

**ROCK ISLAND COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE COMMISSION  
MARCH 21, 2023 – 6:15PM  
PRESIDENT KAI SWANSON - PRESIDING**

1. Karen Kinney, County Clerk, called the roll: (Record)

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil,  
D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards,  
K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL PRESENT 17**

B. Perkins, J. Woods

**TOTAL ABSENT 2**

2. President Swanson stated, "Okay, thank you we clearly have a quorum. We are going to start this evening with a presentation by someone who has been before us before, Mr. John Fellman from IMEG. Mr. Fellman, please come right up here and the floor is yours. We will be hearing some interesting things about our partnership with IMEG; which I think is one of the largest firms in the country now. isn't it?"

Mr. Fellman stated, "It's getting there....it's getting there."

President Swanson added, "Well, thanks for your time."

Mr. Fellman stated, "Yeah, no problem. So, I am John Fellman. I'm with IMEG. I sit here in Rock Island and my previous firm has been in Rock Island since 1946....but I haven't been around since 1946, but we've done a ton of work for the Forest Preserve since the 1990's, I believe. And the Lake George Dam is why I am here. Jeff Craver asked I do this for the new Members on the Board. So, I will just give you a summary about the dam. It was built in the 1960's by the DNR. Today, there is a bit of an unknown on the dam and it became the Forest Preserve's. It needed a lot of maintenance and rehab, but finally, IDOT needed to do a lot of work on the bridge that stands over the spillway...so, they put some funds into the project to kind of help the Forest Preserve at that time around 2008, I believe. We did a lot of concrete work around and inside the spillway shoot itself. A little bit of rip-rap at the bottom, but I am here about the spillway itself. To maintain the permit of the dam, the DNR required some other requirements...um, more rip-rap on the water side and have what they call a de-watering mechanism. The dam did not have one, so we installed a tower, if you go out there now...you'll see a tower with a slough scape...so, now, we can at least drain a little bit of the floor to at least relieve pressure on the dam. And all of that is for an emergency situation. We have a ton of water and it's starting to crest, we can at least lower the water enough and hopefully at least save the dam from any catastrophic type issue. Uh...the permit is a higher standard because we have a campground

downstream. So, you have to maintain some more safety features and have an emergency action in place...so, if you do have campers down there, we need to be able to get them out of there if it ever looks like there will be a breach of the dam. So, we did a lot of work in 2008, and then we did some more work in 2018-2019, where we completely re-rocked the water side with new rip-rap. We put new rip-rap down at the bottom and we just did more of those improvements around that area...installed the slough-scape tower and that kind of got you up to what the permit needed you to be at. So, that's where we are at today for the most part. In general, regardless of the ownership discrepancy, the dam was neglected and no offense to the Board, but the previous Boards wouldn't put money into the dam...and they kind of let it get neglected and as we know if we let our house go too long, it's that much more expensive to fix in the future, right? The bills get bigger and we gotta tear the house down and start over. So, I am more or less trying to help this Board know to pre-plan and be more proactive. There is going to be a need for maintenance of the dam. They are expensive, especially, one this big that is holding this much water back. So, in general, we would just say over five years, you are looking at probably...this is a conservative thing, but I would say about \$150K to \$160K over the next five years. So, the additional rip-rap work and also maintain rip-rap that gets washed away in big storms and just some other things going on. We completed our inspection last fall or last year on the dam. It's got normal stuff right now. We need to maintain the grass on the land side, what we call. Also, we work with John Massa of the County Engineer's Office and Jeff's staff where every now and then, every three or four years, we do a controlled burn. And that just helps keeps the grass and the weeds and that type of vegetation that we don't want growing. We would really like some nice lawn type grass that's all on that side and mowed at a certain height; which reduces erosion and keeps the dam face in good shape, and every now and then when we do that burn. Um, but the normal maintenance...we found the chain-link fence by the shoot is not in the best shape. There is some erosion off the road way on the west side...it's got a pretty good depth to it, that needs to be filled in soon; whether that's in coordination with John Massa or not...that's up to you guys. There are some animal burrows and that sort of thing...but again, right now, it's not in too bad of shape. So, the work we did in 2018-2019 is holding up well. Just know when Jeff or Kai comes to you and says they need some more money for some more maintenance stuff, that's where this is coming from. So, that's the quick version. If anyone has any questions?"

Commissioner Layer was recognized.

President Swanson asked, "Yes, can we have Mr. Layer's microphone on, please?"

Ms. Kinney stated, "There ya go, Chuck."

Mr. Layer asked, "So, the dam being under IDNR regulations, does it fall under any Corps of Engineer's regulations?"

Mr. Fellman answered, "Not under the dam maintenance itself. For the Corps, that would probably be more with the fish habitat and anything downstream that you guys do with the creek that empties into the river, the campground, the boat ramp all falls under the Corps...that type stuff. The dam itself is locked into the DNR. And then, most of the states follow the federal...there are some federal guidelines for dam safety. The dams are classified 1, 2 and 3. Basically, Class 1...the dam breaks and maybe some property damage or it doesn't touch anything. Class 2...is mostly property damage with a higher dollar value and maybe a small chance of loss of life. Class 3...is, there is a chance of loss of life. So, if the dam breaks and the people downstream get flooded, they would drown...and so, in your case, it's a Class 3 because of the campground."

Mr. Layer stated, "Thank you."

Commissioner Simmer was recognized.

President Swanson stated, "Dr. Simmer, if you don't mind...use your mic for the people at home."

Ms. Kinney stated, "There ya go."

Mr. Simmer stated, "Um, this is kind of ancient history, like in 2008, 2009...or whatever they did. At one point, the Corps changed the flow of that creek going out instead of dumping right underneath out by our campgrounds there. They kind of put it back down and stretched it out down river more before it dumps in."

Mr. Fellman stated, "Okay."

Mr. Simmer asked, "Are you aware of that one?"

Mr. Fellman answered, "No, that I wasn't uh, aware of."

(Overlapping Comments between Mr. Simmer and Mr. Fellman)

Mr. Simmer added, "They used to scour up that little...and they keep it clean because otherwise it is silted. Okay? I was just wondering what the rationale, if you ever heard of the rationale and why it was necessary or what the deal was when it had been...and I don't know how long it had been the other direction."

Mr. Fellman answered, "The Corps would maintain that type of area because in fact like the campground area, I believe is on leased ground from the Corps. And then, the boat ramps...anything to do with the boat ramps, because we have looked at improvements in that area down by the boat ramp area parking lot...but, any work we do down there would have to get approval of the Corps."

Mr. Simmer asked, I was just wondering if you had been right along..."

Mr. Fellman interrupted, "It was probably something they were scouring they didn't want to scour into and they were trying to...you know? You can push Mother Nature only a certain direction....but..."

(Both chuckles)

Mr. Simmer interrupted, "You meant when it comes to scouring...he meant when the ramp opens up." (Chuckles)

Mr. Fellman answered, "Yes."

Mr. Simmer stated, "Okay, thanks."

President Swanson asked, "Are there any other questions for Mr. Fellman? Alright...I thank you for your time and thank you for IMEG's partnership. That was a game changer."

Mr. Fellman stated, "Yeah...I appreciate it. Thanks for having me."

President Swanson stated, "Thank you. Alright, with that I would entertain a motion to approve the February minutes, as presented in your packet."

3. Commissioner Simmer moved to approve the February 21, 2023, Commission Minutes, as presented. Commissioner Vyncke seconded.

A roll call vote was taken.

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil, D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL YES 17**

**TOTAL NO 0**

Motion carried.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS (NONE)** Three calls were made for Public Comment.

5. **PRESIDENTS COMMENTS:**

President Swanson asked, "Just something very quick. On behalf of the staff because they have been watching this very closely offer thanks to the Commissioners in their earlier role as Board Members because all of the stuff we did with this ARPA thing is tied to the strategic plan. Some of you were on the

Commission when we adopted the strategic plan and it's pretty logical. And when you put it into improvement...the improvement draws more families out. More families means more revenue. That sets the stage for the next improvement all leading up to...someday, we'll have a fine lion enclosure out there. What we just did today was...what happened with Covid was we took about a \$1.5 million dollar hit on the chin in revenues, all of those plans slow down. And we were moving ahead...the staff did a great job going out to get grants for over 50% of the cost of the Painted Dogs and over 50% of the Prairie Dogs. And, of course, things happened with the Bald Eagle Exhibit; which is very important to many of us...and we saw that there were some deficiencies that were going to put the animals at risk. We couldn't do that. And so, this is all about investment having Mr. Fellman here is a good reminder. In 2018, not everybody was sold on the idea of saving the dam. That saved Lake George, but we did. And that's a legacy that this Commission will leave to our grandkids...ya know, that they will have a place to go like we did when we were kids. So, you got to invest. And, if you don't want to invest, there is a pretty healthy symbol of what happens when you don't invest kitty-corner from where we are seated right now. So, on behalf of the Niabi staff we are going to be very excited to learn what you did. I want to say thanks. Alright...with that, you'll have a chance to ask other questions and make your own comments in just a moment."

6. Commissioner Simmer moved to approve the Forest Preserve Claims and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$156,091.07, as presented. Commissioner Layer seconded.

Commissioner Foster moved to approve the previous roll call vote. Commissioner Dewith seconded.

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil, D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL YES**                    **17**

**TOTAL NO**                    **0**

Motion carried.

7. Commissioner Sowards moved to waive the reading and approve the Transfers of Appropriation, as presented. Commissioner Burns seconded.

Commissioner Mielke moved to approve the previous roll call vote. Commissioner L. Moreno seconded.

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil, D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL YES 17**

**TOTAL NO 0**

Motion carried.

8. Commissioner Layer moved to waive the reading and approve the Resolution regarding DFCI Fund Illiniwek Recreation Trail Grant Appropriations, as presented. Commissioner Vyncke seconded.

(Note\*\* The Resolution is in .pdf format and begins on the next page)

## RESOLUTION

RE: FY 23 Illiniwek Recreation Trail Grant Appropriations

**WHEREAS**, Illiniwek Forest Preserve was awarded \$200,000.00 from the Illinois Recreation Trail Grant program to construct a new restroom facility and make trail improvements, and

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Recreation Trail Grant program is a reimbursable grant, and

**WHEREAS**, engineering and 100% construction document work has been performed for the road and trail work required, and

**WHEREAS**, the project has been bid and moving into contract and construction of Phase I of two phases, and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Forest Preserve Commission of Rock Island County, Rock Island, Illinois, as follows:

SECTION 1. An emergency exists as outlined above.

SECTION 2. Expenditures in the amount of \$26,132.00 shall be increased from grant revenue to be received in the Development of Forests and Construction Improvement Fund to the following:

AMOUNT	APPROPRIATION	DESCRIPTION
\$26,132.00	335-32-35 765 RTP 23	Construction in Progress

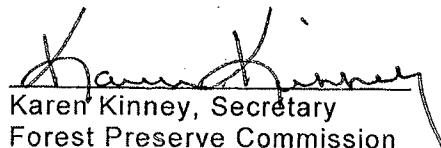
SECTION 3. Revenues in the amount of \$26,132.00 shall be increased in the Development of Forests and Construction Improvement Fund to the following:

AMOUNT	APPROPRIATION	DESCRIPTION
\$26,132.00	335-32-35 334.70 RTP23	State Grants

SECTION 4. This resolution to become effective immediately.

**ADOPTED** by the Rock Island County Forest Preserve Commission, Rock Island County, Illinois, this 21<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2023.

  
Kai Swanson, President  
Forest Preserve Commission

  
Karen Kinney, Secretary  
Forest Preserve Commission

Commissioner Morthland moved to approve the previous roll call vote. Commissioner Sowards seconded.

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil, D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL YES 17**

**TOTAL NO 0**

Motion carried.

9. Commissioner Foster moved to waive the reading and approve the Agreement for IMEG for construction observation and testing for the new AMÔWA Parking Lot Project, as presented. Commissioner Vyncke seconded.

Commissioner Brunk moved to approve the previous roll call vote. Commissioner L. Moreno seconded.

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil, D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL YES 17**

**TOTAL NO 0**

Motion carried.

10. **Comments from Commissioners: (One)**

Commissioner Simmer was recognized.

Mr. Simmer stated, "I just want to make sure we all remember the name AMÔWA, right?"

President Swanson reiterated, "AMÔWA."

Mr. Simmer stated, "Alright... AMÔWA. I keep forgetting the dang thing and people are like...what's going on out there at that park, AMÔWA?"

President Swanson stated, "What am I going to do on Saturday in June? I'm gonna AMÔWA." (Chuckles)  
(Group laughter)

President Swanson stated, "Thank you, Dr. Simmer. Any other questions or comments, please?"

11. Commissioner Vyncke moved to approve all Routine Reports from the Director and Departments Heads of the Forest Preserve Commission, as presented. Commissioner Sowards seconded.

Commissioner Layer moved to approve the previous roll call vote. Commissioner L. Moreno seconded.

D. Adams, R. Brunk, L. Burns, E. Dewith, C. Enburg, T. Foster, C. Layer, P. McNeil, D. Mielke, L. Moreno, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, R. Simmer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl

**TOTAL YES**                    **17**

**TOTAL NO**                    **0**

Motion carried.

The next meeting of the Forest Preserve Commission is Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 5:30pm, immediately following the meeting of the Rock Island County Board.

President Swanson declared the Forest Preserve Meeting recessed at 6:32pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



KAREN KINNEY  
COUNTY CLERK AND SECRETARY  
OF THE FOREST PRESERVE COMMISSION

KK:rw