

FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2024

PRESENT: Committee members –L. Moreno, E. Sowards, R. Simmer, C. Layer, K. Swanson, J. Woods.

ABSENT: D. Mielke.

ALSO PRESENT: B. Perkins, District 13 Commissioner; Jeff Craver, District Director; Lee Jackson, Niabi Zoo Director; Ben Mills, Loud Thunder Ranger; April Palmer, Auditor; Nick Camlin, Treasurer.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 9:30 AM on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, in the 3rd floor chambers of the Rock Island County Building, Rock Island, Illinois.

L. Moreno, R. Simmer, C. Layer, E. Sowards, K. Swanson, J. Woods.

TOTAL PRESENT 6

D. Mielke.

TOTAL ABSENT 1

President Swanson called for a motion approving the February Committee meeting.

MOTION: Dr. Moreno moved to approve the February Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the transfers of appropriation.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the transfers of appropriation. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$198,342.94.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$198,342.94. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the resolutions regarding Illiniwek Recreation Trail Grant Appropriations, Niabi Zoo Improvements ARPA Grant Appropriations,

Niabi Zoo receipt of grant funds Hubbell-Waterman Foundation Grant, and Niabi Zoo Loan from the General Fund.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the corrected resolutions regarding Illiniwek Recreation Trail Grant Appropriations, Niabi Zoo Improvements ARPA Grant Appropriations, Niabi Zoo receipt of grant funds Hubbell-Waterman Foundation Grant, and Niabi Zoo Loan from the General Fund. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson made three calls for public comment. There was no request for public comment.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding from the Niabi Zoo Foundation.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding from the Niabi Zoo Foundation. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the License for Concession and Ball Diamonds at Dorrance Forest Preserve.

MOTION: Mr. Layer moved to approve the License for Concession and Ball Diamonds at Dorrance Forest Preserve. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the revised Niabi Zoo admission fees for 2024.

MOTION: Dr. Moreno moved to approve the revised Niabi Zoo admission fees for 2024. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Niabi Zoo 2024 schedule of operation with assigned free days.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the Niabi Zoo 2024 schedule of operation with assigned free days. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Tyler Technologies quote for Time & Attendance software.

MOTION: Ms. Sowards moved to approve the Tyler Technologies quote for Time & Attendance software. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve change of venue and time for the May 14, 2024 Forest Preserve Executive Committee meeting. Proposed is moving the meeting to noon, and having it in the Educational Barge for Living Lands and Waters. Want to thank Mr. Craver for making that possible. [17624 Route 84 North, East Moline, IL 61244]

MOTION: Dr. Moreno moved to approve the change of venue and time for the May 14, 2024 Forest Preserve Executive Committee meeting. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called on Mr. Craver for discussion on Niabi Big Cats, Eagle Enclosure, Rhino Roof & Snow Damage Repairs.

Mr. Craver stated that these projects will be going out to bid soon. Unfortunately, due to timing, those bids will need to go directly to the full Commission, and staff will be relying on Estes to recommend the lowest responsible bidder in accordance with the District's stated definition.

Dr. Simmer asked for a bullet point list of what the repair plan was so that the Committee members could have some talking points and quick information when they speak to people out in the Community about Niabi.

Mr. Jackson stated that Niabi will be replacing the outdoor cat barriers, repairing the cat building, removing the palace cats outdoor exhibit, replacing portions of roofs and gutters throughout the zoo, replacing a number of small aviaries. Niabi is also pursuing quotes from specialized manufacturers for some of the larger outdoor exhibits around the biodiversity hall that were damaged.

Mr. Layer asked if there were any repairs that were, or are, being handled in house.

Mr. Craver stated that some repairs have been and will be handled in house, or addressed in the future.

President Swanson asked if the Committee had any questions regarding the routine reports of the District.

There were no questions.

President Swanson asked Mr. Craver if there was anything he would like to lift up from the Director's report.

Mr. Craver stated that some time ago the option was raised regarding the purchase of a property near Illiniwek. Stone's Apple Barn was listed their property for sale. At this time, they have changed their strategy a bit and parceled off several areas. The handout that was at your seat outlines the details of how the property was parceled out. The grants for land acquisition have decreased notably since the last time the District purchased land. Land is being sold at auction, and it is likely that people with more money than the District will be bidding. If the Committee is interested in acquiring these parcels, the Committee could set a maximum amount and direct staff to bid on the parcels that the Committee is interested in.

President Swanson asked what the staff recommendation was in regards to the parcels.

Mr. Craver stated that the parcels are not likely in the District's fiscal reach. The sellers are likely trying to maximize the revenue from the sale of the property. If the Committee is interested in staff bidding on these properties, there would need to be a maximum amount authorized by the Committee.

President Swanson stated that it would be best to discuss this with the full board in closed session. If Mr. Craver would put together a solid recommendation on which parcels and what the maximum authorized bid should be, that could be presented at next week's Commission meeting.

Mr. Craver stated that since the March Commission meeting got moved from Tuesday to Thursday, I will be on vacation.

President Swanson suggested that Mr. Craver put together a presentation for Mr. Petersen to present.

Mr. Craver believed Mr. Petersen would be back from his vacation by then.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the routine reports of the District.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approved the routine reports of the District. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called the meeting adjourned at 10:04 AM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant