

Lake County Forest Preserve District

Joint Committee Meeting Minutes: Operations Committee, Planning Committee, Finance Committee September 30, 2024

On Monday, September 30, 2024, the Operations, Planning, and Finance Committees met jointly at the Lake County Forest Preserve District's General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois. Vice President John Wasik convened the meeting at 8:45 a.m. and confirmed electronic attendance for Commissioner Marah Altenberg due to personal illness. There were no objections and Vice President Wasik asked the Chairs to call their committees to order:

1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call – Operations Committee: Chair Jessica Vealitzek called the Operations Committee to order and asked for a roll call; five present: Chair Vealitzek, Vice Chair Mary Ross Cunningham, Jennifer Clark, Sara Knizhnik, John Wasik. Member Michael Danforth arrived at 9:10 a.m. Absent: Adam Schlick.

2.0 Call to Order and Roll Call – Planning Committee: Chair Paras Parekh called the Planning Committee to order and asked for a roll call; five present: Chair Parekh, Marah Altenberg (on Zoom), Kevin Hunter, Linda Pedersen, John Wasik. Absent: Esiah Campos, Vice Chair Carissa Casbon.

3.0 Call to Order and Roll Call – Finance Committee: Chair Gina Roberts called the Finance Committee to order and asked for a roll call; six present: Chair Roberts, Vice Chair Paul Frank, Sandy Hart, Diane Hewitt, Sara Knizhnik, Ann Maine. Member Michael Danforth arrived after roll call at 9:10 a.m.

Also Present:

Alex Ty Kovach, <i>Executive Director</i>	Ken Jones	Debbie Boness
Matt Norton, <i>Corporate Counsel</i>	Pati Vitt	Beth Frederick
Steve Neaman	Ron Davis	Laurel Diver
John Nelson	Dan Stearns	Kim Mikus
Mary Kann	Alex Eichman	Maureen Shelton
Rebekah Snyder	Alyssa Firkus	Natalie Kahn
Kevin Kleinjan	Julie Gragani	Anamaria Chavez Stiller

4.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Hunter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None

6.0 Public Comment – There was no public comment.

7.0 Executive Director's Report

- The Foundation hosted guests at the Dunn Museum for the Bob Ross exhibit; and WGN-TV filmed several live segments at the Museum;
- Fall Horizons is out and spotlights the upcoming referendum question; Director Kovach distributed materials;
- 10 new roadside banner poles have been added, expanding the roadside banner program;
- Hike Lake County kick-off event at Raven Glen;
- Communications and Design staff mailed 1,300 school programs and teacher resources booklets to teachers and principals in Lake County public schools;
- Celebrated National Dog Day with a video and media story in the Daily Herald;
- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Old School recognized 123 volunteers;
- Local Girl Scout project to design and create a junior ranger booklet;
- Senior admission to the Museum is free during October;
- Zion Benton Township's participation in Lake Ecology Program at Independence Grove;
- \$315,000 deposited to the endowment fund from the BMB settlement;

- USG Foundation renewed sponsorship of Free Thursdays at the Museum; NICOR Gas renewed its support of restoration work at Nippersink;
- Due to issues, the chatbox on the website has been taken down;
- Two awards received for Horizons and two IAPD Best of the Best Awards;
- Native tree and shrub sale will be held this Sunday;
- Open House recently held at the new building at Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area;

Vice President Wasik thanked staff for the successful first Hispanic heritage event held at Nippersink; over 400 people were in attendance.

8.0 Correspondence – None

Vice President Wasik turned the meeting over to Finance Committee Chair Roberts.

9.0 New Business – All Committees

9.1 Review the proposed 2025 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan and recommend approval of an Ordinance approving the 2025 Annual Budget and Capital Improvement Plan

- Finance Committee: Motion by member Maine, second by member Hart to recommend approval.
- Operations Committee: Motion by member Cunningham, second by member Clark to recommend approval.
- Planning Committee: Motion by member Hunter, second by member Wasik to recommend approval.

Commissioner Danforth joined the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Executive Director Kovach made opening remarks and outlined the budget strategy, highlighting net-zero construction, Decennial Committee action, the upcoming referendum, attitude and interest survey, 10-year balanced budget projections, and a progress report on the Road Map to 2025 including the Endowment. Finance Director Steve Neaman then advised the committees of a change to the EAV since the budget books were printed, noting that the estimate increased from 2.5% to 7.5%. This change will reduce the tax rate, increase the total property value, and will not change the tax levy dollar amount. He also explained a revised total FTE, however it did not change budgeted amounts. He then went into the details of the budget, including a general overview, tax levy summary, PTELL, EAV and inflation review, and responded to questions. The total proposed budget for FY 2025 is \$85,817,709. Mr. Neaman then reviewed new program requests, position inventory changes, technology and equipment additions, and summarized revenues and expenditures by fund and by department, and reviewed the replacement funds.

During the presentation, Commissioner Altenberg disconnected from Zoom at 9:55 a.m. Following the presentation, Executive Director Kovach and Director Neaman responded to questions. A discussion ensued including the District's operational needs whether or not the referendum passes and use of grants, donations, and the Endowment, once excess fund balance dollars are expended for habitat restoration. During discussion, Commissioner Frank left the meeting at 10:39 a.m. After discussion, Chair Roberts asked each committee for a roll call vote on their motion on the floor to recommend approval of the FY 2025 budget including the 10-year CIP as presented and the Annual Budget Ordinance for FY 2025:

- Finance Committee, Chair Roberts: Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 6, NAYS: 0
- Operations Committee, Chair Vealitzek: Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 6, NAYS: 0
- Planning Committee, Chair Parekh: Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 4, NAYS: 0

Commissioner Clark left the meeting at 10:43 a.m. Commissioner Hunter left the meeting at 10:46 a.m. The Budget Ordinance was forwarded to the full Board for approval. Vice President turned the meeting over to Operations Committee Chair Vealitzek.

10.0 New Business – Operations Committee and Finance Committee

10.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for Occupational Health Services to Endeavor Health Northwest Community Healthcare - Administration Director Mary Kann summarized the recommendation for annual occupational health services. Commissioner Frank entered the room at 10:44 a.m.

- Operations Committee: Motion by member Cunningham, second by member Wasik to recommend approval. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- Finance Committee: Motion by member Hart, second by member Knizhnik to recommend approval. Voice vote being had, the motion passed with member Maine recusing herself.

The Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract to purchase a 2026 Freightliner Forestry Boom Truck to Custom Truck One Source, Inc., in the Contract Price of \$306,819.00 – Director Kovach summarized the recommendation and Facilities Director Dan Stearns explained how the battery is charged, and that the boom can operate without the engine running.

- Operations Committee: Motion by member Danforth, second by member Wasik to recommend approval.
- Finance Committee: Motion by member Danforth, second by member Frank to recommend approval.

With a voice vote from each committee both motions passed unanimously. The Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.3 Recommend approval of a Resolution approving a Cooperative Service Agreement for Deer Management and Integrated Wildlife Damage Management with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a Contract Price not to exceed \$172,500.00 annually – Natural Resource Director Pati Vitt summarized the details and terms of the agreement and responded to questions.

- Operations Committee: Motion by Vice Chair Cunningham, second by member Knizhnik to recommend approval.
- Finance Committee: Motion by member Knizhnik, second by member Hart to recommend approval.

With a voice vote from each committee both motions passed unanimously. The Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.4 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for Helicopter Services for the Winter Deer Count to AM Air Service in the Contract Price of \$48,300.00. Director Vitt summarized the contract for services required by IDNR for a winter deer count.

- Operations Committee: Motion by member Knizhnik, second by member Wasik to recommend approval.
- Finance Committee: Motion by member Knizhnik, second by member Danforth to recommend approval.

With a voice vote from each committee both motions passed unanimously. The Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

11.0 New Business – Operations Committee

11.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for Woody Invasive Plant Clearing at MacArthur Woods Forest Preserve to Tallgrass Restoration, LLC, in the Contract Price of \$57,915.00 – Motion by Vice Chair Cunningham, second by member Knizhnik to recommend approval. Director Vitt summarized the project. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

12.0 Miscellaneous Business – Operations Committee - None

13.0 **Adjourn Operations Committee** – Chair Vealitzek noted that the next meeting is November 4, 2024 and declared the Operations Committee adjourned at 10:55 a.m. Vice President Wasik turned the meeting over to Finance Committee Chair Roberts.

14.0 New Business – Finance Committee:

14.1 Invoices and Requisitions - Motion by member Hart, second by member Maine to approve the invoices for legal services for June and July, 2024. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the invoices were circulated for signatures.

14.2 Recommend approval of an Ordinance Setting Forth the Annual Appropriations for the District for the Fiscal Year January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 - Motion by Vice Chair Frank, second by member Knizhnik to approve the recommendation. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the Ordinance was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

14.3 Recommend approval of an Ordinance Providing for the Levy of Taxes for the Lake County Forest Preserve District for the Fiscal Year January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 - Motion by member Knizhnik, second by Vice Chair Frank to approve the recommendation. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the Ordinance was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

15.0 Miscellaneous Business – Finance Committee – None

Member Knizhnik left the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

16.0 Closed Session – Motion by member Maine, second by member Hart to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining negotiation matters between the District and its employees or their representatives. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 6, NAYS: 0. The committee went into closed session at 10:56 a.m. and returned to open session at 11:08 a.m.

17.0 Potential Action Following Closed Session – Finance Committee - None

18.0 Adjourn Finance Committee – Chair Roberts noted that the next meeting is November 7, 2024 and adjourned the Finance Committee at 11:08 a.m. There was not a quorum of the Planning Committee in the room, and Vice President Wasik called for a recess. At 11:14 a.m. a quorum was reestablished and Vice President Wasik turned the meeting over to Planning Committee Chair Parekh for the remainder of the agenda.

19.0 New Business – Planning Committee:



19.1 Approve Minutes of August 26, 2024 – open and closed session – Motion by member Hunter, second by member Wasik to approve. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the minutes were circulated for signatures.

19.2 Authorize the Director of Planning to approve Change Order No. 1 to a contract with Chicagoland Paving Contractors, Inc. for site improvements at the District General Offices to (i) set forth revised plans and specifications for the work due to unforeseen subsurface conditions; (ii) increase the Contract price by an amount not to exceed \$307,000.00 and (iii) extend the time for completion of the Contract by 56 days - Motion by member Pedersen, second by member Wasik to approve. Director Kovach noted that unforeseen conditions were encountered during the paving project and Planning Director Kevin Kleinjan explained the subgrade and concrete thickness problems in detail, and the new timeframe as it relates to winter weather. Mr. Kleinjan responded to questions, noting that core samples were done prior to the project being bid, but the issues were not discovered. Director Kovach added that in spite of the costs, the parking lot improvements will be advantageous for marketing the building in the future. A discussion ensued and with a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

20.0 Miscellaneous Business – None

21.0 Closed Session – Motion by member Wasik, second by member Pedersen to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the purchase or lease of real property; and the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 4, NAYS: 0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>			
 Gina Roberts, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Diane Hewitt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/> Paul Frank, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Sara Knizhnik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Michael Danforth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Ann B. Maine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Sandy Hart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>