

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Forest Preserve Headquarters
January 21, 2026

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman
Gloria Lind – Arrived at 5:37pm
Cheryl Maggio – Arrived at 5:32pm
Jerry Paulson
Emily Porter - Absent
Jeff Tilly

STAFF

Daniel Olson, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Director of Finance
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Sarah Lorenz, Communications Coordinator
Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources
Jody Kennay, Human Resources Manager
Kristy Knapp, Administrative Services Manager
Emily Wendlandt, Board Recording Secretary

GUESTS

**Ray Ferguson Alex Mills Eve Kirk Gary Anderson Ann Wasser
Debra Hamilton Becky Maier Masha Roberts Ethan Schultz**

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM, by President Jeff Tilly.

ROLL CALL Recording secretary Emily Wendlandt called the roll.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Judy Barnard made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 17, 2025 meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

Bills for December - Steve Chapman presented to the Board the bills for December. Mike Eickman made a motion to authorize the payment of the bills for December in the amount of \$622,372.23. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Purchase of Golf Utility Vehicle– Vaughn Stamm presented to the Board the resolution to approve of the purchase of a golf utility truckster for Ledges Golf Course. Judy Barnard made a motion to approve of the purchase. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Budget Amendment for Golf Personnel – Vaughn Stamm presented to the Board the Budget amendment for the additional golf employees that were approved at the last meeting. Judy Barnard made a motion to approve of the Budget amendment. **Roll Call Vote Taken. Motion passed unanimously.**

Budget Amendment for Natural Resource Building – Steve Chapman presented to the Board the budget amendment to reappropriate the money into this year’s budget for the Natural Resource building. **A Roll Call Vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.**

Length of Service Bonus Resolution – Daniel Olson presented to the Board the resolution to implement a length of service bonus for staff. Judy Barnard made a motion to approve of the resolution. **Motion passed unanimously.**

DISCUSSION

Holt House Next Steps – Gary Anderson presented to the Board the next steps for the Holt House as a part of the Save the Holt House Committee’s agreement to provide updates to the Board. Gary Anderson provided the Board with a timeline of events that has a proposed completion date of May 1st, 2027.

STAFF REPORTS

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

Natural Resource Management – 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. Vaughn Stamm let the Board know that the new Food & Beverage position for golf has been filled and that the Golf Manager position has been narrowed down to its top three candidates.

Communications Coordinator – Sarah Lorenz submitted a written report.

Human Resources – Jody Kennay submitted a written report.

Partner Groups – Alex Mills let the Board know that the OSLAD Grant for the Clarcor Pavilion Restroom Renovation Project was not approved.

Dan Olson announced that the Forest Preserves has acquired its 45th preserve along the Sugar River named the Paula Swanson Forest Preserve.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:16 PM Gloria Lind made a motion to go into closed session to discuss personnel. At 7:40pm the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED – Consent Agenda

Mike Eickman made a motion to approve of the following closed session minutes:

December 20th, 2023, January 17th, 2024, March 20th, 2024, November 20th, 2024, December 18th, 2024, February 19th, 2025, September 17th, 2025, October 22, 2025 and November 19th, 2025.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Approval to Release, destroy meeting verbatim minutes – Judy Barnard made a motion to approve of the resolution. **Motion Passed unanimously.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

1. Winter Tree & Shrub ID Hike at Hononegah Forest Preserve starting at 10:00 a.m. on January 29th.
2. Snowshoeing Excursion with Rocktown Adventures at Kieselburg Forest Preserve starting at 1:00 p.m. on February 7th.
3. Calling Frog Monitor Training, starting at 6:00pm virtually on February 12th.

ADJOURNMENT

Judy Barnard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48PM; **motion passed unanimously.**

Next regular Board Meeting– 5:30 PM Wednesday, February 18th, Forest Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Wendlandt
Recording Secretary