

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE COMMISSION
EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE 1st DAY
JULY 18, 2023 – 6:12PM
FOREST PRESERVE 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, M. Moreno-Baker, R. Morthland, B. Perkins, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, B. Vyncke, J. R. Westpfahl, J. Woods, Holly Sparkman, Karen Dahlstrom, Karen Kinney, Nick Camlin, April Palmer, Jeff Craver

TOTAL PRESENT 23

L. Moreno, R. Simmer

TOTAL ABSENT 2

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS - (NONE)** (Three calls were made.)

3. **PRESIDENTS COMMENTS:**

President Swanson stated, "Just a few Comments from the President... The purpose of this...and we could debate all day long whether it was a wise decision but the fact is...this is the fact, we are going to do this because the State has asked us to do this. And, we are going to fulfill the letter in the spirit of the law. We are gonna do this three times. If at any time, any member of the committee sees things that could be done more efficiently, not just in the conduct of meetings, but in the reports. Hopefully, you have had a chance to see Jeff's report. This is the time to put that out there and then we will present a report to the County Board. Yeah, I know most of you are the County Board, but the County Board will eventually approve the report. Now that said, and you are welcome to hit me with questions at any point."

4. **OTHER NEW BUSINESS:**

President Swanson added, "I did want to start...I know a lot of times the Forest Preserve Commission meetings kind of zip right along, so I especially wanted to ask Ms. Dahlstrom and Ms. Sparkman if there is anything from that Commission meeting was a particular concern, a question, something that just flew by or anything at all? And, of course, you can always ask questions at any other time. Do you have anything now?"

Ms. Sparkman stated, "Um, no...I choose to observe first and then..."

Ms. Winstead asked, "Who is speaking?"

Ms. Kinney answered, "That's Holly Sparkman."

President Swanson stated, "Sure, sure...yeah. That's where...we will be taking notes here too. Now, before we wrap up, I'll just put you on notice if either of you have any comments on...ya know, your background in the community or what's brought you here tonight...we are going to give you that opportunity. You don't have to, but it will be there. Now, that was one item on the agenda. But, under President's Comments, and there is also open comments from all Committee Members...I hope you had a chance to read what Jeff prepared. Jeff put a lot of work into that. It's a pretty comprehensive overview of what's going on in the District. If you have not had a chance to read that, I would encourage you to do so, and then if you have questions or comments, you can send those to Cassie Sullivan, to Jeff, to me and they'll become part of our next agenda. But, that said...for those who did have a chance to consider Jeff's report, any questions or responses that you want to make to that at this time?"

Committee Member Layer was recognized.

Mr. Layer asked, "So I was going to say in their great list of general assembly seems to give us yet another mandate...but, instead of seeing this negatively, I think Mr. Craver did a wonderful job! It gives us a chance to toot our own horn, nobody toots it for ya...so, go in big!"

President Swanson stated, "I want to thank you for that, Mr. Layer. I would add to that, it's always an opportunity if we can find ways to do things better, more efficiently, who benefits? Right? Our bosses. So, I think it's an opportunity. And, I am sorry if I sound like I was poo-pooing it, but I think it's a great opportunity. So, thank you, Mr. Layer. Are there any other questions on Jeff's report? Ms. Palmer, please."

Committee Member Ms. Palmer was recognized.

Ms. Palmer stated, "I just have one...under the Efficiency Section, um there is a focus on the unique services, and I just have a question or maybe a possible future inclusion...why specifically the campground areas were left off that list? It says Parks, Golf Course and Zoological Park. But, it doesn't really say anything in this report regarding the Camping facilities that we have at both ends of the county that I just thought maybe should be highlighted."

President Swanson answered, "I think you are absolutely right. We'll make sure that we can...that should be an easy edit to make, Mr. Craver. I think that we could make sure that we mention the camping. I think that you...totally understandably put that under Parks, right?"

Mr. Craver answered, "Right."

President Swanson added, "But, it does give us a distinction because most municipal park systems don't offer camping but that is a wonderful service that we offer...and a variety because we do from big old RV Camping, rustic tent camping, and everything in between."

Ms. Palmer added, "That was my thought."

President Swanson stated, "I think it was a great thought. Thank you, Ms. Palmer. Are there any other questions to Mr. Cravers report? Remember, you have some time to digest...and as you have thoughts, please share those so we could have that on the next agenda?"

5. **Comments from Commissioners: (None)**

6. President Swanson stated, "Well guess what? I think we have discharged our duty. Before I move on, Jeff, do you have anything else for this agenda tonight?"

Mr. Craver stated, "No."

President Swanson stated, "Alright, before we close out, I did want to offer...uh, we will go in alphabetical order, Ms. Dahlstrom, is there anything you would like to share in your background? What prompted you to say yes to the invitation or anything like that?"

Ms. Dahlstrom stated, "Um, hello again. I am Karen Dahlstrom, I am currently the Executive Director of Moline Public Schools Foundation. But I have worked in higher education most of my career at Blackhawk College and also at Augustana College in two different tenures. Um, I am originally from Aledo, so I am now in Rock Island County and a native of this area. I am involved in a lot of different community organizations volunteering and so, when Kai approached me about this, it's totally new...but it is something that is very exciting. I am someone who knows and loves this area...so, thanks for letting me join."

President Swanson stated, "Thank you for being with us. Ms. Sparkman, please."

Ms. Sparkman stated, "Um hi...I am Holly Sparkman. I will go along with what Karen said, I am from Rock Island originally from Geneseo. I did attend Augustana and graduated in 1991. I have been here ever since. My husband is a life-long Rock Islander and so, I don't think he would let me leave anyway. I recently retired. I put 17 years into the Rock Island/Milan School District as Director of Communications. Before that, my degree is in Art History and tried to find an area that fit me and marketing and communications seemed to be something that I could go on. We have three boys and they are all adulting. I run a lot and appreciate the trails...I did not do the ultra at Loud Thunder earlier in the year. But, I have a lot of friends who do that and I am looking forward to the Trail Run at Illiniwek on August 19th. So, if anyone wants to join me, that would be a lot of fun."

Yeah, I appreciate Kai's invitation. This is new to me as well from this perspective and I like all of the assets in Rock Island County and believe we live in probably one of the best places on the planet. So, I am looking forward to what this committee was doing."

President Swanson stated, "Well, thank you, Holly and I would love to take you up on your invitation to join you but I would probably only join you for 12 yards and then you would just be an increasing specimen of (inaudible)...(Group chuckles). Mr. Craver, please."

Committee Member Craver was recognized.

Mr. Craver stated, "Just a little background, for the new Committee Members, I got sworn in back in December. I've provided Procedure Manuals, Board Manual and a lot of other documents and I kind of directed you to where you can find information on our website and make those types of things. Kai and I did the same review with Karen and Holly several weeks ago...where, here's the thing we are going to do for the Board Members when they come on so you can get a little better understanding. They have been provided some of those documents. A lot of information is available on our website. Holly pointed out a couple of things that she saw on the website to me. So, just so that you know that we didn't just give them this report, but we did kind of give them some background to give them an opportunity and had some discussion on what we do at the Forest Preserve District to help give them a better insight as to our operation for efficiency."

President Swanson stated, "Alright, thank you. Another opportunity for questions at this point? We are going to do this another couple of times. We've got a while until we have to submit our report. And, I understand that the next meeting of this body will be after the September Commission meeting, is that correct, Jeff?"

Mr. Craver answered, "We can set that date...everybody available in September?"

President Swanson added, "That was going to be more conducive than August for the next one. Alright."

Mr. Craver added, "I think it's September for the next one and the one after is to be determined."

President Swanson stated, "Yeah, to be determined. And, if you have any other questions of this whole process, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or Mr. Craver would be happy to help."

The next meeting of the Forest Preserve Commission Efficiency Committee is Tuesday, September 19, 2023, at 5:30pm, immediately following the meeting of the Rock Island County Board and Forest Preserve Commission meetings.

President Swanson declared the Forest Preserve Efficiency Committee Meeting recessed at 6:30pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

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

KAREN KINNEY
COUNTY CLERK, SECRETARY & MEMBER
OF THE FOREST PRESERVE EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE

KK:rw