



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

Forest Preserve District Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

8:30 AM

County Board Room

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Full Commission meeting was held Tuesday, February 10th, 2026 at the Kane County Government Center located at 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva, IL 60134. President Lenert called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioners Sanchez, Gumz

II. Roll Call

PRESENT

President Forest Preserve District Bill Lenert
Secretary Forest Preserve District Mo Iqbal
Commissioner Deborah Allan
Commissioner Mavis Bates
Commissioner Leslie Juby
Commissioner Chris Kious
Commissioner Anita Lewis (Arrived in person @ 9:06AM)
Commissioner Michael Linder
Commissioner Myrna Molina
Commissioner Bill Roth
Commissioner Clifford Surges (Arrived in person @ 8:44AM)
Commissioner Bill Tarver
Commissioner Vern Tepe
Commissioner Rick Williams
Commissioner David Young
Commissioner Jon Gripe
Commissioner Sonia Garcia
Commissioner Ted Penesis

REMOTE:

Commissioner Michelle Gumz
Commissioner Jarett Sanchez

ABSENT:

Commissioner Cherryl Strathmann

Also Present: Exec. Dir. Haberthur, CFAO Petschke; Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez; HR Dir Clough; NRM Dir. Chess; Ops. Dir. Jensen; Dir. of Comm. Engagement Metanchuk; Chief of Police Burger; Attorney Price; Exec. Assist. Figliozzi, KCIT staff Peters and members of the public.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

President Lenert asked Commissioner Molina to lead the pledge.

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

Steve Leffler, resident of Kane County spoke in favor of the Forest Preserve and all the restoration work they do. He discussed the various tools that are provided to the public volunteers that assist District staff with restoration work. He requested more tools be provided to the volunteers.

V. Presentation and Approval of the Minutes from January 13, 2026

RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOVER: Chris Kious

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams

ABSENT: Anita Lewis, Cheryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges

VI. Presentation and Approval of the Bills and Commissioners' Per Diem from January 2026

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Jon Gripe

SECONDER: Bill Roth

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams

ABSENT: Anita Lewis, Cheryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges

VII. Presentations

None.

VIII. Finance and Administration

FP-R-26-02-3202 Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Forest Preserve District of Kane County and the County of Kane for Volunteer Site Restoration Services

HR Dir. Clough presented the intergovernmental agreement with Kane County. The District has an established Volunteer Program for Natural Areas Management that performs substantial invasive and nuisance tree and brush removal on District land throughout the County, including adjacent to the Kane County Recycling Center at Fabyan Forest Preserve. The Recycling Center, owned and operated by Kane County, contains an area of dense growth of invasive and nuisance trees and brush which the County desires to remove. The District shares this interest, both to protect the previously restored woodlands and prairie that border the property, as well as to provide a site conducive for hosting the Volunteer Program's annual "Battle of the Brush piles" event, scheduled for March, 2026. This large-scale restoration effort is led by a trained and qualified site steward and invites local student volunteers to participate in brush clearing work.

The District has executed similar intergovernmental agreements with the County, including streambank restoration work at Gunnar Anderson Forest Preserve and the Kane County Government Center. Consistent with the agreement, the District would recruit, train, and coordinate the Volunteers assigned to improve the site within the parameters established by the County, for the duration of one (1) year.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Jon Gripe

SECONDER: Chris Kious

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams

ABSENT: Anita Lewis, Cheryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges

FP-O-26-02-0626 Approval of the Restated Organization Ordinance

HR Dir. Clough presented the updates to the Organization Ordinance. On an annual basis, staff and the District’s legal counsel review and prepare necessary changes to the District’s Organization Ordinance for the Commission’s approval. The Ordinance was last approved by the Commission on March 11, 2025. The following new changes are proposed:

1. *Chapter 1, Section C, “Definitions”.* Updated the language that ensures compliance with the Open Meetings Act (OMA) to be more concise.
2. *Chapter 3, Section B, “Duties of Officers; Committee Appointments by President”.* Removed the President’s unilateral ability to appoint legal counsel to improve transparency and align with the District’s procurement practices.
3. *Chapter 3, Section D, “Travel Expense Reimbursements”.* Updated the terminology to ensure consistency in policy administration for all travelers of the District.
4. *Chapter 4, Section B, “Administrative Staff”.* Revised the chain of command to include the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFAO) position.
5. *Chapter 6, Section D, “Regular, Adjourned or Special Meetings”.* Clarified the posting requirements and order of business for public meetings.
6. *Chapter 13, Multiple Sections.* Revised the amendment review process for the Organization Ordinance to include the Finance and Administration Committee, and updated the approval dates associated with various other ordinances referenced within the document.

DISCUSSION: *None. (Commissioner Surges arrived in person at 8:44AM).*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Mavis Bates

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Ted Penesis, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSTAIN: Clifford Surges

ABSENT: Anita Lewis, Cherryl Strathmann

IX. Land Acquisition

FP-R-26-02-3203 Resolution Authorizing Permanent and Temporary Easements with the Illinois Department of Transportation for Culvert Improvements at Illinois Route 31 and Fabyan Forest Preserve

Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the easement request. In Spring of 2019, IDOT reached out to the District and the City of Geneva to discuss plans related to the replacement of a failing culvert under Route 31. While the majority of the affected culvert is owned by the State, the inlet and outfall are on property owned by the City of Geneva and the District. The State is requesting the necessary easements be donated. In exchange the State will replace the District’s section of the culvert, make improvements to the outfall to reduce erosion and replace/rebuild the section of the Fabyan wall above the culvert at no charge to the District. The Fabyan wall will be reconstructed using as much of the existing limestone as possible, any deviations will be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer and District for approval. The permanent easement will allow IDOT future access to the culvert for

inspections and repairs. In total IDOT, will be acquiring 0.232 acres of permanent easement and 0.0446 acres of temporary easements. The project is tentatively scheduled for late 2026.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Penesis asked about the remaining portions of the wall, noting that it is in need of repair. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that Preservation Partners has done a restoration study on the wall. It is a costly repair and the District has had conversations about phasing the work out in multiple budget cycles. Commissioner Allan commented that it is great that the state will do a portion of the work at no cost and provide a baseline for the District of what needs to be done going forward. President Lenert noted that the preliminary cost of repair was an estimated \$2M.*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Deborah Allan

SECONDER: Ted Penesis

AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Ted Penesis, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Anita Lewis, Cherryl Strathmann

X. Planning and Utilization

None.

XI. Executive

None.

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

The Commission moved into Executive Closed Session at 8:51AM to discuss license agreements

RESULT: **APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Alex Arroyo,

SECONDER: Michael Linder

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Ted Penesis, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Anita Lewis, Cherryl Strathmann

The Commission returned to Open Session at 9:06AM on a motion by Linder, second by Gripe, unanimous voice vote. (Commissioner Lewis arrived in person at 9:06AM)

XIII. New or Unfinished Business

FP-R-26-02-3204 Resolution Authorizing an Emergency Purchase of the Irrigation Pump Station Equipment at Hughes Creek Golf Course

President Lenert presented the emergency purchase. The District currently operates Hughes Creek Golf Course under a golf management agreement with Landscapes Golf Management, Inc. (LGM). Under this agreement, LGM is authorized to utilize District funds for operational needs, capital maintenance and replacement, and safety management to support the long-term success of golf operations. At the conclusion of the 2025 golf season, LGM notified District staff that the existing irrigation pump station was experiencing intermittent malfunctions. Initial observations suggested the issue may have been related to pond conditions, including increased pressure and reduced water flow to the pump system. However, due to concerns regarding the age, condition, and overall reliability of the equipment, LGM recommended an independent evaluation of the pump station.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: **APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Bill Tarver

SECONDER: Michael Linder

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Ted Penesis, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Cherryl Strathmann

XIV. Communications

Dir. of Community Engagement Metanchuk presented current events. The District has open positions available for summer internship. The annual Maple Sugaring Days event will be held on March 7 & 8, 2026 from 12p.m. to 3p.m. Lastly, the Kane Forest Preserve Native Plant sale is live for purchases online. Commissioner Juby asked about the sponsorship options for the plant sale. Dir. Metanchuk responded that anyone is welcome to pledge any amount. She noted that the standard starts at \$100.00, however there is no set amount.

XV. President's Comments

President Lenert commented on the recent 2026 IAPD/IPRA Soaring New Heights conference. Exec. Dir. Haberthur commented that Commissioner Mavis Bates will be receiving the Tom Weisner Memorial award at The Conservation Foundation luncheon on February 19th, 2026.

XVI. Department Reports

RESULT: **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**

MOVER: Chris Kious

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Ted Penesis, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Cherryl Strathmann

XVII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15AM

RESULT: **APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**

MOVER: Mike Linder

SECONDER: Alex Arroyo

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Ted Penesis, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Cherryl Strathmann

Bill Lenert, Chairman
Forest Preserve District Commission
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

