

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

PRESENT: Committee members - K. Swanson, E. Sowards, D. Cremeens, R. Simmer, A. Normoyle(arrived 3:36pm), L. Moreno(arrived 3:44pm).

ABSENT: J. Woods.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Mike Petersen, Illiniwek Ranger; April Palmer, Auditor; Louisa Ewert, Treasurer.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:33 PM on Tuesday, September 14, 2021, in the Picnic Pavilion at Illiniwek Forest Preserve in Hampton, Illinois.

E. Sowards, R. Simmer, K. Swanson, D. Cremeens. {A. Normoyle and L. Moreno arrived after roll was called.}

TOTAL YES 6

J. Woods.

TOTAL ABSENT 1

President Swanson called for a motion approving the August Budget and Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Cremeens moved to approve the August Budget and Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the fiscal year 2021 treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$18,360.07.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the fiscal year 2021 treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$18,360.07. Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the fiscal year 2022 claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$201,863.62.

MOTION: Mr. Cremeens moved to approve the fiscal year 2022 claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$201,863.62. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the fiscal year 2021 transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund.

MOTION: Ms. Sowards moved to approve the fiscal year 2021 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 fiscal year 2022 transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the fiscal year 2022 transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Resolution pertaining to the Niabi Zoo Fund increase in appropriation for fiscal year 2022.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Resolution pertaining to the Niabi Zoo Fund increase in appropriation for fiscal year 2022. Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Closed Session Minutes Resolution.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Closed Session Minutes Resolution. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to remove from display and approve the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinances for the General Fund, Niabi Zoological Fund, IMRF Retirement Fund, Liability Fund, FISSA Fund, and Development of Forests & Construction of Improvements Fund.

MOTION: Mr. Cremeens moved to remove from display and approve the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinances for the General Fund, Niabi Zoological Fund, IMRF Retirement Fund, Liability Fund, FISSA Fund, and Development of Forests & Construction of Improvements Fund. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to make public comment.

There were no requests for public comment.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the renewing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Niabi Zoo and the Forest Preserves of Rock Island County Foundation.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to the renewing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Niabi Zoo and the Forest Preserves of Rock Island County Foundation. Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that the agreement expires in October. The CAB will meet on Monday, and if there are any recommendations to amend, the Committee and Commission will be notified, and changes explained. At this time, keeping the agreement to a year is recommended by staff. There have not been any issues with the agreement over the past year.

Motion carried.

President Swanson stated that next on the agenda is a discussion of the regularly scheduled meetings for the remainder of the calendar year. Before coming out to meet at the parks for the year the Committee was scheduled to meet at 9:30am, which is right after the County's Finance and Personnel Committee meeting. Does anyone have conflicts with the 9:30am time?

Mr. Craver stated that whichever time was convenient for the Committee can be accommodated. The issue that we've run into a few times is that when Finance and Personnel goes longer than an hour, the District is waiting around for the meeting to start. The Forest Preserve Executive Committee meeting does not typically go more than an hour, and staff does have duties at their preserves to attend to.

President Swanson acknowledged that that can occasionally be an issue. Do the Committee members have any feelings regarding this matter?

Mr. Craver asked the Committee how they felt about the Forest Preserve going first and meeting at 8:30am instead.

Dr. Moreno stated that the time would work for him.

Ms. Normoyle stated that the time would work for her, and that it can be discussed with the County's Finance and Personnel Committee members.

President Swanson asked Mr. Petersen if there was anything from his report that he would like to bring attention to.

Mr. Petersen stated that staff has been performing a lot of work at Dorrance Park on the ball diamonds and surrounding fencing. The new water line for Illiniwek has been installed. Staff has also been working on the prairie and forest management plan. August was a record month for camping.

President Swanson asked Mr. Petersen if there were any strategic concerns he wished to bring to the Committee's attention.

Mr. Petersen stated that much of the infrastructure on the park is coming to the end of its life. The roads, and well system are paramount among the list of aging structures. It is possible that Illiniwek could hook into the water lines that comes out of East Moline. Those are definitely projects that need to be addressed sooner than later.

President Swanson suggested putting in for ARPA funds for those projects.

Ms. Palmer stated that the division of ARPA that is likely what the Forest Preserve would be looking for is the direct assistance to tourism and park facilities. The District can also apply to the County for its own revenue loss. Those numbers have been sent to Mr. Craver. It would just be a matter of going through the application process and getting those funds through the County. There is an application that just was published by the State's Attorney's Office and sent to Department heads and Elected Officials.

Mr. Craver stated that there were several projects that were put on hold because of the need to redistribute the funds during the pandemic. Very seriously doubt that Niabi will get AZA accreditation without modernizing the exhibits. There is now a list that the District can submit for those funds.

Mr. Petersen continued with his report stating that, like last year, the campgrounds have been busy all season. Trails, both at Illiniwek and Dorrance, have also been quite busy. Conservation efforts have been going strong.

Mr. Craver briefly touched on the boat ramp and bike path projects that will need to be addressed.

President Swanson asked Ms. Ewert if there was anything from the Treasurer's report that she would like to bring attention to.

Ms. Ewert stated that there was nothing, but if anyone had any questions, she was happy to answer them.

There were no questions for Ms. Ewert.

President Swanson asked if Ms. Palmer had anything from her reports that she would like to bring attention to.

Ms. Palmer stated that the budget standing is good for all funds on the trial balance report. Fund balances are still unaudited, but are up to date. The five-month reserve calculations have been recalculated and updated as well based on the most recent numbers. Things are looking better for Niabi this year in comparison to last year. Though do keep in mind that it is currently tax season. Cash balances report looks as expected this time of year.

President Swanson congratulated Ms. Palmer on another GOFA award.

Ms. Palmer thanked President Swanson, and stated that, as always, she appreciated the cooperation of the District staff. It is a team effort.

President Swanson asked Mr. Craver if there was anything from his report that he would like to bring attention to.

Mr. Craver went through the ILke George Dam inspection report from IMEG.

Dr. Moreno asked if the sloth that recently died at Niabi would be replaced.

President Swanson stated that he believed it was planned to replace the male sloth.

Dr. Moreno asked if the train was back up and running, and if there was major concern over the challenge of future repairs.

Mr. Craver stated that Niabi's train is back up and running. The train does still have life left in it. It is not an emergency that needs to be replaced right now. Parts, while at times may be challenging to source, are still out there and available. The District will likely get another good five to ten years of service life from the current train. Staff has met with sellers and East Moline officials regarding the sale of those properties previously discussed. All parties are looking at a way to find a compromise. The grant application for the purchase of those properties has been submitted. Will keep the Committee informed of the ongoing endeavors.

President Swanson called the meeting adjourned at 4:44 PM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant