

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday, October 21, 2026 – 5:30 PM
Forest Preserve Headquarters



A G E N D A

A. ROLL CALL

B. PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE

C. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

D. OLD BUSINESS

Page

E. NEW BUSINESS

- 1.** 1. Approval of Budget and Appropriations Ordinance (Two Amendments)
- 4.** 2. Approval of Levy Ordinance
- 8.** 3. Approval of Changes to Employee Vacation Ordinance
- 14.** 4. Approval of Temporary Policy for Employee Vacation Time Accrual and Use Ordinance
- 5. Consent Agenda

President's Statement: The following items "a" through "h" are considered routine or presented in earlier communications and will be approved with a single motion. No discussion is required. Any commissioner requesting to remove an item from the consent agenda must request the removal now so that it may be placed later in the agenda for discussion. Are there any items to be removed from the consent agenda?

- 17.** a. Approval of Bills for September
- b. Minutes of Regular Session September 16, 2026
- c. Minutes from Special Meeting (Strategic Planning Meeting) Aug. 26, 2026
- 19.** d. Approval of Floating Holiday Accrual Ordinance
- 22.** e. Approval of 2027 Holiday Schedule
- 24.** f. Authorization of Change Order for Construction of the New Natural Resources Facility
- 27.** g. Transfer of Splashpad and Critter Creek Assets from Klehm
- 29.** h. Approval of Employee Bonus Distribution

F. DISCUSSION

- 30.** 1. Board Meeting Schedule for 2027

G. UPDATES and REPORTS

- 32.** 1. Preserve Operations
- 37.** 2. Natural Resource Management
- 40.** 3. Golf
- 46.** 4. Marketing
- 48.** 5. Human Resources
- 6. Partner Groups

H. CLOSED SESSION

- 1. Land Acquisition
- 2. Litigation
- 3. Personnel
- 4. Closed Session Minutes

I. REGULAR SESSION NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

- 49.** 1. Approval of Closed Session Minutes From:
 - a. April 20, 2022
 - b. June 22, 2022 – Land Acquisition
 - c. June 22, 2022 – Litigation
 - d. July 20, 2022 – Litigation
 - e. July 20, 2022 – Personnel
 - f. July 20, 2022 – Personnel 2

g. November 16, 2022

6. Approval of Resolution to Release Closed Session Minutes.

J. ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

1. October 23 – Site Steward Volunteer Day at Deer Run Forest Preserve starting at 1:00pm.
2. November 14 – Site Steward Volunteer Day at Kilbuck Bluffs starting at 9:00am.
3. November 20 – Site Steward Volunteer Day at Deer Run Forest Preserve starting at 1:00pm.
4. November 23 – 24 – Lincoln & Liberty at Macktown Living History Museum.

K. ADJOURNMENT

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

If you require assistance while attending our meetings, please call 815-877-6100 or email ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org no less than 48 hours prior to the Board meeting.

Anyone wishing to address the Board may call 815-877-6100 or email ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org in advance of the meeting.

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD of COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA BACKGROUND INFORMATION

October 21, 2026

Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance

Contact	Steve Chapman	877-6100
	Daniel Olson	877-6100

Background Information:

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County's fiscal year budget operates from November 1 through October 31. The Board of Commissioners have been presented the proposed 2026-2027 Annual Budget and Appropriation for review and adoption. The budget has been laid over for 30 days for public review and comment. No changes were made during the layover. It is requested the Board will approve the Ordinance to adopt the attached 2026-2027 Annual Budget and Appropriations.

Motion: To adopt the attached 2026-2027 Budget and Appropriations Ordinance.

ACTION required: Ordinance

September 16, 2026 – layover
October 21, 2026 – adoption
Rockford, Illinois

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE
No. 26-1002

for the fiscal period of November 1, 2026 through October 31, 2027

WHEREAS, the District staff in compliance with the provisions of the Illinois Municipal Budget Law, Illinois Revised Statutes, Section 70, paragraph 805 *et seq.*, has prepared an Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the District fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027; and

WHEREAS, the said Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance was submitted to the District Board of Commissioners on September 16, 2026.

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

Section 1. That the attached schedules, containing the estimated cash on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year, the estimate of the cash expected to be received during the fiscal year from all sources, the estimate of the expenditures contemplated for said fiscal year, and the estimated cash expected to be on hand at the end of said fiscal year, be, and they are hereby approved as, the budget for the District fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027.

Section 2. That the amounts stated for the objects and purposes specified in the attached schedules, or so much thereof as may be authorized by law, or as may be needed are hereby appropriated for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027, from the following funds: Corporate, Capital Improvement, Botanical Garden, Liability Reserve, Social Security, Retirement, 2016 Debt Service, 2025 Debt Service, Health Insurance, and 2025 Land Acquisition.

Section 3. That, except as otherwise provided by law, no personnel shall be added other than specifically stated in each department budget, and no further appropriation shall be made at any other time within said fiscal year; however, the Board of Commissioners may from time to time make transfers between object classifications in any fund not exceeding, in the aggregate, 10% of the total amount appropriated in said Fund, and the Board of Commissioners may amend said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance from time to time by following the same procedure employed in the adoption of this Ordinance.

Section 4. That the District Secretary is hereby directed to provide two copies of this laid-over budget available in the Forest Preserve District office for public review by Thursday, September 17, 2026.

Section 5. That the District Executive Director is, by way of layover, hereby directed to advertise and hold a public hearing at the District Headquarters at 5:15 PM Wednesday, October 21, 2026, to receive public testimony regarding this proposed budget.

Section 6. That the District Secretary is hereby directed to make publication of this Ordinance in a newspaper having general circulation in the District within ten days of adoption of this Ordinance; and said Ordinance shall take effect ten days following the date of said publication.

Section 7. That the Secretary of the Forest Preserve District is hereby authorized and directed to deliver copies of this Ordinance to the District Director, Treasurer, Director of Finance, and County Clerk.

Voting Yes

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Jerry Paulson

Emily Porter

Jeff Tilly, President

Voting No

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Jerry Paulson

Emily Porter

Jeff Tilly, President

Abstained

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Jerry Paulson

Emily Porter

Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

Jeff Tilly, President

Gloria Lind, Secretary

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD of COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA BACKGROUND INFORMATION

October 21, 2026

Tax Levy Ordinance

Contact	Steve Chapman	877-6100
	Daniel Olson	877-6100

Background Information:

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County's fiscal year budget operates from November 1 through October 31. The Board of Commissioners have been presented a proposed tax levy that must be approved to finance the 2026-2027 Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance that has been presented to the Board. The tax levy has been laid over for 30 days for public review and comment. It is requested the Board will approve the Ordinance to adopt the attached Levy Ordinance.

Motion: To adopt the attached Levy Ordinance.

ACTION required: Ordinance

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

LEVY ORDINANCE

No. 26-1003

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, pursuant to the requirements set forth in the Illinois Municipal Budget Law, adopted an Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the fiscal year beginning November 1, 2026 and ending October 31, 2027; and

WHEREAS, per the Truth in Taxation law, the aggregate levy listed below did not increase over 2025 by 2.70% or more; and

WHEREAS, the District Executive Director did cause said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance to be made conveniently available for public inspection on and after September 17, 2026; and

WHEREAS, all legal requirements in connection with the preparation, public display, public hearings and adoption of the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance have been complied with; and

WHEREAS, said Ordinance will become effective ten days after its publication.

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

Section 1. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of two million, six hundred six-seven thousand dollars (\$2,667,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a General Corporate Tax for the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Corporate 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 2. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of one million, two hundred five thousand dollars (\$1,205,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Capital Improvement Tax for the year 2026, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Capital Improvement Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 3. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of three hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$320,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Botanical Garden Tax for the year 2026, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Botanical Garden Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 4. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of three hundred sixty-four thousand dollars (\$364,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Liability Reserve Fund Tax for the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Liability Reserve Fund 2026-2027 appropriations

Section 5. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of one hundred ninety-nine thousand dollars (\$199,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as IMRF Tax for the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Retirement Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 6. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of two hundred ten thousand dollars (\$210,000) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago, State of Illinois, as a Social Security Tax the year 2026 and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purposes as set forth in the Social Security Fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 7. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of two hundred fifty-eight thousand seven hundred twenty-six dollars (\$258,726) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago State of Illinois as a 2016 Bond Debt Service Tax for the year 2026 as set forth in the 2016 Land Acquisition Bond Ordinance, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purpose as set forth in the 2016 Debt Service fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 8. That there be and is hereby levied the sum of one hundred seventy-eight thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$178,750) on all taxable property in the County of Winnebago State of Illinois as a 2025 Bond Debt Service Tax for the year 2026 as set forth in the 2025 Land Acquisition Bond Ordinance, and that the County Clerk of said County be and is hereby authorized and directed to extend a rate of taxation that will produce said amount for the objects and purpose as set forth in the 2025 Debt Service fund 2026-2027 appropriations; and

Section 9. That the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is hereby directed to make a certified copy of this Ordinance and file such certified copy with the County Clerk of Winnebago County, Illinois, no later than October 31, 2026; and

Section 10. That the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is hereby directed to deliver certified copies of this Ordinance to the District Executive Director, District Treasurer, and County Clerk.

Section 11. That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force and effect from and after its adoption by this Board of Commissioners.

Voting Yes	Voting No	Abstained
Judith Barnard	Judith Barnard	Judith Barnard
Mike Eickman	Mike Eickman	Mike Eickman
Gloria Lind	Gloria Lind	Gloria Lind
Cheryl Maggio	Cheryl Maggio	Cheryl Maggio

Jerry Paulson	Jerry Paulson	Jerry Paulson
Emily Porter	Emily Porter	Emily Porter
Jeff Tilly, President	Jeff Tilly, President	Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

Jeff Tilly, President

Gloria Lind, Secretary

ORDINANCE

No. 26-1004

CHANGES TO EMPLOYEE VACATION POLICY

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

WHEREAS, the Board adopted a full employee manual (Employee Handbook) on May 20, 2026 and it is deemed necessary to make changes from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) provides vacation time to full and part-time employees, based on the years of service; and

WHEREAS, the District would like to change certain aspects of the Vacation Policy in order to be able to use vacation time as it is accrued, and to accrue increasing vacation hours annually, instead of increasing at five-year intervals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois, the following:

Section 1. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District adopts and approves the attached changes to the Vacation Time policy in Section 6.2 Time Off – Vacation, of the District Employee Handbook.

Section 2. Repeal of Conflicting Provisions. All ordinances, resolutions and policies or parts thereof, in conflict with this Ordinance are, to the extent of the conflict, are temporarily repealed during the effective date of the Ordinance.

Section 3. 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 application 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 4. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage in accordance with 70 ILCS 805/11 and aligned with the dates written into the new policy.

APPROVED AND PASSED ON THIS 21ST DAY OF OCTOBER 2026

Voting Yes

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Emily Porter

Jerry Paulson

Jeff Tilly, President

Voting No

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Emily Porter

Jerry Paulson

Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

6.2 Vacation (Includes Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act)

Full-time employees are eligible for vacation based on the length of full-time continuous service at WCPD.

Vacation credit is accrued on a monthly basis. Upon completion of the employee's probationary period, hours will be available for use. Each full-time employee will be entitled to a monthly accrual rate of vacation time as follows:

YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE (BY ANNIVERSARY DATE)	MONTHS OF COMPLETED CONTINUOUS SERVICE	ANNUAL VACATION DAYS EARNED	MONTHLY VACATION HOURS EARNED	MAXIMUM RATE
1 year	0 - 12 months	10 days	6.6667 hours	80.0 hours
2 years	13 - 24 months	11 days	7.3334 hours	128.00 hours
3 years	25 - 36 months	12 days	8.0000 hours	136.00 hours
4 years	37 - 48 months	13 days	8.6667 hours	144.00 hours
5 years	49 - 60 months	14 days	9.3334 hours	152.00 hours
6 years	61 - 72 months	15 days	10.0000 hours	160.00 hours
7 years	73 - 84 months	16 days	10.6667 hours	168.00 hours
8 years	85 - 96 months	17 days	11.3334 hours	176.00 hours
9 years	97 - 108 months	18 days	12.0000 hours	184.00 hours
10 years	109 - 120 months	19 days	12.6667 hours	192.00 hours
11 years	121 - 132 months	20 days	13.3334 hours	200.00 hours
12 years	133 - 144 months	21 days	14.0000 hours	208.00 hours
13 years	145 - 156 months	22 days	14.6667 hours	216.00 hours
14 years	157 - 168 months	23 days	15.3334 hours	224.00 hours
15 years	169 - 180 months	24 days	16.0000 hours	232.00 hours
16 years +	181+ months	25 days	16.6667 hours	240.00 hours

6.2.1 Use of Vacation

- Vacation accrues retroactive to the hire date but is credited after probation period (90 days).

- Full-time employees may maintain a maximum vacation balance according to the maximum rate. Employees whose vacation balance exceeds their annual maximum rate at any time during the year, will be reduced to fall within the maximum rates.
- Part time employees will earn a monthly accrual of 3.3334 hours, totaling 40 hours of vacation annually. Maximum rate will be 60 hours.
- Vacation requests should be submitted at least five (5) working days in advance; approval with shorter notice is at the manager's discretion.
- Scheduling conflicts are resolved at the manager's discretion, based on operational needs, seniority, timeliness, and personal circumstances.
- Vacation may not be used during the last two weeks of employment.
- Upon separation from employment, employees will be paid for all accrued and unused vacation in accordance with applicable law.

6.2 Vacation (Includes Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act)

Full-time employees are eligible for vacation based on the length of full-time continuous service at WCFPD.

Vacation credit is ~~accumulated~~ accrued on a monthly basis. Upon completion of the employee's probationary period, ~~hours will be available for use. retroactive to their hire date.~~ After one year of service, Each full-time employee will be entitled to ~~annual~~ a monthly accrual rate of vacation time as follows:

YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE (BY ANNIVERSARY DATE)	MONTHS OF COMPLETED CONTINUOUS SERVICE	ANNUAL VACATION DAYS EARNED	MONTHLY VACATION HOURS EARNED	MAXIMUM RATE
1 year	0 - 12 months	10 days	6.6667 hours	80.0 hours
2 years	13 - 24 months	11 days	7.3334 hours	128.00 hours
3 years	25 - 36 months	12 days	8.0000 hours	136.00 hours
4 years	37 - 48 months	13 days	8.6667 hours	144.00 hours
5 years	49 - 60 months	14 days	9.3334 hours	152.00 hours
6 years	61 - 72 months	15 days	10.0000 hours	160.00 hours
7 years	73 - 84 months	16 days	10.6667 hours	168.00 hours
8 years	85 - 96 months	17 days	11.3334 hours	176.00 hours
9 years	97 - 108 months	18 days	12.0000 hours	184.00 hours
10 years	109 - 120 months	19 days	12.6667 hours	192.00 hours
11 years	121 - 132 months	20 days	13.3334 hours	200.00 hours
12 years	133 - 144 months	21 days	14.0000 hours	208.00 hours
13 years	145 - 156 months	22 days	14.6667 hours	216.00 hours
14 years	157 - 168 months	23 days	15.3334 hours	224.00 hours
15 years	169 - 180 months	24 days	16.0000 hours	232.00 hours
16 years +	181+ months	25 days	16.6667 hours	240.00 hours

~~Earned per Consecutive Years of Service~~	~~Accrued on Anniversary~~	~~Accrual Rate~~
~~1st year – 5th year~~	~~80 hours – 10 days – 2 weeks~~	~~6.66 hours per month~~
~~6th year – 10th year~~	~~120 hours – 15 days – 3 weeks~~	~~10.00 hours per month~~
~~11th year – 15th year~~	~~160 hours – 20 days – 4 weeks~~	~~13.33 hours per month~~
~~16th year and over~~	~~200 hours – 25 days – 5 weeks~~	~~16.66 hours per month~~

6.2.1 Use of Vacation

- Vacation accrues retroactive to the hire date but is credited after probation period (90 days).
- ~~Up to one week may be used after six (6) months of continuous service the first year.~~
- ~~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 may be carried over for one year past the anniversary date.~~
- Full-time employees may maintain a maximum vacation balance according to the maximum rate. Employees whose vacation balance exceeds their annual maximum rate at any time during the year, will be reduced to fall within the maximum rate.
- Part-time employees will earn a monthly accrual of 3.3334 hours, totaling 40 hours of vacation annually. Maximum rate will be 60 hours.
- Vacation requests should be submitted at least five (5) working days in advance; approval with shorter notice is at the manager's discretion.
- Scheduling conflicts are resolved **at the manager's discretion**, based on operational needs, seniority, timeliness, and personal circumstances.
- ~~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.~~
- ~~Upon termination, employees are paid for all unused and accrued vacation. Vacation may not be used during the last two weeks of employment to extend a two week notice period.~~
- Upon separation from employment, employees will be paid for all accrued and unused vacation in accordance with applicable law. ~~Vacation may not be used to extend a required notice period.~~

ORDINANCE

No. 26-1005

TEMPORARAY VACATION TIME ACCUMULATION AND USE POLICY

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

WHEREAS, the Board adopted a full employee manual (Employee Handbook) on May 20, 2026 and it is deemed necessary to make changes from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) provides vacation time to full and part-time employees, based on the years of service; and

WHEREAS, the Board approved changes to the District vacation policy that allows employees to use the vacation time as they accrue it, and as such, will need to implement a temporary policy that allows employees to hold and use vacation time, greater than the current policy allows.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois, the following:

Section 1. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District adopts and approves the attached Temporary Vacation and Time Accumulation and Use Policy for the time specified, to supplement Section 6.2 Time Off – Vacation of the District Employee Handbook.

Section 2. Repeal of Conflicting Provisions. All ordinances, resolutions and policies or parts thereof, in conflict with this Ordinance are, to the extent of the conflict, are temporarily repealed during the effective date of the Ordinance.

Section 3. 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 application 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 4. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage in accordance with 70 ILCS 805/11 and aligned with the dates written into the temporary policy.

APPROVED AND PASSED ON THIS 21ST DAY OF OCTOBER 2026

Voting Yes

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Emily Porter

Jerry Paulson

Jeff Tilly, President

Voting No

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Emily Porter

Jerry Paulson

Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Temporary Vacation Time Accumulation and Use Policy Supplemental to District Employee Handbook Section 6.2

This Temporary Vacation Time Accumulation and Use Policy is supplemental to Section 6.2, Time Off – Vacation, of the District Employee Handbook. To the extent that the provisions of this temporary policy conflict with Section 6.2 during the effective period of this policy, the provisions of this temporary policy shall apply.

This temporary policy shall be effective January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2028, unless otherwise modified or extended by the District.

Effective January 1, 2027, all eligible full-time and part-time employees will have their accrued vacation hours available for use. This includes any existing vacation balance as of January 1, 2027, as well as vacation hours accrued since the employee's most recent anniversary date.

Beginning January 1, 2027, employees may maintain a maximum vacation balance of 440 hours. Employees whose vacation balances exceeds 440 hours at any time during 2027, will be reduced to fall within the maximum rates.

Effective January 1, 2028, employees may maintain a maximum vacation balance of one and a half (1.5) times their annual rate of accrual. Employees whose vacation balances exceeding one and a half (1.5) times their annual rate any time during 2028, will be reduced to fall within the maximum rates.

Effective January 1, 2029, this temporary policy will expire and employees will be subject to the normal maximum vacation accumulation limits established in Section 6.2, Vacation, of the District Employee Handbook.

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Authorization to Process Payment of Bills



October 21, 2026

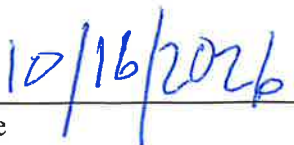
**TO: THE AUDITOR AND TREASURER OF THE
FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY.**

Your Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners, to whom were referred the following bills in the amount of **\$ 1,118,734.16** 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	265,740.79
HEALTH BENEFITS FUND	3185	44,153.38
SOCIAL SECURITY FUND	3192	21,757.76
RETIREMENT FUND	3193	21,039.21
IMPROVEMENT & DEV. FUND	3302	590,554.16
CORPORATE FUND	3402	<u>175,488.86</u>
		\$1,118,734.16

Respectfully submitted,


Steve Chapman, Finance Director


Date

RESOLUTION

No. 26-1001

PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR SEPTEMBER

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 September; 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 \$1,118,734.16 to be paid by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County for the month of September, 2026.

Voting YES_____ Voting NO_____ Voting ABSTAINED_____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

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

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

ORDINANCE
No. 26-1006
FLOATING HOLIDAY ACCRUAL AND USE

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

WHEREAS, the Board adopted a full employee manual (Employee Handbook) on May 20, 2026 and it is deemed necessary to make changes from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserve District of Winnebago County (District) already grants floating holiday time to full and part-time employees; and

WHEREAS, the District, recognizes that employees may wish to celebrate other milestones and holidays that are not listed as annually approved holidays; and

WHEREAS, the following changes to floating holiday time does not increase or decrease the current amount of floating holiday time, but instead changes when it can be used.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Winnebago County, Illinois, the following:

Section 1. The Forest Preserve District of Winnebago County hereby adopts and approves the attached changes to the Employee Handbook Section 6.1.3 Floating Holidays.

Section 2. Repeal of Conflicting Provisions. All ordinances, resolutions and policies or parts thereof, in conflict with this Ordinance are, to the extent of the conflict, expressly repealed on the effective date of the Ordinance.

Section 3. 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 application 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 4. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage in accordance with 70 ILCS 805/11.

APPROVED AND PASSED ON THIS 21ST DAY OF OCTOBER 2026.

Voting Yes

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Emily Porter

Jerry Paulson

Jeff Tilly, President

Voting No

Judith Barnard

Mike Eickman

Gloria Lind

Cheryl Maggio

Emily Porter

Jerry Paulson

Jeff Tilly, President

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

6.1.3 Floating Holidays

Floating holidays provide eligible employees with additional flexibility to request paid time off for days or hours of their choosing, subject to supervisor approval and the operational needs of the District.

In addition to fixed holidays that are granted to employees, the District will grant floating holiday time.

During the first year of employment, the number of hours granted will be dependent upon the hire date, and as follows:

Date Hired	Full-time Employees Hours Floating Holiday	Part-time Employees Hours Floating Holiday
Jan. 1 to March 1	24 hrs. + 16 hrs. after July 1	12 hrs. + 8 hrs. after July 1
March 2 to May 31	16 hrs. + 16 hrs. after July 1	8 hrs. + 8 hrs. after July 1
June 1 to July 1	8 hrs. + 16 hrs. after July 1	4 hrs. + 8 hrs. after July 1
July 2 to September 1	16 hrs.	8 hrs.
After September 1 to December 31	8 hrs.	4 hrs.

Each subsequent year of employment, full-time employees will receive twenty-four (24) floating holiday hours on January 1 and sixteen (16) floating holiday hours beginning July 1, of each calendar year. Part-time employees will receive twelve (12) floating holiday hours on January 1 and eight (8) floating holiday hours beginning July 1, of each calendar year.

Use of Floating Holiday Time

- Floating holiday time may be used during the probationary period.
- Employees may take floating holiday time for any day, with supervisor approval.
- Requests to use floating holiday time should be submitted at least five working days in advance to their supervisor. Approval with shorter notice is at the supervisor's approval.
- Floating holiday time may not be used to extend a separation date or notice period.
- Floating holiday time may be used in fifteen (15) minute increments.
- Floating Holiday time must be used within the same calendar year in which they are provided and do not carry over into the following calendar year.
- Floating holiday time will not be paid out upon separation from the District.

RESOLUTION
No. 26-1007
2027 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

WHEREAS, certain days of the calendar year are designated as scheduled holidays; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County has designated such dates to observe said holidays; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County elect to set the scheduled holidays for all Forest Preserve employees;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County approve the attached holiday schedule to be observed by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County's employees for the year of 2027.

Voting YES_____ Voting NO_____ Voting ABSTAINED_____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

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

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners



2027 Holiday Schedule

Friday	January 1	New Year's Holiday
Monday	May 31	Memorial Day
Monday	July 5	Independence Day (Observed)
Monday	September 6	Labor Day
Thursday	November 25	Thanksgiving Day
Friday	November 26	Thanksgiving Holiday
Friday	December 24	Christmas Holiday
Monday	December 27	Christmas Day (Observed)

Floating Holidays – Refer to the revised Policy (6.1.3 – Floating Holidays), effective January 1, 2027.

RESOLUTION
No. 26-1008

**AUTHORIZATION OF CHANGE ORDER FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW
NATURAL RESOURCES FACILITY**

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners awarded the contract to construct a new facility for the natural resource department at Funderburg Forest Preserve to Schmeling Construction Co., for the cost of \$2,511,00.00 through Resolution 25-1202; and,

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners approved Change Order #1 on April 15, 2026 via Resolution 26-0406, which increased the contract amount with Schmeling Construction Co. to \$2,531,787.49; and,

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners approved Change Order #2 on August 19th, 2026 via Resolution 26-0804, which increased the contract amount with Schmeling Construction Co. to \$2,636,288.97; and,

WHEREAS, State law (720 ILCS 5/33E-9) requires that any change order, or change orders in aggregate, which change the contract price by more than \$10,000 require board approval; and,

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District's purchasing policy permits the Executive Director to approve all change orders up to 25% over the approved contract price in advance of Board Approval; and,

WHEREAS, the Executive Director has approved the following proposed changes to the contract:

1. Replace one eyewash station with a hot/cold faucet (deduct \$612.00)
2. Provide electrical service to fuel station (add \$3,280.20)
3. Eliminate 4' of transformer screen fence (deduct \$1,200.00)
4. Provide and install water softener (add 6,200.25)

WHEREAS, these proposed change orders have been incorporated into Change Order #3, AIA Document G701; and,

WHEREAS, these changes will increase the contract price by \$7,668.45 for a total contract price of \$2,643,957.42, and sufficient funds are available in the project budget to accommodate the proposed change;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District approve Change Order #3, which will increase the contract price with Schmeling Construction Co. by \$7,668.45 for the construction of the natural resource facility.

Voting YES _____ Voting NO _____ ABSTAINED _____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026. That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

24 _____
Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

New Natural Resource Facility

Updated 10.14.2026

Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources

Blakemore Contract	\$	181,250.00
Pay Request 1 (FY2024-25)	\$	49,786.00
Pay Request 2 - 10.28.25 (FY2024-25)	\$	98,672.70
Pay Request 3 - 3.6.2026	\$	1,965.49
Pay Request 4 - 5.31.2026	\$	4,590.39
Pay Request 5 - 9.3.2026	\$	4,925.57
Paid as of 10.14.2026	\$	159,940.15
Remaining per Contract	\$	21,309.85
Contract Waive for Redesign Costs	\$	(12,109.43)
<u>Actual Remaining Expenses</u>	\$	9,200.42
Schmeling Contract	\$	2,636,288.97
Paid Invoices		
Pay Request 1 - 2.9.2026	\$	67,500.10
Pay Request 2 - 4.7.2026	\$	257,726.30
Pay Request 3 - 5.5.2026	\$	322,646.15
Pay Request 4 - 6.8.2026	\$	234,341.50
Pay Request 5 - 7.8.2026	\$	154,554.63
Pay Request 6 - 8.10.2026	\$	151,915.30
Pay Request 7 - 9.8.2026	\$	463,934.79
Pay Request 8 - 10.13.2026	\$	256,114.30
Paid Invoices Total	\$	1,908,733.07
Upcoming Change Orders		
Change Order 3	\$	7,668.45
Upcoming Change Order Total	\$	7,668.45
<u>Remaining on Contract</u>	\$	735,224.35

Additional Expenses

Paid as of 10.14.26

Building permit	\$	17,361.36
CGMT - Soil Testing (FY2024-25)	\$	4,050.00
Nicor Service Install	\$	3,327.57
WCSWCD - SWPP Plan Review	\$	990.00
WCSWCD - Additional Soil Borings	\$	150.00
NPDES Permit	\$	250.00
Midwest Archaeological - Phase I	\$	1,634.00
ComEd Installation	\$	1,033.17
Fire Alarm Permit	\$	610.06
Knox Box	\$	535.00
Fuel Tanks	\$	12,398.87
Heartland Business Systems	\$	9,516.60
CDWG	\$	2,032.93

Paid Subtotal \$ 53,889.56

Upcoming

Per Mar - Burglar Alarm	\$	2,769.59
Per Mar - Door Access	\$	4,514.70
Per Mar - CCTV	\$	4,983.48
Furniture	\$	27,081.00

Upcoming Subtotal \$ 39,348.77

Additional Expenses Total \$ 93,238.33

FY 2025 - 26 BUDGET OUTLOOK

Budgeted Amount	\$	2,800,000.00
Paid in FY 2025-26	\$	1,970,054.08
Remaining FY 2025-26 Expenses	\$	783,773.54
Total Anticipated FY 2025-26 Expenses	\$	2,753,827.62
Remaining FY 2025-26 Budget	\$	46,172.38
Total Paid in FY 2024-25	\$	152,508.70
ANTICIPATED PROJECT TOTAL	\$	2,906,336.32

RESOLUTION

No. 26-1009

ACCEPTING DONATION OF THE SPRAY PAD AND CRITTER CREEK FEATURES AND ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENTS FROM KLEHM ARBORETUM AND BOTANIC GARDEN INC. TO THE FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

WHEREAS, Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden Inc. (Klehm) has made improvements to the Carl and Lois Klehm Forest Preserve property owned by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District); and

WHEREAS, the improvements include the demolition and construction of an all-new Spray Pad and the conversion of the prior Kid's Creek water feature to the new Critter Creek water feature, consisting of excavation and construction, including plumbing, electrical, hardscape and plant material, as well as all engineering and design work necessary to accomplish said installation, total \$341,804.15; and

WHEREAS, Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden Inc. intends to continue to fund and perform regular and routine maintenance to the Spray Pad and Critter Creek features; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago previously approved the remodel of these features on December 17, 2025 via Resolution 25-1203; and

WHEREAS, Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden Inc. has invested a total of \$316,839.15 of its own organizational funds, including but not limited to grant funds and other restricted contributions, into said improvements, and has provided documentation of expenditures to the District; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County reallocated \$24,965 of funding previously allocated and not utilized in the FY26 budget for the Fountain Garden Gazebo reroofing project toward this project on May 20, 2026 via Resolution 26-0504, and provided Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden Inc. with said funds; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden Inc. has passed a Resolution approving the donation of each described improvement to the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County.

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 gratefully accept the gift of the Spray Pad and Critter Creek Features, including all professional engineering and design services rendered, collectively valued at \$ \$341,804.15 from Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden Inc.

Section 2: The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County recognize the value of the Spray Pad and Critter Creek Features as \$ \$341,804.15

Section 3: That the Secretary of Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Inc. shall forward a certified copy of the Resolution to donate the described improvements to the Forest Preserve of Winnebago County's Executive Director.

Section 4: That the Secretary to the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County shall forward a certified copy of the Resolution to accept the donation of the described improvements to the Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Inc. Executive Director

Voting **YES**_____ Voting **NO**_____ **ABSTAINING**_____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

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

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION

No. 26-1010

DISCRETIONARY BONUS FOR FULL AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners (Board) of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) recognizes the significant contributions of its employees to the District's success and growth; and,

WHEREAS, the Board, in consultation with staff during the annual budget process, proposed discretionary bonuses for staff based on the District's financial performance during the 2025-26 fiscal year, and,

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it is in the best interest of the District to implement a one-time discretionary bonus for District staff, in the 2026-27 fiscal year, to help retain and motivate individuals.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District hereby approves the following criteria for a one-time discretionary bonus for full and part-time employees to be paid in the 2026-27 fiscal year.

- I. A one-time discretionary bonus pool, not to exceed \$40,000.00 is established to be paid in the 2026-27 fiscal year, which was included in the 2026-27 fiscal year budget.
- II. All full-time employees (excluding the Executive Director) (27 total) that were employed as full-time, from November 1, 2025 through Oct. 31, 2026 and are still employed as of November 23, 2026 will be eligible for a one-time base discretionary bonus of nine hundred dollars (\$900.00) plus thirty-one dollars (\$31.00) for each completed full-year of employment with the District, calculated as of October 31, 2026, to be paid in one lump sum.
- III. All full-time employees (8 total) that were not employed as full time from November 1, 2025 through Oct. 31, 2026 and are still employed as of November 23, 2026 will be eligible for a one-time prorated discretionary bonus of seventy-five (\$75.00) dollars per fully completed month of service, to be paid in one lump sum.
- IV. All part-time employees (2 total) that were employed between November 1, 2025 and October 31, 2026 and are still employed as of November 23, 2026, will be eligible for a four hundred fifty dollar (\$450.00) one-time discretionary bonus, to be paid in one lump sum.

Voting YES_____ Voting NO_____ Voting ABSTAINED_____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 21st day of October, 2026.

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

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
29 Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION

No. 26-????

Establishing the date, time and location of each regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County for the period from January 1, 2027 through December 31, 2027

WHEREAS, under the provisions pursuant to the Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/2.02(a), the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is required to provide public notice of the date, time and location of its regularly scheduled meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners will hold regular meetings and study sessions during the year 2027 and may hold additional meetings at such other times as may be determined.

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

Section 1. That it shall conduct regular meetings at 5:30 PM in the conference room of Forest Preserve Headquarters, 5500 Northrock Drive, Rockford, Illinois on the 3rd Wednesday of every month throughout 2027.

January 20	May 19	September 15
February 17	June 16	October 20
March 17	July 21	November 17
April 21	August 18	December 15

Section 2. That it shall conduct study sessions at the dates and times listed below in the conference room of Forest Preserve Headquarters, 5500 Northrock Drive, Rockford, Illinois during 2027. No actions may be voted on by the Board during study sessions.

January 9, (Sat.) at 9:00 AM – Strategic Planning	April 7, (Wed.) at 5:30 PM – Strategic Planning
February 3, (Wed.) at 5:30 PM – Board Training	May 5, (Wed.) at 5:30 PM – Strategic Planning
March 3, (Wed.) at 5:30 PM – Strategic Planning	June 2, (Wed.) at 5:30 PM – Strategic Planning

Section 3. That additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Section 4. That any changes, deletions or additions to times or locations in this schedule shall be posted 48 hours in advance at Forest Preserve Headquarters and distributed to any public media requesting notice of such meetings.

Section 5. That the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners is hereby directed to supply copies of this Resolution to any public media having filed an annual request for notice of the scheduled meetings of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County.

Voting YES_____ Voting NO_____ Voting ABSTAINED_____

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 18th day of November, 2026.

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

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

DRAFT

Preserve Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Scott Wallace & Matt Weik, Preserve Managers
Scott Young, Facility & Equipment Manager
September 2026 Activities Report

North Area Shop

- Ground and repainted hand rails at employee entrance at Headquarters.
- Repaired damaged cement on back step of employee entrance at Headquarters.
- String trimmed and sprayed weeds on Kieselburg fly field landing pad.
- Frinks pumped out dump station and host site at Hononegah Campground.
- Weekly mowing and trimming of preserves.
- Repaired men's shower in shower house at Sugar River Campground.
- Stenstrom completed Sugar River entrance asphalt project.
- Rock Valley Alarm serviced defective smoke alarm in Trading Post at Macktown Historic District.
- Met with Dan Olson and Linda Sonneson regarding Stephens Building and Macktown alarm system.
- Pressure washed and cleaned shower house floors at Sugar River campground.
- Hedge trimmed walking path at Headquarters.
- Hedge trimmed main roadway at Macktown.
- Replaced rotted timber base board at Headquarters parking lot employee entrance.
- Installed boot/shoe brush at Headquarters employee entrance.
- Laid recycled asphalt product in parking pull-off area at Sugar River entrance.
- Back filled edges of new asphalt at Sugar River entrance.
- Cleaned up boat launches after river levels raised.
- Started blowing various preserve roadways of fallen leaves.
- Hauled folding chairs from Macktown Stevens Building to Hononegah Barn.
- Hauled 5 loads of Recycled Asphalt Product (RAP) to Sugar River.
- Full time employees completed required trainings on Back Safety and Blood Borne Pathogens.
- Rock Valley Alarm moved key pad in Stevens Building and moved motion sensors on doors in all buildings at Macktown Historic District.
- Completed September safety inspections.
- Completed monthly truck logs.

Preserve Operations

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

- Removed dead tree on site #59 at Hononegah Campground.
- Started prep for Sugar River Halloween event.
- Installed caution signs at Two Rivers boat launch for sudden drop off.
- Cleaned up and blew out Sugar River barn on rain day.
- Swept up and reorganized upstairs storage in Sugar River shop on rain day.
- Cleared down trees off trails after significant rain fall.
- Ordered two down spouts for Headquarters building to be installed in October.

South Area Shop

- Pressure washed limestone overlook wall at Seward Bluffs.
- Repaired damaged entrance gate at Kilbuck Bluffs.
- Backfilled along edges of new asphalt parking and entrance drive at Seward Bluffs.
- Added four yards of certified playground mulch under swings at the Seward Bluffs Playground.
- Brush mowed along trail edges at Oak Ridge, Deer Run, Indian Hill, and Seward Bluffs preserves.
- Removed three hazardous trees from the Seward Bluffs Campground.
- Backfilled holes at the Oak Ridge equestrian camping area.
- Removed storm damaged tree overhanging the dock at the Severson Dells pond.
- Ordered and delivered materials for the Klehm trellis project.
- Cleaned the interior of the Pecatonica study center and maintenance shop.
- Harvested additional black locust logs for the Grove project at Severson Dells.
- Forestry mowed along edges of the hard path at Severson Dells.
- Removed multiple storm damaged trees along recreation path at Blackhawk Springs.
- Restocked firewood at the Seward bluffs Campground.
- Cleaned out the storm gutters around the Deer Lodge at Severson Dells.
- Ongoing mowing of turf areas and trail systems.
- Completed chainsaw cleaning and maintenance.
- Completed monthly safety inspections.
- Pressure washed fuel tank at Pecatonica River maintenance shop.
- Clearing of leaves off preserve roadways and parking areas.
- Replaced faded trail marking placards in multiple preserves.
- String trimmed and pruned back trees at the Grove Play Area.

Preserve Operations

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

- Trail system maintenance including tree and debris removal after excessive rainfall events.
- Staff completed assigned monthly safety trainings.

Central Shop

- New Equipment & Facility Repair Manager, Scott Young, started in the position September 21st.
- Completed yearly inspections, repairs and painted trailers 588, 595 and 433.
- Inspected the music structure at Severson Dells and picked up the new piano insert in preparation for the overhaul of the music structure.
- Removed and replaced the lattice structure on the south side of HQ.
- Serviced LE V531.
- Began visits to each preserve to assess the condition of structures.
- Staff completed monthly safety trainings.

FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

November-September

	<u>2024-2025</u>		<u>2025-2026</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>
Small Shelter Res.	49	\$4,165	51	\$4,335
Small Shelter N/Res.	6	\$660	1	\$110
Large Shelter Res.	126	\$13,860	119	\$13,090
Large Shelter N/Res.	9	\$1,215	11	\$1,485
Electric Res.	166	\$20,750	169	\$21,125
Electric N/Res.	21	\$3,255	9	\$1,395
TOTAL	377	\$43,905	360	\$41,540
ONLINE	309	82%	249	69%
Over 300 Res.	0	\$0	0	\$0
Over 300 N/Res.	0	\$0	0	\$0
Ground Use/Tent Res	16	\$500	17	\$530
Ground Use/Tent N/Res.	2	\$90	2	\$90
Building Use Permits	5	\$500	3	\$300
Commercial Photography Permit	2	\$200	0	\$0
Special Use Permits	15	\$2,780	22	\$2,710
Rides	21	\$840	11	\$440
TOTAL	61	\$4,910	55	\$4,070
ONLINE	26	43%	9	16%
Equestrian Passes	Number	Total	Number	Total
Yearly Tag Res.	90	\$4,500	80	\$4,000
Yearly Tag N/Res.	36	\$2,520	33	\$2,310
TOTAL	126	\$7,020	113	\$6,310
ONLINE	50	40%	31	27%
Fly Field Passes	Number	Total	Number	Total
Yearly Pass Res.	38	\$1,330	42	\$1,470
Yearly Pass N/Res.	13	\$585	11	\$495
TOTAL	51	\$1,915	53	\$1,965
ONLINE	17	33%	18	34%
Metal Detecting Passes	Number	Total	Number	Total
Yearly Pass Res.	36	\$900	35	\$875
Yearly Pass N/Res.	9	\$315	8	\$280
TOTAL	45	\$1,215	43	\$1,155
ONLINE	14	31%	18	42%
GRAND TOTAL	660	\$58,965	624	\$55,040
ONLINE	416	63%	325	52%

**FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY
2023-2026
CAMPING REVENUE COMPARISON**

	<u>2023</u> (thru 10/1)	<u>2024</u> (thru 10/2)	<u>2025</u> (thru 9/29)	<u>2026</u> (thru 9/28)
CAMPGROUND				
Hononegah	\$34,650	\$33,062	\$35,524	\$29,116
Seward Bluffs	42,716	49,422	54,384	42,128
Sugar River	<u>69,489</u>	<u>73,787</u>	<u>67,065</u>	<u>61,428</u>
Campground Revenue	\$146,855	\$156,271	\$156,973	\$132,672

SCOUT/YOUTH CAMPGROUDNS

Hononegah	\$302	\$282	\$150	\$355
Pecatonica River	515	577	500	610
Rockford Rotary	340	331	340	200
Seward Bluffs	135	0	0	0
Sugar River	<u>195</u>	<u>589</u>	<u>231</u>	<u>230</u>
Scout/Youth Campground Revenue	\$1,487	\$1,779	\$1,221	\$1,395

EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUNDS

Oak Ridge	\$64	\$362	\$535	\$65
Seward Bluffs	<u>1,164</u>	<u>1,132</u>	<u>1,590</u>	<u>975</u>
Equestrian Campground Revenue	\$1,228	\$1,494	\$2,125	\$1,040

FIREWOOD

Hononegah	\$1,719	\$3,233	\$2,567	\$856
Seward Bluffs	3,318	3,473	3,417	2,252
Sugar River	<u>8,293</u>	<u>7,580</u>	<u>8,458</u>	<u>6,524</u>
Firewood Revenue	\$13,330	\$14,286	\$14,442	\$9,632

TOTAL REVENUE	\$162,900	\$173,830	\$174,761	\$144,739
----------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

NUMBER OF GROUPS AT REGULAR CAMPGROUNDS (DOES NOT INCLUDE EQUESTRIAN AND SCOUT/YOUTH CAMPING)	2,476	2,472	2,412	2,203
--	-------	-------	-------	-------

Natural Resource Management

Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources

Mike Groves, Natural Resources Manager

Keith Krey, Stewardship Coordinator

Taylor Joray, Wildlife Biologist

September 2026 Activities Report

Natural Resources

- Chemically treated invasive brush, Siberian elm, phragmites, and multiflora rose in preserves throughout the county.
- Collected seed from Jack in the pulpit, cream gentian, prairie cinquefoil, grass of parnasis, prairie dock, rice cut grass, swamp milkweed, culver's root, cardinal flower, mountain mint, ironweed, bellwort, and others from preserves throughout the county.
- Began installing burn breaks for the fall and spring burn seasons at preserves throughout the county.
- Completed application for the 2027 Deer Population Control Permit.
- Purchased and hauled stone from local quarries to use for future projects.
- Cleared woody brush with forestry mulcher and batwing mowers in preserves throughout the county.
- Earlier this year department staff dug remnant prairie plants from a site in Winnebago County facing imminent development. The plants were held at our nursery all summer where they could be watered and nurtured. This month staff planted the rescued plants in suitable spots at Stone Bridge and Cedar Cliff Forest Preserves.
- Planted wetland plugs grown at the District's nursery at Paula Swanson Forest Preserve.
- Cleaned and processed harvested seed as needed.
- Hosted State Representative John Cabello and other guests from Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves, and Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, for a tour of Colored Sands Nature Preserve.
- Cleared beaver blockages from water control structures at Deer Run and Pecatonica Wetlands Forest Preserves.
- Submitted application materials for North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant.
- Continued project coordination for the construction of the new natural resource facility.
- Coordination of various utility projects in preserves throughout the county.

Natural Resource Management

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

Wildlife

- Blanding's Turtle Monitoring:
 - Captured a **new adult male Blanding's Turtle** and **recaptured two adult male Blanding's Turtles** via hoop-trapping efforts; the new male was fitted with a transmitter and his movements will be monitored into the future.
 - The newly documented male Blanding's Turtle received a health assessment as part of a multi-county collaborative disease study conducted by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, University of Illinois Wildlife Epidemiology Lab, and Brookfield Zoo.
 - Continued weekly VHF telemetry of all turtles with transmitters to document habitat use and annual movement patterns.
 - Performed transmitter replacements on four Blanding's Turtles requiring new transmitters.
- Mussel Surveys
 - Partnered with the Illinois Natural History Survey to conduct a mussel sampling effort in the Kishwaukee River.
 - Scouted stretches of the Kishwaukee River and its tributaries for in-house mussel surveys.
- Continued sampling preserves with historic records of Smooth Greensnakes; one new (i.e., unmarked) greensnake documented.
- Documented the state-threatened Starhead Topminnow at a new preserve, in addition to several other fish species (e.g., Rainbow Darter, Northern Hog Sucker, Silver Redhorse) that have not been documented via in-house sampling efforts at District preserves.
- Visited several local non-district sites occupied by the federally-endangered Hine's Emerald Dragonfly to observe habitat characteristics; observations made and information gathered will guide survey and habitat management efforts at district preserves.
- Participated in an electrofishing training and tour of the Urban Stream Research Center in DuPage (USRC) County; the tour involved observing how the USRC is working to conserve freshwater mussels, the Hine's Emerald Dragonfly, and Blanding's Turtle.
- Participated in fall migration bird monitoring and processing at the Sand Bluff Bird Observatory.
- Continued water quality study across trap sites to document the impact of environmental changes/trends in preferred habitat of monitored aquatic species across sampled populations.
- Continued camera trapping efforts to document presence/absence of species in the preserves; likely badger activity is being monitored.
- Continued monitoring of artificial cover arrays for snake species of conservation concern.
- Assisted with a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant application that would facilitate wetland habitat enhancement within ~250 acres at the Sugar River FP.
- Reviewed in-house White-tailed Deer sharpshooting program details and requirements and visited field sites with natural resources staff.

Natural Resource Management

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

- Monitored AH Drift camera trap system at Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve to document smaller-bodied wildlife; notable observations include a juvenile Eastern Hog-nosed Snake and juvenile Snapping Turtle.

Stewardship

- Hosted six volunteer workdays at Sugar River Alder, Cedar Cliff, Severson Dells, and Pecatonica Wetlands Forest Preserves, where volunteers harvested seed and planted native plants grown at our plant nursery.
- Performed monitoring and maintenance of 4H tree planting at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Maintained blue bird nest boxes as needed.
- Attended the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association quarterly meeting.
- Prepared native seed packets for upcoming public events.
- Began working on a volunteer brush pile burning training protocol.
- Hosted UAW Local 1268 at Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve for a day of invasive species removal as part of the United Way's Day of Giving.
- Staffed information table at the Lifescape's Senior Expo.
- District site stewards hosted two of their own workdays at Kilbuck Bluffs and Deer Run Forest Preserves, where they led other volunteers in seed collection and invasive species removal.

Community Science Snapshot

- Eastern Bluebird Monitoring: 7 volunteers logged 29 hours
- Bat Monitoring: 1 volunteer logged 1 hours

2026 Statistics

A total of 315 volunteers have completed 3,874 service hours in 2026.

The monetary value of these service hours equals \$140,006.31. As of April 2026, the estimated national value of each volunteer hour is currently \$36.14 (based on the Independent Sector, April 21st 2026).

Golf Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations
Bobby VanSistine, Golf General Manager
Rose Mathews, Golf Food & Beverage Manager
Tyler Knapp & Mark Freiman, Golf Maintenance Managers
September 2026 Activities Report

Clubhouse Operations:

- Cash control
 - Weekly cash deposits
 - Restock change bags at three courses
 - Monitoring cash over/shorts
- Staff Meetings
 - Food and Beverage Manager
 - Outing food and beverage
 - Weekly scheduling
 - Staff meeting
 - Additional Training
 - Cashiers and OAs
- Schedules completed using When-to-Work software
 - Outside Attendant
 - Cashier
- Senior County Am
 - Tournament Prep
 - Two days of tournament operation
- Meetings with outings
 - Planning 2026 events
 - Booking for 2027
- Outings
 - Rockford Fire Department – 144 golfers
 - Bob n Mike – 80 golfers
 - Rockton Lions – 100 golfers
 - Don't Be Next Foundation – 100 golfers
 - Poison Ivy – 80 golfers
 - Forest City Gear – 80 golfers
- High School Tournaments
 - NIC 10 Girls Conference & NIC 10 Boys Conference

Golf Operations

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

Food & Beverage:

Atwood

- AAR outing on September 5th- I made egg salad and pimento cheese sandwiches for their lunch. I also prepared an after-event meal of pulled pork, cheesy potatoes, baked beans, and cole slaw.
- Rockford Fire Department outing on September 10th- They brought in their own breakfast and lunch. Sold quite a bit of alcohol.
- The Bev Cart was used for both above events.
- September 24-26 were the NIC golf matches. Girls' match (27 golfers) was on the 24th and the boys played on the 25th (120 golfers) and 26th (60 golfers). Hot dog/Brat/Turkey wraps, chips and fountain drinks were paid for by the conference.
- September 30th a High School Regional match was played. 60 golfers were provided hot dog/brat, chips, and fountain drink.

Macktown

- Rockton Lion's Club Jack Joy Love outing on September 12th- They had their own liquor license however several drinks were obtained inside with their drink tickets. They did have food tickets, which were used for hot dog/brat and chips.
- September 14th- Monday Night League dinner -steaks, potatoes, beans, salad, and dessert. September 16th- Men's Assoc dinner – steaks, potatoes, beans, salad, and dessert. September 17th- PGA League dinner – steaks, potatoes, beans, salad, and dessert.
- Poison Ivy outing on September 26th- Bev cart was used. They wanted lunch provided so hot dogs/brats and chips were included.
- I have begun ordering less items and moving stuff from one course to another to avoid any waste on products. I also have been utilizing GFS to buy products as I have a 20-case minimum from our current food service.
- I had one employee quit. I worked 14 shifts as well as being at all but three of the events above.
- I purchased a replacement microwave to replace the one that wasn't working at Macktown.

Ledges

- Bob and Mike outing on September 12th- Bev cart was used as well as an outdoor bar on the course. No food was included but lots of food was bought by the golfers.
- Don't Be Next Foundation outing on September 19th- Unfortunately due to the rain, the course was closed. However, golfers showed up and they were able to do their raffle and silent auction in the banquet room. They had also requested appetizers. They were provided with meatballs, cheese and crackers, fruit, pinwheels, and buffalo chicken dip.
- Forest City Gear outing on September 26th- They brought in their own lunch. Bev cart was on the course. They had one drink ticket per person.

Golf Operations

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

Golf Maintenance:

Atwood

- Applied granular fertilizer to fairways and tees to ensure plant health.
- Repaired large irrigation main line leak Labor Day weekend.
- Vertical mowed greens and collars to remove lateral growth and excess thatch.
- Top-dressed greens with sand to smooth and firm putting surface.
- Edged all bunkers.
- Pumped water from bunkers after heavy rain and relocate sand to repair erosion.
- Trimmed trees and vegetation around 13 green to improve playability and traffic patterns.
- Prepared golf course for girl's high school conference tournament, boy's high school conference tournament and boy's regional tournament.
- Continued fertility and plant health program on golf greens.
- Repaired leaking irrigation swing joints on hole 9.

Macktown

- Updated expense report for the 2026 season to ensure accurate, up to date tracking of all expenses.
- Performed hand watering on putting greens to correct and prevent localized dry spot to ensure consistent turf quality.
- Golf Course Mechanic position posted and search for applicants underway.
- Began reviewing and evaluating applications for the vacant Golf Course Mechanic position. No interviews have been conducted at this time.
- Applied granular fall fertilizer to all fairways and tee complexes to promote root development, improve turf density, and enhance carbohydrate storage heading into winter.
- Pumped water from bunkers and redistributed eroded sand to proper playing depths following heavy rainfall.
- Trimmed trees along fairways to improve sightlines and maintain adequate clearance for golfers and equipment.
- Continued fertility and plant protectant program on greens, tees, and fairways.
- Burned brush pile.
- Mechanic performed repairs and maintenance on equipment.
- Prepared golf course for Winnebago County Senior Amateur Tournament.
- Adjusted irrigation cycles to changing weather patterns.
- Removed leaves and debris to keep playing surfaces clean.

Golf Operations

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

Ledges

- Updated expense report for the 2026 season to ensure accurate, up to date tracking of all expenses.
- Performed hand watering on putting greens to correct and prevent localized dry spot to ensure consistent turf quality.
- Mowed all waterways and pond edges using the boom mower to maintain visibility and enhance course appearance.
- Cleaned screens on irrigation heads that supply water to greens and tees.
- Continued fertility and plant protectant program on greens, tees, and fairways.
- Applied granular fall fertilizer to all fairways and tee complexes to promote root development, improve turf density, and enhance carbohydrate storage heading into winter.
- Pumped water from bunkers and redistributed eroded sand to proper playing depths following heavy rainfall.
- Repaired and restored eroded cart path edges following heavy rainfall.
- Swept and blew leaves from all playing surfaces to maintain clean, playable conditions.
- Vertical cut greens to remove excess organic matter, followed by topdressing sand application to smooth the putting surface.
- Vertical cut collars and approaches to remove excess organic matter.
- Assisted Atwood with the repair of a 4-inch mainline irrigation break.
- Irrigation repairs including pilot valves and drive motor replacement.
- Burned brush pile.
- Mechanic performed repairs and maintenance on equipment.

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Golf Course Revenue & Sales
November - August**

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>
<u>Atwood Homestead</u>				
Green Fees	\$214,315	\$239,411	\$265,030	\$250,037
Cart Rental	\$159,198	\$181,846	\$192,254	\$215,274
Merchandise	\$29,270	\$25,018	\$27,682	\$39,280
Discount/Gift Card	\$56,533	\$70,642	\$85,070	\$90,454
Capital Improvement Fee	\$18,305	\$18,972	\$19,938	\$26,005
Food & Beverage	\$90,783	\$91,865	\$105,476	\$150,489
Range Balls/Golf Club Rental	\$360	\$820	\$250	\$15,876
Video Gaming & ATM	\$3,454	\$3,650	\$288	\$0
Total Atwood Revenue	\$572,217	\$632,223	\$695,987	\$787,414
<u>Ledges</u>				
Green Fees	\$224,080	\$230,166	\$254,568	\$267,309
Cart Rental	\$171,130	\$175,168	\$184,036	\$223,390
Merchandise	\$24,960	\$22,203	\$25,009	\$38,474
Discount/Gift Card	\$65,830	\$69,711	\$78,525	\$81,019
Capital Improvement Fee	\$20,820	\$21,010	\$19,624	\$28,608
Food & Beverage	\$112,659	\$119,609	\$119,904	\$149,048
Range Balls/Golf Club Rental	\$440	\$460	\$910	\$9,854
Video Gaming & ATM	\$1,327	\$5,001	-\$347	\$0
Total Ledges Revenue	\$621,245	\$643,328	\$682,228	\$797,703
<u>Macktown</u>				
Green Fees	\$168,257	\$168,623	\$187,523	\$208,032
Cart Rental	\$132,879	\$129,457	\$143,030	\$164,977
Merchandise	\$16,641	\$13,073	\$16,785	\$21,108
Discount/Gift Card	\$81,396	\$80,890	\$96,932	\$99,788
Capital Improvement Fee	\$16,309	\$15,443	\$15,961	\$23,478
Food & Beverage	\$92,121	\$92,820	\$89,752	\$115,441
Golf Club Rental	\$120	\$110	\$180	\$300
Video Gaming & ATM	\$2,938	\$3,796	\$0	\$0
Total Macktown Revenue	\$510,660	\$504,212	\$550,163	\$633,123
<u>Headquarters</u>				
Discount/Gift Card	\$30,858	\$33,800	\$32,474	\$39,755
Golf Passes	\$315,785	\$328,440	\$353,205	\$403,440
Capital Improvement Fee	\$32,338	\$32,880	\$35,400	\$40,680
Outing/Tournaments	\$17,988	\$21,330	\$19,975	\$97,159
Private Golf Cart Registration	\$11,650	\$10,150	\$9,500	\$9,500
Total Headquarters Revenue	\$408,619	\$426,600	\$450,554	\$590,534
Total Golf Course Revenue	\$2,112,740	\$2,206,361	\$2,378,932	\$2,808,774

Budgeted Revenue	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>
<i>Golf Service Fees and Charges Budgeted Revenue</i>	<i>\$1,200,000</i>	<i>\$1,550,000</i>	<i>\$1,660,000</i>	<i>\$1,810,000</i>
<i>Sale of Merchandise and Concessions Budgeted Revenue</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>	<i>\$320,000</i>	<i>\$340,000</i>	<i>\$340,000</i>
<i>Golf Capital Fee Budgeted Revenue</i>	<i>\$80,000</i>	<i>\$92,000</i>	<i>\$90,000</i>	<i>\$92,000</i>
Total Budgeted Revenue	\$1,530,000	\$1,962,000	\$2,090,000	\$2,242,000
Budgeted Revenue Variance	\$582,740	\$244,361	\$288,932	\$566,774

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Golf Course Revenue & Sales
November - August

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>
<u>Rounds Played</u>				
Atwood	19,765	21,863	24,860	29,525
Ledges	18,962	19,726	21,498	26,756
Macktown	17,889	18,704	20,249	23,837
Total Rounds Played	56,615	60,293	66,607	80,118
<u>Golf Passes</u>				
Premier Card Res.	28	28	33	35
Premier Card Res.-Refer-A-Friend	37	47	50	70
Premier Card Non-Res.	2	2	3	4
Premier Card Non-Res.-Refer-A-Friend	1	1	4	7
Player Card Res.	164	162	173	178
Player Card Res.-Refer-A-Friend	278	279	294	345
Player Card Non-Res.	9	11	15	13
Player Card Non-Res.-Refer-A-Friend	20	18	18	26
Student Card Res.	73	103	113	108
Student Card Non-Res.	10	10	7	6
Team Pass	15	8	7	5
Practice Range Res.	19	21	0	25
Practice Range Non-Res.	0	0	0	0
Total Passes	656	690	717	822
<u>Private Golf Cart Registration</u>				
Outside Storage	3	2	2	2
Home Storage	14	13	12	12
Total Private Golf Cart Registration	17	15	14	14

Marketing & Communication Relations

Sarah Lorenz, Communications Coordinator
September 2026 Activities Report

Printing & Signage

- Developed 2027 wall calendar; final artwork to printer 10/19.

Digital

- Website redevelopment project in Design Phase with internal work being done on Information Architecture and content updates.
- Developed artwork and copy for updated GoRockford listings.
- Developing individual golf course logos underway.
- Implemented updated golf course fall rate campaign.

Marketing/Advertising

- GoRockford: Two featured listings (Things to Do, Family Fun); Spotlight listing (run of site); Events and programs included in free community calendar.
- Filmed B-roll at all three golf courses for spring commercial with FOX39/Nexstar Media.

Engagement

- October digital newsletter to be sent to subscribers on 10/22.

Social Media (September 3 – October 6, 2026)

FPWC Facebook: 6,896 followers (+103)

- Reach: 41,290 (+35.8%)
- Engagement: 2,881 (+8.7%)
- Views: 122,646 (+26.8%)

FPWC Instagram: 2,297 followers (+64)

- Reach: 4,032 (-82.4%)
- Engagement: 1,052 (+1.8%)
- Views: 24,538 (-70.7%)

Professional Development

- Attended GoRockford Marketing Partnership Meeting 9/29.

Marketing & Communication Relations

September 2026 Activities Report – Cont.

Events/Programs

- Past: Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Deer Run) 9/25, Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Kilbuck Bluffs) 10/10, Northern Illinois Native Tree Diversity with IL Extension 10/15.
- Upcoming: Volunteer Site Steward Work Day (Deer Run) 10/23; Kilbuck Bluffs Site Steward Volunteer Day 11/14; Deer Run Site Steward Volunteer Day 11/20.

Tabling

- Upcoming: Four Rivers Sanitation Authority Wellness Fair 10/30.

Human Resources

Jody Kennay, Human Resources Manager
September 2026 Activities Report

Full-Time New Hires	0
Full-Time Open Requisitions	2
Seasonal Hires	0
Resignations	0

Projects and Progress:

Seasonal Employees - efforts starting re seasonal employees who will be returning for the next season or those who will not be returning. Working with the County on processing status changes and with Managers to identify who will be returning.

Site Visits - quarterly site visits this week for employees. Topics are: performance review purpose and process, update on training, update on strategic planning interviews, and policy changes in handbook.

Compensation Study - Analysis includes current state, pain points, research, compensation comparisons with similar agencies/organizations, recommendations for roll out, etc. Discussing next steps with D. Olson.

Staff Hiring - 2 full time open positions that have been posted both internally and externally. Initial interviews ongoing.

Training for Employees - 100% compliance with required trainings for employees (Blood Borne Pathogens and Back Injury Prevention). Additional training for October will be Trailing with Light Trucks, followed by Fire Extinguisher demonstrations.

Employee Appreciation Brunch - initial planning meeting this week. Anticipate first week in December for event.

Performance Review Process - begins October 16th with forms sent to all employees. November 30 is due date for managers to complete draft performance reviews and forward to directors. December 18 is completion of meetings and January 1, 2027 increases are effective.

RESOLUTION
No. 26-1011
RELEASE OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES AND
DESTRUCTION OF VERBATIM RECORDINGS

WHEREAS, pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), the Board of Commissioners (Board) of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (District) has met and reviewed and approved the minutes of all meetings of the Board dated below, that are presently closed to the public; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby finds and declares that the minutes for closed sessions held on certain dates no longer require confidential treatment; and

WHEREAS, section 2.06(c) of the Open Meetings Act allows for destruction of closed session verbatim recordings more than eighteen (18) months old; and

WHEREAS, District staff and legal counsel have reviewed and made recommendations to the Board about the minutes of all meetings dated below.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT IN ILLINOIS, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE: The recitals set forth herein above shall be and they are hereby incorporated as if said recitals were fully set forth within this Section One.

SECTION TWO: The Board finds and hereby declares that closed session minutes or parts thereof of the following dates no longer require confidential treatment and can be released at this time:

April 20, 2022
July 20, 2022 – Personnel
July 20, 2022 – Personnel 2
November 16, 2022

SECTION THREE: The Board finds and hereby declares that the closed session minutes or parts thereof for the following dates cannot be released at this time because it remains necessary to protect the public interest or the privacy of an individual to keep said minutes confidential:

June 22, 2022 – Land Acquisition
June 22, 2022 – Litigation
July 20, 2022 - Litigation

SECTION FOUR: The Board finds and hereby declares that the verbatim recordings of closed session minutes for the following dates may be destroyed by the recording secretary, as approved written minutes exist for those sessions:

April 20, 2022

June 22, 2022 – Land Acquisition
June 22, 2022 – Litigation
July 20, 2022 - Litigation
July 20, 2022 – Personnel
July 20, 2022 – Personnel 2
November 16, 2022

SECTION FIVE: Any and all motions, policies or resolutions of the Forest Preserve District of Winnebago County in conflict with the provisions of this resolution shall be and are hereby repealed.

SECTION SIX: This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

PASSED THIS 21st day of October, 2026.

Voting YES _____

Voting NO _____

ABSTAINING _____

Jeff Tilly, President
Board of Commissioners

Gloria Lind, Secretary
Board of Commissioners