

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
AUGUST 13, 2024**

**PRESENT:** Committee members –E. Sowards, D. Mielke, J. Woods, K. Swanson, C. Layer.

**ABSENT:** L. Moreno, R. Simmer.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jeff Craver, District Director; Ben Mills, Loud Thunder Superintendent.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:33 PM on Tuesday, August 13, 2024, in the Park Office at Loud Thunder Forest Preserve in Illinois City, Illinois.

D. Mielke, E. Sowards, J. Woods, K. Swanson, C. Layer.

**TOTAL PRESENT 5**

L. Moreno, R. Simmer.

**TOTAL ABSENT 2**

President Swanson called for a motion approving the July Committee meeting and the closed session minutes.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mielke moved to approve the July Committee meeting minutes. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$476,662.23.

**MOTION:** Ms. Woods moved to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$476,662.23. Mr. Mielke seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025 transfers of appropriation.

**MOTION:** Mr. Layer moved to approve the fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025 transfers of appropriation. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the resolutions regarding FY24 Illiniwek Recreation Trail Grant Appropriations, FY25 Niabi Zoo ARPA Grant Appropriations, FY24 Niabi Zoo Appropriations – Zoo Foundation Donation for Shipping Costs, Niabi Zoo Receipt of

Grant Funds-Woodard Community Grant Fund, and Development of Forests and Construction of Improvements Fund Loan from the General Fund.

**MOTION:** Mr. Layer moved to approve the resolutions regarding FY24 Illiniwek Recreation Trail Grant Appropriations, FY25 Niabi Zoo ARPA Grant Appropriations, FY24 Niabi Zoo Appropriations – Zoo Foundation Donation for Shipping Costs, Niabi Zoo Receipt of Grant Funds-Woodard Community Grant Fund, and Development of Forests and Construction of Improvements Fund Loan from the General Fund. Mr. Mielke seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson made three calls for public comment. There were no requests for public comment.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the purchase of a Wiedenmann Terra Spike GX18 (aerator) in the amount of \$42,500.00.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mielke moved to approve the purchase of a Wiedenmann Terra Spike GX18 (aerator) in the amount of \$42,500.00. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Quad Cities Power Station Real Property Tax Assessment Settlement Agreement, subject to final revision and approval by counsel.

**MOTION:** Mr. Layer moved to approve the Quad Cities Power Station Real Property Tax Assessment Settlement Agreement, subject to final revision and approval by counsel. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that the attorney's will be at the full board on Tuesday night to answer any questions. This agreement is similar to the previous agreement with the Power Station. If anyone specific questions, I can do my best to answer. The taxing bodies weren't much involved in the negotiation.

President Swanson stated that the agreement had also been discussed in the County's Finance and Personnel meeting this morning. It will increase the tax revenue from the previous agreement.

Mr. Craver stated that this is a better agreement than the previous agreement. It is a progressive agreement. The attorney's that are representing the taxing bodies are recommending approvals.

President Swanson stated that he wanted to thank the Civil Division for looking out for the interests of the District's.

President Swanson asked Ms. Palmer if there was anything she wanted to bring the Committee's attention to.

Ms. Palmer stated that the Trial Balance and Fund Balance Reports have closeout reports in addition to the first month of the new fiscal year. On the Fund Balance Report, the beginning balance is an estimate. Those numbers will change as revenues and expenses get recorded in the old fiscal year. The District has sixty days to record revenues and expenses in the previous fiscal year. Once the external audit is complete the beginning balance for the funds will be finalized. The external auditors will begin on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

President Swanson called on Mr. Craver for an update on the goings on of the District.

Mr. Craver stated that the club house was hit by lightning during a storm, again. No interior wiring was damaged, but there was some loss of equipment. IT was able to help staff get things back up and running, so there was barely a hiccup in operations. July was a great month of activity for the District's preserves. Mr. Jackson is in Paraguay, so I'll plug the Pints for Preservation. If anyone is interested in volunteering, contact Joel Vanderbush. Not all campsites are open at Illiniwek due to the flooding, but some campsites are. Staff is starting budget input for fiscal year 2026. There should be a tentative budget in time for the Levy Ordinances to be presented.

President Swanson congratulated Mr. Mills and his team for joining the \$30,000.00 revenue in one month club, and asked for an update on Loud Thunder.

Mr. Mills stated that staff was also excited to see the revenue numbers. Staff has gotten a lot of great feedback this year, and we've seen the length of stays increase this year. A lot of campers came out for the first time this year because of the flooding and other campgrounds had to close. Many have come back for second or third stays. There were many hazard trees on the park from the storms this year, so a tree service came out to safely remove those trees. We'll be working with HCCTP again for a bridge project. There is a large creek bed along the trail at the south of the property, near the boy scout camp. When there is a lot of rain the creek bed gets quite full. The bridge should go in this fall.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the routine reports from department heads.

**MOTION:** Mr. Layer moved to approve the routine reports from the department heads. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called the meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM.

Submitted by:  
Cassie Sullivan  
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant