

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Preserves Headquarters
March 15, 2023

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind-arrived 5:36pm
Cheryl Maggio
Jerry Paulson
Jeff Tilly

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources
Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager
Renee Pixler, Communications Coordinator

FPWC ATTORNEY

Roxanne Sosnowski

GUESTS

Stacy Wallace	Liz Wiener	Jennifer Kuroda
Craig G. Campbell	Cathy Ott	Jackie Kuroda
Alex Mills	M. Schneider	M.J. Mill
Patty Oliveri	Dana Wallace	Jack Armstrong
Phil McIntosh	Ann Wasser	Steve Schmaeny
Connie McIntosh	Laura Sjoquist	Brandon Wallace
Zach Dal Pra	Jessie Crow Mermel	Shae Morelock
Julie Uram	Frank Langholf	

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 Audrey Johnson led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL of AGENDA and MINUTES Mike Eickman made a motion, Judy Barnard second to approve the minutes for February 15, 2023. **Motion passed unanimously.** No changes or additions were made to the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Clarcor Pavilion Restroom Renovation – Alex Mills addressed the Board regarding the proposed expansion and remodel of the Clarcor Pavilion Restrooms. Floor plan designs were shown to the Board, along with the cost estimate of \$275,000 and a resolution that was passed by Klehm’s Board of Directors. The project will be submitted for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Museum’s Capital grant program. They start taking applications April 3 through May 31, with funds being awarded between October 2023 and January 2024. This would be a great winter project with hopes to finish in the spring of 2024.

Dwarf Conifer Garden – Alex Mills showed the Board an overview of the garden design. There are around 36 trees, which are very slow growing but very unique specimens. The garden will be located along the path near the maintenance shop. The project will be in excess of \$10,000 and once completed, will be transferred to the Forest Preserves as an asset. A resolution will be brought to the next Forest Preserve Board meeting. This project is donor funded by Klehm’s generous donors.

Shade Structure – Alex Mills addressed the Board regarding a shade structure for the Nancy Olson Children’s Garden. Images of a butterfly shape shade structure installed in a park in California was shown to the Board. The proposed colors for the shade structure that would be installed at Klehm, would be orange

and black to represent a monarch butterfly. The shade structure would be perfect for children to play under and would be next to the observation tower. There are funding sources lined up and the approximate cost will be \$43,000 - \$50,000. The structure would be turned over to the Forest Preserve once complete.

Nathan Hill – Nathan Hill addressed the Board regarding the requirements of stating your address for public comment per the Open Meeting Act and Attorney General. Nathan also asked that items on the agenda clearly describe what the subject matter will be for a resolution or ordinance.

Craig Campbell – 2431 Highcrest Road, Rockford IL. Craig asked the Board to rise to the occasion for a successful negotiation and equitable operating agreement between the Commission and Severson Dells Education Foundation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS / DISCUSSION

Committee Report and Update – Cheryl Maggio mentioned that the Severson Dells' agreement and lease agreement are being brought forward to the Board at tonight's meeting. The lease agreement was at the request of Severson Dells.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Holan mentioned he has been in contact with Zach Oakley of the Rockford Airport. Zach is allowing our staff on the Bell Bowl Prairie property to remove soils and move them to a site on Forest Preserve property. Zach is also giving us permission in the future to collect seed from the remaining six acres. There may be a possible volunteer workday to do some planting in the future once we have definitive dates.

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 \$335,630.26. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Klehm Arboretum Clarcor Pavilion Restroom Renovation – Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc. (Klehm), as a 501c3 organization, is eligible to serve as the applicant for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Museums Capital Grant Program. Klehm finds that the restroom facilities located at the Clarcor Pavilion at Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden (Carl & Lois Klehm Forest Preserve), being property owned by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, were initially constructed in 1994 and despite the continued proper maintenance and upkeep provided by Klehm are in need of renovation due to age and inadequate capacity for the current user base. As the organization has continued to increase annual facility visitation through the continued expansion of educational program offerings in conjunction with continued investment in capital improvements to the property. Klehm specifically finds that in order to best serve all facility users, a renovation of existing restroom facilities shall also include the expansion of existing facilities in order to increase user capacity and to comply with all applicable laws and regulations regarding user accessibility. Klehm is seeking to secure \$275,000 or more dollars in grant funding, with no matching funds required, in order to provide for this renovation and expansion of the restroom facilities at the Clarcor Pavilion, and to-date has incurred architectural expenses of \$4,623.75 to support this project. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is in agreement with the findings above, made by Klehm, and supports the effort by their organization to improve the property in this manner in order to best serve all facility users. The Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County will endeavor to provide financial support to Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc. in the event a grant award is made in order to relieve any financial burden placed upon the 501c3 organization in carrying out this reimbursement-based grant funded project that will result in an improvement to Forest Preserves property. Cheryl Maggio commented that there will need to be a mini audit done by a CPA for the grant and that the IDNR usually charges 1% for attainment that doesn't come back, which is an expense. Jerry Paulson made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to approve the authorization of Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden to apply for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Museums Capital Grant for restroom facility renovations at the Clarcor Pavilion at Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Gardens. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Asset Donation for the Photovoltaic System from Klehm Arboretum – Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc. (Klehm) made improvements to the Klehm Visitors Center building, owned by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, with permission from the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County per the agreement between both organizations. The improvements include the installation of a 29.7 kW photovoltaic system upon the building consisting of racking, solar panels, inverters, electrical system upgrades and an internet-based monitoring system, including all design work and all permitted and necessary electrical work to accomplish said installation. Klehm intends to continue to fund and perform regular and routine maintenance to the entire Visitors Center, including the photovoltaic system, as detailed in the operating agreement by which both organizations are party to. After receiving reimbursement via an Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grant, Klehm has invested a total of \$28,911.43 of its organizational funds into said improvements. The Board of Directors of Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc. has passed a Resolution approving the donation of each described improvement to the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County. Gloria Lind made a motion, Jerry Paulson seconded to accept gift the Photovoltaic System improvements to the Visitors Center, including all professional design and electrical services rendered, collectively valued at \$72,276.43 from Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bids for Utility Vehicle – Vaughn Stamm addressed the Board regarding the Utility Vehicle Bid. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners approved a purchase of a Heavy-Duty Utility Vehicle as part of the 2023 capital budget, which was a carryover from the 2022 budget due to production delays. Staff recommends the current low bid be awarded to Burris Equipment for a Cushman Truckster XD – 2WD totaling \$ 31,133.00, which staff budgeted \$27,500 for this piece of equipment in the 2023 budget. Gloria Lind made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to approve the purchase for \$31,133.00 from Burris Equipment for the Cushman Truckster XD- 2WD Heavy Duty Utility Vehicle. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bids for Macktown Water Main – Vaughn Stamm addressed the Board regarding the Macktown water main bid. The current water system at Macktown golf course clubhouse is on a well, which requires annual testing. Over the last several years, the well has been signaled for having high nitrates. Since there is a water line already coming into the preserve to the Visitor Center, staff is recommending tapping into that water source. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners approved the project to install and connect to municipal water supply at Macktown Clubhouse as part of the 2023 capital budget. Staff recommends the current low bid be awarded to N-Trak Group in Loves Park, Illinois for installation and connection of water main supply. The total cost as specified is \$38,750 which staff budgeted \$70,000 for the work in the 2023 budget. A provisional 10% project overrun not to exceed \$3,875.00, is being provided. Gloria Lind made a motion, Jerry Paulson seconded to approve awarding the Water Main Connection at Macktown Golf Clubhouse in the amount of \$38,750, with a provision for up to an additional \$3,875.00 in project overruns from N-Trak Group in Loves Park, Illinois. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bids for Ledges Clubhouse HVAC Replacement – Vaughn Stamm addressed the Board regarding the bid for HVAC replacement at Ledges. Currently there are multiple furnaces and air conditioning units that serve the facility. At the mandatory pre-bid meeting there was discussion that we should explore additional options regarding the kitchen area and how it wasn't being sufficiently serviced with airflow and cooling in the summertime. An addendum was sent out to add a separate standalone airflow and cooling unit just for the kitchen which would be more cost effective and didn't require additional ductwork. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners approved the replacement of HVAC systems at Ledges Clubhouse as part of the 2023 capital budget. Staff recommends the current low bid be awarded to Rockford Heating and Air Conditioning for the replacement of HVAC systems at the Ledges Clubhouse. The total cost as specified is \$59,965, which the staff budgeted \$45,000 for this project in the 2023 budget. There are sufficient funds in the FY 2023 Capital Project Budget fund balance in order to cover the difference of \$14,965. Audrey Johnson made a motion, Mike Eickman seconded to

approve the project for \$59,965 from Rockford Heating and Air Conditioning for the replacement of HVAC systems at the Ledges Clubhouse. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Severson Dells Education Foundation Agreement – Cheryl Maggio updated the Board on the status of the agreement. Roxanne Sosnowski reviewed the Severson Dells Education Foundation Agreement with the Board. Severson Dells Education Foundation and the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County have operated under a mutually beneficial agreement to work together to provide educational and nature-related opportunities for the citizens of Winnebago County. Severson Dells Nature Center staff have served as Forest Preserves of Winnebago County staff as a term of this agreement. The agreement has been revised to turn the oversight of Severson Dells Nature Center staff to the Severson Dells Education Foundation, which \$80,000 of their salaries and benefits have been waived in the negotiations of the agreement. The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County will continue to provide and maintain the preserve property to be used by the Severson Dells Education Foundation for educating the public about the natural environment. The Preserve facilities and buildings are provided for Severson Dells Nature Center as the location of programs and educational activities offered to the public. The new agreement shall take effect at such time as approved by both the Board of the Severson Dells Education Foundation and the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and will continue in effect until such time as both parties agree to amend or either party elects to terminate the agreement (per the terms of the agreement). Mike Eickman made a motion, Cheryl Maggio seconded to adopt the Severson Dells Education Foundation Agreement. Jerry Paulson made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to amend Section 4B to remove the words “for children”. Roll Call vote taken. **Motion passes 6-0.** Jerry Paulson made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to amend the agreement to remove Section 8. Roll Call vote taken. **Motion passes 4-2** (Judy Barnard and Cheryl Maggio voted no). Jeff Tilly asked for approval of the dually amended agreement. Roll Call vote taken. **Motion passes 6-0.**

Severson Dells Education Foundation Lease for Nature Center – Roxanne Sosnowski reviewed the Lease Agreement for Severson Dells Nature Center. The building was converted into a Nature Center, which has been operated by the Severson Dells Education Foundation and the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County through a long-standing agreement. Severson Dells Education Foundation has requested to lease the Severson Dells Nature Center. The Board of Commissioners for the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County agree to lease the Nature Center to the Severson Dells Education Foundation for \$1.00 per year. Forest Preserves of Winnebago County legal counsel Sosnowski/Szeto has drafted a lease agreement between Severson Dells Education Foundation and the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County for a period of ten years, with provision for lease termination should the need arise. Judy Barnard made a motion, Mike Eickman seconded to authorize the Lease Agreement between the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and Severson Dells Education Foundation for a period of ten years, with the understanding that the lease may be further amended with the approval of both the lessor and the lessee. Roll Call vote taken. **Motion passes 6-0.**

STAFF REPORTS

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

Land and Development – Mike Brien and Mike Groves submitted a written report. Mike Brien mentioned deer culling finished up with three deer testing positive for CWD out of 60 deer. Tomorrow they will be bringing the estimated 2,300-2,400 lbs. of deer meat from the processor to the food pantries. All the deer meat is donated to the food pantries.

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

Marketing – Renee Pixler submitted a written report.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

March 16 - Community Science Training - Bluebird Monitors, Virtual at 6:30pm

March 23 - Community Science Training - Budburst Monitors, Virtual at 6:30pm

April 6 - Community Science Training - Bat Monitors, Virtual at 6:30pm

April 13 - Community Science Training - Bumblebee Monitors, Virtual at 6:30pm

Mike Brien announced the four Community Science Trainings that will be held between now and the next Board meeting. Keith Krey will be hosting the trainings via Zoom, with hopes to return to in person next year.

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion, Judy Barnard second to go into closed session at 6:46 pm for personnel. At 8:49 pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

Audrey Johnson made a motion, Jerry Paulson second to go into closed session at 8:49 pm for land acquisition. At 9:31 pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Jerry Paulson made a motion, Judy Barnard second to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 PM. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary