

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

BOARD MEETING

Klehm Arboretum

June 21, 2023

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind
Cheryl Maggio
Jerry Paulson
Jeff Tilly-arrived at 5:31pm

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Director of Finance
Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager
Renee Pixler, Communications Coordinator

GUESTS

Alex Mills
Liz Wiener
Brendan Noble
Andrea Wallace Noble
Jim Larson
Ann Wasser

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM, by Vice President Mike Eickman. Recording secretary Kristy Knapp called the roll.

PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE Audrey Johnson led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL of AGENDA and MINUTES Gloria Lind made a motion, Mike Eickman second to approve the minutes for May 17, 2023. **Motion passed unanimously.** No changes or additions were made to the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Jim Larson – 10245 Tybow Trail, Roscoe. Jim mentioned he was able to paint the outhouses and has had positive feedback. He heard the video on Arbor Day went well and will look for an appropriate signature tree for next year. Jim mentioned a new idea he has for Roland Olson Forest Preserve. He received a fundraising letter from the Girl Scouts Council, which described a young ladies Gold Award project that involves setting up a Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary. Since Roland Olson is being used primarily as a natural area, he thinks there would be at least two or three areas that would be good places to establish a Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary. This would consist of cleaning out some plant material and planting milkweed. He will be back with more information after he hears back from Mike Brien and the young lady. Jim also mentioned that a neighbor to the preserve has two Bur Oak trees and one is getting interfered by a tree and wonders if something can be done about it.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS / DISCUSSION

Oswald Property – Mike Holan addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the recently purchased Oswald property. The Forest Preserve closed on the 96-acre property two weeks ago. Most of the property is farmland with some disturbed land that of which eight to nine acres will be turned back into farmland for at least a few years. On the property, there are four houses. One of the houses is vacant but the other three are occupied. Mike apprised the Board of recent discussion with a couple of the tenants and is asking the Board to decide if they would like to continue to rent the houses, how long would we want to rent them for, and how much are we going to charge for rent? The Board's consensus is a six-month lease with emphasis

on removal of our liability. Mike also stated he has talked with Jeff Norman about a piece of property that would connect the new property to the 11 acres that were donated years back by Leslie Oswald. Jeff seemed amicable to either donating or selling the 5+ acres to the Forest Preserve. The Board will also need to make a decision on if they want this property to be the 45th preserve or make it an addition to County Line Forest Preserve. This decision will be made at a later date.

NEW BUSINESS

Jerry Paulson stated he was looking into the Forest Preserve Act regarding endowment funds. Jerry passed out a copy of the Endowment Fund Act to the Commissioners. Jerry thinks it would be a good idea if the Forest Preserve had a resolution establishing the endowment fund and leaving it open to have other endowments to be added to it. This resolution would determine how the monies, revenues and the principle from the fund can be used. Steve Chapman mentioned there was \$200,000 allocated from the original Atwood donation that was put into the improvement and development fund, which only \$45,000 has been spent. The remaining \$155,000 can be used for either the golf course or the preserve at Atwood Homestead. Steve thinks it would be a good idea to have something formalized that was approved by the Board. Jerry Paulson will work with Steve Chapman and Mike Holan on this process.

Jeff Tilly stated now that the Severson Dells lease agreement has been executed and adopted, there was talk about a donation to Severson Dells for their programs. Jeff mentioned we are still waiting to hear back from Severson Dells Nature Center on a program or details and how to proceed with the donation.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for May – Gloria Lind made a motion, Judy Barnard seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for May in the amount of \$758,568.84. **Motion passed unanimously.**

STAFF REPORTS

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

Land and Development – Mike Brien, Mike Groves and Keith Krey submitted a written report.

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

Marketing – Renee Pixler submitted a written report. Renee stated the Hooked on Fun Fishing Derby on June 10th had 182 kids with a diverse group of people and a lot of kids who have never fished before. Staff along with some volunteers helped with the event.

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

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

Mike Holan mentioned staff may be looking into fishing clinic in the future.

Jeff Tilly mentioned he overheard some gentlemen talking about the Forest Preserve golf courses and the comments they were making were all great comments about the courses.

Judy Barnard stated Renee Pixler and Keith Krey came to the Art Scene at the Swedish Historic Society in April. A table was set up with Forest Preserve information and they handed out prairie seed packets. People loved having them there and they were able to setup partnerships with other organizations. Judy thanked Renee and Keith.

Mike Holan mentioned while working at the Klehm Garden Fair, a lot of people gave positive feedback despite the Severson Dells situation. There were not-for-profits and other agencies that said they would come in and facilitate educational programs for the Forest Preserve.

Judy Barnard announced the Natural Land Institute has hired Alan Branhagen as their new Executive Director starting July 15th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

July 3 - Howl at the Moon Night Hike at Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve, Time TBD

July 8 - Walk With U - Guided Walk at Deer Run Forest Preserve from 9:00am - 10:00am

July 11 - FPWC Guided Hike at Oak Ridge Forest Preserve from 5:30pm - 6:30pm

July 15 - R.E.A.P. Volunteer Workday at Oak Ridge Forest Preserve from 9:00am - 12:00pm

ADJOURNMENT

Gloria Lind made a motion, Jerry Paulson second to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 PM. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary