

**FOREST PRESERVE BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
AUGUST 09, 2022**

PRESENT: Committee members - K. Swanson, L. Moreno, E. Sowards, R. Simmer, J. Woods, A. Normoyle, D. Cremeens.

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Ben Mills, Loud Thunder Ranger; April Palmer, Auditor; Kayle Ziegenhorn; Crystal Bower.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Budget Committee to order at 3:04 PM on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, in the Park Office at Loud Thunder Forest Preserve in Illinois City, Illinois.

E. Sowards, J. Woods, A. Normoyle, K. Swanson, L. Moreno(via phone), D. Cremeens(via phone). R. Simmer arrived at 3:29pm after roll was called.

TOTAL YES 7

TOTAL ABSENT 0

President Swanson called on Mr. Craver to go through the proposed budget.

Mr. Craver stated that the budget packet went out about two weeks ago. It's pretty standard yearly expenses. The District has been trying to get better about spacing out significant expenses for equipment replacement instead of being hit all at once. Schedule A will show where the District currently sits in fund balances. The General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund have a surplus. It's great to see the Zoo Fund heading in the right direction. The District should see some savings from what is budgeted in the IMRF Fund. There are no outstanding Workers' Comp claims or Liability lawsuits at this time, so the Liability Fund is budgeted mostly for the IPARKS expense. The Committee will notice a new fund, the Audit Fund. Those funds will pay for the external audit the District is required to do for each fiscal year. Provided that the Commission approves the Ordinances, collection for the Audit fund will begin the second half of this fiscal year. This upcoming audit will be the last one on the current agreement. Will be working with the Auditor's Office to put out an RFP for the next three years of external audit services as has been the practice of the District for quite some time now. There is a balanced budget created for the General Fund, and a surplus budget created for the Niabi Fund, which staff is recommending going forward in order to avoid the predicament that the District found itself in the past few years in regards to the Zoo fund.

President Swanson asked what projects are budgeted in fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

Mr. Craver stated that the Indian Bluff disconnected culvert and hole 18 pond renovation. The zoo also needs to upgrade the eagle exhibit. The eagle recently passed

away, and there are two birds coming into that space, which will require bringing the exhibit up to the required standards. Have talked to Coal Valley recently, and the response we got regarding the water main project that was initially spoken about several years ago was that they hadn't talked about it in some time. However, that project really can't wait. The District will need to do what it can to improve its water access and quality. The plan had originally been to address that in April of 2023, but that's not looking like it's going to happen at that time. Next month there will be updated fiscal year 2022 numbers as back dating can happen through the end of August. The numbers seen in September are typically the numbers seen in the audit. You'll notice that the tax levy is pretty similar to what it has been in past years. There is a list of projects in the packet that the District will be trying to address in the coming years' budgets.

President Swanson asked if there were any other questions regarding the budget presentation.

There were no other questions regarding the budget presentation.

Adjourned the meeting at 3:33 PM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant