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

Forest Preserve District Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 9, 2026 **8:30 AM** **Auditorium**

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Full Commission meeting was held Tuesday, June 9, 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

Commissioner Molina.

II. Roll Call

PRESENT
President Forest Preserve District Bill Lenert
Secretary Forest Preserve District Mo Iqbal
Commissioner Jennifer Abbatacola (In person at 8:44AM)
Commissioner Alex Arroyo
Commissioner Mavis Bates
Commissioner Sonia Garcia
Commissioner Jon Gripe
Commissioner Michelle Gumz (Arrived in person at 8:40AM)
Commissioner Leslie Juby
Commissioner Chris Kious
Commissioner Anita Lewis
Commissioner Michael Linder
Commissioner Myrna Molina
Commissioner Ted Penesis
Commissioner Bill Roth
Commissioner Jarett Sanchez
Commissioner Cherryl Strathmann
Commissioner Clifford Surges (In person at 8:44AM)
Commissioner Bill Tarver
Commissioner Vern Tepe
Commissioner Rick Williams
Commissioner David Young
Commissioner Kim Young

ABSENT
Commissioner Deborah Allan

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 & staff Kovach; 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 Rick Williams to lead the pledge.

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

None.

V. Presentation and Approval of the Minutes of May 12, 2026

RESULT: **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**
MOVER: Chris Kious
AYE: 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, Cherryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young, Kim Young
Absent: Jennifer Abbatacola**,** Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Clifford Surges

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

RESULT: **APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
MOVER: Rick Williams
SECONDER: Ted Penesis
AYE: 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, Cherryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young, Kim Young
Absent: Jennifer Abbatacola**,** Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Clifford Surges

VII. Presentations

John Rabchuk, President of the River Corridor Foundation St. Charles, and Laurel Moad presented the Golden Turtle Award to Barb McKittrick for her efforts in the environmental education capacity.

VIII. Planning and Utilization

FP-R-26-06-3226 Resolution Approving a Bid for the Resurfacing of Riverbend Parking Lot Within the Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve, South Elgin, IL

President Lenert presented the item. The Riverbend parking lot is a satellite parking lot to the Jon Duerr Forest Preserve, located south of the main preserve entrance directly off of Illinois Route 31. It provides the public with direct access to the Riverbend Trail, which connects the Fox River Trail to the municipal bike trail along Randall Rd. In addition to quick access of the trail, a unique waterfall structure is a short walk from the parking lot. This parking lot was originally a gravel lot prior to 2008, but was prioritized within the capital budget to be paved due to the growing patron use. Since that time the pavement is in need of repair due to its age and normal wear and tear. This project was advertised using the District's online bidding platform with four responding bidders. The qualified lowest bid was Arthur J. Lootens & Sons, Inc. of West Chicago, IL with a cost of $35,136.40 for the Base Bid and Option 1. Additionally, staff is requesting a 5% contingency to cover any unforeseen costs during construction, for a project total not to exceed $36,893.22.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
MOVER: Michael Linder
SECONDER: Bill Roth
AYE: 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, Cherryl Strathmann, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young, Kim Young
Absent: Jennifer Abbatacola**,** Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Clifford Surges

FP-R-26-06-3227 Resolution Approving a Bid for the RTP Grant Trail Restoration Project at Fitchie Creek Forest Preserve, Elgin, IL

President Lenert presented the bid for the trail restoration project at Fitchie Creek FP. In 2025, the District received a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for trail improvements at Fitchie Creek Forest Preserve. The project includes drainage improvements and the restoration of 2,700 linear feet of existing limestone trail that currently experience perennial flooding and erosion. The RTP grant will reimburse the District 80% of the construction costs up to a total of $200,000.00, upon completion of the project. The District conducted a formal bid process for the project. Bids were publicly advertised, with 5 bidders responding. The responsible, lowest bidder was Schroeder Asphalt Services, Inc. with a base bid of $123,308.75. Additionally, a 10% contingency of $12,330.25 shall be set aside to cover any unanticipated additional costs, that may arise during construction for a total project amount of $135,639.00.

(Commissioner Gumz arrived at 8:40AM)

DISCUSSION: *None.*

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

IX. Executive

FP-O-26-06-0629 Ordinance Amending "An Ordinance Setting the Salary Ranges of Employee Positions for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County"

President Lenert presented the ordinance. The Commission approved a new step schedule compensation model in 2024 that adjusted salary ranges for the first time since 2017. The new compensation plan was implemented to support the District's intention to recruit and retain employees by offering competitive pay. The new plan placed employees' pay closer to the regional average of pay for each position compared to other local agencies. The step schedule has been updated to reflect a 2.7% increase to all salary ranges effective July 1, 2026, consistent with the FY2026-2027 annual budget approved by the Commission on May 12, 2026. This economic factor adjustment ensures the District's compensation plan stays in line with the market, and is consistent with the recommendations of the comprehensive study of the District's compensation and classification plan completed in 2024. This annual review process includes the assignment of new, reclassified, and retitled positions to the step schedule since the last commission approved update, which was June, 2025. They include:

New:
- Human Resources Manager, Human Resources Department
- Finance Analyst, Finance Department
- Project Manager, Planning and Land Protection Department

Reclassified:
- Stewardship Specialist, Part-time to Full-time Classification
- "Wildlife Technician" to "Wildlife Ecologist"
- "Director of Finance" to "Chief Financial and Administrative Officer"
- "Accounting Manager" to "Assistant Director of Finance"
- "Accountant" to "Accounting Supervisor"

Employee compensation is adjusted consistent with the increase to the step schedule. The FY2026-2027 annual budget approved on May 12, 2026 included the economic factor adjustment of 2.7% to the ranges in the salary schedule. The financial impact for the economic factor increase is $169,775.96.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

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

FP-R-26-06-3228 Resolution Authorizing an Extension to the Historical Structures Operating and Caretaking Agreement with the Preservation Partners of Fox Valley Through June 30, 2027

President Lenert presented the extension agreement with Preservation Partners. Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley 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. Preservation Partners provides exclusive exhibits management, staffing, tours, program coordination and marketing for the Fabyan Villa Museum, the Durant-Peterson House Museum, and Sholes School Museum.

Additionally, Preservation Partners coordinates programming and tours of the Fabyan Japanese Garden. The District retains ownership of all land and structures and is responsible for the cost and coordination of maintenance, repairs, and utilities for the buildings as well as grounds and landscape maintenance. The District is seeking approval to extend the existing contract through June 30, 2027, to align with the District's fiscal year. The new contract will extend the current agreement at the same rate, providing Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley with an annual sum of $115,000 for their services. Of this amount, $78,000 is allocated to the operation of the Fabyan Villa Museum, $10,000 for the Japanese Garden, and $27,000 for the operation of the Durant-Peterson House Museum and the Sholes School Museum. The District's legal counsel and risk management provider (PDRMA) have reviewed the agreement.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

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

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

(Commissioners Abbatacola and Surges arrived in person at 8:44AM)

The Commission moved into Executive Closed Session to discuss land acquisition at 8:44AM.

RESULT: **APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
MOVER: Jon Gripe

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

The Commission returned to Open Session at 9:16AM on a motion by Roth and second by Bates. Unanimous voice vote.

XI. New or Unfinished Business

None.

XII. Communications

Dir. of Community Engagement Metanchuk reported on the grand opening of the archery range noting an estimated 400 people attended. She thanked all the staff and volunteers who worked to make the event successful.

XIII. President's Comments

President Lenert thanked all the District staff in their hard work at the opening of the Archery Range.

IXV. Department Reports

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

XV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:21AM.

RESULT: **APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**
MOVER: Bill Roth
SECONDER: Chris Kious
AYE: Jennifer Abbatacola**,** 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, Ted Penesis Bill Roth, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Rick Williams, David Young, Kim Young

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi _____