

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Forest Preserve Headquarters
September 20, 2023

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
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources
Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager
Renee Pixler, Communications Coordinator
Emily Wendlandt, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS

Alex Mills
Debbi Hamilton
Ann Wasser
Andrea Wallace Noble
Jillian Neece
Harn Patel

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM, by President Jeff 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 Jerry Paulson made a motion, Gloria Lind seconded to approve the minutes for August 16, 2023. **Motion passed unanimously.** Mike Eickman made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to approve the minutes for September 6, 2023. **Motion passed unanimously.** No changes or additions were made to the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ann Wasser – Ann Wasser handed out a copy of her speech to the Board of Commissioners. Ann addressed the Board regarding the lack of communication between the Severson Dells and Forest Preserve Boards. Ann provided an update to the Board on the operations at Severson Dells and how they continue to support the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County. Ann gave examples of how they continue to support the Forest Preserves and gave an update on their regular operations. Ann mentioned Chris Samuelson reached out to each of the board members to discuss what the future of the relationship looks like between Severson Dells and the Forest Preserves. She appreciates those that have responded and encourages those that have not responded to reach out to improve the communication challenge and work toward mending the relationship moving forward.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS / DISCUSSION

Jerry Paulson brought up the discussion regarding repairs to the deer lodge at Severson Dells. At the August board meeting, Jerry Paulson suggested having a structural survey done. After the August meeting Jerry Paulson asked Gary Anderson to give the Forest Preserves an estimate on what it would cost to do a structural inventory on the building. After visiting the deer lodge, Gary Anderson made several suggestions to staff about repairs that need to be completed and the structural inventory would cost \$5,000. Jerry Paulson handed out a copy of the Severson Dells deed and mentioned it's important to honor our agreement made back in 1975. Jerry Paulson read to the Board what the assessment would include. Mike Holan mentioned an estimate was given 2 years ago for the siding, windows and doors and at that time it would have cost \$155,000 for these non-structural items. If the structural repairs are done, it may cost at least \$250,000 for repairs. Mike Holan asked what's the value of the building and what will be the use of the building down the road. The main items of concern are the

woodpeckers, rodents and carpenter ants. Mike Holan mentioned they spoke with a pest control company and the pest control company stated it's not the time of year to deal with the carpenter ants, so that portion will be dealt with in the spring. The Board discussed the functionality of the building and realize that when the building was built that it was not built for what it's used for now. Audrey Johnson mentioned there should be money set aside in the budget for major repairs to keep the building functional until a plan is put together. Gloria Lind asked for staff to look at what a new building would cost. If a new building is built, it would need to be determined who would invest and if a commitment would be needed.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for August – Judy Barnard made a motion, Gloria Lind seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for August in the amount of \$604,714.61. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bid for Atwood Golf Maintenance Shop Roof Replacement – Vaughn Stamm addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the acceptance of bids for Atwood Golf Maintenance Shop Roof Replacement. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners approved the replacement roof for the Atwood Golf Maintenance Shop as part of the 2023 Capital budget. A mandatory on-site pre-bid meeting was held on August 22nd. A bid opening was conducted on September 8th with a total of four (4) sealed bids being submitted for this project. Staff budgeted \$54,000 for this building improvement in the 2023 Capital budget. Staff recommends awarding the bid to the qualified lowest bidder. Mike Eickman made a motion, Gloria Lind seconded to approve the awarding of the project bid to Freeport Industrial Roofing, 3507 IL. Route 26 South, Freeport, Illinois 61032, in the amount of \$54,845.00 for the replacement of the roof at the Atwood Golf Maintenance Shop. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Annual Budget and Appropriations Layover – Mike Holan discussed the changes from last month's draft budget. Changes include, \$400,000 in grant money for the OSLAD grant and \$100,000 in Capital Outlay in the Corporate Budget for land acquisition. Jerry Paulson proposed putting \$100,000 into line item 439.51 for environmental education for a total of \$136,000. Audrey Johnson mentioned adding \$35,000 for environmental education. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District fiscal year budget operates from November 1 through October 31 each year. The District's Board of Commissioners has been presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for review and adoption. 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. Audrey Johnson made a motion and Judy Barnard seconded to amend the budget to add \$35,000 into the Environmental Education Corporate Budget for Severson Dells, changing the amount to \$71,000. **Roll call vote taken. Motion passes 5-1 (Cheryl Maggio voted no).** Audrey Johnson made a motion and Gloria Lind seconded to amend the resolution to state "amended budget" and to adopt the budget assumptions as amended. **Roll call vote taken. Motion passes 4-2 (Cheryl Maggio and Jerry Paulson voted no).** Gloria Lind made a motion and Judy Barnard seconded to approve the resolution as amended and that the Board will layover the 2023-2024 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for public review and comment until the October 25, 2023 Board meeting. **Roll call vote taken. Motion passes 4-2 (Cheryl Maggio and Jerry Paulson voted no).** Mike Holan reminded the Board that next month's Board meeting will start 15 minutes earlier.

Annual Tax Levy Layover – The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District fiscal year budget operates from November 1 through October 31 each year. The District's Board of Commissioners have been presented a proposed tax levy that must be approved to finance the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance that has been presented to the Board. 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. Gloria Lind made a motion and Mike Eickman seconded that the Board will layover the 2023-2024 Tax Levy for public review and comment until the October 25, 2023 Board meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

STAFF REPORTS

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

Land and Development/Volunteer Program Report – Mike Brien, Mike Groves and Keith Krey submitted a written report. Mike Brien announced he is working on farm lease agreements which are currently one-year agreements. He is looking to change the agreements to five-year agreements with required conservation measures that are awarded by a competitive bid process. The announcement will go out next week and accepting bids all October. The bids for Macktown, Seward Bluffs, Severson Dells and the Oswald property will be presented at the November Board meeting. The Funderburg agreement will be kept the same since it will be out of production in two years.

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.

Mike Holan mentioned there are new laptops for the Board members to help eliminate the use of paper at the Board meetings. Kristy and Emily have loaded all the information for the Board meetings onto the laptops and there is a link for email access.

Jerry Paulson thanked Mike Brien for helping lead the Nature Preserve Commission hike at Pecatonica River Nature Preserve.

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session at 6:57 pm. At 7:23 pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

September 24 - Guided Birding Hike at Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve from 9:00am – 10:00am

September 29- Howl at the Moon Night Hike at Oak Ridge Forest Preserve at 7:00pm

October 7- Walk With U - Guided Walk at Colored Sands Forest Preserve from 9:00am – 10:00am

October 11 - FPWC Guided Hike at Funderburg Forest Preserve from 5:30pm-6:30pm

October 28 - Howl at the Moon Night Hike at Funderburg Forest Preserve at TBD

ADJOURNMENT

Gloria Lind made a motion Mike Eickman second to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 PM. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, October 25, 2023, Forest Preserve Headquarters

Budget Hearing – 5:15 PM on Wednesday, October 25, Forest Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary