



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

## Forest Preserve District Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 9, 2024

8:30 AM

County Board Room

### I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Full Commission meeting was held Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at the Kane County Government Center located at 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva, IL 60134. President Kious called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM.

### II. Pledge of Allegiance

President Kious asked Commissioner Roth to lead the pledge.

### III. Roll Call

#### PRESENT

President Forest Preserve District Chris Kious  
Secretary Forest Preserve District Myrna Molina  
Commissioner Mavis Bates  
Commissioner Dale Berman (Arrived in person at 8:39AM)  
Commissioner Mark Davoust  
Commissioner Ron Ford  
Commissioner Michelle Gumz  
Commissioner Mo Iqbal  
Commissioner Leslie Juby  
Commissioner Michael Kenyon (Arrived in person at 8:54AM)  
Commissioner Bill Lenert  
Commissioner Anita Lewis  
Commissioner Bill Roth  
Commissioner Jarett Sanchez (Arrived in person at 8:47AM)  
Commissioner Monica Silva  
Commissioner Cheryl Strathmann  
Commissioner Clifford Surges  
Commissioner Vern Tepe  
Commissioner Rick Williams  
Commissioner David Young

#### Remote

Commissioner Deborah Allan (Arrived in person at 9:02AM)  
Commissioner Gary Daugherty

#### ABSENT

Commissioner Michael Linder  
Commissioner Bill Tarver

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

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

*Mary Ochenschlager, resident of Sugar Grove, volunteer and member of the Kane Forest foundation spoke in favor of the referendum proposal. She explained that the referendum monies would give the District the opportunity to purchase and protect 125 acres a year. She discussed the value of open space for mental and physical health especially for children. She stated that she was a nature education teacher for many years and expressed how important outdoor education for children is, especially in the current digital age. The importance of giving the youth the ability to be around nature and wildlife is vital. (Commissioner Berman arrived in person at 8:39AM.) Ms. Ochenschlager stated she was part of the Kane County Planning Commission for many years and working with the forest preserves is very important with stormwater management. She expressed the importance of having the referendum on the ballot for the community to have the choice and promoted the importance of nature.*

*John Hoscheit, resident of St. Charles, former Forest Preserve District President and Board Member spoke in favor of the referendum proposal. He indicated that on today's agenda the board has the decision to place a referendum on the ballot, a program that the District started in the 1990s. There have been 5 successful referendums with non-partisan support from every corner of the community. This would be the 6<sup>th</sup> referendum. Mr. Hoscheit indicated that placing the referendum on the ballot will give the public the opportunity and the option to decide. In the past, what made the referendums successful was the fact that funds have been spent on purchasing land, saving it and protecting it in perpetuity. He stated that in his opinion, this is not a cost to the tax payers as it is an investment.*

*He continued by stating a promise has been made to the tax payers to retire bonds, as such, the District will retire bonds in the next two years, which will reduce the average homeowners' cost an estimated \$47 a year. Mr. Hoscheit stated that the referendum would only cost \$3 month once the bonds are retired, or \$30 for +/- 1 year. This incremental tax increase has been offset by the retirement of bonds. From a taxpayer standpoint, Kane County is a very popular place to live and that reflects in the property values on the market. The open space and land are part of the investment that makes the community a popular place to live.*

*Mr. Hoscheit provided an example from his term as Forest Preserve District President, of a situation where the District was able to purchase land in Campton Township. The City of Elgin was going to annex an estimated 300 acres and build an estimated 500 homes. With a portion of the referendum monies, the District was able to purchase the land, which is now part of the Meissner-Corron Forest Preserve. If the property would have been developed, an estimated 500 homes would have been built and an additional elementary school needed, causing a permanent increase of about \$110 a year. This is an example of the economic value of the referendum. He stated that protecting the land and continuing the program was one of the reasons why he stayed on the board as long as he could. He noted that you will never have a constituent complain about protecting land. (Commissioner Sanchez arrived in person at 8:47 AM.)*

*Mark Schrage, resident of Elgin spoke in opposition of the referendum. He stated that the increase in the limiting rate equates to a 65% total increase, noting it is more than half. He said the referendum was like going to the bank to ask for a home loan to remodel a home. He stated that we are asking for an increase because we cannot maintain what we currently own and want to buy more land. He stated he loves walking in forest preserves and asked why the District can't generate revenues. He spoke of tax dollars being taken from large oil companies and banks.*

**V. Presentation and Approval of the Minutes from June 11, 2024**

**RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**

**MOVER:** 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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

**VI. Presentation and Approval of the Bills and Commissioners' Per Diem June 2024**

**RESULT: APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

**MOVER:** Mo Iqbal

**SECONDER:** Michelle Gumz

**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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

**VII. Presentations**

*None.*

**VIII. Finance and Administration**

**FP-R-24-07-3094** Resolution Approving the Purchase of Six (6) Zero Turn Mowers for the Operations Department

*Ops. Dir. Jensen presented the purchase request of six mowers for the Operations Department. Based on the District's replacement schedule, two zero turn mowers for South Operations were approved in the 2024-25 budget. Mowers M424, a 2014 Toro Z-Master and M425, a 2015 Toro Z-Master, have both exceeded the threshold of their 1,600 hours of expected service life. M424 was placed out of service in August of 2023 due to the cost of needed hydraulic drive motor repairs exceeding the value of the operational mower. Additionally, four zero-turn mowers have been approved as part of the FY 24-25 budget to replace M429 (435 hours) and M430 (313 hours) for South Operations and M320 (703 hours) and M321 (296 hours) for North Operations. These mowers are 2018 Toro Z-Masters Professional 5000 propane models, a model that is no longer available. M429 has been out of service for over one year pending availability of a new propane engine.*

All four propane mowers have shown similar deficiencies and inconsistencies in operation and reliability. Unreliable engine performance in cool or hot temperature conditions and frequent fuel regulator issues have resulted in low hours of use and extended periods of time with our in-house mechanic, as well as with external repair vendors. All six mowers will be replaced with a Toro Z-Master 6000 series 60" cut with a 31-horsepower engine, consistent with our most recent purchases. This combo has proven to be reliable and durable for the mowing needs of the District. The District utilized the Sourcewell Joint Purchasing Program. Ralph Helm Inc. of Elgin, Illinois is a local, authorized Sourcewell dealer and provides a 27% reduction to the MSRP for the mowers. This provides the District with a savings of \$33,840.18 below MSRP. Any accessories are not covered with the reduction, which have been added to maximize mowing efficiencies and maintenance safety. Staff recommends the Committee approve the purchase of six (6) zero turn mowers from Ralph Helm, Inc., Elgin, Illinois, for a total cost of \$96,923.52.

**DISCUSSION:** Commissioner Daugherty asked why the District did not purchase electric mowers. Ops. Dir. Jensen responded that the electric mowers are costly, the gas-powered mowers have been more reliable and last longer.

**RESULT:** APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [22-1]

**MOVER:** Dale Berman

**SECONDER:** Cheryl Strathmann

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

**NAY:** Gary Daugherty

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

## IX. Planning and Utilization

**FP-R-24-07-3095** Resolution Approving a Bid for Common Reed Control for Five (5) Forest Preserves

*NRM Dir. Chess presented the bid for common reed control.* The non-native, invasive plant Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) is a tall (up to 15') perennial grass that infests many District wetlands. It produces some viable seed on the highly visible plumes it produces in late summer, but primarily propagates through lateral shoots called rhizomes. This vigorously growing plant quickly forms monotypic stands of itself, at the exclusion of native fauna. Its dense growth habit minimizes its utility to native wetland fauna; ducks cannot swim through mature stands, and its stalks fail to support the nests of native wetland songbirds. Contractors were sought to bid on summer/fall 2024 control projects of multiple, separate infestations of Common Reed, across five different preserves. Funds totaling \$140,000 were budgeted in this fiscal year for weed management. Sufficient funds totaling \$140,000 are available in Natural Resources Weed Management Account for all five projects totaling \$47,424.

**DISCUSSION:** None. (Commissioner Allan arrived in person at 9:02 AM)

**RESULT:** APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

**MOVER:** Bill Roth

**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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cheryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

**FP-R-24-07-3096** Resolution Approving a Bid for Natural Areas Vegetation Management at Settler's Hill Golf Course

*NRM. Dir. Chess presented the bid for vegetation management of the natural areas at Settler's Hill Golf Course.* Settler's Hill Golf Course (224 acres) is located within Batavia Township, and is one of two golf courses owned by the District. Bids were sought from qualified firms for one year of management and naturalization of terrestrial vegetation across the out of play areas of Settler's Hill Golf Course (approximately 100 acres). This third consecutive year of work will be conducted from September 2024 until June 30, 2025. The primary goal of this work will be to control invasive and non-native herbaceous species as well as invasive woody brush in the woodland areas and along the trail edges. Species to be controlled will include, but not be limited to teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*), common reed (*Phragmites australis*), and bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.). The qualified, lowest bid was

received from Woods to Wetlands, LLC of Streamwood, Illinois, in the amount of \$89,300. Contractor oversight will be conducted by our Natural Resource Management department. **DISCUSSION:** Commissioner Iqbal asked about the significant variation in bid price. NRM Dir. Chess explained that some vendors bid high due to their workload, they would be willing to do the work for a higher price. The company Woods to Wetlands area smaller local business, husband and wife team, therefore they would not have the overhead cost that some other companies do. Commissioner Daugherty asked what company worked on this project previously. NRM Dir. Chess responded that Davey Tree Expert company was contracted previously.

**RESULT: APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

**MOVER:** Bill Lenert

**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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

**XI. New Business**

**FP-O-24-07-0604** Approval of an Ordinance Providing for and Requiring the Submission of the Proposition of Increasing the Limiting Rate of the Forest Preserve District of Kane County, Illinois, to the Voters of Said Forest Preserve District at the General Election to be Held on the 5th Day of November, 2024  
*President Kious presented the ordinance and opened the floor for discussion.*

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**RESULT: APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [21-2]**

**MOVER:** Mike Kenyon

**SECONDER:** Mavis Bates

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

**NAY:** Gary Daugherty, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

**FP-R-24-07-3097** Resolution Approving a Bid for the Carpentersville Dam Removal

*Exc. Dir. Haberthur presented the bid for the Carpentersville Dam removal.* In 2015, the District entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for the River Obstruction Removal Project. The agreement included 100% reimbursement from the IDNR for engineering and demolition costs up the \$3,500,000.00, of which \$2,078,305.00 remain. The scope of the river obstruction removal project included cost for the removal of the Fabyan Causeway Island and Carpentersville Dam. The District conducted a formal bid process for the demolition.

The bid was publicly advertised, with three bidders responding. The lowest responsible bidder was RES Environmental Operating Company, LLC with a base bid of \$1,197,089.85. Additionally, a 10% contingency of \$119,708.99 will be set aside to cover any unanticipated costs that may arise during the project for a total not to exceed project cost of 1,316,798.84. Funds totaling \$2,500,000.00 were budgeted for engineering and

demolition. Currently, \$2,078,305.00 remain for this project. The IDNR will reimburse the District 100% of the dam removal and engineering costs up to the remaining \$2,078,305.00. The District is responsible for costs associated with the boat launch impacts and repairs north of the dam. Those costs are included in the base bid at a cost to the District of \$149,606.00.

**DISCUSSION:** *Chief of Planning and Land Mgmt. Rooks-Lopez explained the recent issue with the need to re-bid the project and why the District had to move quickly in order to meet the ideal construction period according to the IDNR. She indicated that all permits have been acquired with the waterway and regulatory agencies. Exec. Dir. Haberthur explained that the District received a grant award notification for this project 9 years ago. Since the approval, the District has been working on various components of the project working closely with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Army Corps. of Engineers. He understood that other community dams have been brought up in discussions recently, which may have caused questions and concerns.*

*Commissioner Surges stated that in his District, constituents have expressed their excitement for this project, it has been a long time coming. He noted, there has been controversy in the Elgin area over the past year regarding other dams because of concerns of water contamination. Commissioner Surges asked for clarification that removing the dam would help the water flow in the river. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that yes, the base reason for removing the dam is to improve the water quality. The dam contributes to stagnant water pools, it is a deterrent to the river and the quality of life for the fish. Commissioner Daugherty confirmed that the Army Corps of Engineers was on board with the project. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that yes, they have endorsed the removal of the dam and signed off on the required permits. Exec. Dir. Haberthur commented that the Army Corps is the regulatory authority of the waterways, they have promoted and endorsed the removal of all dams for the water quality. Commissioner Sanchez commented that the Friends of the Fox River have been providing presentations for the public in various locations as to why it is appropriate to remove the dams.*

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Clifford Surges
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Jarett Sanchez
<b>AYE:</b>	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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Bill Tarver

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

*None.*

**XIII. Communications**

*Comm. Affairs Dir. Metanchuk provided handouts of the new logo Max15. This campaign is to promote awareness of the speed limits on trails. Max15 logo is a reminder that the speed limit is 15mph on the trails. She invited everyone to join the District's volunteer seed team every Wednesday, weather permitting. Seed collecting helps establish prairie and wetlands in the forest preserves. Dir. Metanchuk provided an update on the District's summer camps. She noted how well attended they are each year, and read a letter that was sent thanking the nature education staff for going above and beyond for her son who uses a powered wheelchair. The parent talked about how the staff modified the activities so their child could feel included in all the program had to offer, and their child had a very positive experience. Dir. Metanchuk thanked*

*her staff, specifically Erica Lemon and Barb McKittrick for going above and beyond to make sure all the campers have a positive experience and feel included in all activities.*

*Commissioner Lewis commented that her granddaughter attended a camp, that day it had rained, however the staff acted quickly moved the activity indoors at LeRoy Oakes. The transition and safety aspect were seamless, her granddaughter had a very positive experience.*

**XIV. President's Comments**

*President Kious asked for a moment of silence for Forest Preserve District Ofc. Ed Lopez who was battling cancer and recently passed away.*

**XV. Department Reports**

**RESULT: ACCEPTED AND PLACED ON FILE BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**

**MOVER:** 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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

**XVI. Adjournment**

*The meeting adjourned at 9:34AM.*

**RESULT: APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**

**MOVER:** Michael Kenyon

**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, Michael Linder Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Monica Silva, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young

**ABSENT:** Bill Tarver

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

Respectfully Submitted,

*Gabriella Figliozzi*

Gabriella Figliozzi  
Recording Secretary

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Myrna Molina  
Board Secretary