education – Ann Wasser submitted a written report. Ann reported that there are 78 community science volunteers so far this year. Ashlyn, the new AmeriCorps member started a few weeks ago and will be at next month's Board meeting. Ann stated they had their first field trip and are getting busy with after school programs. Audrey Johnson recognized Ann for presenting at the Rockford Area Arts Awards.

Human Resources/Volunteer Program Report – Donna Bileto submitted a written report.

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

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session at 6:01pm. At 7:33pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

April 5 - Community Science: Bat Training, Virtual from 6:30pm – 7:30pm

April 12 - Community Science: Bumblebee Training, Virtual from 6:30pm – 7:30pm

April 23 - Pollinator Palooza, Severson Dells Nature Center from 10:00am – 3:00pm

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, April 20, 2022, Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary