

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
BOARD MEETING
Preserves Headquarters
February 16, 2022

PRESENT

Judy Barnard
Mike Eickman - via Zoom
Audrey Johnson
Gloria Lind
Cheryl Maggio – via Zoom
Jerry Paulson
Jeff Tilly

STAFF

Mike Holan, Executive Director
Steve Chapman, Finance
Vaughn Stamm, Preserve Operations
Donna Bileto, HR/Volunteer Program
Ann Wasser, Education

GUEST

Alex Mills	Mike Barr
Roxanne Sosnowski	Jim McFarlane
Damaris Emiliano	Matthew Weigel
Megan Bertucci	Jill Kennay
Peter Pawlowski	Zach Grycan
Chris Samuelson	Mark Keister

ROLL CALL

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Jerry Paulson led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA and MINUTES Minutes for January 19, 2022 were approved. Closed Session was moved before Klehm Foundation Presentation. No additions were made to the agenda.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AWARDS, AND PRESENTATIONS

Introduction – Damaris Emiliano, Part-time Administrative Assistant – Mike Holan introduced Damaris Emiliano, the new part-time administrative assistant for the Forest Preserve. Damaris gave a brief background on herself.

Introduction – Chris Samuelson, Severson Dells President – Chris Samuelson introduced himself as the new Board President of Severson Dells. He gave a brief background on himself and looks forward to working with us in the future.

Introduction – Megan Bertucci, AmeriCorps Member – Ann Wasser introduced Megan Bertucci, the new AmeriCorps Member. Megan started working 6 weeks ago and she gave a brief background on herself.

Conifer Power – Peter Pawlowski – Peter Pawlowski passed out copies of the Winnebago County Solar Development Site Drainage Study to the Board of Commissioners. Peter stated they are investigating the possibility of putting a solar facility by the Pecatonica River. The location would be by Pecatonica Street and Green Road. To comply with the Counties run-off requirements, he is presenting two options which include either a retention basin (point source) or sheet flow into the Pecatonica River. If the forest preserve would like sheet flow, it would require an easement from the forest preserve. Peter mentioned that he can come back and have more conversations and work with staff. The timeline for the project is 2026. Conifer Power will be working with the Agriculture Department Extension Office to make sure the pollinator mixes for the grasses will be correct. The ground cover should benefit the area and be

environmentally friendly. The property currently is receiving sheet flow but because they are developing the land, they have to comply with the ordinance. Peter mentioned that just because it's sheet flow now the forest preserve can still decide on either option. Peter is unaware at this time how many solar panels will be in the field.

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session at 5:43pm. At 6:28pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AWARDS, AND PRESENTATIONS-CONTINUED

Klehm Fountain – Alex Mills – Alex Mills presented a 3D video rendering of the pond and water feature project. This is the project that Klehm submitted a grant application with the State of Illinois under the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunities Tourism Attractions. They hope to find out any day whether they will receive the grant. The project will happen either way, with or without the grant. This project has not been bid out yet and will be discussed at the next Klehm Board meeting. Alex mentioned that there are also static images if anyone would like to see them. Alex is hoping for the majority of the construction to be completed before the Garden Fair in June.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Atwood Endowment – Jerry Paulson asked for information on how the Atwood endowment was set up because of concern with following the State Law. After seeing the distribution letter, it is clearly a donor designated endowment, meaning the Forest Preserve will need to follow the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act. Jerry thinks a resolution is needed to define how the money is managed, how the money is to be withdrawn, who makes the decision about withdrawing the money and setting a goal on how much the forest preserve would want to generate from the endowment. Judy Barnard let the Board know that she spoke with Dan Ross from the Community Foundation and Dan referred the endowment to their attorney for review. Their attorney reviewed what Steve Chapman wrote and the letter from the donor and their attorney said the way the forest preserve has the endowment set up follows the State Law. Judy also stated that Dan would be happy to speak with Jerry regarding the endowment. Jerry stated he thinks the forest preserve still needs to have procedures in place for the endowment. Jerry would also like to keep this on agenda until it's confirmed that the endowment has been done properly. Steve Chapman is planning on calling Dan for ideas on investing.

NEW BUSINESS

Rockford Airport Proposal – Mike Holan apprised the Board of Commissioners regarding discussions Vaughn Stamm, Mike Groves and himself had with Zach Oakley and CMT (consulting firm for the construction project). During the conversation, there was discussion regarding Zach and CMT working with US Fish and Wildlife and the IDNR to determine what needs to be done with the project. They mentioned that they can mitigate the property and that the property does not have to be mitigated to a dry hill prairie. They can mitigate on to other properties, which Mike mentioned Funderburg because of its location. Prairie dropseed for the Red-veined leafhopper and pollinator plant species for the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee are of concern. If Prairie dropseed and a pollinator habitat would be planted, that would be suffice for the project. The mitigation requirements are 5 ½ to 1, which would be about 52 acres. Mike mentioned to them that they would need to come to the Board with any desire of an agreement or proposal for mitigation. Jerry Paulson asked if they are proposing to pay for the entire mitigation and Mike responded that they would either pay for us to use our seed source and reimburse for the cost of seed and labor or potentially move plants. Jerry asked that we do not endorse the destruction of the Bell Bowl Prairie by engaging in any further discussion. Cheryl Maggio stated she is not in favor in the forest preserve having their hand in this. Judy Barnard is opposed to the forest preserve going any further with this. From this point on, the Board request they come to the Board meeting and bring a proposal.

Finance Report – The Interim Financial Results and the Corporate Fund Details for November 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022 were distributed to the Board of Commissioners. Steve Chapman reviewed the finance reports with the Commissioners and stated they can contact him with any questions.

Mike Holan reminded the Board of the discussion they had at last month's Board meeting regarding the John Deere tractors. After the meeting, the forest preserve was all set to purchase the tractors and then John Deere ceased production of the tractors for the year. The purchase order is being held open until the end of the fiscal year to see if production will start again. Mike stated we are running into the same issue with the John Deere Gators and he is seeking the Board's approval to purchase the Gators. The Board approved the purchase. Mike also wanted to let the Board know that Ford has ceased production on trucks. Staff is looking to bid other brands but we are not sure where that will go, what the cost will be and if dealers will even bid. Next year's capital budget may be used for other projects and the following years for the purchase of trucks.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills for January – Judy Barnard made a motion, Gloria Lind seconded to authorize the payment of the bills for January in the amount of \$343,307.01. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Acceptance of Bids for Fertilizers & Chemicals – Vaughn Stamm addressed the Board of Commissioners regarding the fertilizers and chemicals bid. Bids on fertilizers and pesticides were presented. These materials are used for application on our golf courses and forest preserve restoration sites. The forecasted predictions by staff on the cost of these products indicated increases of up 25% more over the previous year, especially on fertilizers. These quantities are similar to last year's and are budgeted out of various departments. These products are handled and applied by personnel licensed by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. All the fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides and fungicides included in this bid are registered through the Environmental Protection Agency and have been approved for use on public golf courses and forest preserves. Jerry Paulson made a motion and Audrey Johnson seconded to approve the purchase of fertilizers and chemicals as per the attached list for a total price of \$76,082.22. **Motion passed unanimously.**

STAFF REPORTS

Preserve Operations - Vaughn Stamm, Scott Stewart, Scott Wallace and Bryan Helmold submitted a written report. Vaughn mentioned that the annual In-kind service report for Klehm was inserted into the packet.

Land and Development – The Natural Resource Staff submitted a written report. Mike Holan mentioned that staff just finished the deer management program last week and were only out 5 days with 71 deer taken. At this time, they have not received test results and are not sure on the total amount of meat. Mike also mentioned that he is receiving information on other food pantries just in case we need to distribute more meat.

Golf Operations – Vaughn Stamm, Rich Rosenstiel, Tyler Knapp & Mark Freiman submitted a written report. Mike Holan mentioned that the golf revenue report was included in the packet, which has been the highest since he's been here.

Marketing – Samantha Crooks submitted a written report.

Environmental Education – Ann Wasser submitted a written report. Ann announced the Community Science program has launched with 60 volunteers signed up for the year. There are still five more trainings to go this year. Ann also mentioned she submitted a federal grant for the new building which would cover 80% of the cost for the facility which would be about 9 million dollars. She should know more in September regarding the grant.

Human Resources/Volunteer Program Report – Donna Bileto submitted a written report.

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

Jerry Paulson asked who is going to run the 100th anniversary event with Samantha gone and Mike replied we are in the process of trying to hire someone and that staff is on board to help run the event. We are not planning on postponing the event and will move forward.

Gloria Lind request the purchase of microphones for the Board meetings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS

March 1 - Community Science: Bluebird Training, Virtual from 6:30pm – 7:30pm

March 8 - Community Science: Budburst Training, Virtual from 6:30pm – 7:30pm

CLOSED SESSION

Audrey Johnson made a motion to go into closed session at 7:06pm. At 9:04pm, the meeting returned to open session. No action was taken while in closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Next board meeting 5:30 PM, Wednesday, March 16, Forest Preserve Headquarters

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Knapp
Recording Secretary