

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
APRIL 10, 2018**

PRESENT: Committee members - K. Swanson, K. Maranda, D. Cremeens, E. Sowards, L. Moreno, R. Simmer.

ABSENT: C. O'Brien.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Lee Jackson, Zoo Director; Amanda Van Daele, Chief Deputy Auditor.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:34 PM on Tuesday, April 10, 2018, in the Education Room of the Administrative Building at Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Illinois.

President Swanson called for a motion approving the March Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Cremeens moved to approve the March Committee meeting minutes. Mr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

No request for public comment was submitted.

President Swanson announced to the Committee that on Thursday there will be a hearing in Springfield for House Bill 4591, which has to do with reducing the amount of free days that Niabi is mandated to offer each year. If you remember, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Craver have been pursuing getting that legislation changed. The Chair of the Committee does not see this as a bill that she wants to get behind, and we're looking for community support to get this bill through. Ms. Sullivan will send a link to a witness slip to show support without having to be in Springfield. I would encourage the Committee to not only fill out a slip, but to forward the link to anyone who supports Niabi and its mission. The District still intends to make the zoo accessible to those who could not normally afford it through its existing programs. Programs like passes that are available at Rock Island County libraries, free admission for Rock Island County schools, and of course there will still be free days offered. Those free days will simply be one free day a month, as opposed to one free day for every week.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the claims for the Forest Preserve General Fund in the amount of \$50,967.44, Niabi Zoo Fund claims in the amount of \$131,822.36, Liability Fund claims in the amount of \$2,766.00, Loud Thunder Spillway & Camping Improvements Fund claims in the amount of \$5,000.00, Marvin Martin Fund claims in the amount of \$764.59, and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$14,371.42.

MOTION: Mr. Moreno moved to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the bid for the Giraffe Yard Structure.

MOTION: Mr. Cremeens moved to approve the bid for the Giraffe Yard Structure. Mr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Mr. Jackson stated that his preference would be for the lower bid.

Mr. Craver stated that he also was in favor of the lower bid in the amount of \$51,553.00. The warranties are similar, and the District included a stipulation that the work be completed within sixty days of an executed contract, and the higher bid was not able to accommodate that. Both companies are reputable.

Amended Motion: Dr. Simmer moved to amend the motion to accept the low bid from All Inclusive Rec. Mr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Mr. Maranda expressed concern that the low bidder was not local.

Mr. Craver stated that the address listed for the higher bid was the salesman's address, not the company address. The company is not based out of Rock Island County.

Mr. Jackson stated that Park & Paly Structures is an international firm.

Mr. Maranda asked about where the installation crew would come from.

Mr. Craver answered that both companies use a traveling crew.

Dr. Simmer asked if the covers for the structure would come down in the winter.

Mr. Jackson answered that they would.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Playground bid for Loud Thunder.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Playground bid for Loud Thunder. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that the playground had been done through the National Joint Purchasing Association. The funds for the playground would be coming from the Marvin Martin Endowment. The Committee authorized the withdrawal of the interest accrued at a previous meeting. The District does this nearly every year. That check was received about a week ago.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called on Ms. Van Daele for the Auditor's reports.

Ms. Van Daele stated that on the Trial Balance report the General Fund is about where it should be at this point in the fiscal year. Property Tax distribution will be in June, and seasonal revenues will be starting to come in soon. The fund balance for the General Fund is good as well. Niabi Zoo is closing the gap on the Fund Balance report for the five-month reserve. There is a small concern that it is possible that the Niabi Zoo Fund will need a loan to get them to the tax distribution in June. If the Liability Fund can continue to avoid any major expenses, then the District is looking at a healthier fund balance in the next fiscal year. On the Cash Balance report, the General Fund is very close to what it was last March, which is very good.

Mr. Moreno asked if there was something in the past year of Niabi's expenses that would account for the big difference.

Mr. Jackson stated that it was not any one thing. The expenses are up due to projects around the zoo that will get Niabi back its AZA accreditation. In addition to planned projects, there have also been unexpected repairs that have come up over the past year that needed to be addressed to keep exhibits functioning.

President Swanson asked Mr. Craver if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to in his director's report.

Mr. Craver stated that in addition to the staff reports, Loud Thunder received the annual letter from Thomas Jefferson Elementary, and briefly explained what happens with that outing. The Tugfest Committee has also submitted its annual request to use Dorrance Park for parking.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve both requests. Mr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Craver continued, stating that Mr. Verstraete had received a quote for preliminary engineering services for cost estimates on reestablishing a culvert in the ravine near the pond at the seventh tee. Also, the pond at hole 18 needs to be dressed up as well to help with erosion and water runoff. The cost for the engineering services is \$9,600.00. Those funds are available in the Golf Course Improvement Fund.

There was a brief discussion regarding whether or not that would affect the cart replacement in the future, and how often carts were replaced. It was determined that it would not likely stop the District from replacing the cart fleet when the time comes.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve going forward with the engineering service agreement. Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Craver stated that the Committee should be prepared that due to the weather this year, revenues for the month of April will be down from last year. However, expenses for April will also be down due to holding off on seasonal staff and not having to mow. As far as loans, if Niabi has a descent May, then I'm confident that we won't need to get a loan for the zoo.

President Swanson asked Mr. Jackson if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to in his Niabi Zoo report.

Mr. Jackson reported that the Members Only Egg Hunt went very well this year even with the very cold weather that day. RSVPs for that event were 1,022, and attendance was 638. Last year there were 545 that attended, and the weather last year was much nicer. Enrollment for Zoo Camps has started, and out of state reservations for school groups are coming in. Also going well is the Conservation Speaker series that was started a couple months ago. There will be several new exhibits for the season open. Website update are going well, and Pepsi will be done setting up by the opening. On the AZA accreditation front, we're looking at the first week of May to get in the application.

President Swanson then called for a motion approving the routine reports of the District.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the routine reports of the District. Mr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

After a brief discussion of whether or not to adjourn the meeting prior to the tour that was included on the agenda, President Swanson called the meeting adjourned before the Committee started the tour.

Adjourned the meeting at 4:13 PM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant