



1996 S. Kirk Rd. Suite 320
Geneva, IL 60134

Forest Preserve District Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

President Bill Lenert, Michelle Gumz, Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams

Thursday, May 8, 2025

8:30 AM

3rd Floor Board Room

I. Call To Order

The Forest Preserve District Executive Committee meeting was held Thursday, May 8, 2025. President Lenert called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM at the Administration Offices located at 1996 S. Kirk Road, Suite 320, Geneva, IL 60134.

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioner Williams

PRESENT President Forest Preserve District Bill Lenert
Commissioner Jon Gripe
Commissioner Mo Iqbal
Commissioner Leslie Juby
Commissioner Anita Lewis
Commissioner Bill Roth
Commissioner Cherryl Strathmann
Commissioner Rick Williams (Remote)

ABSENT: Commissioner Michelle Gumz

Also Present: Commissioners: Allan (Remote), Garcia; Exec. Dir. Haberthur; Dir. of Planning & Land Protection Rooks-Lopez; Dir. of Finance Petschke & staff Carrano, Wolff; Dir. of Comm. Engagement Metanchuk & staff Kovach; HR Dir. Clough & Misner; NRM Dir. Chess; Dir. of Ops. Jensen; Chief of Police Burger; Exec. Assist. Figliozzi & staff Rafferty; Attorney Hodge (Remote).

II. Approval of the Minutes from April 3, 2025

RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOVER: Mo Iqbal

SECONDER: Jon Gripe

AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

III. Public Comment (Each Speaker is limited to three minutes)

None.

IV. Presentation and Approval of Bills and Commissioners' Per Diem from April 2025

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: Forest Preserve District Commission

MOVER: Anita Lewis

SECONDER: Jon Gripe

AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams
ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

V. Finance and Administration

TMP-25-496 Ordinance for the Annual Budget Appropriation Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Dir. of Finance Petschke presented the balanced budget for fiscal year 2025/2026. Revenues increased from \$12,036,082 in the current year to \$14,051,163, this was primarily due to the referendum. Dir. Petschke noted that \$2M would be transferred to the land acquisition fund from the general fund and the construction and development fund, as promised to the tax payers. The golf revenues and expenditures would be transferred into the Construction and Development fund. Exec. Dir. Haberthur discussed the compensation of employees, noting that the focus was on retention, with a performance and step increase where applicable. He indicated the grant consultant line item was a previous allocation in past budgets, that has been returned. Dir. Haberthur briefly explained the health benefit premiums, noting that employees would see a decrease in the premiums.

Dir. of Finance Petschke presented highlights of the Construction and Development fund. Dir. Haberthur discussed the bison improvement project, and the engineering for an urban ecology center that will be developed in the Arlene Shoemaker location. Glenwood Forest Preserve is the next larger capital project for improvements. Dir. Petschke reviewed the expenditures that would be allocated to improve the golf courses this next fiscal year in working with the new management company, LGM.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Kiouss asked about the wetland mitigation bank. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that ecologically, everything has been thriving. Currently, a capital project is set for the 25/26 fiscal year to build an ADA accessible overlook. Dir. Haberthur indicated that the District is currently waiting for a release of credits from the Army Corps. of Engineers. Once the approvals are gained, the District would be able to sell additional credits.*

President Lenert commented on the budget, noting that with the passing of the referendum, the District is seeing an increase of 14% in revenues, however the District's gross additional expenses are about 12% with \$1M moving into the land acquisition fund. Therefore, the net increase is 5%. President Lenert stated that the District has been working to focus on long term, being able to handle the increases in the budget. Additionally, he noted that focusing on the employees by improving salaries and lowering the health benefit premiums, benefits the employees as well as lessens turnaround expenses. President Lenert stated he felt comfortable with this budget and supports it. Commissioner Gripe expressed his gratitude for staff and the presentation of the budget process. He asked about an expense regarding batteries, noting it seemed high. Dir. Petschke responded that sometimes line items could include miscellaneous items with the batteries that were not specifically itemized on the report, although invoices are itemized and kept in the system. He noted he would review the expense. Commissioner Gripe asked about the salary increase and what the District should expect to see each year. Exec. Dir. Haberthur explained that the step schedule was lined up with the demand of the market, per the compensation and classification study, additionally, the increase of CPI and the economic cost of living each year. President Lenert commented that the District has been trying to stay competitive with the neighboring Districts to maintain employee retention.

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Rick Williams
SECONDER: Anita Lewis

AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams
ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

VI. Land Acquisition

TMP-25-505 Resolution Approving a Storm Water Easement Agreement at Hannaford Woods Forest Preserve with Crown Development

Dir of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the easement agreement.

Hannaford Woods/Nickels Farm Forest Preserve is comprised of 400 acres that surround Waubensee Community College in Sugar Grove. The majority of the northern boundary of the preserve is defined by Merrill Road. Crown Community Development (Crown) is beginning construction on Phase 1 of its 760-acre mixed-use development known as “The Grove”, this summer. Phase 1 of the project is primarily residential units on the north side of Merrill Road and bounded by Illinois 47 to the west. The land on which this project is to be built, drains to the south via culvert onto Hannaford Woods. The current land use is agricultural. Crown’s development project will decrease the amount of permeable surface across their project area and thereby increase the amount of stormwater to be managed north of Merrill Rd. In early 2025, the District was contacted by the Village of Sugar Grove and Crown Development requesting a stormwater easement. Illinois drainage law requires the District, as a downstream neighbor, to natural volumes of water from upstream neighbors (to permit drainage), but has provisions to ensure water velocity does not increase on downstream neighbors, which could result in soil erosion.

Staff met with Crown and their engineers in March to evaluate changes in stormwater volume and velocities and how they might affect Hannaford Woods. Staff specified changes in the stormwater discharge point that will ensure the stormwater that discharges under Merrill Road and onto Forest Preserve property will be properly managed. These requirements primarily consist of a new level spreader, which is a device that converts the high energy level in high-velocity flow into sheet flow, thereby dispersing the energy in the discharged water, so that it may infiltrate into the soil. The proposed easement is necessary to provide stormwater discharge for Crown’s Phase 1 development and to allow access for discharge point improvements and perpetual maintenance, post construction. Crown Community Development also does business as Sugar Grove LLC.

DISCUSSION: *President Lenert explained that per statute, the District is required to allow mitigation of stormwater, this is done through an easement. The District would not have any added costs. Commissioner Allan asked if the stormwater would be diverted to the creek and if the water would be filtered. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that yes, the water would be appropriately mitigated.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Anita Lewis
SECONDER: Leslie Juby
AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams
ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

TMP-25-504 Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of Lands by Gift in the Village of Sugar Grove

Dir. Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the acquisition. Lennar Homes is in the process of receiving final approval from the Village of Sugar Grove for a 322-unit residential development (174 single-family home; 148 townhome) at the intersection of Galena Rd and Illinois Route 56. Known as Brighton Ridge, this development is adjacent to

the District's 235-acre Bliss Woods Forest Preserve. In early 2025, the District was contacted by Lennar Homes at the behest of Sugar Grove Park District. Lennar is seeking to dedicate approximately 42 acres of land to the District, as the incorporation of open space into the development will enhance the desirability of living at Brighton Ridge. Staff evaluation of the natural area value of the donation parcel show it to be comprised primarily of non-native species and in need of restoration; however, this parcel will link the District's Aurora West (715 acres) and Bliss Woods Forest Preserves. Protection of this parcel will assist with maintenance of the Virgil Gilman Trail as well as provide a transportation corridor and habitat for our native wildlife. Staff and legal counsel have worked with Lennar to ensure that the proposed property boundaries will not create any undue encroachment burden, and clarified that the Fox Metro Water Reclamation District maintenance path onsite remains the maintenance responsibility of that District. Additionally, Lennar Homes will be donating \$20,000 to the District to begin the ecological restoration on the donated parcel.

DISCUSSION: *President Lenert stated that the 235-acre parcel is being developed into single family homes as well as townhomes and will benefit the County. In addition to the development of the homes, there will be a connection to the bike trail with not cost to the District.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Bill Roth
SECONDER: Jon Gripe
AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams
ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

VII. Planning & Utilization

TMP-25-510 Resolution Approving a Bid for the Fabyan South Residence Exterior Renovation.

Dir. of Operations Jensen presented the bid. The South Residence at Fabyan Forest preserve was built between 1915 and 1920; known as "The Superintendent's House" it was ordinarily used as staff quarters on the Fabyan Estate. The residence is currently part of the District's employee housing program and in need of minor cedar-shake siding replacement due to prolonged exposure to direct sunlight. The historic significance of this residence makes it a high priority for maintenance funds. In-kind replacement materials were specified as part of this project to ensure historical accuracy. The color pallet will also remain consistent to site for staining and painting to maintain preserve aesthetics and provide UV protection to the structure. Only damaged areas of the siding (totaling approximately 50% of the house) are to be replaced at this time in addition to minor repairs to sheathing, decking and trim. The District publicly advertised the bid and released it on the District's online bidding platform. Seven responses were received. American Painting, Incorporated (St. Charles, IL) was selected with a base bid in the amount of \$37,450. District staff recommend an additional contingency in the amount of \$2,550 to cover any unanticipated expenses of this project. Funds totaling \$120,000 were budgeted in Fiscal Year 2024/2025 for Rental Properties Maintenance. Sufficient funds totaling \$83,751.96 are available for this expense totaling \$40,000.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Juby asked if the District had replaced the windows in the home. Dir. of Ops. Jensen responded that staff replaced the upstairs windows and the downstairs windows are next. Commissioner Juby asked about keeping the historic structure of the home. Dir. Jensen explained that staff replaced the windows with the same style, however there is vinyl added to it. The house is not registered as historic, although the District did consult with Preservation Partners regarding the materials and style being used.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Leslie Juby
SECONDER: Cherryl Strathmann
AYE: Michelle Gumz, Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby,
Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams

There was a change in the agenda order; The Closed Session portion of the meeting was called prior to the item TMP-25-511

VIII. Executive
None.

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

The Committee moved into Executive Closed Session at 9:08AM to discuss license agreements.

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Bill Roth
SECONDER: Cherryl Strathmann
AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams
ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

The Committee returned to Open Session at 9:14AM on a motion by Roth, second by Gripe Roll Call vote was taken, unanimous vote.

TMP-25-511 Resolution Authorizing a License Renewal and Third Amendment with All Grass Farms, at the Brunner Family Forest Preserve

Dir. of NRM Chess presented the license renewal. In February 2015, the District entered into a license agreement with All Grass Farms (formerly Barrington Natural Farms). The original license stipulates that the primary purpose of the operation will be for an organic farm operation, including livestock, dairy operation, vegetable and fruit crops, and a farmer's market. This license was amended in 2016 to include specified organic vegetable production areas and again in 2020 to extend the term to an additional five (5) years to December 31, 2024. The original terms called for the potential of four (4), five-year renewals for a total term period of 25 years. The proposed amended renewal provides for a term extension of another three (3) years and records additional requirements for the licensee to remain in compliance with District's standards and expectations. The financial terms of this second renewal change significantly from the original 2015 license agreement. The base rent includes the same \$200 per acre fee for land rent but now includes an additional \$25,340 per year fee for use of the buildings. This will increase District rent revenue from \$32,000 each year to \$57,340. The original license also included a 5% fee on the gross sales of the farm market. That percentage has been reduced to 1% in this renewal. This 1% gross revenue fee, all gross revenue reports from prior months, and the first installment of the land rent will be due by June 15, 2025 payment deadline.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Commission
MOVER: Cherryl Strathmann
SECONDER: Anita Lewis
AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams
ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

X. Communications

Dir. of Community Engagement Metanchuk reported on the Foundation's annual native plant sale noting it was almost sold out. The remaining plants were donated to the District by the vendor. The \$10,000 made will go towards the Native Play Space Project at Leroy Oakes Forest Preserve. Dir. Metanchuk met with Senator Don DeWitte at the IAPD legislative conference in Springfield. President Lenert attended the legislative conference and noted it was his first time at that event. He stated it was very informative and beneficial to speak to the legislators.

XI. President's Comments

None.

XII. Financial Reports

Reports A-C were placed on file.

A. Bond Investment Analysis Report through March 2025

B. Cash & Investment Report through March 2025

C. Income Statement through March 2025

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Mo Iqbal

SECONDER: Jon Gripe

AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

Commissioner Gripe commented on the property recently purchased by the District on the north end of the County that contains a house. He noted that it could potentially be a great location for the Public safety department. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the house is currently being utilized for natural resource management including some equipment storage. The District is looking to utilize the property as a multi-function use operation. More information would be provided.

XIII. Adjournment

This meeting adjourned at 9:21AM.

RESULT: APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE

MOVER: Bill Roth

SECONDER: Cherryl Strathmann

AYE: Jon Gripe, Mo Iqbal, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Bill Roth, Cherryl Strathmann, Rick Williams

ABSENT: Michelle Gumz

Bill Lenert, President
Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

Gabriella Figliozzi
Recording Secretary