



April 20, 2022

Dear Chairman Kyle and Mr. Kovach,

The League of Women Voters of Lake County is very supportive of the Lake County Forest Preserve District and happy to enjoy its many facilities and programs. However, one of our members brought an issue to our attention that we are embarrassed to have ignored previously: the timing of the start of the monthly LCFPD Board meetings.

The Forest Preserve Board meetings begin 15 minutes after the end of the monthly Lake County Board meetings. However, the length of the County Board meetings can vary widely. If a person were only interested in attending the Forest Preserve meeting, sitting through the County Board meeting would be necessary. This problem is even more concerning if the person wishes to address the Forest Preserve Board during the public comment period at the beginning of the meeting. There is no consistent starting time for the monthly Forest Preserve Board meetings. This is difficult for people in many circumstances, whether it be work schedules or health issues or family responsibilities. Residents should know exactly when a meeting is scheduled to start so that they can participate fully in our government.

We understand that this method of starting the Forest Preserve Board meetings has been determined to comply with the letter of the Illinois Open Meetings Act. However, we feel that it is in violation of the spirit of that Act. According to the Illinois Attorney General's website:

lwvlakecounty@gmail.com

The Attorney General believes that an open, honest and accountable government, the cornerstone of a democracy, can be achieved only through the free and open exchange of information between government and the public. In Illinois, our most important transparency laws – the [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\)](#) and the [Open Meetings Act \(OMA\)](#) - endeavor to open the workings of government to the public, shed light on government actions and, in the process, strengthen our democracy.

The LWV of Lake County understands that this system has been convenient for LCFPD Board members and staff, but we feel it is a disservice to the residents of Lake County in that it hinders public participation and input. We strongly urge you to establish a consistent starting time for Lake County Forest Preserve Board Meetings.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane Sanderson" with a small "rh" and a horizontal line underneath.

Diane Sanderson, LWVLC Secretary and Board Member,
on behalf of the League of Women Voters, Lake County (IL)
(an Inter League Organization)