

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Forest Preserve Headquarters
September 18, 2024

PRESENT

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

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Director of Finance
Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources
Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager
Renee Pixler, Communications Coordinator
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Kristy Knapp, Administrative Services Manager
Liz Hucker, Wildlife Biologist

GUESTS

Alex Mills Ann Wasser Craig Campbell
Eve Kirk Kim Boyden Emily Porter

ROLL CALL The meeting was called to order at 5:30PM, by President Jeff Tilly. Recording secretary Emily Wendlandt 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 to approve the minutes for the August 21, 2024 meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.** Mike Eickman made a motion to approve the minutes for the September 13, 2024 meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AWARDS, and PRESENTATIONS

Craig Campbell spoke to the board to give them insight on the history of the Holt house.

Eve Kirk, a volunteer and member of Macktown Living History, let the board know of the Frenchman's Frolic event at Macktown Living History. Kirk also reminded the board once again of the septic issue at Macktown.

Ann Wasser, Executive Director of Severson Dells, provided the board with an update of the recent happenings at Severson Dells Nature Center.

Liz Hucker, Wildlife Biologist, gave a brief presentation on her work with the endangered Blanding's Turtle. The data collected in her efforts will be used to better assess the decline of this turtle species and devise a plan to preserve their habitat.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Jeff Tilly updated the board on his meeting with Chris Samuelson.

NEW BUSINESS

Fee Schedules – Mike Holan made the board aware of the changes that are proposed to be made to the Forest Preserve's fee schedules. A 3% fee for all customer credit card transactions is proposed to offset

FPWC's customer credit card charges. Also proposed is a cancellation fee if golf tee times are not cancelled at least 24 hours prior to the tee time.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for August– Steve Chapman presented to the board the bills for August. Gloria Lind made a motion to authorize the payment of the bills for August in the amount of \$747,505.48. **Motion passed unanimously.**

License Agreement with Sugar River Adventures – Mike Holan prefaced the board about the initial agreement between the Forest Preserves and Sugar River Adventures that began in 2020. This new agreement is a 5-year agreement with a 30 day out clause. Audrey Johnson made a motion to approve of the license agreement renewal with Sugar River Adventures. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Authorizing Participation in the ComEd Green Region Grant Program – Mike Brien reminded the board of the \$10,0000 grant that was awarded to the Forest Preserves for their work at Funderburg. The match money will be included in the budget. Jerry Paulson made a motion to authorize participation in the ComEd Green Region Grant program. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Vehicle Replacement Purchase from Insurance Claim – Vaughn Stamm gave the board background as to the vehicle accident that had occurred to warrant such resolution. Mike Eickman made a motion to approve the vehicle replacement purchase from the insurance claim. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Annual Budget and Appropriations Layover – Steve Chapman brought attention to the handouts that were given to reflect the changes that have been made to the budget since the August board meeting. Judy Barnard made a motion to approve of the annual budget and appropriations layover. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Annual Tax Levy Layover – Audrey Johnson made a motion to approve of the annual tax levy layover. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Allocation of Sponsorship for the Burpee Museum Nature Nook – Mike Brien made the board aware that the Forest Preserves has been working closely with the Burpee Museum on their new Nature Nook, which will have native vegetation. Burpee has asked if the Forest Preserves could allocate \$4,000.00 toward the funding of the nature nook. Jerry Paulson motioned to amend the resolution to indicate that the funds to Burpee will be in the form of plants and installation and not just a cash donation. A roll call vote was taken to amend resolution #24-0907. Judy Barnard made a motion to approve amending of the resolution. **Motion passed unanimously.**

STAFF REPORTS

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

Land and Development/Volunteer Program Report – Mike Brien, Mike Groves, Keith Krey and Liz Hucker 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.

Human Resources – Sherry Winebaugh submitted a written report.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

1. September 24 - Guided Hike at Hononegah Forest Preserve starting at 5:30pm.
2. September 28 - Nine and Dine at Ledges Golf Course.
3. October 5 - Walk with U Guided Hike at Roland Olson from 9:00am-10:00am.
4. October 5 - Backpacking with Burpee; Fossils at Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve starting at 10:00am.
5. October 17 - Trees & Shrubs for Wildlife Program Hike & Presentation starting at 5:00pm.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:40 PM Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session to discuss personnel.

ADJOURNMENT

Jerry Paulson made a motion to go back into open session at 7:50 PM. No action was taken while in closed session. Mike Holan notified the board that the trademarks for the names ‘Severson Dells’ and ‘Severson Dells Nature Center’ are complete. The board was notified that the Trademark Attorney advises FPWC to place notification on anything with those names to have registered trademark insignia and the statement "Registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office". FPWC’s corporate attorney advises that FPWC should send a cease-and-desist letter to Severson Dells Education Foundation to discontinue using either name. Mike Eickman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 PM. Motion passed unanimously. Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, October 23rd at Preserve Headquarters.

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Wendlandt
Recording Secretary