

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County  
BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 – 5:30 PM  
Forest Preserve Headquarters



**AGENDA**

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>Page</b> | <b>A. ROLL CALL</b>  |
|             | <b>B. PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE</b>   |
|             | <b>C. APPROVAL of MINUTES</b><br>Minutes for November 11 - Board Governance Training<br>Minutes for November 15 – Board Meeting  |
|             | <b>D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AWARDS, and PRESENTATIONS</b>  |
|             | <b>E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS / DISCUSSION</b>   |
|             | <b>F. NEW BUSINESS</b><br>1. Rockford Tax Rebate   |
|             | <b>H. ACTION ITEMS</b>   |
| 1.          | 1. Bills for November  |
| 3.          | 2. Acceptance of Purchase of Loader Tractors   |
| 5.          | 3. Approval to Amend Employee Handbook   |
| 30.         | 4. Acceptance of Purchase of Klehm Arboretum Children’s Double Hammock Play Feature  |
|             | <b>I. UPDATES and REPORTS</b>  |
| 33.         | 1. Preserve Operations   |
| 34.         | 2. Land and Development  |
| 36.         | 3. Golf  |
| 38.         | 4. Marketing   |
| 39.         | 5. Human Resources   |
| 40.         | 6. Law Enforcement   |
|             | <b>J. CLOSED SESSION</b><br>1. Land Acquisition  |
|             | <b>K. ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS</b><br>1. December 21 – Restoration Work Day at Pecatonica Forest Preserve from 9:00am – 12:00pm.<br>2. December 29 – Howl at the Moon Hike at Hononegah Forest Preserve starting at 4:30pm.<br>3. January 4 – Restoration Work Day at Roland Olson from 9:00am – 12:00pm.<br>4. January 11 – Restoration Work Day at Macktown Forest Preserve from 9:00am – 12:00pm. |
|             | <b>L. ADJOURNMENT</b>  |

Next regular Board Meeting– 5:30 PM Wednesday, January 17, [Forest Preserve Headquarters](#)

Anyone wishing to address the Board must call 815-877-6100 or email [ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org](mailto:ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org) in advance of the meeting.

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County**  
**Authorization to Process Payment of Bills**



December 20, 2023

**TO: THE AUDITOR AND TREASURER OF THE  
FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY.**

Your Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners, to whom were referred the following bills in the amount of **\$ 497,970.42** against the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, have reviewed and approved and therefore respectfully request that orders be drawn on the account of the Forest Preserve District for their payment:

CORPORATE FUND	3001	259,709.09
BOTANICAL GARDEN FUND	3120	4,846.00
HEALTH BENEFITS FUND	3185	42,117.94
SOCIAL SECURITY FUND	3192	13,649.54
RETIREMENT FUND	3193	13,387.90
IMPROVEMENT & DEV. FUND	3302	92,084.42
CORPORATE FUND	3402	<u>72,175.53</u>
		<b>\$ 497,970.42</b>

Respectfully submitted,

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Steve Chapman, Finance Director

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Date

**RESOLUTION**

**No. 23-1201**

**PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR NOVEMBER**

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserve incurs annual and monthly operating and capital expenditures during its budget cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Finance Department compiled the attached invoices relating to Forest Preserve expenditures to be paid for the month of November; and

WHEREAS, our Finance Director, Steve Chapman, has reviewed the invoices and avows them to be accurate and appropriate for payment; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board authorizes the payment of the attached compilation of bills totaling \$497,970.42 to be paid by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County for the month of November 2023.

Voting YES \_\_\_\_\_

Voting NO \_\_\_\_\_

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 20th day of December, 2023.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

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Jeff Tilly, President  
Board of Commissioners

## RESOLUTION

### No. 23-1202

#### PURCHASE REPLACEMENT COMPACT UTILITY LOADER TRACTORS

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners approved replacement of two (2) Loader Tractors as part of the 2024 capital budget; and,

WHEREAS, the current Sourcewell Cooperative Contract #031121-DAC is applicable for this purchase; and,

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is a member of Sourcewell, and therefore eligible to receive the 18% discount provided under this contract, which has undergone a formal bidding process; and,

WHEREAS, the piece of equipment would be provided from a local dealer, Mid-State Equipment in Janesville, Wisconsin, and would be for two (2) 2024 John Deere 4052M Heavy Duty Compact Utility Loader Tractors with pallet fork attachments; and,

WHEREAS, the total cost as specified is \$106,310.64 for which the staff budgeted \$110,000.00 for these pieces of equipment in the 2024 budget;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County approve the purchase for \$106,310.64 from Mid-State Equipment in Janesville, Wisconsin for two (2) 2024 John Deere 4052M Heavy Duty Compact Utility Loader Tractors with pallet fork attachments.

Voting YES \_\_\_\_\_

Voting NO \_\_\_\_\_

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 20th day of December 2023.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

---

Jeff Tilly, President  
Board of Commissioners



**JOHN DEERE**

**Customer:**

**Quotes are valid for 30 days from the creation date or upon contract expiration, whichever occurs first.**

**A Purchase Order (PO) or Letter of Intent (LOI) including the below information is required to proceed with this sale. The PO or LOI will be returned if information is missing.**

Vendor: Deere & Company

- 2000 John Deere Run  
Cary, NC 27513

- Signature on all LOIs and POs with a signature line
- Contract name or number; or JD Quote ID
- Sold to street address
- Ship to street address (no PO box)
- Bill to contact name and phone number
- Bill to address

- Bill to email address (required to send the invoice and/or to obtain the tax exemption certificate)

- Membership number if required by the contract

**For any questions, please contact:**

**Blakeney Christopher**

Mid-State Equipment  
4323 E Us Highway 14  
Janesville, WI 53546

Tel: 608-754-8450

Fax: 608-754-8655

Email: [cblakeney@midstateequipment.com](mailto:cblakeney@midstateequipment.com)

Quotes of equipment offered through contracts between Deere & Company, its divisions and subsidiaries (collectively "Deere") and government agencies are subject to audit and access by Deere's Strategic Accounts Business Division to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the contracts.

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County**

**ORDINANCE**

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO THE FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY, ILLINOIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AND TO APPROVE A POLICY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ILLINOIS PAID LEAVE FOR ALL WORKERS ACT**

**No. 23-1203**

WHEREAS, the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act, 70 ILCS 805/8(a), provides that the Board shall be the corporate authority of such forest preserve district and shall have power to pass and enforce all necessary ordinances, rules and regulations for the management of the property and conduct of the business of such district; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (hereinafter referred to as Forest Preserves) is a downstate forest preserve district; and

WHEREAS, previously the Forest Preserves adopted an Employee Handbook to govern the terms and conditions, policies and procedures of employment with the Forest Preserves; and

WHEREAS, on or about March 12, 2023, Governor JB Pritzker signed into law the Paid Leave for All Workers Act (820 ILCS 192/1 *et seq.*) (the “Act”); and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois did not make the necessary appropriations or include statutory language exempting the Act from the Illinois State Mandates Act (30 ILCS 805/1 *et seq.*); and

WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2024, the Act requires an employer to provide certain paid leave to their employees, unless the employer is subject to an existing municipal or county ordinance that requires the employer to provide any form of paid leave to their employees; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves recognizes the importance of paid leave and currently provides reasonable paid leave benefits to its full time and part time employees in excess of what is required under the Act; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to adopt policy in the Employee Handbook to provide for paid leave for temporary employees in accordance with the Act; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves believes and hereby declares that it is in the best interests of the Forest Preserves to clearly define the paid leave benefits that Forest Preserves employees shall receive; and

WHEREAS, additionally the Forest Preserves wishes to make other various annual updates to the Employee Handbook, specifically, but not limited to, bereavement leave to update those sections to comply with recent changes in Illinois law.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained, by the Forest Preserve President and Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County as follows:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals shall be and are hereby incorporated as findings of fact as if said recitals were fully set forth herein.

Section 2. Pursuant to Section 15(p) of the Act, the Forest Preserves hereby adopts its current paid leave policy for all Forest Preserves employees as set forth in the Employee Handbook, and all other binding legislative actions governing paid leave adopted by the Forest Preserves President and Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, as the same may be amended from time to time. However, in no event shall the Forest Preserve, as an employer, provide no less than one (1) hour of paid leave for every forty (40) hours actually worked to any Forest Preserves employee.

Section 3. The Forest Preserves hereby adopts and approves all amendments to the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Employee Handbook, said revisions attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit A. The Executive Director is directed to circulate the newly adopted Employee Handbook to all Forest Preserves Employees.

Section 4. Repeal of Conflicting Provisions. All ordinances, resolutions, and policies or parts thereof, in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are, to the extent of the conflict, expressly repealed on the effective date of this Ordinance.

Section 5. Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance or application thereof to any person or circumstance is ruled unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid application or provision, and each invalid provision or invalid application of this Ordinance is severable.

Section 6. The Secretary is directed by the Board to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage and publication in accordance with 70 ILCS 805/11.

**Voting Yes**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judith Barnard

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Eickman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Audrey Johnson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gloria Lind

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Maggio

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Paulson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Tilly, President

**Voting No**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judith Barnard

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Eickman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Audrey Johnson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gloria Lind

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Maggio

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Paulson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 20th day of December, 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Tilly, President

FPWC will make a reasonable effort to identify a location within close proximity to the work area for the employee to express milk.

FPWC will otherwise treat lactation as a pregnancy-related medical condition and address lactation-related needs in the same manner that it addresses other non-incapacitating medical conditions, including requested time off for medical appointments, requested changes in schedules and other requested accommodations.

Employees should discuss the need of a storage location with their supervisor or human resources. In addition, employees should contact their supervisor or human resources during their pregnancy or before their return to work to identify the need for a lactation area.

## **2.6 Religious Accommodation**

Employees and applicants for employment may request a reasonable accommodation for their sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, and/or observances, including but not limited to the wearing of any attire, clothing or facial hair in accordance with the requirements of their religion. In accordance with the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA), FPWC will provide reasonable accommodation for employees' religious beliefs, observances and practices when a need for such accommodation is identified and reasonable accommodation is possible. A reasonable accommodation is one that eliminates the conflict between an employee's religious beliefs, observances or practices and the employee's job requirements, without causing undue hardship to FPWC. Employees must request religious accommodation from their supervisor or human resources, giving as much notice as practical.

# **SECTION 3. GENERAL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

## **3.1 Employee Classification Policy**

It is the intent of FPWC to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefits eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. The right to terminate the employment relationship at will at any time is retained by both the employee and FPWC.

**Fair Labor Standards Act Job Classifications.** All employees are designated as either non-exempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws:

- **Non-exempt employees** are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are *not* exempt from the law's requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime.
- **Exempt employees** are generally executives, managers, and administrative staff who are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

**FPWC Job Classifications.** Our agency has established the following categories for both non-exempt and exempt employees:

- **Regular Full-time Employees** are not in a temporary status and are regularly scheduled to work the agency's full-time schedule of not less than forty (40) hours per week after successfully completing their probationary period. Generally, they are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.



**Promotions.** FPWC believes in providing opportunities for its employees to advance within the organization. It is the intention, not the obligation, of FPWC to promote current employees to positions of greater responsibility when and where appropriate, and in the best interest of FPWC. Ultimately, the overall needs of the agency will be considered first and foremost.

In the event such a selection results in the promotion of a current employee, a promotional salary increase may be granted in accordance with FPWC's compensation structure. If the rate of pay in the previous position is less than the minimum rate established for the new position, the rate of pay will be advanced to the minimum rate for the new position.

A promotion will be treated the same as a new appointment insofar as it is necessary for the employee to successfully complete a probationary period of ninety (90) days, after which time their performance will be formally evaluated by the supervisor.

If the employee is deemed to be unfit, unsuited or incapable of performing the essential duties of the newly-assigned position during the ninety (90) day probationary period, the employee may be reassigned to their previous position. FPWC has no obligation to ensure continued employment, or return the employee to his previous position, or any other position, if the employee does not successfully complete the probationary period, or if no appropriate position exists.

Employees are encouraged to discuss promotional opportunities with their supervisor, department head, or the executive director. Employees may also inquire about training opportunities that may lead to promotional opportunities with the understanding that not all requests may be granted due to budget limitations and other factors.

**Transfers.** Temporary or permanent transfers of employees between departments may be necessary based upon the needs of FPWC and the recommendation of supervisory personnel. All transfers must be approved by the executive director. A pay increase may be granted for the duration of a temporary assignment in a higher position if the employee's wage rate is less than the minimum rate for the assignment, and in keeping with the requirements of applicable law. No wage adjustment will be made in the case of a lateral transfer. An employee's refusal to transfer throughout FPWC's jurisdiction may result in dismissal.

An employee's request to transfer will be based on the needs of FPWC, qualifications to perform the essential job functions (with or without a reasonable accommodation) and past job performance.

**Layoffs/Reductions in Force/Demotions.** A reorganization of FPWC areas or facilities may occur due to lack of funds, improvements or other reasons. At the executive director's discretion, positions may be reduced or eliminated. In the case of demotion, the wage rate of an affected employee may be reduced to a lower rate commensurate with the lessened degree of responsibility and duties.

### **3.3 Screening Processes**

FPWC recognizes the importance of maintaining a safe, secure workplace with employees who are qualified, reliable, and nonviolent, and who do not present a risk of serious harm to their coworkers or others.

**Employment Eligibility and Work Authorization.** FPWC is committed to employing only individuals who are authorized to work in the United States and who comply with applicable immigration and employment law. In compliance with such laws, FPWC will verify the status of every individual offered employment with our agency. In this connection, all offers of employment are subject to verification of the applicant's identity and employment authorization, and it will be necessary for the applicant to submit such documents as are required by law to\_

verify identification and employment authorization as outlined on the Federal I-9 form. FPWC proudly participates in E-Verify. [These documents will be kept in electronic form.](#)

**Background Check.** All offers of full-time employment are contingent upon clear results of a thorough background check. Additionally, full-time, part-time and seasonal applicants who are extended offers of employment involving management of FPWC funds and/or handling of cash and credit cards must successfully pass a criminal background check.

Background checks will be initiated by human resources and will include:

- **Social Security Verification:** validates the applicant's Social Security number, date of birth and former addresses.
- **Prior Employment Verification:** confirms applicant's employment with the listed companies, including dates of employment, position held and additional information available pertaining to performance rating, reason for departure and eligibility for rehire.
- **Personal and Professional References:** calls will be placed to individuals listed as references by the applicant.
- **Educational Verification:** confirms the applicant's claimed educational institution, including the years attended and the degree/diploma received.
- **Criminal History:** includes review of criminal convictions and probation.
- **Motor Vehicle Records:** provides a report on an individual's driving history. This search will also be run annually when driving is an essential requirement of the position.

If negative information is obtained from the screenings, the human resources manager will assess the potential risks and liabilities related to the job's requirements utilizing the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) Criminal Record Risk Factor Assessment to determine whether the individual should be hired.

The following factors will be considered:

- The nature of the crime and its relationship to the position.
- The time since the conviction.
- The number (if more than one) of convictions.
- Whether hiring, transferring or promoting the applicant would pose an unreasonable risk to the agency, its employees or its customers and vendors.

Background check information will be maintained in a file separate from an employee's personnel file for a minimum of five years.

**Pre-employment Medical Examination/Drug Screen.** Upon receipt of an offer of full-time/part-time employment, candidates will be required to undergo a pre-employment medical examination and testing for controlled substances within 24 hours. The entire process is coordinated by the human resources manager.

Candidates will be tested for use of the following:

Marijuana ( <i>safety-sensitive positions</i> )	Barbiturates
Cocaine	Benzodiazepines
Opiates	Methadone
Amphetamines	Oxycodone
Phencyclidine (PCP)	MDA-Analogues

- **Regular Part-time Employees** are not in a temporary status and are regularly scheduled to work less than forty (40) hours per week. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some pro-rated benefits offered by the agency, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program. The annual number of hours is counted from the part-time employee's anniversary date.
- **Seasonal Employees** are hired to temporarily supplement the agency's workforce for a specific operating season, but may also include individuals rehired for successive seasons. By pre-arrangement, these employees work for a limited duration of less than ten (10) consecutive months each year. Employment beyond any initially-stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Seasonal employees are not eligible for agency benefits, other than those benefits required by law, unless they work a minimum of 1,000 hours per year, (from the date of their anniversary) at which time they are mandated to participate in and contribute to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF).
- **Campground Hosts** are paid a weekly stipend on a bi-weekly basis when FPWC campgrounds are open to the public. These positions may be shared and are not included in overtime or holiday pay.

**FPWC Job Descriptions.** Final approval must be received from the executive director prior to creating any new position, the duties of which will be described in an official job description drafted by the appropriate department head and referred to human resources for review and final editing.

All job descriptions should be reviewed on a regular basis by department heads, but not less than every two (2) years, to identify substantial changes in existing duties.

Job descriptions are available for inspection upon request in the human resources department.

### **3.2 Appointment**

**Job Posting.** Once a newly-created position or vacancy is approved for recruitment, the human resources manager will generate a job announcement to be posted in designated areas of FPWC facilities. The opening will simultaneously be posted on the agency website and advertised through various external recruitment sources as determined by the department head and/or the hiring manager, in conjunction with human resources.

**Eligibility.** In order for a current employee to be considered for an open position they must:

- Meet the minimum qualifications and have the ability to perform the essential functions of the position (with or without reasonable accommodation);
- Be in good standing (e.g., received a rating no lower than "fully acceptable-performance meets the standard" on their most recent performance evaluation and/or not currently on a performance improvement plan); and
- Submit a letter of interest to human resources by the closing date of the application period which outlines their knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to the position and why they think they would be a good fit.

Internal applicants may or may not be given preference, and will receive notice from human resources as to whether they will be interviewed for the position. Eligibility does not automatically guarantee placement.

The executive director reserves the right at any time to grant exceptions to this policy based on the circumstance and agency needs.

FPWC's human resources department will prepare and post its Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 300-A form by February 1 annually at all facilities and on the agency's intranet.

**Reporting.** Winnebago County will prepare and submit reports as required for federal and state tax withholding reporting on FPWC's behalf.

The 940 series reports, prepared by Winnebago County on FPWC's behalf, present FPWC's consolidated quarterly tax reporting requirements; state withholding reports will be submitted to each jurisdiction in which they are required within 20 days of the end of each quarter.

Annually, no later than January 31, Winnebago County will report and mail W-2s and 1099s to reporting agencies, employees and contractors on FPWC's behalf.

State new-hire reports will be prepared and reported by FPWC's human resources department no less frequently than monthly, in accordance with federal Department of Health and Human Services requirements.

FPWC operates all of its benefit plans on a July-June basis; however, required annual notices will be posted on the employee intranet in January of each year.

FPWC's human resources department will report annually to the IRS on the health coverage provided to full-time employees under the shared responsibility portion of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). 1095-B statements will also be provided annually to employees regarding health insurance coverage.

FPWC's human resources department will report to OSHA within 24 hours any inpatient hospitalization, amputation or eye loss that occurs within 24 hours of the incident or accident, and fatalities will be reported to OSHA within 8 hours.

FPWC's education department employees are considered "Mandated Reporters" by the State of Illinois, which means these employees are required by law to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). For purposes of this policy, the education staff should report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the director of education, who in turn reports to DCFS. Should the director of education decline to report to DCFS, and staff disagrees with the director's decision, staff has the option to report to DCFS independently.

## **SECTION 4. WORKPLACE CONDUCT**

### **4.1 Standards of Conduct and Discipline**

To assure safety and security and provide the best possible work environment, FPWC expects every employee to operate in a highly self-disciplined, respectful manner, utilizing sound judgment and common sense. Employees are responsible for regulating their conduct in a positive, productive, and mature way.

It is not possible to list all forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, but the following are examples of infractions that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:-

~~These examples have been separated into groups according to the usual severity and impact of the infraction; though violations may be handled differently depending on the specific circumstances. FPWC reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any and all employee performance or conduct issues:~~

**Group 1 Examples include, but are not limited to:**

1. Creating conflict with co-workers, supervisors, visitors or volunteers;
2. Failing or refusing to adhere to FPWC policies and/or procedures including, without limitation, safety, financial, personnel, operational and administrative policies, practices, orders, rules, ordinances and procedures;
3. Contributing to unsafe conditions;
4. Smoking or vaping while on duty in or on any FPWC facility, equipment, vehicle, or while working directly with the public;
5. Leaving the assigned work area or facility without the supervisor's permission;
6. Loitering or loafing while on duty;
7. Disregarding FPWC's dress code;
8. Damaging or using FPWC equipment or property without authorization;
9. Abusing break periods and/or not taking breaks at scheduled times;
10. Removing, posting or altering notices on any bulletin board on agency property without permission from the employee's manager or human resources;
11. Violating any other rules or policies not specifically listed.

**Group 2 Examples include, but are not limited to:**

- ~~12.~~ Failing to report injuries, damage, or accidents involving FPWC equipment or property;
- ~~12-13.~~ Violating any safety rule or failing to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment;
- ~~13-14.~~ Acting negligently;
- ~~14-15.~~ Engaging in horseplay that results in personal injury or equipment damage;
- ~~15-16.~~ Spreading malicious rumors;
- ~~16-17.~~ Engaging in vulgar or abusive language or harassing conduct toward others;
- ~~17-18.~~ Wastefulness, carelessness, or negligence in the handling or control of FPWC equipment or property;
- ~~18-19.~~ Copying FPWC documents for personal use;
- ~~19-20.~~ Inappropriate use of facility communication systems;
- ~~20-21.~~ Treating visitors, volunteers, Board members or co-workers in a discourteous, inattentive or unprofessional manner;
- ~~21-22.~~ Leaving early or being absent from duty without notification or permission, including habitual or excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism not excused under the FMLA policy. Also, not following department guidelines concerning notification of an absence.

**Group 3 Examples include, but are not limited to:**

- ~~22-23.~~ Being absent for three (3) or more days without notification or permission (also referred to as a voluntary quit or job abandonment);
- ~~24.~~ Fighting (or threatening to do so, even if in horseplay).
- ~~23.~~ —
- ~~25.~~ Threatening or striking any person who is in or on FPWC property or participating in

FPWC activities (see also Section 10.1 Workplace Violence);

~~24.~~

~~26.~~ Gambling while on duty;

~~25.~~

~~26-27.~~ Demonstrating insubordination, including:

- Refusal to do an assigned job.
- Refusal to work weekend, overtime or holiday shifts when required.
- Disrespectful response to a supervisor's directive.
- Deliberate delay in carrying out an assignment.

~~27.~~

28. Dishonesty, including deception, fraud, lying, cheating or theft;

29. Violating time card procedures;

30. Failing to comply with applicable licensure and certification requirements;

31. Sabotaging the facility, grounds or equipment of FPWC;

32. Falsifying agency records, such as employment applications, time cards, reports, etc. in any way;

33. Engaging in indecent behavior;

34. Possessing or being under the influence of an intoxicant or controlled substance while on duty;

35. Sleeping while on duty;

36. Concealing defective work or damage to agency equipment or property;

37. Being in possession of a weapon, including legal or illegal firearm (unless authorized to participate in the Deer Management Program), a knife with a blade over three inches in length (unless it is a tool regularly used in performing the employee's job duties), explosive material, or anything that could be used to threaten or injure another person on FPWC property (see also Section 10.2 Weapons in the Workplace);

38. Disclosing confidential records or information to unauthorized parties;

39. Soliciting gifts or tips from business-related contracts;

40. Unauthorized use of FPWC's computer systems, including accessing confidential computer files and data;

41. Demonstrating gross misconduct or other serious violations of FPWC policies and/or procedures;

42. Failing to follow any federal, state, local law, or FPWC ordinance, rule or regulation, or engaging in criminal activity while on duty or while on FPWC property;

43. Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude (e.g., offenses such as murder, voluntary manslaughter, kidnapping, robbery, and aggravated assaults, etc.), or any other conviction that adversely impacts the employee's ability to continue to perform the essential functions of their position and/or that harms FPWC's reputation and/or standing in the communities it serves (see also Section 3.3 Screening Processes, Criminal Conviction of Current Employee).

The above is not an exclusive list of infractions that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. [FPWC reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any and all employee performance or conduct issues.](#)

**Discipline Process.** Discipline is used by the supervisor as a means of communicating performance problems directly and in a timely fashion so that the employee can involve themselves in the problem-solving process. The supervisor's efforts to ensure that an employee understands what the problem is, what they need to do to correct the problem, what will happen if they don't, and how much time they have to demonstrate improvement is considered "due process." Documentation is an important part of this process.

The following guidelines are in no way a guarantee that an employee will necessarily receive each and every "step" prior to dismissal:

1. Informal Conference/Record of Discussion: Also known as a "verbal warning," this is an informal meeting between a supervisor and an employee who is informed of not meeting expected performance standards. The supervisor and employee discuss possible solutions for improvement, and the appropriate form is completed and signed as documentation of the conversation. The employee is given an opportunity to respond. The original form is forwarded to human resources and placed in the employee's personnel file.
2. Oral Reprimand: This is considered disciplinary action. A supervisor verbally counsels an employee about an issue of concern to warn that repetition of the conduct or failure to improve performance may result in more severe discipline. A written record is made of the discussion, noting the date, event and recommended corrective action. The form is signed by the employee indicating their receipt of the reprimand, and it is forwarded to human resources to be placed in the employee's personnel file after the employee is given a copy. If the employee refuses to sign, the supervisor will document the employee's refusal to sign.
3. Written Reprimand: This disciplinary action form documents behavior or violations that a supervisor considers serious or when an oral reprimand has not helped change unacceptable behavior. The employee is warned that further repetition of the conduct or failure to improve (typically within a specific timeframe) may result in more severe discipline, up to and including dismissal. The employee is required to sign the form indicating their receipt. If the employee refuses to sign, the supervisor will document the employee's refusal to sign. The employee is given a copy, and the reprimand will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
4. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Also known as a performance action plan, a PIP is a tool to give an employee with performance deficiencies the opportunity to succeed. It may be used to address failure to meet specific job goals or to improve behavior-related concerns. Failure to meet and sustain improved performance may lead to further disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. A decrease in performance after successfully completing the improvement plan may also result in dismissal without the issuance of another warning or improvement plan (see also Section 3.7 Performance Review System)
5. Suspension: Some performance, conduct or safety incidents are so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the supervisor may recommend a suspension without pay which must be approved by the department head and executive director in collaboration with human resources. The suspension may be in full-day increments consistent with federal, state and local wage and hour employment

laws not to exceed three (3) days. Non-exempt/hourly employees may not substitute or use accrued paid vacation or sick days in lieu of the unpaid suspension. In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), unpaid suspension of salaried/exempt employees is reserved for serious workplace safety or conduct issues. The department head will: 1) inform the employee that they are being placed on unpaid suspension; 2) inform the employee of the reason for and the duration of the suspension; 3) request the return of agency property (e.g., keys, I.D., electronic equipment, files, or other records) during the suspension; 4) direct the employee not to utilize any FPWC-provided email or other means of FPWC-provided electronic communication; and 5) escort the employee from the worksite. The suspension will be confirmed in writing by human resources.

The employee may, within three (3) working days of the effective date of action, submit a written appeal to the executive director for review, and the decision in such cases will be final. This section is subject to such exceptions as may be required by law.

5.6. Investigatory/Administrative Leave: An employee may be placed on investigatory/administrative leave, with or without notice, to permit FPWC to review or investigate conduct that warrants removing the employee from the worksite or for other than disciplinary reasons.

The department head will 1) inform the employee that they are being placed on investigatory leave and that an investigation will occur, 2) inform the employee of the reasons for the leave, 3) request the return of agency property (e.g., keys, electronic equipment, files, or other records) while the leave is pending, 4) direct the employee not to utilize any FPWC-provided email or other means of FPWC-provided electronic communication; and 5) escort the employee from the worksite.

The leave must be confirmed in writing to the employee no later than three (3) working days after the leave commences. This written notice must 1) explain the reasons for the investigatory/administrative leave, 2) state the expected length of the leave and that the leave may be extended, if necessary, and 3) direct the employee to remain available during their typical work-day hours during the leave to participate in investigative interviewing. The leave is not to exceed thirtyfifteen (30+5) work days unless approved by the executive director.

The executive director, in consultation with human resources, will appoint an appropriate person of authority to conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the allegations or charges.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, the department head will determine if the remaining period of the investigatory leave is to be converted to a suspension without pay or dismissal. Human resources will inform the employee in writing of the decision.

~~6. Administrative Leave: The executive director may order an administrative leave for other than disciplinary reasons, for the good of the agency, not to exceed thirty (30) work days. Reasoning for such suspension will be provided in writing to the employee no later than three (3) working days after the leave commences.~~

7. Termination: It is acknowledged that a serious breach of responsibility, unsatisfactory performance or misconduct may make it necessary to proceed to termination at the executive director's discretion. In some circumstances, an employee may be dismissed without prior disciplinary action. The department head will 1) inform the employee that their employment is being terminated, 2) inform the employee of the reasons for the termination, 3) request the return of agency property (e.g., keys, electronic equipment, files, or other records), 4) direct the employee not to utilize any FPWC-provided email or other means of FPWC-provided electronic communication, and 5) escort the employee



It is important for employees to report to work regularly, promptly and ready to perform the assigned duties at the beginning of the workday. Hours of work will be determined by the operational requirements of the department.

An employee who is unable to report to work at the designated time is required to notify their supervisor as soon as practicable, but, for purposes of a sick leave absence, no later than thirty (30) minutes before start time in accordance with the sick leave policy (see also Section 5 Time Off, and Section 11 Leaving the Agency).

Outside of an employee's pre-established ADA-related issue already accommodated, FPWC reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, upon those employees who demonstrate a pattern of poor attendance and punctuality even if the employee provides proper notice and meets other performance expectations of the position (see also Section 2.3 Disability & Reasonable Accommodation).

## **4.6 Cell Phones**

FPWC provides cell phones for certain positions as determined by the head of the department.

Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Recognizing that our employees work out in the field and may work evenings and weekends, it is understood that limited non-business calls and/or texts may be necessary. Personal use of cell phones must be minimal and used with discretion.

FPWC is not liable for the loss of personal cellular devices brought into the workplace, and employees may be required to reimburse FPWC for lost or damaged cell phones that are provided by the agency if it is determined that there was negligence on the behalf of the employee.

**Cell Phone Etiquette.** All employees are required to be professional and conscientious at all times when using agency cell phones:

- Return calls in a timely manner (within 24 hours, unless on a day off or vacation).
- Frequently check voice messages and greetings.
- Turn off or mute the device when in meetings.
- Turn the device back on when in service.
- Be available to provide exceptional service.
- Utilize a standardized voicemail greeting established by your supervisor.

**Safety.** In general, cell phones should not be used when they could pose a security or safety risk, or when they distract from work tasks:

- Never use a cell phone while operating heavy equipment.
- Do not use personal cell phones for surfing the internet or gaming during work hours. These activities should be limited to scheduled breaks or lunch periods in non-working areas.
- Avoid using work cell phones for personal tasks.
- Avoid using personal cell phones for work tasks.

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving are expected to follow applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations regarding the use of electronic

devices while operating FPWC- owned and operated vehicles, and also while operating a personal vehicle on FPWC-business.

- The use of hands-free cellular devices is allowed, but should be kept to a minimum when driving to minimize distraction.
- To make or receive calls:
  - Pull over and stop;
  - Allow a passenger to operate the phone;
  - Use voice mail and respond to the call at a safer time; or
  - Let someone else drive, freeing you up to make or receive calls.

Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of cellphone devices while driving an agency vehicle, or driving a personal vehicle on agency business, will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions, and may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

**Non-exempt (Hourly) Employee Cell Phone Use.** Unless designated as on-call staff per the department schedule, non-exempt (hourly) employees are neither required, nor expected, to use their agency or personal cell phones for work purposes outside of their normal work schedule without advance authorization from their supervisor. ~~This includes reviewing, sending and responding to e-mails or text messages, responding to phone calls, or making phone calls. Such time (over 15 minutes) will be compensated at the employee's regular hourly rate.~~

**Privacy.** No employee using their personal device should expect any privacy except that which is governed by law. FPWC has the right, at any time, to monitor and preserve any communications that use FPWC networks in any way, including data, voice mail, telephone logs, internet use and network traffic, to determine proper use.

FPWC policies pertaining to harassment, discrimination, retaliation, confidential information and ethics apply to employee use of personal devices for work-related activities.

Any employee who uses a cell phone for FPWC business will be subject to the most up to date Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) laws. This includes personal phones, as well as FPWC-issued phones. FOIA is subject to content related to agency business; the phone on which government business is conducted is of no concern in the laws pertaining to FOIA. Employees and elected officials should recognize that e-mails, text messages, and other communications that relate to agency business are subject to FOIA even if sent or received via their personal cell phone.

Upon resignation or termination of employment, an employee will be required to turn in their FPWC-issued phone; they may also be requested to turn in their FPWC-issued phone at any time during their employment.

**Violations.** Employees who are found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **4.7 Internet & E-mail Use & Computer Usage**

FPWC recognizes that use of [computer systems](#), the internet and e-mail is necessary in the workplace. Employees are encouraged to use all technology systems responsibly in an appropriate, ethical and professional manner. In general, use of agency technology systems and electronic communications should be job related and not for personal convenience. All FPWC business should be conducted on password-protected networks only.

All technology provided by FPWC, including computer systems, communication networks, agency-related work records and other information stored electronically, is the property of FPWC and not the employee. FPWC reserves the right to examine, monitor and regulate e-mail and other electronic communications, directories, files and all other content, including internet use, transmitted by or stored in its technology systems, whether onsite or offsite. All pass codes/passwords are the property of the FPWC. You may not use a pass code/password that has not been issued to you or that is unknown to the FPWC. If you violate this policy you may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The employee's initial internet/e-mail access must be authorized by the department head and coordinated through the administrative services manager. Employees are prohibited from downloading software or other program files or online services from the internet without prior approval from their supervisor. The administrative services manager will coordinate an annual check of hardware and software inventory and review of proper software installations, upgrades, and licenses.

Internal and external e-mail, voicemail, text messages and other electronic communications are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. These records are also subject to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act and therefore must be maintained in accordance with FPWC policies.

FPWC's internet, e-mail or other electronic communications will not be used to transmit, retrieve or store any communications or other content of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, inappropriate or pornographic nature. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference may be transmitted. Harassment of any kind is forbidden (see also Section 2.2, Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment).

FPWC's internet/e-mail system may not be used to solicit for religious or political causes, commercial ventures, outside organizations, or other non-job-related solicitations.

Illegal activities, including piracy, cracking, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement and unauthorized access to any computers on the internet or e-mail are forbidden. Copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than FPWC may not be transmitted by employees on the agency network without permission of the copyrighted holder.

Employees may not use FPWC's computer systems in a way that disrupts its use by others. This includes sending or receiving an excessive number of large files, spamming (sending unsolicited e-mail to thousands of users), or streaming large videos or audio files. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent that hide the identity of the sender or represent the sender as someone else.

Employees should exercise extreme caution in using electronic communications to transmit confidential or sensitive matters. Notwithstanding FPWC's right to retrieve and read any internet/e-mail messages, all messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient.

To ensure that the use of electronic and telephonic communications systems and business equipment is consistent with the FPWC's legitimate business interests, authorized representatives of the FPWC may monitor the use of such equipment from time to time to the extent permitted by applicable state and federal law. Users should not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any materials and information created or stored on these systems.

Employees should not share any password for any FPWC computer with any unauthorized person, nor obtain any other user's password by any unauthorized means.

The safety and security of the FPWC computer system and resources must be considered at all times when using agency-provided internet/e-mail:

- Employees are cautioned against running software or opening any files attached to e-mails from unknown, suspicious or non-trusted sources.
- Employees are to inform the administrative services manager if a virus or malware is suspected or detected on any FPWC-provided electronic equipment.
- Employees are prohibited from creating, installing, or knowingly distributing malicious programs (e.g. viruses, worms, Trojans, etc.) on the agency network, regardless of whether any demonstrable harm results. Signatures used in e-mail communications on behalf of FPWC should appear professional and provide relevant information to support business processes. A standard e-mail signature includes the employee's name, title and contact information, along with the FPWC logo (or partner agency logo, as appropriate). Personal taglines, slogans, favorite quotes or epigraphs, custom multicolored fonts, etc. are inappropriate in a professional setting and should not be used.

All use of FPWC-provided internet, e-mail, and electronic equipment must be in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws, in addition to FPWC policies. Employees are responsible for the content of all text, audio, video or image files placed or sent over the FPWC's internet and e-mail systems. Any employee who abuses access to e-mail, the internet, or other electronic communications or networks, including social media, may be denied future access and, if appropriate, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **4.8 Social Media**

FPWC recognizes that many employees engage in social media activity. If matters related to FPWC, staff or patrons are discussed on personal websites, weblogs, online social networks (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.), or any other medium of online publishing, caution and discretion should be used. Although a staff member's personal profile may convey individual expression, the public may view the employee as an official spokesperson for FPWC.

Such activities at or outside of work may affect the employee's job performance, the performance of others, staff morale, teamwork, and/or the reputation or business interests of our agency. In light of these possibilities, the following guidelines are expected to be observed:

- Employees should refrain from using social media while on work time or on agency-provided equipment unless it is work-related and authorized by the employee's supervisor. When using FPWC equipment, employees are subject to the agency's internet/e-mail use policy. FPWC email addresses should not be used to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use. (See Section 4.7, Internet/E-mail Use)
- Employees should make it clear that the views expressed on their personal social media account do not necessarily reflect the views of FPWC. To help reduce the potential for confusion, it is suggested that the following notice — or something similar — be posted in a reasonably prominent place: *"The views expressed on this website/weblog/social network are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."*
- Care should be taken to avoid disclosing any information that is confidential or proprietary to the agency (including patrons, staff, partner agencies/affiliates or vendors), or to any third party that has disclosed information to FPWC. Staff should not discuss or divulge

**Couples Who are Married or in a Domestic Partnership.** Employees who have entered in an official relationship with another employee are expected to behave appropriately in the workplace so as not to offend and/or distract other employees or disrupt and/or hinder agency operations (see Unacceptable Behavior above).

Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, professional conferences, business meetings and business-related social events.

See also Section 3.9 Anti-Nepotism.

Employees in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4.10 Use of Agency Equipment and Resources**

The protection of FPWC information, property and all other agency assets are vital to the interests and success of FPWC. Employees are trusted to behave responsibly and use good judgment to conserve agency resources, including time, material, equipment and information. Managers are responsible for the resources assigned to their departments and are empowered to resolve issues concerning their proper use. FPWC employees should not have an expectation of privacy concerning equipment and/or materials provided to them by the agency (see also Section 10.9 Right to Privacy).

Except in the ordinary course of performing duties for FPWC, or otherwise permitted, no FPWC-owned property may be removed from the premises or used for personal or other unauthorized purposes. FPWC property, for the purpose of this section, includes, but is not limited to, buildings, vehicles (e.g., cars, trucks, backhoes, front-end loaders, all-terrain vehicles, golf carts), facilities, grounds, tools, implements, building materials, recreation and rental equipment, electronic equipment, telephones, copiers, printers, fax machines, bulletin boards, desks, chairs, lockers, file cabinets, office and other supplies, and all other property owned, leased or in the possession of the agency. (See also Section 4.11 Vehicle Use).

Employees who are assigned keys, safe combinations or other access to FPWC property in connection with their job responsibilities must exercise sound judgment and discretion to protect against theft, loss or negligence. Employees must immediately report any loss of keys to their supervisor. Keys may not be transferred from one employee to another without their supervisor's prior authorization.

Employees are responsible for the care and conservation of FPWC property and will promptly report any damage, malfunctioning, loss or theft of property to their supervisor.

Work areas should be kept clean and neat, and all equipment should be cleaned and stored at the end of the workday whenever possible and where it is deemed practical.

All FPWC property in an employee's possession must be returned upon separation from employment, promotion and/or transfer to another department. (See also Section 11 Leaving the Agency).

Negligence in the care and use of FPWC property may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

#### **4.11 Vehicle Use**

FPWC provides vehicles to allow employees to conduct agency business and to reimburse

employees for business use of personal vehicles according to the guidelines below. FPWC retains the right to amend or terminate this policy at any time. Personal use of agency vehicles is prohibited unless special circumstances merit which have been approved in advance by the Executive Director. An employee in a position requiring regular driving as an essential job function must, as a condition of employment, be able to meet the driver approval standards of this policy at all times. Failure to do so may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees operating any vehicle for FPWC business must have a valid driver's license with the proper classification for the type of vehicle being operated and must show proof of such license upon request. The employee is responsible for providing a copy of any renewed driver's license to human resources upon expiration of the license on file.

FPWC vehicles are permanently assigned to departments that have demonstrated a continued need for them as determined by the executive director.

An employee may use their personal vehicle for agency business and receive mileage reimbursement based on the standard mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service as approved by their immediate supervisor. These expenses will be processed as accounts payable by the administrative services department.

The executive director may be paid a vehicle stipend or provided a fleet vehicle, as determined and approved by the FPWC Board of Commissioners.

Upon Board approval, other FPWC staff may be provided a fleet vehicle to be used for FPWC business and not for personal reasons other than commuting, unless the personal use has such a minimal value that accounting for the benefit would be administratively impractical or unreasonable.

The executive director may authorize the use of FPWC-owned vehicles outside of this policy under special circumstances for limited use. For example, allowing an employee to take a vehicle home when a winter storm is expected so that they can begin plowing a preserve near their home first, or because the employee will attend a conference and it is closer to go directly to the conference location from their home, etc.

Employees are responsible for the care and conservation of FPWC-owned vehicles, and must promptly report any accident, breakdown or malfunction of any unit so that necessary repairs may be made.

Employees who drive any agency vehicle must exercise due diligence to drive safely and to maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents. The vehicle engine must be shut off, ignition keys removed, and vehicle doors locked whenever the vehicle is left unattended for a prolonged period of time.

Employees using their personal vehicle for FPWC business are required to carry liability insurance on their vehicle in accordance with applicable law and may be asked to provide proof of this insurance.

The driving records of employees who operate agency vehicles will be reviewed annually by the human resources manager. Any employee's record indicating a pattern of unsafe or irresponsible driving may have their agency vehicle driving privileges suspended or revoked by the executive director. See also Section 3.3 Screening Processes, Motor Vehicle Records.

Employees who drive FPWC vehicles are responsible for any infractions or fines incurred as a result of their driving. Any employee who operates a FPWC vehicle who has had their driver's license revoked or suspended should immediately notify the human resources manager (see also Section 3.3 Screening Processes, Criminal Conviction of Current Employee).

Employees are not permitted to operate an agency vehicle, nor a personal vehicle for agency business, while under the influence of intoxicants, controlled substances or medication which could impair driving ability (see also Section 10.7, Alcohol & Drug Abuse). Additionally, employees may not operate any agency vehicle when any physical or mental impairment (e.g. illness, fatigue, injury) causes the employee to be unable to drive safely.

Employees who are found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4.12 Conflict of Interest**

FPWC expects all employees to conduct business according to the highest ethical standards of conduct, and to devote their best efforts to the interests of FPWC. Business dealings that appear to create a conflict between the interests of FPWC and an employee are prohibited.

FPWC recognizes the right of employees to engage in activities outside of their employment which are of a private nature and unrelated to our business. However, the employee must disclose any possible conflicts so that FPWC may assess and prevent potential conflicts of interests from arising. A potential or actual conflict of interest occurs whenever an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for the employee, an immediate family member including, but not limited to, spouse or significant other, children, parents, siblings or in-laws, as a result of FPWC's business dealings.

It is the responsibility of every employee to disclose any personal or financial interest in any person, firm, company or any business entity doing business with FPWC as soon as possible. This information is required to determine whether any undue or special influence may be involved in sales to or purchases from FPWC. Such disclosure must be made in writing by the employee and forwarded to the executive director or his designee to obtain advice on the issue. The purpose of this policy is to protect employees from a conflict of interest that may arise.

Individuals employed in a supervisory capacity or authorized to purchase equipment may be required to file a Statement of Economic Interest as required by Illinois law. Please see the executive director for details (see also Section 3.11 Purchasing Policy & Procedures, Conflict of Interest).

A violation of this policy, as determined by the executive director, may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

#### **4.13 Ethics and Gift Ban**

**Gift Ban.** Except as otherwise provided in this policy, no employee will intentionally solicit or accept any gift from any prohibited source or in violation of any federal or State statute, rule, or regulation. This ban applies to and includes spouses or immediate family living with the employee. Prohibited source means any person or entity who:

- is seeking official action by any FPWC entity or employee;
- does business or seeks to do business with any FPWC entity or employee;
- has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the official duties of the employee;
- is registered or required to be registered with the Secretary of State under the Lobbyist Registration Act, except that an entity not otherwise a prohibited source does not become a prohibited source merely because a registered lobbyist is one of its members or serves on its board of commissioners.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4.18 Suggestion System**

An employee or group of employees who have suggestions that identify agency-specific problems and propose suitable solutions to enhance efficiency and effectiveness through increased productivity, reduced costs, improved and safer working conditions, conservation of resources, and enhanced public services should submit their suggestions in writing to the executive director for consideration. As a general rule, the employee will be notified of the disposition in a reasonable timeframe, and a copy of the notification will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

### **SECTION 5. TIME OFF**

FPWC recognizes that employees benefit from time away from work for a variety of reasons - all of which contribute towards a positive work-life balance for our employees.

- Paid time off is not available to employees who have not yet passed their ninety (90) day probationary period, with the exception of holidays ~~and floating holidays~~, unless pre-approved at the time of hire, or due to an extenuating circumstance approved by the supervisor.
- Employees must submit the appropriate form requesting time off to their supervisor for approval.
- All leaves must be in increments of no less than one (1) hour.
- Paid time off is not considered hours worked in the calculation of overtime.

#### **5.1 Holidays**

FPWC offers paid time off to full-time and part-time employees (whether or not they have completed their probationary period) for the observance of specific holidays each calendar year. Typically, FPWC observes the following paid holidays:

New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving (Day After)
Independence Day	Christmas Eve
Labor Day	Christmas Day

The holiday schedule is established and approved annually by the FPWC Board of Commissioners.

Holiday pay is defined as payment received for the holiday, plus any additional hours worked. Holiday pay will not be used for the purpose of overtime calculation (see also Section 8.2 Payment of Wages, Pay for Holidays Worked).

The following conditions must be met in order for employees to be eligible for holiday pay:

- If an employee calls in sick the day before and/or after a holiday, the employee must provide a doctor's note. If a doctor's note is not provided, the employee must substitute a vacation day for the holiday, forfeiting the holiday pay.



- If an employee is scheduled to work the holiday and calls in sick on the holiday, the employee must use sick time, forfeiting the holiday pay.
- If an employee is scheduled to work the holiday and calls in sick the day of the holiday, and also calls in sick either before or after the holiday, the employee must provide a doctor's note. If a doctor's note is not provided, the employee must substitute a vacation day for the holiday, forfeiting the holiday pay, as well as use a sick day for the day before and/or after the holiday.
- If an employee is sick the day before or after a holiday they worked, a doctor's note is not necessary.
- If an employee is on vacation when a holiday occurs, the holiday with pay will not be counted as a vacation day.

Employees on bereavement, paid leave of absence or jury duty are eligible to receive regular pay for the holiday.

**Holidays for Part-time/Seasonal Employees.** Part-time employees will receive pay for the holiday based on a proration of total hours they are scheduled to work within a calendar year. If a holiday falls on a day the employee is not normally scheduled to work, the part-time employee will not be paid for the holiday.

Seasonal employees will receive twice the regular rate of pay for hours worked on Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. Campground hosts are ineligible for holiday pay.

## **5.2 Floating Holidays**

Certain days are designated as floating holidays on which FPWC offices and shops will remain open:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Columbus Day
President's Day	Veteran's Day
Good Friday	

**Effective January 1, 2022, floating holidays are only available for use as they are earned.**

An employee may choose to either take the paid floating holiday day off, or they may substitute another day off with pay in the same calendar year. A request for such time off must be approved by the supervisor in advance and taken in increments of no less than one (1) hour.

Unused floating holidays will not be carried over to the next calendar year, nor will they be paid out upon termination of employment. Floating holidays may be accrued but not available for use until the employee has successfully completed their probationary period.

## **5.3 Vacation**

Full-time employees are eligible for vacation leave based on the length of full-time continuous service at FPWC. ~~Part-time employees with a specific part-time schedule amounting to a minimum 50% of the total yearly hours will earn vacation on a pro-rated basis, calculated as follows: hours worked per year divided by 2080, multiplied by 80 hours.~~

Vacation credit is accumulated upon completion of the employee's probationary period, retroactive to their hire date. After one year of service, each full-time employee will be entitled to annual vacation time as follows:

Earned per Consecutive Years of Service	Accrued on Anniversary	Accrual Rate
1st year - <del>7th</del> <u>5th</u> year	80 hours - 10 days - 2 weeks	6.66 hours per month
<del>8th</del> <u>6th</u> year - <del>14th</del> <u>10th</u> year	120 hours - 15 days - 3 weeks	10.00 hours per month
<del>15th</del> <u>11th</u> year - <del>24th</del> <u>15th</u> year	160 hours - 20 days - 4 weeks	13.33 hours per month
<u>16th</u> <del>25th</del> year and over	200 hours - 25 days - 5 weeks	16.66 hours per month

Part time employees with a specific part time schedule amounting to a minimum of 50% of the total yearly hours will earn 40 hours of vacation annually.

Vacation is accrued at the start of the years of service, but displayed on the employee's pay stub after the anniversary each year.

Two (2) weeks of vacation will be accrued upon completion of twelve (12) months of continuous employment; however, one (1) week may be requested after six (6) months of continuous employment in the first year only.

An employee is not eligible to take vacation before ninety (90) days ~~six (6) months~~ of employment unless pre-arranged and approved by the supervisor at the time of hire.

Vacation should be taken during the twelve (12)-month period immediately following the anniversary in which it was accrued.

**A maximum of forty (40) hours of vacation may be carried over for up to one (1) year after the employee's anniversary date, but no longer. A request to carry over vacation hours must be made by the employee and approved by their supervisor prior to their anniversary date.**

Employees are expected to submit vacation requests to the supervisor at least five (5) working days in advance of the leave. Approval of vacation time with notice of less than five (5) working days is at the discretion of the supervisor. The supervisor will notify the department head of scheduled vacations within the department.

The supervisor will do their best to honor all time off requests; however, the needs of the agency in scheduling workloads will be the controlling criteria. When two (2) or more employees in the same department request vacation for the same time, the decision will be based on factors such as seniority, timeliness of the request, personal situations and emergencies.

Employees who terminate will receive a pay out of all unused vacation days, plus vacation days accrued since their last anniversary. Vacation time may not be used as part of a two (2) week notice.

## **5.4 Sick Leave**

*Revised 2021 3-01*

FPWC allows sick leave for regular employees when they are sick or injured. Sick leave will be allowed for absences due to an illness, injury, or medical appointment of the employee's child, spouse, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent or stepparent, for reasonable periods of time as the employee's attendance may be necessary, on the same terms upon which the employee is able to use sick leave benefits for the employee's own illness or injury. For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" is defined as an employee's:

- Spouse (includes civil union partner and/or same-sex marriage);
- Parent (includes an individual who assumed the obligations of a parent to the employee when the employee was a child);
- Child under age 18; (includes adopted or foster child, step-child, legal ward or child to whom the employee is "in loco parentis," or a child for whom the employee has assumed the obligations of a parent – no legal or biological relationship is necessary);
- Child 18 years or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability as defined by the ADA (whether temporary or permanent).

See also Section 6.1, Family and Medical Leave.

Sick leave is considered a benefit, and not an entitlement to be used at the employee's discretion.

- Full-time employees earn one 8-hour sick day for each completed month of service, up to a maximum of 240 sick leave days (1,920) hours.
- Part-time employees accrue sick leave on a pro-rated basis.
- Sick leave will be taken in not less than one (1) hour increments.
- Sick leave is not accrued while on unpaid leave of absence.
- Employees are not paid for accrued, unused sick leave upon termination of employment.

Employees are required to notify their supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than thirty (30) minutes before their scheduled start time to be eligible for sick leave. If the employee is incapacitated or unable to contact the supervisor, such as in a medical emergency, it is permissible for a representative (such as a spouse or family member) to provide notice on the employee's behalf. An employee who becomes ill while at work must notify their supervisor before leaving. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration, and the notification method (e.g., texting vs. phone call) is at the discretion of the supervisor.

During authorized sick leave, an employee must notify their supervisor of their progress on a daily basis so that departmental workloads may be planned effectively. If an employee fails to properly notify their supervisor, they will be considered "absent without leave" which will result in loss of pay or disciplinary action.

The supervisor must notify human resources if an employee cannot report to work for three (3) or more consecutive days because of illness or injury, as the employee will be required to provide a doctor's note substantiating the illness or injury, fitness for duty, or ability to perform the essential functions of the position.

If the employee's supervisor has reason to suspect abuse of sick leave, medical documentation for the employee's time away from work will be required for less than three (3) consecutive work days.

FPWC has an ample sick leave policy; therefore, no employee will be allowed to carry a negative balance. Employees who have depleted their sick leave balance must substitute accrued vacation time. If none is available, the time taken will be unpaid and must be approved by the

executive director.

Once an employee on sick leave returns to work, the appropriate form must be completed and approved by the supervisor documenting the dates and amount of leave taken for payroll purposes. Sick leave accruals are not loaded into our payroll system until after the successful completion of the employee's probationary period.

#### **5.55.4 Personal Leave**

Two (2) days, or sixteen (16) hours, of the sick leave accrued in a calendar year by a regular full-time employee may be used as personal leave in place of sick leave, and therefore may be used for reasons other than illness. Personal leave must be approved by the supervisor and will be taken in increments of not less than one (1) hour.

Once an employee on personal leave returns to work, the appropriate form must be completed and approved by the supervisor documenting the dates and amount of leave taken for payroll purposes.

#### **5.65.5 Bereavement Leave**

All employees shall be entitled to use a maximum of 2 weeks (10 consecutive work days) of unpaid bereavement leave to:

- (1) attend the funeral or alternative to a funeral of a covered family member;
- (2) make arrangements necessitated by the death of the covered family member;
- (3) grieve the death of the covered family member; or
- (4) be absent from work due to (i) a miscarriage; (ii) an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure; (iii) a failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party; (iv) a failed surrogacy agreement; (v) a diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility; or (vi) a stillbirth.

"Covered family member" means an employee's child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent.

Regular full time employees will be allowed up to three (3) consecutive days (of the total 10 consecutive work days) as paid bereavement leave, to be used in increments of no less than one (1) hour, on approval of the executive director.

Bereavement leave must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee receives notice of the death of the covered family member or the date on which an event listed under paragraph (4) of subsection (a) occurs. An employee shall provide the employer with at least 48 hours' advance notice of the employee's intention to take bereavement leave, unless providing such notice is not reasonable and practicable.

Reasonable documentation is required for approval of leave. Documentation may include a death certificate, a published obituary, or written verification of death, burial, or memorial services from a mortuary, funeral home, burial society, crematorium, religious institution, or government agency. For leave resulting from an event listed under paragraph (4) of subsection (a), reasonable documentation shall include a form to be filled out by a health care practitioner who has treated the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner, or surrogate, for an event listed under paragraph (4) of subsection (a), or documentation from the adoption or surrogacy organization that the employee worked with related to an event listed under paragraph (4) of subsection (a), certifying that the employee or his or her spouse or domestic partner has experienced an event listed under paragraph (4) of subsection (a).

In the event of the death of more than one covered family member in a 12-month period, an employee is entitled to up to a total of 6 weeks of bereavement leave during the 12-month period.

~~In the event of the death of an immediate family member, regular full-time employees will be allowed paid bereavement leave in increments of not less than one (1) hour, for up to three (3) days upon approval by the executive director.~~

~~For purposes of this policy, immediate family is defined as the employee's:~~

- ~~• Current spouse or civil union partner;~~
- ~~• Child and Grandchild (natural, foster, adopted or step);~~
- ~~• Sibling (step and in-law);~~
- ~~• Parent or Grandparent (step and in-law);~~

~~Other relatives, such as aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or cousin of the employee are regarded as members of the immediate family only if in residence in the employee's household.~~

~~Relationships existing due to marriage will terminate upon the death or divorce of the relative through whom the marriage relationship exists. Current marital status will be defined in accordance with Illinois State law.~~

~~Additional bereavement days (e.g. necessary travel) for immediate family will be granted to full-time employees due to extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the executive director. Proof of death and relationship to the deceased may be required.~~

~~Bereavement leave for the death of other than an immediate family member of a full-time hourly employee may be taken as unpaid if approved by the supervisor, taking the employee's attendance and general work record into consideration. Personal or vacation leave (in increments of not less than one (1) hour) may be substituted for both exempt and hourly staff. Paid sick leave may not be used.~~

~~Part-time employees may be granted unpaid bereavement leave, unless substituting accrued vacation leave (in increments of not less than one (1) hour).~~

~~Once an employee on bereavement leave returns to work, the appropriate form must be completed and approved by the supervisor documenting the dates and amount of leave taken for payroll purposes.~~

~~See also Section 5.7, Child Bereavement Leave.~~

## **5.6-Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act**

Under the Illinois Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act, an employee is entitled to use a maximum of 6 weeks of unpaid leave if the employee experiences the loss of a child by suicide or homicide. Leave may be taken in a single continuous period or intermittently in increments of no less than 4 hours, but leave must be completed within one year after the employee notifies the employer of the loss. Reasonable advance notice of the employee's intention to take leave must be provided, unless providing such notice is not reasonable and practicable. Reasonable documentation will be required. Documentation may include a death certificate, a published obituary, or written verification of death, burial, or memorial services from a mortuary, funeral home, burial society, crematorium, religious institution, or government agency. Documentation must include the cause of death.

~~employees otherwise eligible for Family and Medical Leave are eligible for an additional ten (10) unpaid days to attend the funeral, or an alternative to a funeral; to make arrangements necessitated by the death of the child; or to grieve the death of the child. (See "Employee Eligibility Criteria" in Section 6.1, Family and Medical Leave Act).~~

## **5.7 Paid Leave for Seasonal Employees**

All seasonal employees shall accrue paid leave at a rate of one (1) hour per every forty (40) hours actually worked. Employees shall be allowed to carry over up to 40 hours of paid leave annually, for a total of 80 hours of paid leave, but usage is limited to 40 hours per year. The annual period shall run from the employee's date of hire to the next anniversary date. New employees shall be prohibited from using paid leave during their first ninety (90) days of employment, unless authorized in writing by the appropriate Department Head. Paid leave must be taken at a minimum of two (2) hour increments. Upon termination of employment, unused remaining hours of paid leave will not be paid out. Requests for foreseeable paid leave must be submitted at least five calendar days in advance. Requests will then be reviewed based on several factors, including operational needs, and staffing requirements. Paid Leave does not entitle individuals to take time off without notice or call in at the start of a work shift and announce that they are taking paid leave. If a request for use of paid leave is unforeseeable, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable after the employee is aware of the necessity for leave. Department Heads may deny requests for leave based on operational need.

# **SECTION 6. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

## **6.1 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

FPWC will grant family and medical leave in accordance with the requirements of applicable federal and state law in effect at the time the leave is granted. Although the federal and state laws have different names, FPWC refers to these types of leaves collectively as "FMLA Leave." In any case, employees will be eligible for the most generous benefits available under applicable law.

Additionally, FPWC complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which restricts the dissemination of information regarding the health of its employees (See Section 4.3 Confidentiality).

Employees requiring FMLA should contact human resources for assistance.

## RESOLUTION

### No. 23-1204

#### APPROVAL BY THE FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY OF KLEHM ARBORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN INC.'S CONSTRUCTION OF A CHILDREN'S DOUBLE HAMMOCK PLAY FEATURE

WHEREAS, Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc. (Klehm) has made and continues to propose improvements to the Carl and Lois Klehm Forest Preserve property owned by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (FPWC) to the mutual benefit of both parties, and

WHEREAS, Klehm proposes that the construction of commercially produced double hammock children's play feature will provide enhanced recreational opportunities and value to visitors, and

WHEREAS, said double hammock play feature shall be constructed in the Nancy Olson Children's Garden, in a space adjacent to the paved path surfaces, where it interacted with by children of all ages and abilities, and

WHEREAS, Klehm believes in good faith that the ultimate cost of this improvement shall be over \$10,000 and is likely to cost approximately \$20,000, and

WHEREAS, Klehm shall endeavor to fund this improvement solely through restricted contributions, grants, and other funds solicited and received by the organization, and

WHEREAS, Section 10 of the operating agreement between in effect between Klehm and FPWC states that Klehm will seek the District's written approval for any capital improvement project which is anticipated to cost in excess of \$10,000, and the District agrees that such approval will not be unreasonably withheld.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County as follows:

Section 1: That the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County does hereby approve Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden Inc.'s construction of a sundial that will cost in excess of \$10,000.

Section 2: That the Secretary to the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County shall forward a certified copy of the Resolution granting this written approval to the Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden, Inc. Executive Director

Voting YES: \_\_\_\_\_

Voting NO: \_\_\_\_\_

The above and foregoing Resolution as adopted this 20<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023 and shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

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Jeff Tilly, President  
Board of Commissioners



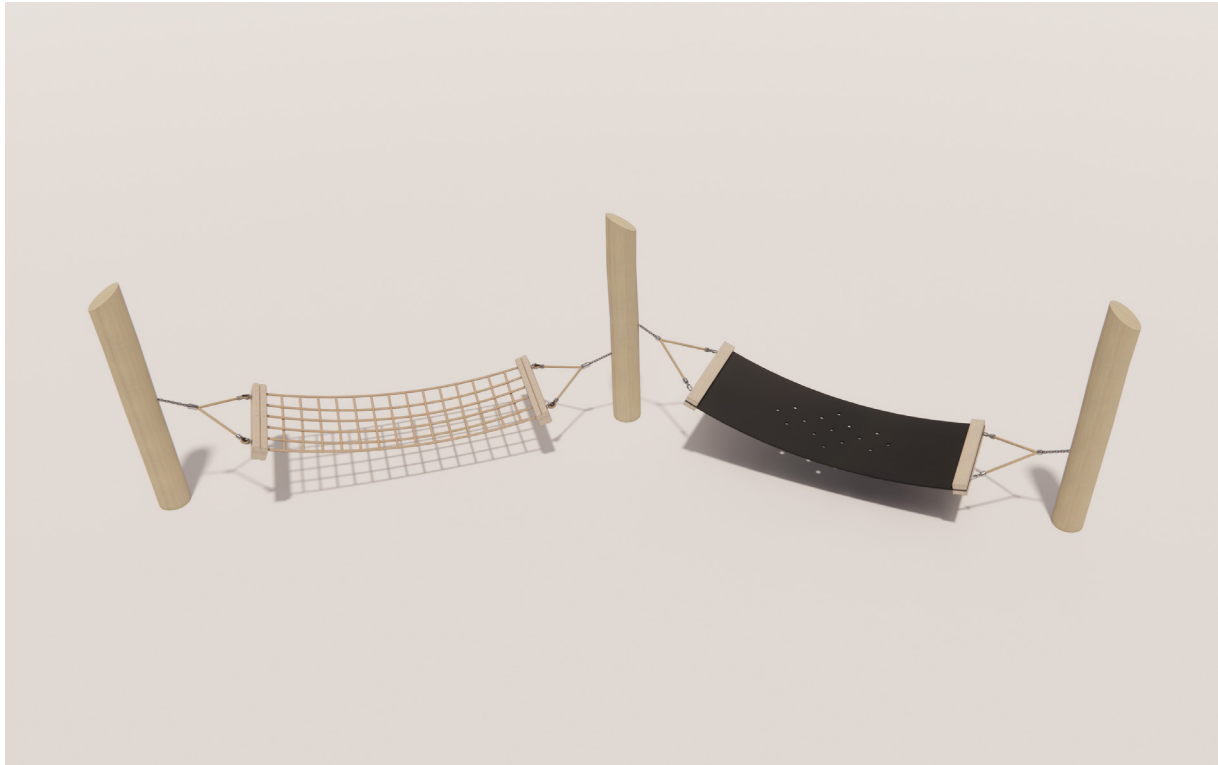
# DOUBLE HAMMOCK - STANDARD

Intended user age: 2-12

## PRODUCT INFORMATION

ASTM F1487

The Double Hammock really is twice the fun! Children can play together and socialize, each while rocking in his/her own hammock, or they can sit or lie down together, allowing more children to gather together at one time. The Double Hammock offers greater flexibility within a medium-sized play space. Hammocks are available in flexform or rope.

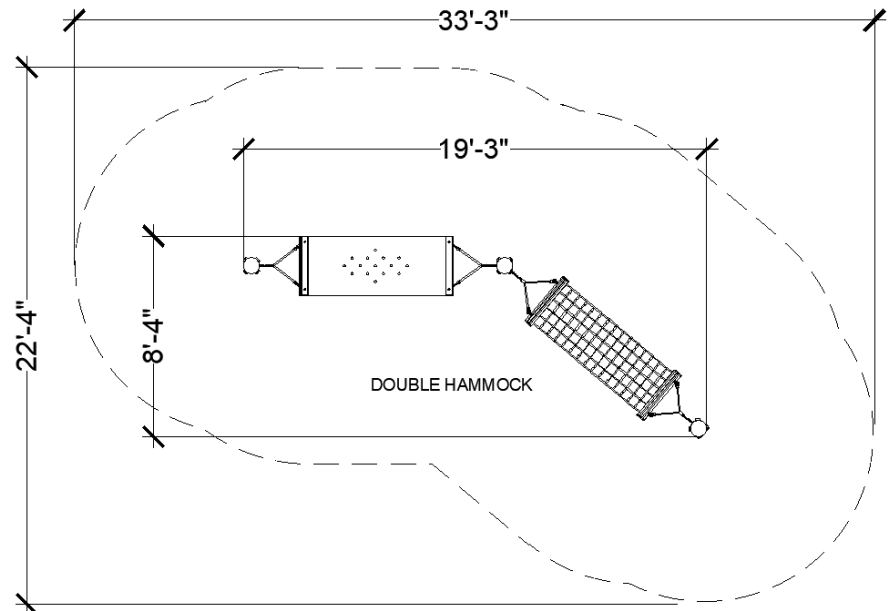


Maximum height: 6'0"  
Maximum fall height: 3'4"  
Area of Safety Surfacing: 505 ft<sup>2</sup>  
User Capacity: 2

The highest designated play surface and space required are according to ASTM F1487. A buffer is included in the fall zone to account for fabrication and material variations.

Resilient safety surfacing is required within the fall zone of equipment.

If you have questions about the equipment, please contact Earthscape Collections at [collections@earthscapeplay.com](mailto:collections@earthscapeplay.com)





**Imagine Nation, LLC**

WBE CERTIFIED  
Westchester, IL 60154

# QUOTATION

Quote Number: 2733  
Quote Date: Nov 30, 2023  
Page: 1

847-640-0904

Quoted To:
Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden 2715 South Main St. Rockford, IL 61102  Alexander Mills 815-965-8146

Customer ID	Good Thru	Payment Terms	Sales Rep
KlehmArboretum	12/30/23	50% Deposit	Alyssa Heppe

Quantity	Item	Description	Unit Price	Amount
1.00	Earthscape	Earthscape Double Hammock	15,350.00	15,350.00
1.00	Earthscape	Earthscape Stain Double Hammock	750.00	750.00
NANCY OLSON CHILDREN'S GARDEN  Price does not include installation, truck unloading, storage or applicable taxes. Payment terms are 50% deposit, balance due before shipment.				
Subtotal				16,100.00
Sales Tax				
Freight				1,900.00
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>18,000.00</b>

# Preserve Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations  
Scott Stewart & Scott Wallace, Preserve Managers  
Bryan Helmold, Facility & Equipment Manager  
November 2023 Activities Report

- Central Shop built and installed new entrance awning structure on Atwood Maintenance shop.
- Central Shop staff continue to conduct annual service and repairs to all District trailers.
- Central Shop built and installed new snowmobile / hiking bridge on trail system at Seward Bluffs.
- Used aerial bucket truck at Macktown and Atwood to remove dead limbs over roadways.
- Closed campgrounds for the year and winterized the shower house.
- Closed equestrian trails for the year.
- Collected all unused campground tickets plus startup money and handed them in to HQ.
- Contractor pulled septic pumps from Macktown visitor center for the winter.
- Hosted chainsaw safety and tree-felling class at Sugar River, with all Preserve Maintenance staff attending.
- Pulled out and tested snow plows and salt spreaders for Winter.
- Preserve Maintenance staff assisted with fall prescribed burns.
- Campground attendant / host electric golf carts were washed and pulled inside for winter.
- Bucked and split firewood, and filled wood bins at campgrounds for start of next year.
- Detailed and waxed several trucks.
- Removed large fallen tree off of Ferguson dike.
- Cleaned and organized North Area Shop at Sugar River.
- End of season mowing and leaf pick up.
- Hauled equipment to / from central shop for yearly maintenance.
- Burned brush piles at Pecatonica River and Kilbuck Bluffs.
- Rebuilt wood staircase on hiking trail within Pecatonica River Nature Preserve.
- Completed playground repair at Blackhawk Springs.
- Four Preserve Maintenance staff qualified through IDNR to participate in the deer management program.
- Removed hazardous trees at Seward Bluffs and Blackhawk Springs.
- Pressure Washed exterior surfaces of fuel tanks at Kishwaukee Maintenance Shop.
- Ongoing maintenance to various preserve trail systems.
- Conducted monthly safety inspections.

# Land and Development

Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources

Mike Groves, Natural Resources Manager

Keith Krey, Stewardship Coordinator

November 2023 Activities Report

## Natural Resource Staff

- District staff from natural resources and preserve operations burned 395 acres at four preserves.
- Treated black locust and other woody species at Colored Sands, Four Lakes, Fuller, and Seward Bluff Forest Preserves.
- Six District staff members qualified to participate in the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's deer population control program.
- Harvested seed at preserves around the county. Staff harvested several species of asters and goldenrods, along with bottle gentian, wild onion, thimbleweed, and Indian tobacco.
- Transplanted trees from the Macktown tree nursery into Atwood Golf Course and Hononegah Forest Preserve. Mulched and watered fall planted trees as needed.
- Cleaned up native landscaping beds at Atwood, Headquarters, and Macktown Forest Preserves.
- Forestry mowed woody species at Four Lakes and Seward Bluffs Forest Preserves.
- Department staff attended a chainsaw training course conducted by Chainsaw Safety Specialists at the Sugar River operations shop. Staff spent the morning indoors learning about safety, chainsaw maintenance, and felling techniques. Afterwards they put their training to work by felling large trees around the shop.
- Held bid opening for farm agreements. Coordinated with bidders to execute new agreements.
- Worked on execution of forestry mowing contract at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Completed all 2024 capital purchases.
- Completed grant compliance requirements as needed.
- Attended webinars on upcoming funding opportunity through the Morton Arboretum's Chicago Region Trees Initiative.

## Stewardship Coordinator

- Held weekly restoration workdays.
- Attended chainsaw safety training.
- Attended Illinois Parks and Recreation Association Communications and Marketing section board meeting.
- Assisted with prescribed burns.
- Opened, cleaned, repaired, and replaced bluebird nest boxes at Deer Run, Oak Ridge, Fuller, and Funderburg Forest Preserves.

## **Land and Development**

### November 2023 Activities Report – Cont.

#### *2023 Statistics*

A total of 221 volunteers earned 1,999.80 service hours from January 2023 through November 2023.

The monetary value of these service hours equals **\$63,593.64**. As of April 2023, the estimated national value of each volunteer hour is currently \$31.80 (based on the Independent Sector, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

# Golf Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations  
Rich Rosenstiel, Clubhouse Manager  
Tyler Knapp & Mark Freiman, Golf Maintenance Managers  
November 2023 Activities Report

## Clubhouse Operations:

- Atwood Homestead was able to take advantage of some favorable late fall weather and extended the season through Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- All three golf courses have officially been closed for the season.
  - Macktown – 10/26/23
  - Ledges – 10/29/23
  - Atwood – 11/19/23
- All redemption / ATM and Video Gaming machines removed from all three location.
- Ledges and Atwood F&B operations cleaned and winterized for season.
- Vendor appointments for 2024 merchandise pre-books.
- 2023 demo club program prepared for return authorizations.
- Developed and issued 2024 seasonal re-hire questionnaire to all seasonal staff.
- Prepared 2024 golf pass renewal / information letter.

## Golf Maintenance:

- Snow mold application on greens and tees at all three locations.
- On-going fall cleanup at all three locations, including dead tree removal.
- Golf-course accessories put into storage at all three locations.
- Burned brush piles at all three locations.
- Worked on full-time employee evaluations for all three locations.
- Mechanics servicing equipment and grinding reels at all three locations.
- Golf car fleet parked in storage for winter at Atwood.
- Cut down all ornamental grass around tee signs and clubhouse at Atwood.
- Daily golf course maintenance while Atwood remained open for play.
- Aerifies fairways at Ledges.
- Applied anti-desiccant on greens at Ledges.
- Added gravel on #4 cart path at Ledges.
- Volunteer tree removal behind #15 and #16 green at Ledges.
- Continued removing unwanted vegetation behind #5 green at Ledges.
- Removed volunteer trees on the south side of #11 tee at Ledges.
- Repaired turf vandalized by a 4-wheeler on #8 green at Ledges.
- Completed shelter renovation by #5 tee at Macktown.
- Installed no sledding signs at Macktown.
- Painted railing by the patio at Macktown.
- Continued trimming trees along fairways at Macktown.

## 2023 GOLF REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT

<b>REVENUES</b>			
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>2022 ACTUALS</b>	<b>2023 BUDGETED</b>	<b>2023 ACTUALS</b>
ATWOOD GREENS FEES	263,018	168,500	274,873
ATWOOD FOOD & BEVERAGE	94,748	63,750	111,445
ATWOOD CART RENTALS	206,651	128,000	206,042
<b>ATWOOD TOTALS</b>	<b>564,517</b>	<b>360,250</b>	<b>592,360</b>
MACKTOWN GREENS FEES	197,502	118,000	211,800
MACKTOWN FOOD & BEVERAGE	95,297	63,750	114,191
MACKTOWN CART RENTALS	177,654	98,000	167,817
<b>MACKTOWN TOTALS</b>	<b>470,453</b>	<b>279,750</b>	<b>493,808</b>
LEDGES GREENS FEES	253,902	158,500	289,382
LEDGES FOOD & BEVERAGE	126,730	63,750	143,224
LEDGES CART RENTALS	210,885	118,500	218,459
<b>LEDGES TOTALS</b>	<b>591,516</b>	<b>340,750</b>	<b>651,065</b>
GOLF GEN GOLF PASSES/ DISCOUNT CARDS	488,226	366,500	587,866
GOLF GEN CART RENTALS	11,000	21,000	10,350
GOLF GEN MERCHANDISE	75,920	58,750	83,266
GOLF GEN SPONSORSHIPS	0	0	0
GOLF GEN EVENTS & GAMING	31,963	23,000	30,775
<b>GOLF GENERAL TOTALS</b>	<b>607,109</b>	<b>469,250</b>	<b>712,257</b>
<b>REVENUE TOTALS</b>	<b>2,233,595</b>	<b>1,450,000</b>	<b>2,449,490</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>2022 ACTUALS</b>	<b>2023 BUDGETED</b>	<b>2023 ACTUALS</b>
ATWOOD PERSONNEL	312,068	330,500	330,830
ATWOOD SUPPLIES	245,765	279,500	277,284
<b>ATWOOD TOTALS</b>	<b>557,833</b>	<b>610,000</b>	<b>608,114</b>
MACKTOWN PERSONNEL	232,832	246,900	259,267
MACKTOWN SUPPLIES	204,472	230,800	223,289
<b>MACKTOWN TOTALS</b>	<b>437,304</b>	<b>477,700</b>	<b>482,556</b>
LEDGES PERSONNEL	294,928	323,175	341,233
LEDGES SUPPLIES	266,655	297,300	289,259
<b>LEDGES TOTALS</b>	<b>561,583</b>	<b>620,475</b>	<b>630,492</b>
GOLF GEN PERSONNEL	86,831	87,352	93,332
GOLF GEN SUPPLIES	6,950	12,200	4,702
<b>GOLF GENERAL TOTALS</b>	<b>93,781</b>	<b>99,552</b>	<b>98,034</b>
<b>EXPENSE TOTALS</b>	<b>1,650,501</b>	<b>1,807,727</b>	<b>1,819,196</b>
<b>REVENUE vs EXPENSES</b>			<b>630,294</b>

# Marketing & Communication Relations

Renee Pixler, Communications Coordinator

November 2023 Activities Report

## Marketing/Advertising:

- Have ads running on gorockford.com “Things to Do” pages.
  - Sports (golf)
  - Outdoor Activities
  - Family Fun
- Working with Mid-West Family Broadcasting.
  - Running digital ads and radio commercials
- Ran two “boosted” social media ads to promote the Career & Volunteer Open House.  
Insights as of 12/11/23
  - Ad #1 – 213 link clicks; \$0.23/link click; 4,759 reach
  - Ad #2 – 427 link clicks; \$0.12/link click; 7,480 reach
- Published ¼ ad in Beloit Daily News to promote the Career & Volunteer Open House
- Published ad to promote 2024 golf passes/gift cards to be run for two weeks in the Journal, Herald, Gazette, Tempo and E & W Shopper.

## Media Relations

- Featured in “*Career & Volunteer Open House*” article on Rockton-RoscoeNews.com.
- 11/6/23 – Sent press release for the Career & Volunteer Open House media contacts.
- 11/20/23 – Did radio interview with Steve Summers and Ryan Sartori on 95.3 The Bull to promote the Career & Volunteer Open House.

## Events/Programs

- *IAPD / IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference* – I am excited to be presenting at the 2024 Soaring to New Heights Conference alongside McHenry County Conservation District and Bolingbrook Park District. Our session is called “*It’s Dangerous To Go Alone! Take This. – Gamification Marketing Strategies*”. I will be presenting about the FPWC Preserve passport program.
- *Walk With U* – I am working with UW Health and UICM to come up with a schedule and preserve locations for the Walk With U 2024 walking program.
- *E.A.R.L.* – Assisted Sherry with planning and facilitating the 2024 E.A.R.L.

## Social Media

- Social Media Stats (compared to October 2023 report)
  - FPWC Facebook: 4,578 followers (+23)
  - FPWC Instagram: 1,604 followers (+1)
  - FPWC Golf Facebook: 515 followers (+2)
  - FPWC Golf Instagram: 264 followers (+3)
- Go Rockford (RACVB) tagged us in an Instagram reel on 11/6/23. Insights:
  - 4,023 views, 200 likes, 3 comments, 47 shares, 22 saves

## **Human Resources**

### **Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager November 2023 Activities Report**

- I collaborated with Roxanne Sosnowski regarding updating our employee handbook. A preliminary redline draft is ready and will be presented to the Board at the meeting on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 for approval.
- I am working with Maureen Hagen from Paylocity to implement our new Document Management Platform. We signed a one-year contract and are tentatively scheduled for a February 2024 launch date.
- I attended a meeting at the County with Steve Chapman and Kristy Knapp. We met with Key Finance and HR employees. We discussed the time tracking options to replace manual timecards with Angie.
- Presently, I am working on NEOGOV's safety platform and resolving all associated issues. My target is to complete this project by the end of January 2024.
- This month, Mike Holan and I attended a zoom IPBC Member meeting. I participated in an IPBC Benefit Administrative Systems Meeting.
- I collaborated with Mike Holan on personnel matters within the organization.
- I attended a zoom Clearinghouse Workshop for our DOT program.
- Additionally, I'm working on the termination process for seasonal employees.
- Lastly, preparations are underway for our 2023 Employee Appreciation Recognition Luncheon, set for December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 11:30am-2:30pm at the Ledges Golf Course. I am looking forward to seeing everyone there!



## Law Enforcement

### November 2023 Activities Report

11/01 Deputy Chavez is still off on Worker's comp due to his injury. He is planning to retire and will be replaced by another Deputy once his retirement is official. Patrol Deputies have been conducting extra patrol in the Forest Preserves and locking the gates when available to do so.

11/28 Deputy Eiten took a report of a dumpster fire at Keiselburg Forest Preserve. It appeared that an unknown person might have dumped hot coals into the dumpster which caused the fire.

11/30 Deputy Eiten was dispatched to Severson Dells for a criminal damage to property report to vehicle. Unknown persons damaged the rear passenger side window of the victim's vehicle while she was hiking on the trails. Nothing appeared to be taken from the vehicle.

#### **Brief Activity Summary**

- There were 0 Criminal arrests
- There were 13 Calls for service inside of the Forest Preserves
- There were 4 Reports written
- There were 0 Ordinance violations (citations) written
- There were 0 Written warnings
- There were 16 Verbal warnings
- There were 0 Airfield permits
- There were 9 Equestrian bridle tags
- There were 5 Fishing license checks
- There were 45 Occupied shelter house patrols
- There were 15 Campground patrols
- There were 15 Patrols on trail systems
- There were 20 Directed patrol hours