



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

Forest Preserve District Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

President Christopher Kious, President Pro Tem Mavis Bates, Treasurer Bill Lenert,
Secretary Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl
Strathmann, Vern Tepe

Thursday, October 5, 2023

8:30 AM

3rd Floor Board Room

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Executive Committee meeting was held Thursday, October 5, 2023. President Kious called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM at the Administration Offices located at 1996 S. Kirk Road, Suite 320, Geneva, IL 60134.

PRESENT President Forest Preserve District Chris Kious
 Secretary Forest Preserve District Myrna Molina
 Commissioner Dale Berman (In person at 8:37 AM)
 Commissioner Anita Lewis
 Commissioner Mavis Bates
 Commissioner Michael Kenyon
 Commissioner Cherryl Strathmann
 Commissioner Vern Tepe
 Commissioner Jarett Sanchez (Remote)

Also Present: Commissioners Juby (Remote), Roth; Exec. Dir. Haberthur; Chief of Plan. & Land Mgmt. Rooks-Lopez; Dir. of NRM Chess; CFO Petschke & staff Marrano; Ops. Dir. Pentecost; Dir. of Comm. Affairs Metanchuk; HR Dir. Clough & staff Misner; Chief of Police & Dir. of Public Safety Burger; Exec. Assist. Figliozzi & staff Rafferty and Attorney Hodge.

II. Approval of Minutes from September 7, 2023

RESULT: **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**
MOVER: Vern Tepe
AYE: Mavis Bates Mike Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Myrna Molina, Jarett Sanchez,
 Cherryl Strathmann and Vern Tepe
ABSENT: Dale Berman

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

None.

IV. Presentation and Approval of Bills and Commissioners' Per Diem from September 2023

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Mavis Bates
SECONDER: Cherryl Strathmann
AYE: Myrna Molina, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cherryl

Strathmann, Vern Tepe, and Jarett Sanchez

ABSENT: Dale Berman

V. Finance and Administration

TMP-23-1322 Resolution Approving the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Estimated Budget for the Purpose of Establishing the 2023 Tax Levy

Chief of Finance Petschke presented the Committee with information regarding various options for the upcoming 2023 property tax levy. Each year, the Finance & Administration Committee determines the direction for the upcoming property tax levy, which is then forwarded to the Executive Committee, and approved at the Full Commission meeting. Staff requested the most-current information from the clerk's office and received the following:

- Rate Setting EAV is estimated at \$19,418,802,282 (final percentage is not determined)
- Preliminary new construction figures for the county are \$211,060,025 (partial year)

The Committee has the following options available regarding the levy.

1. Increase the levy by both CPI and new construction – The levy would increase for CPI by \$400,343, which for the upcoming levy year will be 5%. The increase in the levy due to new construction is estimated between \$92,000 and \$125,000. A Truth in taxation hearing would be required for an increase over 5% in order to comply with State Statute.
2. Increase the levy by CPI only- The levy would increase for CPI by \$400,343.
3. Freeze the levy but allow for new construction – New construction has been relatively steady over the past few years (2020 - \$145 million, 2021 - \$160 million, 2022 - \$179 million). The increase in the levy due to new construction is estimated between \$92,000 and \$125,000.

Based on estimates, and using the new construction figure shown above, the 3 options presented would generate the following capped tax levy:

- Option #1** – Taking both CPI and new construction, the District would receive \$400,343 from CPI and an estimated \$92,000 - \$125,000 from new construction, for increased funding between \$492,343 and \$525,343.
- Option #2** – Taking solely new CPI, the District would receive \$400,343.
- Option #3** – Taking solely new construction, the District would receive increased funding between \$92,000 and \$125,000.

CFO Petschke stated that the direction recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee was option #1, to move forward with taking both the CPI and new construction. Petschke presented the revenues and expenses included in the agenda packet. He noted that one of the biggest contributing factors to the surplus in the general fund was due to wages. He discussed the effects of the Early Retirement Incentive (ERI), although the District spent 90% budgeted for the fiscal year, the ERI savings and staff turnover caused the fluctuation. Petschke stated that the District's salary expenditures are expected to normalize next fiscal year. (Berman arrived in person at 8:37 AM). The comp and class study RFQ has been submitted, results will help normalize wage issues that will in turn retain employees for a longer period. Petschke explained the other issue has been with Enterprise. The vehicle lease contract has not been successful in locating vehicles, which has affected the budget. Lastly, the PC replacement with IT was postponed due to shortage of equipment during Covid, the new invoice would be presented in the current budget 2023/2024.

Exec. Dir. Haberthur added the key note of the major cause for employee turnover according to exit interviews was compensation, the need for salary adjustments will be realized with the comp and class study.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Roth asked about the average lifespan of the current PCs the District has. CFO Petschke responded that Kane County IT replaces all the PC towers every 6 years per the agreement. Commissioner Roth recommended replacing the PCs in stages, noting 20% per year over the 5 years rather than all at once, this would lower the cost. Commissioner Lewis asked about the wages and equity. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the District is in the midst of the compensation and class study. Some preliminary results from sister agencies, specifically senior level positions show large discrepancies. The District is low across the board. ED Haberthur noted that as an example, if the District adjusted wages by 10%, that would be \$500,000 to implement, currently the budget would account for \$300,000; therefore, the District would need to find additional revenues.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Michael Kenyon
SECONDER: Anita Lewis
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, and Jarett Sanchez

TMP-23-1126 Resolution Authorizing a 1-Year Extension to the Historical Structures Operating and Caretaking Agreement with the Preservation Partners of Fox Valley

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the one-year greement extension. Preservation Partners has been managing the Fabyan Villa Museum at Fabyan Forest Preserve, and the Durant-Peterson House at Leroy Oakes Forest Preserve since the mid 1990's. On October 25, 2017, the Pioneer Sholes Restoration Society was dissolved, and the operations, income and artifacts transferred to Preservation Partners. The Historic Structures Operating and Caretaking Agreement with Preservation Partners expired on July 31, 2023. A 1-year extension is proposed for the current agreement in order to revisit future management of the Japanese Garden and Fabyan Windmill. Preservation Partners provides exclusive exhibits management, staffing, tours, program coordination and marketing for the Fabyan Villa, the Durant-Peterson House, and Sholes School. Additionally, Preservation Partners coordinates programming and tours of the Fabyan Japanese Garden. The District owns all of the land and structures and is responsible for the expense and coordination of maintenance/repairs and utilities for the buildings as well as grounds/landscape maintenance. All rentals of the Japanese Garden are booked through the District. The new contract will increase payments to Preservation Partners from a previous annual amount of \$78,000 to a new annual sum of \$95,000 for their services with \$68,000 allocated to the operation of the Fabyan Villa and Japanese Garden and \$27,000 allocated for the operation of the Durant-Peterson House and the Sholes School. The agreement term is 1 year, ending August 31, 2024. The District's legal counsel and risk management provider (PDRMA) have reviewed the agreement.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
MOVER: Cheryl Strathmann
SECONDER: Dale Berman
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, and Jarett Sanchez

TMP-23-1249 Resolution Approving the Purchase of a Vehicle for Use by the Natural Resource Management Department

The Natural Resource Management department currently utilizes seven vehicles for the twelve staff members within the department. The number of staff recently increased with the addition of two new positions created through the District's early retirement incentive (ERI) program savings. One of the newly created positions is a plant technician. The plant technician works primarily in the field moving between preserves as they harvest native seed, monitor rare plant populations, conduct vegetation monitoring, and sow seed/plant plugs. This constant fieldwork necessitates the addition of a vehicle designated for her duties. The addition of an F-250 crew cab is ideal for this position. The larger seating capacity would allow seasonals/volunteers to ride in the truck at various seed harvesting events. The slightly larger size would also allow for the towing of utility trailers with a trail vehicle. This would provide easier access to all areas of the preserves as well as serving the department well during burn season when all trail vehicles are in use. The Suburban Purchasing Cooperative (SPC) recently bid out a contract for the purchasing of Ford F-250s with the lowest qualified bid coming from Sutton Ford, Matteson, Illinois. The SPC is a joint purchasing program that represents 144 municipalities and townships in northeastern Illinois. All public agencies as defined by the Illinois Governmental Joint Purchasing Act are eligible to participate in SPC joint purchasing programs. Under the SPC contract #221, a Ford F-250 XL 4x4 crew cab with an 8-foot bed, along with several desired options, would cost \$52,915.

DISCUSSION: *Brief conversation of vehicle models ensued.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Dale Berman
SECONDER: Michael Kenyon
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe and Jarett Sanchez

TMP-23-1295 Resolution Approving the Forest Preserve District's Holiday Schedule for 2024

HR Dir. Clough presented the proposed 2024 Holiday schedule. This is concurrent with the Employee handbook, the only addition to 2024 is the inclusion of Election Day in November.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Cheryl Strathmann
SECONDER: Mavis Bates
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe and Jarett Sanchez

VI. Planning & Utilization

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

Chief of Planning and Land Mgmt. Rooks Lopez presented the change order with V3 Companies for the floating boat launch plans of the Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve project.

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, V3Companies 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. Funds totaling \$1,300,000 were budgeted in FY22/23 for the Jon Duerr redevelopment project. Sufficient funds of \$1,037,417 are available. The Board already approved a contingency of \$10,900 for this project; therefore, this change order of \$20,400 will increase the project's budget by \$9,500. **DISCUSSION:** *Commissioner Strathmann asked about floating boat ramps and ADA compliance. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that the District has utilized ADA compliant floating docks in the past; the boat launch in Oakhurst Forest Preserve is an example.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Michael Kenyon
SECONDER: Cheryl Strathmann
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Jarett Sanchez

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

NRM Dir. Chess presented the bid for herbicide control for various preserves.

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. Staff recommends the Committee approve the bids for herbicide weed management to be conducted at portions of four forest preserves. The qualified lowest bid was 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: *Commissioner Kenyon asked about the type of herbicides used. Dir. Chess responded that the District uses herbicides safe for aquatics and staff administers the application by spot treatment to limit overspray.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Dale Berman
SECONDER: Michael Kenyon

AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Jarett Sanchez

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

NRM Dir. Chess presented the bid for the electrical fence installation.

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 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 Bates asked about what would happen if power loss would occur, since the fence is solar powered. NRM Dir. Chess responded that the solar charging unit and the components would be monitored by field staff continually and repaired/replaced as necessary.

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

TO: Forest Preserve District Commission

MOVER: Michael Kenyon

SECONDER: Mavis Bates

AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Jarett Sanchez

VII. New or Unfinished Business

TMP-23-1356 Resolution Ratifying Letter of Support for a 12-Year Extension Request for the East State Street TIF District

ED Haberthur presented the ratification of the letter of support requested by the City of Geneva. The letter of support is for a 12-year extension of the East State Street TIF District for the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the City of Geneva for the roadway reconstruction project scheduled for fall 2024. Funds totaling \$4,469 per year would be redirected to the infrastructure project per year for 12 years. This amount would estimate to be just under \$54,000.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

TO: Forest Preserve District Commission

MOVER: Dale Berman

SECONDER: Michael Kenyon

AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Jarett Sanchez

NAY: Mavis Bates

TMP-23-1324 Resolution to Purchase a Parcel Approximately 294.831 Acres in Rutland Township

ED Haberthur presented the resolution to purchase a parcel in the Rutland Township, noting this parcel has a significant amount of waterfowl. This includes an estimated 5-6 acre area that

has never been plowed. The District needs concurrence from the Village of Huntley to finalize the purchase of the parcel due to the boundaries. ED Haberthur noted that this parcel would be the largest purchase of the 2017 referendum.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Strathmann asked about the boundaries of the parcel. ED Haberthur explained the area and noted that the District has applied for a clean energy grant. He indicated that this parcel would score highly due to the wetland and wooded area.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Cheryl Strathmann
SECONDER: Michael Kenyon
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe, Jarett Sanchez

TMP-23-1355 Resolution to Purchase a Parcel Approximately 22.66 Acres in Blackberry Township

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Michael Kenyon
SECONDER: Dale Berman
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe Jarett Sanchez

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

The Committee moved into Executive Closed Session at 9:24AM to personnel.

RESULT: **APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
MOVER: Cheryl Strathmann
SECONDER: Anita Lewis
AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Jarett Sanchez

The Committee returned to Open Session at 9:32 AM on a motion by Berman, second by Kenyon, roll call vote was taken, unanimous vote.

IX. Communications

Comm. Affairs Dir. Metanchuk shared pictures of the It's Our Fox River Days event, noting an estimated 500 pounds of trash was removed from the Fox River. The Great Orb Hunt wrapped up with a successful turn out. Dir. Metanchuk reported an estimated 300 people attended the annual Harvest of the Acorn Moon festival.

X. President's Comments

President Kious promoted the Senior Stroll at 10 AM at Bliss Woods Forest Preserve. (Commissioner Sanchez departed at 9:36 AM)

XI. Financial Reports

Reports A-C were moved together

- A. Bond Investment Analysis Report through August 2023
- B. Cash & Investment Report through August 2023
- C. Income Statement through August 2023

RESULT: **APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**
MOVER: Mavis Bates
SECONDER: Cheryl Strathmann

AYE: Chris Kious, Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Anita Lewis, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Cherryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe
ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

XII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:38AM.

RESULT: **APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**

MOVER: Michael Kenyon

SECONDER: Dale Berman

AYE: Myrna Molina, Dale Berman, Mavis Bates, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Cherryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

Chris Kious, Chairman
Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

Gabriella Figliozzi
Recording Secretary