

**Lake County Forest Preserve District
Operations Committee Meeting Minutes - Monday, August 5, 2024**

The Operations Committee of the Lake County Forest Preserve District met on Monday, August 5, 2024 at the District's General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order –Chair Vealitzek called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2.0 Roll Call – Committee Secretary Shelton called the roll and six committee members responded: Chair Jessica Vealitzek, Vice Chair Mary Ross Cunningham, Member Jennifer Clark, Member Michael Danforth, Member Sara Knizhnik, and Member John Wasik. Absent: Member Adam Schlick.

Also Present:

Alex Kovach	Rebekah Snyder	Jessica Chong
John Nelson	Pati Vitt	Nataly Garcia Campos
Alex Eichman	Jamie Medina	Maureen Shelton
Alyssa Firkus	Debbie Boness	Matt Norton, <i>Corporate Counsel</i>
Kevin Kleinjan	Lisa Roberts (Zoom)	Mick Zawislak, <i>Daily Herald</i>
Mary Kann	Kim Mikus	John Sopata, <i>Public Comment</i>
Steve Neaman	Stephanie Bosack	

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Member Clark led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None

5.0 Approval of Minutes - Motion by Vice Chair Cunningham, second by Member Wasik to approve minutes from the May 6, 2024 Operations Committee and the June 3, 2024 Joint Committee meeting. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the minutes were circulated for signatures.

6.0 Public Comment – John Sopata provided public comment on his concern of electric bikes on the trails.

7.0 Executive Director Comments – Executive Director Ty Kovach presented his report and he and staff responded to questions on:

- Commissioners' referendum training after the 8/14/24 Board meeting;
- The Ryerson new Education Center received certification from the Passive House Institute;
- The success since 2016 of the contribution remittance envelope in *Horizons* magazine;
- As of July 31, 657 donors have committed \$8,497,212.81 to our endowment;
- North Shore Gas and Libertyville Bank & Trust renewed their sponsorship of *Concerts in the Plaza*;
- With one concert left in the 2024 season, \$49,742 has been raised for the endowment from the parking fees and donations;
- Recent grant received from the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation: \$50,000 over two years;
- The “*Celebrating Cicadas*” exhibit closed August 4th. Total attendance for the exhibit was up nearly 60% from the same time last year;
- The new museum exhibit “*Art for Everyone: Bob Ross*” opens August 31;

- Education staff hosted 1,300 guests at the June 9th CicadaFest at Ryerson Woods; In total 4,500 participated in cicada-related programs and events;
- The success of the Science Explorers in Nature program;
- The significant growth of social media metrics;
- Positive comments on our new “*It’s Not About Us*” video on YouTube;
- The record-breaking media coverage of the cicada emergence; the number of people reached worldwide is estimated at more than 213 million;
- The great attendance at the annual Legislative Meeting and Reception;
- State Representative Joyce Mason and Michael Cotter, legislative director for State Representative Bob Morgan, attended a tour of Greenbelt Forest Preserve & the Greenbelt Farm;
- Successful Gospelfest event at the Greenbelt Cultural Center;
- Upcoming Afrofest, at the Greenbelt Cultural Center and “Festival de Cultura, Comida y Vida,” a Latino festival at Nippersink Forest Preserve;
- NACPRO award recipients Stephanie Bosack with the New Professional award and Nels Leutwiler with the Outstanding Volunteer award;
- *Horizon’s* recent awards from Awards for Publication Excellence (APEX) and Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

8.0 Correspondence – None

9.0 Unfinished Business – None

10.0 New Business

- 10.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution approving an Annual Support and License Agreement for Financial Software to Tyler Technologies, Inc., MUNIS Division, in the Contract Price of \$125,746.06. – Motion by Member Clark, second by Member Knizhnik, to approve the recommendation. John Nelson, Chief Operations Officer summarized the recommendation. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval.
- 10.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract to Currie Motors Commercial Center Ford for the Purchase of three 2025 Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD Hybrid vehicles in the Contract Price of \$145,295.00. – Motion by Vice Chair Cunningham, second by Member Knizhnik, to approve the recommendation. Mr. Nelson summarized the recommendation and responded to a question regarding EV models which at this time are not available. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the full board for approval.
- 10.3 Recommend approval of an Ordinance establishing fees and charges for District permits, programs, services and facilities (Annual Fee Ordinance). – Motion by Vice Chair Cunningham, second by Member Knizhnik, to approve the recommendation. Mr. Nelson reviewed the fee ordinance highlighting the changes and responded to questions. Director of Education, Alyssa Firkus provided additional details on programs/education changes. Director of Facilities, Dan Stearns responded to a question, clarifying the in-season dates booked no more than four months prior to event date. Chair Vealitzek suggested that the free museum day in honor of Bess Bower Dunn’s birthday be moved from August 23 to August 1 due to children being back in school. Staff to address this for next year. Voice vote being had,

the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval.

- 10.4 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for the Rare Plant Recovery Project to Chicago Botanic Garden (CBG) in the Contract Price of \$48,000.00. – Motion by Member Wasik, second by Vice Chair Cunningham to approve the recommendation. Natural Resources Director, Pati Vitt summarized the recommendation. Director Vitt responded to questions regarding the cultivation of orchids at the University of Minnesota, explaining that they give us the best deal and the best rate of germination success. Responding to additional questions, she provided more details on this collaborative effort with CBG and on how climate change has affected this program. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval.
- 10.5 Approve the award of a farm license at Ray Lake Forest Preserve to the highest qualified bidder. – Motion by Member Clark, second by Member Danforth to approve the recommendation. Director Vitt summarized the recommendation explaining that this license is not for revenue generation it is for the farmland management and to reduce the weeds prior to the commencement of receiving grant funding and the start of the mitigation bank construction. Director Vitt responded to a question regarding regenerative farming and herbicides. Noting that the farmers use low volatile herbicides. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- 10.6 Provide policy direction whether to solicit competitive bids combined multi-year contracts for both woody and herbaceous species control, instead of soliciting competitive bids for separate, one-year contracts (one for woody control and one for herbaceous control). Director Vitt presented the issue that the district is currently experiencing with the woody and herbaceous species and that climate change currently disrupts our typical seasonal weather patterns, and there is now a significant mismatch between the historic timing of these contracts and the actual conditions on the ground. She noted that currently start dates on these contracts are very specific and the district needs more flexibility. She explained that the bid specifications will remain the same. The difference would be the contractor would provide on-demand natural resource restoration work. The funding level for invasive species management would still be determined by the annual budget process. However, the deployment of contracted resources would be more responsive to current on-the-ground conditions. Dr. Vitt informed the committee that other Forest Preserve Districts have been doing it this way but on a larger scale and that this would be a good test case for the district. The committee gave consensus to proceed.
- 10.7 Provide policy direction to remove the Youth Camp at Fox River Forest Preserve. Mr. Nelson provided a brief history on the district's special use youth group camping. Currently, two primitive campgrounds are maintained for youth group camping at Fox River and Van Patten Woods. As part of the Lakewood master plan, the youth camping area at Lakewood was approved for removal and was removed. Using a map he showed the location of the Fox River youth campground. He explained that major repairs to the handpump are currently needed at a cost of \$3,000 to \$5,000 and that the Staff recommends closing the youth camp at Fox River at this point, because the expected operating costs and long-term ADA improvements would require significant investment to improve to meet the required standards. He provided current usage data of the campgrounds. Noting that the special use area for youth group camping at Van Patten Woods would continue to operate. Member Danforth was concerned about this closing because there would be nothing in the Southwest part of the county for camping. Mr. Nelson noted there are other agencies that have campgrounds in the area that are not as

primitive. A discussion ensued, and Member Clark suggested that a larger discussion needs to happen with regards to youth campgrounds.

Chair Vealitzek noted that we need to have a broader discussion of what level of camping the District should provide. Member Wasik suggested a survey in Horizon's regarding campgrounds. Executive Director Kovach said that we can add a question on campground usage in the next attitude and interest survey.

The discussion concluded that staff will gather additional information and report back at another upcoming Committee meeting for further discussion.

Member Knizhnik left the meeting at 10:48 a.m.


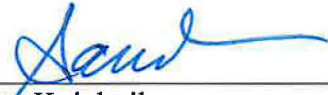
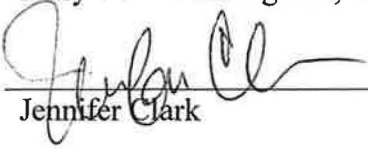

11.0 Miscellaneous Business – None

12.0 Closed Session – None

13.0 Potential Action Following Closed Session – None

14.0 Adjourn –With no further business, Chair Vealitzek declared the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

APPROVED:

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>		<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>
 _____ Jessica Vealitzek, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 _____ Sara Knizhnik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ Mary Ross Cunningham, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Adam Schlick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 _____ Jennifer Clark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 _____ John Wasik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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