

DATE: November 4, 2024

MEMO TO: Jessica Vealitzek, Chair
Operations Committee

FROM: Pati Vitt
Director of Natural Resources

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the award of one farm license with a four-year term at Pine Dunes Forest Preserve to the highest qualified bidder.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS SUPPORTED: Conservation; Organizational Sustainability

FINANCIAL DATA: Awarding the license will generate \$336.00 annually and will be credited to the Farmland Management Fund (28642500-403000). In 2024, these lands generated farm revenue of \$278.40.

With the addition of this license, farm licenses will generate a total of \$200,064.17 in Farmland Management Program revenue for 2025. In 2024, total program revenue was \$305,576.28.

BACKGROUND: The farming program is conducted with farmers to provide cost-effective, interim land use and management until the District is ready to convert farmland to other forest preserve purposes. Parcels at Pine Dunes and Kestrel Ridge (the “Subject Parcels”) are subject to existing farm licenses that will expire on December 31, 2024. Requests for bids for farm licenses to farm the Subject Parcels were advertised in the News-Sun, and bid packages were available on the District's website. The licenses were advertised for a 4-year term starting January 1, 2025. Two potential licensees submitted bids for the Pine Dunes license, and no bids were submitted for the Kestrel Ridge license. The highest qualified bidder for the Pine Dunes license is noted below:

SITE	TERM	ACREAGE	HIGHEST BIDDER	PRICE PER ACRE
Kestrel Ridge - Grazing	4 Years	38.12	NO BIDS RECEIVED	NA
Pine Dunes	4 Years	4.8	Eric Heide	\$ 70.00

The highest qualified bidder for the Pine Dunes license meets District requirements. The Kestrel Ridge License did not receive any bids and will be retired from the Farm Management Program.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Manager of Board Operations and Corporate Counsel.

MOTION: Motion to approve a farm license agreement for a 4-year term with Eric Heide at Pine Dunes Forest Preserve in a form approved by the Executive Director or his designee.

APPROVAL:

Date: _____ Roll Call Vote: Ayes: ____ Nays: _____
 Voice Vote Majority Ayes; Nays: _____