

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Preserves Headquarters
July 19, 2023

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind-arrived 5:42pm
Cheryl Maggio
Jerry Paulson

STAFF

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

ABSENT

Jeff Tilly

GUESTS

Mark O'Neal
Alex Mills
John Mills

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 Cheryl Maggio led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL of AGENDA and MINUTES Judy Barnard made a motion, Audrey Johnson second to approve the minutes for June 21, 2023. **Motion passed unanimously.** Action Item - Contract Extension, was moved after closed session.

PRESENTATIONS and PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mark O'Neal – 683 Wingate Place, Rockton, IL. Mark addressed an issue with barking dogs at Sugar River Campground. While at the campground, there was a camper that had three dogs and two were barking excessively the entire weekend. Mark is asking the Board if they would consider some kind of Ordinance for excessive barking dogs. Mike Holan stated the Forest Preserve does not have an Ordinance, but there is a rule on the rule sheet that discusses noisy dogs. Mike will check with the attendant on the situation. Mark thanked the Board for their time.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Holan apprised the Board of three incidents at Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve. The first incident consists of a neighbor mowing and haying 2.9 acres of the Nature Preserve, along with an additional 4.5 acres outside the Nature Preserve. The Illinois State Nature Preserve was notified of the incident and the neighbor was spoken to regarding the situation. They will no longer be mowing and haying on Forest Preserve property. The second incident consists of 2.5 acres on the property that is being farmed in corn. The farmer was spoken to, which he stated it was being leased to him for \$100/ac by a neighbor of the Forest Preserve. The farmer was put on notice to stop farming the land and this situation will be looked into further. The last incident is to the north of the property where a portion of a building was constructed on Forest Preserve property. The building was built somewhere between 2007-2008, according to the historic aerials. This matter will still need to be dealt with.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for June – Gloria Lind made a motion, Jerry Paulson seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for June in the amount of \$851,971.28. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Lease Agreement-Oswald Property – Mike Holan addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the newly acquired Oswald property. Mike informed the Board regarding the status of the tenants. The general consensus of the Board of Commissioners of Forest Preserves of Winnebago County was to offer the current tenants of the houses on the west side of Mill Road a six (6) month rental lease for \$500 per month with a \$500 security deposit. The only tenant interested in leasing the residence he currently lives in is Jeff Stokes at 2133 Mill Road. Attorney Aaron Szeto created a lease agreement for Jeff Stokes with the stipulations set by the Board of Commissioners for the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County. Judy Barnard made a motion, Audrey Johnson seconded to authorize the Lease Agreement between the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and Jeff Stokes for \$500 per month with a \$500 security deposit for a period of no longer than six (6) months. **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.

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

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

Jerry Paulson mentioned the Region I Plan Commission is having a series of regional planning meetings, including one on natural resources in August. Mike Brien mentioned he is signed up for the meeting already. Jerry also mentioned he thinks we should start looking for special projects to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the independence of this Nation that will happen in 2026. Renee Pixler will start looking into projects.

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session at 5:51 pm for land acquisition and personnel. Roll call vote taken. **Motion passes 6-0.** At 6:11 pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

ACTION ITEMS

Contract Extension – Michael Holan has served as Executive Director of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (FPWC) since April 1, 2013. The Board of Commissioners seeks to continue his employment as the Executive Director of FPWC. The Board has recommended that the contract with Mr. Holan serving as the Executive Director be extended for another 2 years. That the contract for Mr. Holan serving as the Executive Director for the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County be extended through December 31, 2025 and that the extended contract will be based on terms agreed upon between the Board Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and Mr. Holan. Judy Barnard made a motion, Gloria Lind seconded to give the Board President permission to execute the contract with Mr. Holan with the contract considered fully executed by the signatures of the Board President and Mr. Holan. **Motion passed unanimously.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

August 5 - Walk With U - Guided Walk at Kieselburg Forest Preserve from 9:00am - 10:00am

August 8 - FPWC Guided Hike at Deer Run Forest Preserve from 5:30pm - 6:30pm

August 19 - R.E.A.P. Volunteer Workday at Four Lakes Forest Preserve from 9:00am - 12:00pm

August 22 - FPWC Guided Hike at Cedar Cliff Forest Preserve from 5:30pm - 6:30pm

Jerry Paulson announced he received an invitation from Jennifer Kuroda, President of the Sinnissippi Audubon for a hike they will be leading at Cedar Cliff on July 29th at 7:30am. All of the Board members are invited.

Judy Barnard announced the Natural Land Institute new Executive Director, Alan Branhagen started on July 15th.

ADJOURNMENT

Judy Barnard made a motion, Gloria Lind second to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 PM. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, August 16, 2023, Macktown Living History

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary