



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

Forest Preserve District Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

8:30 AM

County Board Room

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Full Commission meeting was held Tuesday, March 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.

President Lenert asked for a moment of silence for our Commissioner Strathmann's family member.

II. Roll Call

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioners Allan, Linder, Molina, Sanchez

PRESENT President Forest Preserve District Bill Lenert
Secretary Forest Preserve District Mo Iqbal
Commissioner Jennifer Abbatacola
Commissioner Alex Arroyo
Commissioner Mavis Bates
Commissioner Sonia Garcia
Commissioner Jon Gripe
Commissioner Leslie Juby
Commissioner Chris Kious
Commissioner Anita Lewis
Commissioner Ted Penesis
Commissioner Bill Roth
Commissioner Clifford Surges
Commissioner Bill Tarver
Commissioner Vern Tepe
Commissioner Rick Williams
Commissioner David Young
REMOTE: Commissioner Deborah Allan
Commissioner Michael Linder
Commissioner Myrna Molina
Commissioner Jarett Sanchez
ABSENT: Commissioner Michelle Gumz
Commissioner Cheryl Strathmann
Commissioner Kim Young

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 4H student Eva Oaks to lead the pledge.

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

None.

V. Presentation and Approval of the Minutes of February 10, 2026

RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOVER: Chris Kious

AYE: Jennifer Abbatacola, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Bill Tarver, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Deborah Allan Alex Arroyo, Michelle Gumz, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Vern Tepe, Kim Young

VI. Presentation and Approval of the Bills and Commissioners' Per Diem from February 2026 (*Commissioner Surges arrived in person at 8:35AM*)

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Jon Gripe

AYE: Jennifer Abbatacola, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Bill Tarver, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSTAIN: Clifford Surges

ABSENT: Deborah Allan Alex Arroyo, Michelle Gumz, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Kim Young

VII. Presentations

None.

VIII. Finance and Administration

FP-R-26-03-3205 Resolution Approving Archery Permit Fees at the Mill Creek Archery Range (*Commissioner Arroyo arrived in person at 8:36AM*)

President Lenert presented a brief overview of the archery range permit fees. Permit Fee revenue will be recorded in a new "Archery Range" general ledger account to allow for tracking and financial transparency. These permit fees will offset the initial and ongoing costs at the Mill Creek Archery Range. The District is forecasting permit fee revenue of \$16,000 in the 2026/27 fiscal year. The District's initial expense for archery range supplies, recreational equipment, and repairs or replacement of equipment as needed to ensure the safety of range users will be \$32,000 in fiscal year 2026. Sufficient funds of \$32,000 are available for these expenses. Recommended Rates

Resident Rate:

Annual Permit: \$40 (\$20 after December 31)

Daily Permit: \$10

Nonresident Rate:

Annual Permit: \$65 (\$35 after December 31)

Daily Permit: \$20

District Staff and Board of Commissioners:

Permit Fees Waived

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Bill Tarver

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

FP-O-26-03-0627 Ordinance Approving Amendments to the General Use Ordinance Chapters 6 - Enforcement / Section 3 - Fines and Penalties *(Commissioner Sanchez arrived in person at 8:40AM)*

CFAO Petschke presented the General Use ordinance updates. In the continuing effort by the Public Safety Department to provide a safe and peaceful experience for visitors to the District's preserves, the Department is proposing a few changes to address quality of life issues, ordinance enforcement, and fines. Our current Use Ordinance recites the District's authority to impose a fine of between \$75 (minimum) and \$500 (maximum) for any violation of the Ordinance and also that those amounts may be amended from time to time.

Public Safety is recommending that the District amend and increase the following ordinance violation fines from \$75 to:

- \$250 - Permit Required
- \$250 - Protection of Property, Structures, and Natural Resources
- \$500 - Destruction or Misuse of Natural Resources

Public Safety is also recommending adding the following language to the Use Ordinance Chapter 6 – Enforcement / Section 3 – Fines and Penalties:

- “Chapter 2, Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 – Related to Destruction or Misuse of Property, Structures, and Natural Resources shall be fined \$250
- Chapter 2, Section 2 (c) - Related to Destruction or Misuse of Natural Resources (Bison) shall be fined \$500
- Chapter 1, Section 3 - Related to Permit Required (engaging in activities where a permit is required, without a permit), shall be fined \$250”

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Young asked for a definition of term “misuse” within the ordinance. Chief Burger responded that it would be anything it is not intended for, such as a picnic table, etc. (Commissioner Tepe arrived in person at 8:41AM) Commissioner Young felt the “misuse” statement was too broad. Attorney Price, clarified situations that would be considered misuse including, a yoga group utilizing a shelter and anchoring ropes inside a shelter, which is not its intended use, or picnic tables that are used as ramps. He stated that the District is adding clarifying language in the ordinance that spells out the fines if the property is not being utilized appropriately. Commissioner Gripe asked if the District writes a citation to an individual, would be prosecutable based on the guidelines. Attorney Price responded that yes, if the individual wanted to bring the constitutional item to court, they could try, however the misuse of the intent for the property is straight forward.*

Commissioner Tarver asked if the fines and penalties included trespassing, would this be added as well. Chief Burger responded that yes, trespassing would be included as well.

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Bill Tarver

AYE: Jennifer Abbatacola, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Jarett

Sanchez, Clifford Surges Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams,
David Young
ABSENT: Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

FP-R-26-03-3206 Resolution Authorizing a Professional Grant Consulting Services Contract with The Ferguson Group, LLC

President Lenert presented the contract with TFG. In December 2025, the District issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for grant consulting services to support these objectives. Three grant consulting firms submitted proposals, with TFG identified as the most qualified firm offering the lowest cost. Staff subsequently negotiated the scope of services and contract term with TFG. TFG tailored its grant services approach and fee structure to align with the District's core operational needs. TFG's proposal also included discounted rates for ancillary services. All hourly services are billed at \$255 per hour (normally billed at \$300 per hour), and if grant writing services are engaged, the estimated cost for each grant would be between \$5,100 to \$24,650 per grant, depending on the size and time involved. Under the proposed agreement, the District will retain primary responsibility for preparing grant applications, resulting in significant cost savings. Staff prefer this approach due to their direct knowledge of District projects. In addition, staff have strengthened grant application narratives by collaborating with engineers and architects when pursuing larger grant projects. The District budgeted \$55,000 for grant consulting services in fiscal year 2026 within the General Fund (Consulting Services), all of which remains available. The proposed cost for TFG's grant consulting services in fiscal year 2026 is \$12,000. Funding for future years will be included in the District's standard annual budget process.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Iqbal asked about grant-writing a resources available within the District staff. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the District had a grant consultant and writer in the past, they had since retired and the District has been managing the work load among the staff. He noted that staff handles the creative writing, however there are a number of reporting aspects after a grant is awarded that the District could outsource to a consultant. President Lenert noted that if the District does not see a return on the investment, staff can terminate the contract at any time. Commissioner Lewis commented that a key advantage of having a grant consultant is that they are trained to search for grants and can find ones that staff may not see or have the time to research. (Commissioner Allan arrived via remote at 8:54AM)*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Jarett Sanchez

SECONDER: Jon Gripe

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

FP-R-26-03-3207 Resolution Approving Revisions to the Employee Handbook 2026

HR Dir. Clough presented the proposed revisions to meet compliance. Best practice in human resources management is to review employment policies on a regular basis. Human Resources and legal counsel have completed a full review of the Employee Handbook, which was most recently revised in February, 2024. The recommended revisions ensure compliance with state and federal statutes, clarify policies for ease of interpretation, and align with current practices. One revision to the Employee Handbook has a potential financial impact. If the Board authorizes a Tuition Reimbursement Program increase, additional funding would be budgeted in the next fiscal year. A FY26/27 budget request will

be incorporated into the budget to allocate an additional \$3,000 in tuition reimbursement funds for a total budgeted amount of \$5,000, compared to the FY25/26 budgeted amount of \$2,000. This increased amount would provide financial reimbursement for up to two (2) eligible employees with a maximum reimbursement amount of \$2,500 for each employee.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Bill Tarver

SECONDER: Jon Gripe

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

IX. Land Acquisition

FP-R-26-03-3208 Resolution Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Village of Carpentersville and the Forest Preserve District of Kane County for the Realignment and Crossing of the Multi-Use Path Along Washington Street

Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks Lopez presented the IGA. The Village of Carpentersville has been working to transform a blighted eight-acre parcel along the Fox River into a vibrant public space known as Riverfront Park. The new park will offer public access to the river, a beer garden with string lighting, concessions, awning structures with seating, a lounge area, fire pits, an area for outdoor games, a butterfly garden, a kayak landing, a food truck parking area, a restroom facility, a small play area for children, and a river outlook. The new park will be located along Washington Street, south of the Main Street bridge and adjacent to the Fox River Trail crossing at Washington Street. The current trail crosses Washington at a roughly 30-degree angle, and presents access issues with the proposed parks main entrance. The Village is requesting permanent and temporary easements to allow for the Fox River trail at Washington Street to be realigned to cross perpendicular to Washington and to allow the Village to install and maintain the new crossing area. The Village has agreed to cover all costs associated with the realignment and will permanently maintain the concrete sidewalk portions of the plan as well as all landscape improvements between Washington Street and the bridge while the District will retain maintenance of the asphalt portion of the Fox River Trail.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Surges expressed his gratitude with the realignment project noting that the current angle is potentially dangerous and this will make the path safer for all patrons.

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Jarett Sanchez

SECONDER: Chris Kious

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

X. Planning and Utilization

FP-R-26-03-3209 Resolution Approving Bids for Pond Management at Three Forest Preserves

NR Dir. Chess presented the bid for pond management. The Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve is approximately 32 acres situated south of Bowes Road in the Bowes Creek Country Club subdivision. The site contains three large artificial ponds (totaling approximately 8 acres). There are also three smaller degraded ponds at the site (approx. 0.6 acres). The 3 larger ponds experience periodic algal blooms and invasion by aquatic weeds. The residents of Bowes Creek find the algae and aquatic vegetation unsightly and have requested that the portion of their HOA dues that come to the District for the management of this site be used for pond management. Bids were sought from qualified firms for three years of consecutive growing season (Apr-Oct) ecological health monitoring and aquatic vegetation management at the ponds within these three preserves. The contract performance standard is to maintain 70% open water within the pond throughout the growing season. Additionally, the aquatic vegetation present within the pond must be comprised of 30% or less exotic species.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Jarett Sanchez

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cheryl Strathmann, Kim Young

FP-R-26-03-3210 Resolution Approving a Bid for Teasel Control At Three Forest Preserves

NRM Dir. Chess presented the bid for teasel control. Invasive teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*, *Dipsacus laciniatus*) was introduced to the United States in the 1700s to be used in the textile industry and as an ornamental species. Over time, the species has escaped cultivation and is now an ever-present threat to the biodiversity of the area. Teasel prefers sunny upland environments where it thrives as a monocarpic perennial that produces seed once before dying. This life cycle necessitates the presence of incredibly viable and abundant seed that can thrive within the seed bank for numerous years. As such, once established, a teasel population can survive for a decade or longer, even without the introduction of additional seed. The District currently controls teasel populations across all 24,000 acres of property. However, some populations have become well established prior to District ownership and will require significant control efforts to reach a maintenance level. The District has sought bids for spring and summer control of teasel across three of these preserves to aid staff efforts across the District.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Jarett Sanchez

SECONDER: Ted Penesis

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cheryl Strathmann, Kim Young

FP-R-26-03-3211 Resolution Authorizing a Professional Engineering Contract with V3 Engineering for the Restoration of Wetlands at the Chicago Premium Outlets

Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the contract with V3 Engineering. The Forest Preserve District (District) manages a 75-acre complex of wetlands created as a mitigation effort following the creation of the Chicago Premium Outlet Mall. Originally designed and constructed in 2003 by V3, the wetland complex is comprised of a series of pools surrounding a re-meandered section of Indian Creek. Each pool is managed at a specific elevation through the use of water control structures and separated by a series of earthen berms. Extensive planting of native vegetation took place and V3 managed the site for several years until the Army Corps of Engineers signed off on the project in 2017. Upon sign off, the site was transferred to the District for long term maintenance.

The initial construction took place over 20 years ago and there has been a lot of wear and tear on the berms. A combination of wave action eroding soil and beavers plugging water control structures has resulted in a multitude of breaches and repairs over the years. Currently, there are several locations where the berms are failing, causing adjacent pools to sit at the same water level. This potentially compromises the storm water capacity of the wetlands as well as threatens the plant communities present within the wetlands. As the firm that did the original design and construction of this complicated project, V3 Engineering has a privileged understanding of the project and required permitting. A scope of work was developed to perform an evaluation of the berms in their current state and to engineer a solution to the problems at hand. Engineering services will provide the District with a design and a cost estimate on how to move forward with construction, ensuring the integrity of the wetland mitigation as originally designed. V3 submitted a proposal for engineering and permitting services of \$39,300.00. Additionally, \$5,000.00 shall be set aside as contingency to cover any unanticipated additional costs that may arise during design and permitting, for a total project amount of \$44,300.00.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Gripe asked if the area is set up for public access. Dir. Rooks Lopez explained that the area does not have any trails, however you can see it from the Outlet mall. Commissioner Arroyo explained that he lives in the area and noted that it is not set up for trails, there are sidewalks around the mall area.*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Mavis Bates

SECONDER: Alex Arroyo

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

XI. Executive

FP-R-26-03-3212 Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Forest Preserve District of Kane County and the City of Geneva

Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the IGA with the City of Geneva. In 2025 the District contracted with Prairie State Water Systems, Inc. to replace the failing irrigation well and pump at Settler's Hill Golf Course. During the approval process concerns were raised by Waste Management that restoring the well to its original production capacity could cause the 1-4 dioxane contaminant in the ground water to shift to the south. A reliable water source is critical for the operation and success of the course. Staff worked closely with Kane County Department of Water Resources and Waste Management to develop a solution. The depth of the existing well was reduced to utilize a shallow aquifer not compromised by the 1-4 dioxane contaminant. Unfortunately, once installed, this solution failed to produce an adequate volume of water for irrigation and other options needed to be explored. The Geneva

Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF) provided water at no charge to the District last fall when levels in the irrigation pond reached a critical point. The success of that operation led to conversations with the City about a possible permanent connection between the two locations to provide Geneva's clean waste water for irrigation purposes. While the use of treated water is a relatively new concept in the Chicago area, it is extremely common in the more arid climates of the west. Fortunately, the City is currently undergoing upgrades to their WWTF, and is currently within 90% design development with CDM Smith Engineering. The proposed Intergovernmental Agreement would add an engineering study to determine the feasibility of the proposed system to CDM Smith's existing contract with the City at the District's cost. A scope of services was developed and a fee of \$54,800.00 was established. Additionally, \$200.00 shall be set aside as contingency to cover any unanticipated additional costs that may arise during the design for a total contract amount not to exceed \$55,000.00.

***DISCUSSION:** Commissioner Young asked if the intent would be to present an engineering plan that includes cost. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that the item today is an approval of a feasibility study to determine options for the District to bring a proposal to the Commission. President Lenert commented that Waste Management would need to contribute due to the late notification on their part.*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Jarett Sanchez

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

FP-R-26-03-3213 Resolution Approving the Commissioner's Expenses Attending the 2026 IPRA/IAPD Annual Conference in Chicago, IL

Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the Commissioner's expenses for the annual IPRA/IAPD conference.

***DISCUSSION:** Commissioner Iqbal expressed his concern with the expenses, he felt that the amount was excessive for a conference held in Chicago. Commissioner Sanchez explained that the conference is an annual three-day event where networking opportunities take place later in the day after the training sessions. He felt the overnight stay is beneficial. Commissioner Kious noted that he has been to the conference in the past and it was a quick turn around from the evening to the 8AM sessions, commuting back and forth was impractical. Commissioner Arroyo stated that the School District had the same conference and he commute back and forth was grueling, this is an investment for the staff.*

RESULT: ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Chris Kious

SECONDER: Jarett Sanchez

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

NAY: Mo Iqbal

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young.

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

None.

XIII. New or Unfinished Business

FP-R-26-03-3214 Resolution Approving a Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP) for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County

President Lenert presented the MERP plan. The implementation of a Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan provides a strategic approach to health insurance cost containment and a transparent and defensible expenditure. While its proposal would otherwise be brought before the Commission for consideration with the full draft budget, staff is seeking its early approval for several reasons. Importantly, a new benefit plan would require a comprehensive education and communication plan in order to ensure its early and continued success. In addition, the new benefit plan would need to be incorporated into the District's open enrollment process and timeline. Finally, WEX requires up to ninety (90) days to fully author a plan document and implement its administration. The District's MERP plan design is being evaluated by staff, its benefits carrier, and District legal counsel. Costs associated with the administration of the plan, including eligible reimbursements and carrier fees, would be identified in the FY26/27 annual budget document presented to the Full Commission for its consideration and approval. Any savings from the various departments health insurance benefit expense accounts would offset the funds expensed from the MERP account. (Commissioner Young stepped away at 9:26AM)

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Anita Lewis

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, David Young, Kim Young

FP-R-26-03-3215 Resolution Approving the Purchase of Parcels Totaling Approximately 220 +/- Acres in Hampshire Township

(Commissioner David Young returned at 9:28AM) Exec. Dir. Haberthur presented the acquisition of the 220 acres in Hampshire Township. He provided a brief overview of the property.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Juby asked questions regarding the property adjacent to the acquisition. Exec. Dir. Haberthur explained that the parcels negotiated had a higher natural resource value to the District. Commissioner Abbatacola read a statement aloud explaining her opposition to purchase the parcels for the purpose of land protection. She explained the importance of the I90 Corridor and the proximity to the highway for development. She noted that the District could protect open space as well as economic growth.*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

MOVER: Chris Kious

SECONDER: Mavis Bates

AYE: Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe

NAY: Jennifer Abbatacola, Jon Gripe, Clifford Surges, Rick Williams, David Young

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

XIV. Communications

Dir. of Community Engagement Metanchuk reported on the annual Maple Sugaring event over the weekend noting it was a success. She promoted the birding exhibit that is scheduled to open by the end of the week. The exhibit is a loan from the Hoffman museum out of Kansas. Gates open May 1, 2026 The Burlington Forest Preserve will open the gates on May 1, 2026 weather permitting. The public will have a chance to view the bison. Lastly the Kane Forest Foundation annual native plant sale will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2026.

Commissioner Surges stated that he seldom votes no on land purchases from the Forest Preserve, however he felt conflicted with the item on the agenda after hearing the statement from Commissioner Abbatacola. He noted as a Commissioner, he would have preferred to be informed of the opposition ahead of time. He noted that phone calls and meeting with farmers and locals in that area is something he would have wanted to acknowledge.

XV. President's Comments

None.

XVI. Department Reports

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOVER: Jarett Sanchez

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

XVII. Adjournment Roth, Linder.

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 AM

RESULT: APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Mike Linder

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

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz, Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi
