



Government Center
719 S. Batavia Ave., Bldg. A
Geneva, IL 60134

Forest Preserve District Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

9:00 AM

County Board Room

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Full Commission meeting was held Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at the Kane County Government Center located at 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva, IL 60134. President Kious called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

President Kious asked Commissioner Vern Tepe to lead the pledge.

III. Roll Call

PRESENT

Commissioner Deborah Allan
Commissioner Mavis Bates
Commissioner Dale Berman
Commissioner Mark Davoust
Commissioner Ron Ford
Commissioner Michelle Gumz
Commissioner Mo Iqbal
Commissioner Leslie Juby
Commissioner Michael Kenyon
President Forest Preserve District Chris Kious
Commissioner Bill Lenert
Commissioner Anita Lewis
Secretary Forest Preserve District Myrna Molina
Commissioner Bill Roth
Commissioner Jarett Sanchez
Commissioner Monica Silva
Commissioner Cherryl Strathmann
Commissioner Bill Tarver
Commissioner Vern Tepe
Commissioner Rick Williams
Commissioner David Young

REMOTE ABSENT

Commissioner Gary Daugherty
Commissioner Michael Linder
Commissioner Clifford Surges

Others Present: Exec. Dir. Haberthur, CFO Petschke; Chief of Planning & Land Mgmt. Rooks-Lopez & staff Tegge; NRM Dir. Chess & staff Johnson; HR Dir. Clough; Dir. of Comm. Affairs Metanchuk & staff Kovach, Swanson, Dir. of Ops. Pentecost; Chief of Police Burger; Attorney Hodge; Exec. Assist. Figliozzi, KCIT Peters and members of the public.

IV. Public Comment (Each Speaker is limited to 3 minutes)

Jerome Johnson, Director of the Garfield Farm Museum in Campton Township spoke in favor of keeping the Millcreek Greenway Forest Preserve barn. He stated his involvement with the Historic Preservation committee; Open Space, zoning and planning in Kane County. He provided historical information of the property. He felt that the barn could be used as an amenity in the future if funds were provided for restoration. (Commissioner Ford arrived in person at 9:04 AM).

V. Presentation and Approval of the Minutes from August 8, 2023

(Commissioner Lewis arrived in person at 9:06 AM)

RESULT: APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Mavis Bates

SECONDER: Bill Roth

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

VI. Presentation and Approval of the Bills and Commissioners' Per Diem for August 2023

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Michelle Gumz

SECONDER: Cheryl Strathmann

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

VII. Planning and Utilization

FP-R-23-09-3038 Resolution Approving Bids for Tree and Brush Clearing at Portions of Three Forest Preserves

NRM Dir. Chess presented the resolution to approve tree and brush clearing. The objectives of these projects are to remove non-native brush and small mesic trees in degraded oak woodlands, with an emphasis on bittersweet, and to greatly reduce their ability to reinvade the area via seed or re-sprouting. Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) is a woody, perennial vine that grows as a climbing vine, up to 60 feet. As it climbs, the bittersweet overtakes native trees and shrubs, girdling trunks and branches. Dense vines weigh down tree canopies, leading to breakage.

Other woody invasive species, such as Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and Bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.), are some of the other primary threats to biodiversity in Kane County's forests. These species create a thick mid-story cover that prevents light from reaching native understory plants. They also grow very well in shade; oak saplings do not. This adaptation prevents the regeneration of native trees.

Mechanical removal of these invasive species, combined with chemical follow-up, will help to restore the woods to a healthier condition. This, in turn, will provide better habitat quality for the entire suite of wildlife that these preserves support. In particular, the habitat value for birds is greatly enhanced with the removal of these invasive shrubs. Native insects don't feed on buckthorn, so their coverage decreases the concentration of caterpillars across the sites. Additionally, their plentiful berries are nutrient poor and cause a laxative effect that makes them

a starvation food. Contractors were sought to bid on clearing projects across three heavily infested forest preserves. Funds totaling \$180,000 were budgeted in Fiscal Year 23/24 for the Fiddlehead Woodland Restoration project. Sufficient funds totaling \$180,000 are available to cover projects 1 and 2 at a total expense of \$160,820. Funds totaling \$100,000 were budgeted in Fiscal Year 23/24 for tree-thinning projects at several preserves. Funds totaling \$100,000 are available to cover all of project 3 (\$33,245), project 5 (\$30,720) and project 6 (\$25,235) at a total expense of \$89,200. Sufficient funds are not available to cover the cost of project 4 at \$59,000. Staff will address this area later, possibly in-house. (*Commissioner Allan arrived in person at 9:14 AM*).

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Strathmann asked how maintenance is kept after a major clearing of invasives. Dir. Chess responded that in the next cycle, contracted bids include follow up chemical treatments and once cleared; the area would roll into the burn regimen to help knock down re-sprouts. Commissioner Bates commented that the invasives are coming from nurseries and store bought plants, she asked if some invasives are illegal and if more needs to be done at the legislative level. Dir. Chess responded that the buckthorn and honeysuckles have been removed from the trade industry; several other woody invasive species are not. Currently, there is a statewide movement to remove invasive species from the industry. Exec. Dir. Haberthur stated that unfortunately, it is species by species, the District has signed a petition that is moving in current legislation.*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Michael Kenyon

SECONDER: Rick Williams

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

VIII. New Business

FP-R-23-09-3039 Resolution Approving Recommendations to Take Action on the Dick Young Forest Preserve Staff Residence Structure

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the resolution to take action on the Dick Young Forest Preserve residence. He provided background information regarding the structures tour. Subcommittee members were listed and a presentation of each house structure was provided. This parcel was purchased in the early 2000's. The current estimated costs for repairs include siding and a new roof for approximately \$30,000. The recommendation was to keep and repair the home. Pictures were shared.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Young asked if staff would utilize the house. ED Haberthur responded that from time to time, the District forms an adhoc committee to review the various structures that are included in land purchases. The District will be updating the Housing Program with a new policy next year 2024. Current staff that are in the program pay a monthly rate of \$400. However, staff is reviewing compliance with the department of labor and the IRS for the allowable rate. Commissioner Young asked why the District has staff members living in the homes. ED Haberthur explained that historically, pre- cellular phone era, a ranger would live on site for security and emergency purposes.*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Ron Ford

SECONDER: Michael Kenyon

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna

Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

FP-R-23-09-3040 Resolution Approving Recommendations to Take Action on the Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve Staff Residence Structure

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the resolution to take action on the Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve residence. He provided background information regarding the structures tour. This house is 950 sq.ft. and is currently vacant. Repairs were estimated at \$30,000 for sanitation, roof repairs and stabilization.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Jarett Sanchez

SECONDER: Cheryl Strathmann

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

FP-R-23-09-3041 Resolution Approving Recommendations to Take Action on the Stony Creek Forest Preserve Residence and Two Storage Facilities

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the resolution to take action on the Stony Creek Forest Preserve residence and two storage facilities. ED Haberthur explained the parcel was recently acquired a couple months ago. The property includes a 3500 sq. ft. home. The recommendations from the structures subcommittee was to keep the home and the climate controlled barn. Due to the quality of the house and size, this would require a unique evaluation to be entered into the Housing Program.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Cheryl Strathmann

SECONDER: Ron Ford

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

FP-R-23-09-3042 Resolution Approving Recommendations to Take Action on the Buffalo Forest Preserve Staff Residence Structure

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the resolution to take action on the Buffalo Forest Preserve residence. The 1600 sq.ft. staff residence has also been vacated. Some repairs are needed at

this residence. Staff had conversations regarding an opportunity to install a shelter on this footprint and much needed parking. This area is a very narrow, however popular preserve for fishing. Recommendations from the structures subcommittee was to keep the home and repair at an estimated cost of \$20,000.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Jarett Sanchez

SECONDER: Deborah Allan

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young

ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

FP-R-23-09-3043 Resolution Approving Recommendations to Take Final Action on the Mill Creek Forest Preserve Barn Structure

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the resolution to take action on the Mill Creek Barn structure. ED Haberthur clarified that the resolution was amended at the Executive Committee meeting to include a stipulation that the barn would be kept until March 1, 2024. This would allow for a potential third party funding source if available. The District purchased the Millcreek Greenway parcel including the barn in 2016. The recommendation of the Board at that time was to keep the barn. Staff attempted to find an occupant to mirror the All Grass Farms operation; however, it has not been successful over the past 7 years. Williams Structural Engineers assessed the barn in 2016 with an estimated cost of \$500,000 at that time. A 2% increase per year was the average cost; however, \$800,000 in today's market is conservative. The structural issues are roof and floor stabilization including wall repairs. ED Haberthur provided a PowerPoint presentation that included the current boundaries stipulated by an LWCF grant awarded for the land acquisition in 2016. He discussed the OSLAD grant awarded for the archery range, because the archery range is in the same vicinity as the barn, this could attract potential nuances and vandalism. ED Haberthur indicated that the main concern is the broken concrete that is hazardous and driving the conflict.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Williams commented that efforts have been made in the past to restore this barn; he requested to table the item for 30 days to provide time for the citizens to propose input. President Kious asked for a second to postpone the resolution for 30 days. Commissioner Young seconded.*

President Kious stated that the motion on the floor was to postpone asked for discussion on the motion.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Juby felt that the public did not have enough time to find someone to save the structure, therefore agreed to postpone. She felt the barn was important and requested a chance to come together. Commissioner Bates commented that barns need to be saved. Commissioner Lenert asked what the potential uses of this barn would be if it were to be restored. He understood the significance historically, however the cost is excessive to restore if the District cannot utilize it, or able to generate any revenues with farming, etc. he felt that the monies should not be spent. Commissioner Lewis stated that the reason for the change in the resolution at the Executive Committee was to provide ample time for opportunities for additional resources with a deadline of March 1st, 2024. She felt that if the*

resolution were postponed another month, it would be the same outcome. She stated that she would be voting no to postpone. President Kious noted the point, and stated that voting for the resolution to move forward today, would provide 6 months of time automatically. President Kious called the vote:

RESULT: **POSTPONED FOR 30 DAYS (12-10)**
MOVER: Rick Williams
SECONDER: David Young
AYE: Deborah Allan, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Leslie Juby, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Monica Silva, Bill Tarver, Rick Williams, David Young
NAY: Dale Berman, Mavis Bates, Mo Iqbal, Mike Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe,
ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

IX. Closed Session to Discuss Land Acquisition, License Agreements, Potential Litigation and Personnel

None.

X. Communications

Community Affairs Dir. Metanchuk presented the recent events held. The Great Orb Hunt art install at LeRoy Oakes is ongoing and has been received with a lot of positive feedback. Dir. Metanchuk thanked The Fine Line Creative Arts studio for partnering with the District, this has brought many people out to the preserves and the nature center. Dir. Metanchuk promoted the Fox River clean up event with Friend of the Fox River at the Glenwood Park Forest Preserve along the Fox River on Saturday, September 16 from 9am to 12pm. The annual Harvest of the Acorn Moon Fall Festival will be held on the Sunday, September 24, 2023.

Commissioner Lenert commented that Golf Inc. Magazine reviews golf course renovations around the world and Settler's Hill Golf Course was voted as the third best course renovation among Sweden as the first, and Spain as second. He felt this was something to note and bring to attention.

XI. President's Comments

President Kious congratulated the Cougars for making it to the playoffs.

XII. Department Reports

RESULT: **ACCEPTED AND PLACED ON FILE**
MOVER: Ron Ford
SECONDER: Mavis Bates
AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty, Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David Young
ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 AM

RESULT: **APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**
MOVER: Michael Kenyon
SECONDER: Dale Berman
AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Dale Berman, Gary Daugherty,
Mark Davoust, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby,
Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Myrna
Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl
Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, and David
Young
ABSENT: Michael Linder, and Clifford Surges

Chris Kious, Chairman
Forest Preserve District Commission
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

Gabriella Figliozzi
Recording Secretary

Myrna Molina
Board Secretary