



LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES
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Preservation, Restoration, Education and Recreation

DATE: April 4, 2016

MEMO TO: Carol Calabresa, Chair
Land Preservation and Acquisition Committee

S. Michael Rummel, Chair
Finance and Administrative Committee

FROM: Alex Ty Kovach,
Executive Director

RECOMMENDATION: Provide Policy Direction regarding a request from Verizon Wireless to construct and operate a cell tower at Buffalo Creek Forest Preserve and to authorize staff to negotiate agreements.

FINANCIAL DATA: At this time there is no financial impact.

BACKGROUND: The License and Easement Ordinance cites Section 6 of the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act, which states the Lake County Forest Preserve District (the “District”) has the "power to grant licenses, easements and rights-of-way for the construction, operation and maintenance upon, under or across any property of [the] District of facilities for water, sewage, telephone, telegraph, electric, gas or other public service...”

The District has been approached with a request to construct and operate a cell tower at Buffalo Creek Forest Preserve. In preliminary discussions, staff delivered to Verizon Wireless the Committee-approved list of terms by which the District is willing to consider new cell tower agreements. Verizon is willing to negotiate a license or easement agreement based on those terms.

In light of efforts to broaden the District’s revenue base as a result of the declining Equalized Assessed Value and other financial challenges, staff sees potential benefits in creating a new license or easement agreement for this proposed tower. Staff would like to obtain committee direction on whether to engage in further due diligence, discussions and negotiations with Verizon Wireless regarding a new tower and license under its current proposal. If negotiations proved fruitful, staff would present a license or easement agreement to the Committees for further review and consideration.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: Policy Direction is required in accordance with District policy.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Chief Operations Officer, Director of Planning and Land Preservation, Finance Director, Corporate Counsel

PRESENTER: Alex Ty Kovach