

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE COMMISSION
APRIL 19, 2016 – 6:11 PM
PRESIDENT STEVE BALLARD PRESIDING

1. Arletta Holmes, County Clerk Office Manager, called the roll: (Record)

S. Ballard, R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, S. Doye, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, D. Johnston, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, D. Mielke, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL PRESENT 24

K. Callaway-Thompson

TOTAL ABSENT 1

2. Commissioner M. Burns moved to approve the March 22, 2016, Commission Minutes. Commissioner Simmer seconded.

A voice vote was taken.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: (none)

3. Commissioner Brunk moved to approve the Forest Preserve claims at \$67,274.18, and the Niabi Zoo claims at \$67,721.19. Commissioner Doye seconded.

A roll call vote was taken.

R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, S. Doye, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, D. Johnston, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, D. Mielke, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL YES 23

TOTAL NO 0

Motion carried.

4. Commissioner L. Burns moved to approve the Treasurer's Disbursements at \$41,533.27. Commissioner Steffen seconded.

A roll call vote was taken.

R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, D. Mielke, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL YES 21

TOTAL NO 0

Motion carried.

5. Commissioner Deppe moved to waive the reading and approve the Transfers of Appropriation in the Forest Preserve General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Commissioner L. Burns seconded.

A roll call vote was taken.

R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, S. Doye, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, D. Johnston, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, D. Mielke, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL YES 23

TOTAL NO 0

Motion carried.

6. Commissioner Langdon moved to waive the reading and approve the Ordinance regarding the issue of Bonds, not to exceed \$3,600,000 of general obligation refunding bonds (alternative revenue source) of the District, providing for the pledge of a revenue source and the levy of taxes to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds and authorizing the sale of the bonds to Bernardi Securities, Inc. Commissioner Cremeens seconded. (Inc. by Ref. 30 pages)

Commissioner Johnston was recognized.

Mr. Johnston asked, "What's that about, is that refinancing?"

President Ballard answered, "Yeah, ya know, that's it. We have the bond guy here with us tonight because I knew there would be a couple of questions about the bonding...so we will let the Bond guy answer any questions and tell us what we are doing here."

Mr. Johnston asked, "But are we refinancing the Bonds?"

President Ballard answered, "Yes, we are refinancing the Bonds we currently have...we are just going out and restructuring and get a better interest rate."

Mr. Johnston stated, "That's all I wanted to know. Thank you."

President Ballard added, "If you had any technical questions, we have the man her tonight that can answer them because I can't answer them."

Mr. Johnston added, "I wouldn't understand it either."

(Group laughter)

Commissioner Oelke was recognized.

Mr. Oelke asked, "When are these Bonds due? Do you know, Steve?"

President Ballard answered, "Well, they were...we found out they will be due in 2028. Does that sound right, Mr. Craver?"

Mr. Craver answered, "Yes, that's what I... (inaudible)."

President Ballard asked, "I'm sorry?"

Mr. Craver stated, "That's the last... (inaudible)"

President Ballard stated, "Yeah, 2028 as far as I know. Any other questions?"

A roll call vote was taken.

R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, S. Doye, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, D. Johnston, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, D. Mielke, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL YES 23

TOTAL NO 0

Motion carried.

7. Commissioner Swanson moved to lay on display for 30 days the Annexation Agreement and petition for Annexation with the Village of Coal Valley, as presented. Commissioners M. Burns and Mielke seconded. (Inc. by Ref.)

A roll call vote was taken.

R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, S. Doye, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, D. Johnston, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL YES 22

TOTAL NO 0

Motion carried.

8. Commissioner Simmer moved to approve the recommendation to hire and execute an employment agreement for Director of Niabi Zoo with a salary of \$105,000 starting June 6th. In your packet, is a bio of the gentleman that's been recommended by the advisory Oversight Committee with the help of Schultz & Williams. Commissioner Steffen seconded.

President Ballard stated, "We've been working on this for quite some time. You basically have the name of the individual, what the salary is going to be...the basics of it. There is going to be, as I sit down...I'll have to sit down and figure out the rest of the agreement, just some minor things in the contract. So, that will be coming up. If we need to go into any details, as far as...a lot of different things, we'll have to go into closed session. If we start talking about the appointment and the contract stuff, those need to be talked about in closed session. That's the general stuff with regard to what we are talking about in hiring the new Director. He will be starting, I believe, June 1st...June 6th, I apologize, Mr. Craver, thanks for the heads up. I always think of the first of the month. Let me get a motion and a second and we will let Mr. Taylor speak tonight, real fast on this and let him get outta here. Motion made by Simmer, seconded by Steffen."

President Ballard asked Joe Taylor, Chairman of the appointed Niabi Zoo Oversight Committee, to come up and answer any questions and help provide the information on the selection process and anything he can add to that.

Mr. Taylor stated, "There was an extensive search process. There was 30 applicants...we interviewed five. We had second round interviews with two individuals. The Niabi Zoological Society was also included in the interviews and staff and many Members have weighed in on this recommendation."

President Ballard added, "For the record, it was a unanimous decision, too. Correct, Joe?"

Mr. Taylor answered, "Yes."

President Ballard asked, "Any questions or comments before we do the roll call?"

Mr. Oelke asked, "So, who are we approving here?"

President Ballard answered, "We are approving the gentleman of the bio you have in front of you. The name of the gentleman and the salary of \$105,000, obviously, he will be starting and there is a couple of other things...but then, I will have to sit down and come up with the contract that will be mirroring the previous contracts, basically, that we had in the past...as far as phone expense or mileage expense and whatever."

Mr. Oelke stated, "I am not trying to slow this down...he is probably a fine individual, but we can approve that, tonight, without all of the I's being dotted and T's being crossed in the contract?"

President Ballard answered, "Absolutely, because the rest of the contract that includes vacation and I think this, tonight, is basically us saying this is the guy we are gonna hire with a unanimous vote of the advisory Oversight Committee and generality of what the salary is going to be, which is right around \$100,000 give or take. And that's right in line with what this Board had agreed to from six months ago. What we are not doing is getting into this guy's contract because that would be out of line."

Mr. Johnston asked, "Just one question, Steve, will this contract be available?"

President Ballard answered, "Absolutely! It will be available to anybody in the Commission. He's being paid out of public tax dollars. That's why we are not hiding what the salary is going to be or anything, ya know...it's a public contract. I am not trying to cut anybody off, but obviously he's got to get approved first and then the contract...the little gray areas will need to be put on paper. He's obviously agreed to come work for \$105,000 and whatever else...ya know...there is nothing else that will hold it up."

Mr. Maranda asked, "But the question from Mr. Oelke was about to move this forward..."

President Ballard interrupted, "No, we already have a motion and a second on the floor. We are just in discussion. That's what we are doing here; we are having discussion about Mr. Oelke's question. Mr. Oelke's comment was do we really want to move forward without the rest of the contract?"

Mr. Oelke stated, "Right."

President Ballard added, "That's what I was getting out of that and I was trying to clear that up about the little minor things in the contract are going to be very common and adequate for what the rest of the contract would be. It's not like he's going to get another \$20,000 bonus or something like that...or something crazy like that, is not going to happen. Just the basics...we have to sit down and talk about things like phone and mileage and stuff like that. Anymore questions before we call the vote?"

Mr. Terry asked, "Don't we have to approve that contract once it is finalized anyway?"

President Ballard answered, "Well, at the end of the day we are voting tonight for him to be hired."

Mr. Terry stated, "Hired...alright."

President Ballard added, "If we come back here the next month and all of the sudden someone in this room doesn't like that he's getting a phone allowance of \$40 a month or something like that or whatever...ya know...we are hiring this guy. So, if you don't have trust in the process, then I don't know...I feel a little bit alarmed by that because we hire people all of the time and we are not going to be giving this guy any more than what anybody else is going to get."

Commissioner Langdon was recognized.

Mr. Langdon asked, "I have a question. Why didn't we get to meet this guy before we appoint him?"

President Ballard answered, "The question is...when we just had our meeting with Joe, they recommended that this guy be hired. When was that, Joe, last week?"

Mr. Taylor answered, "Last week and in previous interviews that occurred a week or two prior to that. So, we have seen this gentleman a lot."

President Ballard stated, "He's been to town a couple of times. You know...and this is what I am going to say, right now...either we are going to go into closed session or we are going to continue this discussion or whatever and take a vote because I can tell you, right now, when you start talking about a lot of things like personnel issues and that kind of stuff, those fall under closed session. And, I am not going to sit here and take individuals and talk about all the things that happened because these are people that are professionals and, obviously, a lot of times when you are looking at candidates to get hired, a lot of times those people don't want it announced until the Board approves their hiring for reasons and I understand their reasons."

Commissioner Maranda stated, "Well, I thought that's what Mr. Oelke was saying...maybe I misunderstood ya, Ron, but I thought that you said all that's left is crossing T's and dotting I's and that's why I thought that should be added to the motion...or am I wrong?"

Mr. Oelke stated, "Well, hey...I am not looking to...it just sounds like to me that the contract isn't quite finalized yet and I am just a little concerned about approving a contract that hasn't been finalized yet. And, that was my question to Steve is how much is...how close are we on that?"

President Ballard answered, "Very, very close. If you offer the job, you offer the salary and you offer the two or three basic things that are important to whoever the individual is. And, then, you work out the other little details of the...or whatever because that is not going to be a deal-breaker, believe me. Because what we are going to be talking about is nothing like...it's not a lot. It's a simple type of contract we offer to everybody when it comes to the little fine things that happen."

Commissioner Moreno was recognized.

Mr. Moreno stated, "We did the same thing with the County Administrator."

President Ballard added, "There ya go."

Mr. Moreno added, "We basically chose the individual and then that evening, we worked out all of the details to cross all the T's and dot the I's."

President Ballard stated, "Right."

Commissioner Simmer was recognized.

Mr. Simmer stated, "And, to add on to that...what we did was we had Schultz & Williams, who agreed to go out and look for these people. Schultz & Williams gave us a list of good, quality people...it's what they do, that's what the professionals do when they do their job. And, we elected to do...to put this Board in position to make these decisions for us and to put these people forward and do everything...so, this is who Schultz & Williams wanted in there and this Board, both, have went through this thing. They are giving us the most qualified person and I just asked for the committee's from two different groups to come up with these people and I just think we need to call the vote."

President Ballard stated, "We are going to let Mr. Craver make just one comment."

Mr. Craver, Director, of the Forest Preserve Commission stated, "In the motion it has hired to execute the agreement, much of what you guys have discussed is what we tried to put into the motion. We are hiring this individual and we are going to allow President Ballard to execute an employment agreement. The terms of that employment agreement are dotting the I's and crossing the T's defining what...any kind of benefits, above and beyond what is in our Procedure Manual...I'm sorry, our Employee Manual for employees of the Forest Preserve District. But, any additional...the compensation was added in there so everyone would know what that compensation is. As President Ballard stated, there is not going to be any additional compensation in addition to that \$105,000 as stated in the salary."

President Ballard stated, "I just wanted to give everybody a chance to say something. I believe in transparency but some people don't...like it or not, I do believe in transparency."

A roll call vote was taken.

R. Brunk, M. Burns, L. Burns, N. Camlin, D. Cremeens, J. Deppe, S. Doye, C. Filbert, D. Jacobs, D. Johnston, E. Langdon, K. Maranda, M. Mayberry, D. Mielke, P. Moreno, R. Oelke, V. Shelton, R. Simmer, M. Steffen, K. Swanson, S. Terry, B. Vyncke, J.R. Westpfahl

TOTAL YES 23

TOTAL NO 0

Motion carried.

9. Commissioner Swanson moved to approve the Routine Reports from the Director and Department Heads of the Forest Preserve Commission. Commissioner Vyncke seconded. (Record)

A voice vote was taken.

Motion carried.

President Ballard declared the Forest Preserve Meeting recessed.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen Kinney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

KAREN KINNEY
COUNTY CLERK AND SECRETARY
OF THE FOREST PRESERVE COMMISSION

KK: rw