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

Forest Preserve District Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 11, 2026 8:30 AM County Board Room

I. Call to Order

The Forest Preserve District Full Commission meeting was held Tuesday, August 11, 2026 at the Kane County Government Center located at 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva, IL 60134. President Lenert called the meeting to order at 8:34 AM.

II. Roll Call

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioners Gripe, Iqbal, Molina.

PRESENT
President Forest Preserve District Bill Lenert
Secretary Forest Preserve District Mo Iqbal
Commissioner Jennifer Abbatacola
Commissioner Deborah Allan (Arrived in person at 8:45AM)
Commissioner Alex Arroyo (Arrived in person at 8:37AM)
Commissioner Mavis Bates
Commissioner Sonia Garcia
Commissioner Jon Gripe
Commissioner Michelle Gumz (Arrived in person at 8:37AM)
Commissioner Leslie Juby
Commissioner Anita Lewis
Commissioner Michael Linder
Commissioner Myrna Molina
Commissioner Ted Penesis
Commissioner Bill Roth
Commissioner Cherryl Strathmann
Commissioner Clifford Surges
Commissioner Bill Tarver
Commissioner Vern Tepe

ABSENT
Commissioner Chris Kious
Commissioner Jarett Sanchez
Commissioner Rick Williams
Commissioner David 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 & 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 Tepe to lead the pledge.

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

None.

V. Presentation and Approval of the Minutes from July 14, 2026

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

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

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

VII. Presentations

None.

VIII. Consent Agenda

President Lenert asked if any Commissioner wished to remove any resolutions from the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Juby requested resolution FP-R-26-08-3245 be removed from the consent agenda. (Commissioner Arroyo & Commissioner Gumz arrived in person at 8:37AM)

----------CONSENTAGENDA ----------

Finance and Administration

FP-R-26-08-3240 Resolution Approving Revisions to the Employee Handbook 2026

FP-O-26-08-0630 Approval of the Restated Organization Ordinance

Land Acquisition

None.

Planning and Utilization

FP-R-26-08-3241 Resolution Approving Bids for Tree and Brush Clearing at Portions of Eight Forest Preserves

FP-R-26-08-3242 Resolution Approving a Bid for the Installation of Insulation at the Natural Resource Management Facility

FP-R-26-08-3243 Resolution Authorizing the District to Apply for IDNR OSLAD Grant Funds for Site Improvements at Rutland Forest Preserve

FP-R-26-08-3244 Resolution Approving a Change Order with HR Green, Inc. for Professional Services to Develop Engineering Plans and Construction Observation for the Fox River Trail Path Improvements

Executive

None.

---------- END OF CONSENT AGENDA ----------

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

FP-R-26-08-3245 Resolution Authorizing the Sale of District Owned Parcels Along Riverside Drive in the Fox River Heights Subdivision, Kane County

Exec. Dir. Haberthur provided a brief presentation of the resolution. The Forest Preserve District of currently owns 4 parcels of real property each of which is less than 1 acre in size, is located along Riverside Drive in the Fox River Heights subdivision within St. Charles. Staff reviewed each of the 4 Parcels and determined that not one of them served the mission of the District in that each of them was of poor habitat quality, provided limited to no public access or potential for use by the public, and required substantial expense to mitigate various undesirable conditions. within the past year, each of the 4 Parcels was appraised by an MAI appraiser who appraised each such parcel at $500.00. The River Bend Community Group is an association of owners of properties that are adjacent or proximate to the various 4 Parcels that, on behalf of its members, desires to purchase all of the 4 Parcels for Ten Dollars ($10.00). The River Bend Community Group is a not-for-profit group whose members include homeowners in the Fox River Heights Subdivision it has been determined the sale of the 4 Parcels to the River Bend Community Group for $10.00 is advantageous to the District.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Juby suggested an amendment to the resolution to offer the parcels at half the appraised value ($250.00) each or a total of $1,000.00. Commissioner Kim Young seconded the motion. Attorney Price indicated that the amendment would strike the resolution considering it would be a counter offer from the District to the buyer. Commissioner Juby clarified her motion to strike the resolution and provide a counter offer to the buyers. Commissioner Kim Young, seconded the clarification. (Commissioner Allan arrived in person at 8:45AM).*

DISCUSSION on the motion to strike the resolution: *President Lenert stated that the four parcels totaled an estimate of 1.77 acres. The original offer was made because the District is not interested in making money off the sale. The sale of these parcels is in the best interest of the District due to the current liability exposure caused by existing encroachments. Commissioner Kim Young commented that since the last meeting, she spoke with the residents and walked the parcels. She indicated that she understood the liability. However, she felt that there is still value in the land, asking for $1,000 or $250 per parcel was a more reasonable offer. Commissioner Tarver asked what would happen if the current interested party would not accept the new offer. Attorney Price explained that the parcels would be placed on public auction. President Lenert reminded the Commission that staff originally was prepared to place the parcels in a public auction starting at appraised value. The accommodation was made for the neighboring community. Commissioner Lewis felt that the longer this resolution gets pushed off, the longer the District's liability exposure continues. President Lenert stated that he was in favor of offering*

the parcels for $10.00, if the District continues to own the property the docks and encroachments would need to be removed and that would be costly. Commissioner Bates expressed her opposition of the sale; she felt that the parcels along the shoreline should be owned by the District and open to the public.

The Vote was called on the proposed motion in lieu to counteroffer $1,000 or $250 per parcel.

RESULT:	**FAILED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [8-12]**
MOVER:	Leslie Juby
SECONDER:	Kim Young
AYE:	Jennifer Abbatacola, Deborah Allan, Leslie Juby, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis. Cherryl Strathmann, Kim Young
NAYS:	Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe
ABSENT:	Chris Kious, Jarett Sanchez, Rick Williams, David Young

DISCUSSION on original motion: *Commissioner Arroyo asked about the ownership of the coastline. He asked if the waters were to recede due to the ongoing projects of dam removal on the Fox River, if the buyers would gain that land. Attorney Price responded that the River itself is the jurisdiction of the IDNR. If the water recedes, the property owner gains the dry footage of the land and the liability. The IDNR has ownership as well as restrictions. Commissioner Linder noted that the St. Charles city council had expressed that they would be keeping their dam. Commissioner Gripe reiterated Commissioner Linder's comment, noting that the water would most likely not recede that much or at all in the foreseeable future. Commissioner Roth stated that the parcels are located in unincorporated Kane County. The shoreline is zoned as a flood plain. Commissioner Penesis noted that if South Elgin decides to remove their dam, it would affect the waterways. Commissioner Gumz commented that the adjacent property owners have maintained the area for many years and would like to be good neighbors. Commissioner Lewis commented that the community is a 501c3, not an HOA. They are being represented by Attorney Hoscheit, Pro-bono. She added that as the former President of the District, she felt confident that the best interest is in the District and was in favor of moving forward with the resolution. Commissioner Bates commented that the concern was not the value of development or gaining land, it has to do with the neighbors squatting for decades, and encroaching for decades. It has been a liability for a long time. Commissioner Roth commented that the adjacent home owners have been complaining for years about the encroachments, he was in support to sell.*

The Vote was called on the Motion.

RESULT:	**APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [15-5]**
MOVER:	Leslie Juby
SECONDER:	Mike Linder
AYE:	Jennifer Abbatacola, Deborah Allan, Sonia Garcia, Jon Gripe, Michelle Gumz, Leslie Juby, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Kim Young
NAYS:	Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Mo Iqbal, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis,
ABSENT:	Chris Kious, Jarett Sanchez, Rick Williams, David Young

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

None.

X. New or Unfinished Business

None.

XI. Communications

Marketing & Communications Sup. Kovach provided updates on the District's events. The volunteer seed harvest events are back for the season, more information can be located on the

District's website calendar. The annual National Night Out event was a success. She promoted the District's annual Rusty Rodeo event. This year it will be held on Saturday August 15, 2026 at North Aurora Island Park and Mt. St. Mary's Park in St. Charles. Commissioner Tarver expressed his appreciation of the announcements each month and all the activities the District hosts.

XII. President's Comments

President Lenert expressed his gratitude and appreciation of everyone's involvement in the Forest Preserve events.

XIII. Department Reports

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

XIV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 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, Michelle Gumz, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Clifford Surges, Bill Tarver, Vern Tepe, Kim Young
ABSENT: Chris Kious, Jarett Sanchez, Rick Williams, David Young

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi _____