



1996 S. Kirk Rd. Suite 320
Geneva, IL 60134

Forest Preserve District, Planning and Utilization Committee

Meeting Minutes

Chair Cherryl Strathmann, President Christopher Kious, President Pro Tem, Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mike Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Mike Linder, Vern Tepe

Thursday, September 28, 2023

9:30 AM

3rd Floor Board Room

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee meeting was held Thursday, September 28, 2023 at the Administration Offices located at 1996 S. Kirk Road, Suite 320, Geneva, IL 60134. Chair Strathmann called the meeting to order at 9:46AM.

- PRESENT** Chair Cherryl Strathmann
Commissioner Michael Kenyon
Commissioner Vern Tepe
Commissioner Michael Linder
Commissioner Ron Ford
Commissioner Michelle Gumz
Commissioner Anita Lewis
Commissioner Mavis Bates
- ABSENT** President Chris Kious

Also Present: Commissioners Molina (Remote), Juby (Remote), Roth; Exec. Dir. Haberthur; NRM Dir. Chess & staff Blackburn; CFO Petschke & staff Carrano, Marano; Chief of Planning & Land Mgmt. Rooks-Lopez; Marketing Coord. Kovach; Dir. of Ops. Pentecost; Chief of Police Burger; Attorney Hodge and Exec. Assist. Figliozzi, Admin staff Rafferty and members of the public.

II. Approval of Minutes from August 24, 2023

- RESULT:** APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE
- MOVER:** Ron Ford
- SECONDER:** Mavis Bates
- AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Cherryl Strathmann and Vern Tepe

III. Public Comment (Each Speaker is limited to three minutes)

None.

IV. Bids and Proposals

TMP 23-1206 Resolution Approving Bids for Herbicide Control of Woody Resprouts at Various Preserves

NRM Dr. Chess presented the bids for the herbicide control, noting that the District has worked with the awarded vendors in the past. Our preserves represent fragments of a much greater landscape. Whereas the land used to be able to reestablish a natural equilibrium after a disturbance, the pieces needed to heal are now often located miles away from the altered landscape (if available at all). Intervention is needed to get these restorative resources where

they need to be. In the face of modern fire suppression and landscape fragmentation, invasive species represent a massive threat to woodland biodiversity. Invasive plant species come in many varieties, but two main distinctions land managers make to categorize management are herbaceous (herb-like, for example: garlic mustard and wild chervil) or woody (a plant that produces wood for structure; shrubs and trees, in essence: buckthorn and honeysuckle). District staff and contractors annually clear dozens of acres. These clearing projects remove large portions of non-native and invasive woody vegetation from degraded woodlands. The removal of mid- and over-story individuals from a woodland opens the forest floor to sunlight. The sunlight equally favors both beneficial species and invasive non-natives. The contracted work detailed below will target invasive woody species for chemical spot control. Through this process, we will promote desirable plants and restore both the structure and function of the woods. Successive years of effort will reduce the effort and cost needed to maintain these areas in perpetuity. The District publicly advertised the bid and received two responses. These two vendors provided the qualified, lowest bid for each of the four projects. Staff recommends approval of the bids for herbicide weed management to be conducted at portions of four forest preserves with Woods to Wetlands, LLC of Streamwood, Illinois, for a contract cost of \$30,274 for Project 1 and Project 2; and Integrated Lakes Management of Waukegan, Illinois, for a contract cost of \$170,825 for Project 3 and Project 4, for a combined total project cost of \$201,099.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
MOVER: Michael Kenyon
SECONDER: Michael Linder
AYE: Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, and Vern Tepe

TMP 23-1253 Resolution Approving a Bid for the Construction of an Electric Fence at Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve

The tallgrass prairie once covered Illinois, and much of the Midwest, in an ocean of grass. These diverse and productive ecosystems persisted until 1837 and the invention of the steel plow. Prairies were rapidly plowed into rich agricultural fields, ultimately leaving Illinois with less than a tenth of a percent of its original 22 million acres of prairie. Restoring tallgrass prairie has been one of the primary goals of the District and it now manages several thousand acres of grasslands. Key to the historic management of these grasslands was disturbance, primarily driven by two factors: fire and grazing. Fire has been reintroduced across the landscape by staff, but the grazing component is still missing. Conservation efforts to preserve the North American bison have been wildly successful in the west, and more recently, conservation agencies within Illinois have started to reintroduce bison herds within their properties. The District is now faced with the opportunity to bring bison back to a restored prairie at Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve, aided by the acquisition of a \$90,100 grant from the Kane County Grand Victoria Riverboat fund to help construct the pasture fence. The first step in the reintroduction process is to construct a fence around the future pasture. Specifications were created for the installation of both a 6-foot tall and an 8-foot tall woven wire fence. The fence would also contain three hot wires powered by solar panels as an additional deterrent to keep the bison contained.

Discussions with current bison ranchers indicate that a 6-foot fence will be sufficient for containment and that the 8 foot height is not a necessary addition. The District advertised and sent bids to 8 vendors, with 1 responding. The lowest qualified bid was received from Farm Way Fencing, LLC of Kingston, Illinois for \$144,859.76.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Gumz asked about the visibility of the future bison from the road. NRM Dir. Chess referenced a map and noted that the Bison would be visible. There was*

discussion on the number of potential bison; ED Haberthur responded that the District could potentially house an estimated 15 bison. It would be dependent of the size of the animals.

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
MOVER: Michael Kenyon
SECONDER: Michelle Gumz
AYE: Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, and Vern Tepe

V. New or Unfinished Business

TMP 23-1271 Resolution Approving a Change Order with V3 Companies, LTD for Professional Services to Develop Engineering Plans for the Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve Improvements

COP Rooks-Lopez presented the change order with V3, noting the original plans for the floating boat launch would not meet ADA standards due to the change in water elevation.

The District was awarded an Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) for improvements to the Jon Duerr Forest Preserve. This project will renovate the existing prairie, parking lots, shelters, restrooms and realign a section of the Riverbend regional trail as well as replace the existing boat launch with a new ADA compliant boat launch. The original design intent for the ADA compliant boat launch anticipated a floating dock structure in the Fox River. After completion of preliminary engineering it was determined, the floating dock option would be inadequate to sustain ADA compliance, and meet the demand of the flows and changing water levels of the Fox River.

Staff worked closely with V3 consultants to design a boat launch that will meet both the intended ADA access requirements as well as the challenges of the Fox River. This new solution requires additional structural engineering services not anticipated in the original contract. To cover the adjusted scope, V3 Companies Ltd. has submitted a change order to secure structural engineering services for the new design at a cost not to exceed \$20,400. An insufficient design contingency of \$10,900 was set aside to cover unanticipated additional costs associated with design and engineering. An additional \$9,500 is required to complete the Change Order and secure the required structural engineering and permitting.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
MOVER: Ron Ford
SECONDER: Michael Kenyon
AYE: Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, and Vern Tepe

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

None.

VII. Communications

ED Haberthur promoted the American Buffalo film. A screening and discussion will be held at the WTTW studio campus on October 12, 2023 at 4:30 PM. ED Haberthur noted that the film was a great addition to the current discussions of the bison reintroduction project at Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve. He invited all Commissioners to attend.

VIII. Chairman's Comments

None.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:03 AM.

RESULT:	APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE
MOVER:	Michael Kenyon
SECONDER:	Ron Ford
AYE:	Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, and Vern Tepe

Cherryl Strathmann, Chair
Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

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Recording Secretary