

Forest Preserve Committee  
September 12, 2013

The Forest Preserve Committee met on Thursday, September 12, 2013 in the conference room of the County Board Office. President Steve Ballard called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

Commissioners Present: Ballard, Banaszek, Adams, Burns, Dueysen, Maranda, Shelton and Simmer

Others Present: John McGehee, Jeff Craver, Don Jacobs, Ben Mills, Mike Petersen

Motion by Simmer, second by Shelton to go into closed session to discuss Litigation, as per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11). Carried with a roll call vote.

Closed Session began at 301PM.

Closed session ended 310p

Motion by Simmer, second by Adams to return to open session.

Motion by Maranda, second by Simmer to proceed with the letter. Carried.

Mr. McGehee mentioned a letter from American Bank regarding the Marvin Martin Trust Fund. It is coming due and that recommend be transferred to an Illinois Conservation Foundation Fund for more interest and will not be subject to the Illinois Public Investment Act (IPIA). Mr. McGehee stated that they have not completed the research on this yet as the letter was just received today. The States Attorneys' Office will research the matter and report back in October. President Ballard would like to leave the funds in a trust and use the interest as we have been in the past. Would like to investigate that as well. There is about \$1.7 million to be turned over. American Bank did a great job investing the funds.

Motion by Adams, second by Dueysen to approve the minutes from August. Carried.

Motion by Simmer, second by Maranda to approve the TDs \$12,813.76. Carried.

Motion by Adams, second by Maranda to approve the claims in all funds. Carried.

Motion by Burns, second by Adams to approve the transfers of appropriation in all funds. Carried.

Motion by Adams, second by Simmer to approve resolution \$2075.55. Carried.

Motion by Adams, second by Shelton to approve resolution \$2852.21. Carried.

Motion by Adams, second by Maranda to approve resolution \$96,372.68. Carried.

Motion by Maranda, second by Simmer to remove from display the appropriation ordinances. Carried.

#### Skid Steer Loud Thunder

This was a previously approved purchase that was questioned on the cost. Additional bids were sought for the item. Low bid was \$62,253. Had already approved up to \$80,000. Needed a head for this and to get rid of the old skid steer. All said and done, \$29,000 head with trade in, \$13,471 whole package deal is \$75,724. This is a Bobcat. Not sacrificing one bit on this piece of equipment. Get everything we need for less. Trencher cost was discussed. Can rent one as needed on a day rate. Would like to move forward with the skid steer and head. Very latest to move forward on November 1st. Have a lot to get done with the trees and timber. Mulching head is the attachment that will be purchased, 60 inch. Will grind the invasive trees into mulch and by next spring will have no idea of the trees absence. It is similar to a brush hog, but can handle up to a 20 inch tree.

Motion by Burns, second by Dueysen to proceed with the payment of the skid steer and mulching head.

This is in line with our forest management plan for all entities.

Carried.

#### Master Plan

Motion by Maranda, second by Simmer to place the 2013 Master Plan on display. Carried.

#### Institutional Collection Plan for Niabi Zoo

Motion by Maranda, second by Dueysen to place the plan on display. Carried.

#### Construction of Tamarin Exhibit Approval

Inside the educational center will have a Tamarin exhibit (\$80,000 project) completely funded by the Zoological Society.

Motion by Dueysen, second by Simmer to approve the exhibit.  
Carried.

Maranda asked about the Lion Exhibit. President Ballard advised that the Zoo will close at the end of October. Our goal is to have them back in their home when the zoo reopens in April 2014. Society had agreed to pay for the repairs that were needed. There is no rush at this time, since we are preparing to close for the season. Society will hire a fundraising firm to earn the capital that they need of \$6 million at the Zoo. The Lion is \$3.1 or \$3.2 million just for that exhibit. The bank where the society was securing the loan is requiring more fundraising on hands to secure the loan.

Bears are also on the society's list. Lions, Camels, rhino, bears, Australian, African hoof stock and forest ridge are the top 7 projects that have been identified, Mr. Craver stated. He was not present when the capital campaign was discussed to know how they will proceed. The fundraising professionals will go after individuals and corporations. The lion exhibit would eat up about 1/2 of the fundraising goal. The estate plan for the Bears will go towards the bear exhibit costs. Bears within the next two or three years is doable, but not next year. Simmer expressed concern about the elephants leaving, the bears had left and the change in the lions that many felt some of the bigger exhibits were gone. We need to keep the interest sparked at the Zoo. The Oltman Estate will be used towards the Bears.

Elephant's future home is still being worked on. There are many outside groups that would like to determine where the elephants go before the Forest Preserve Commission does. The Rhino exhibit is on hold until the elephants are safely in their new home. The tentative costs of the Rhino Exhibit are known, but not starting until the elephants are moved. Drop dead time frame of the end of October.

#### Auditor's Report

Ms. Palmer presented the monthly financial report. (Record) Budget left over for the new year should be at 83% and all funds are spending at or below that currently. Cash balances were reviewed. The General Forest Preserve Fund is down about \$400,000 which is the loan to the Zoo of \$400,000 and loan to Liability of \$100,000. These two loans indicate that the general fund is actually better than last year at this time. Payroll for FP is about \$45,000 for payroll and Zoo is about \$50,000 per payroll. Fund 136 FISSA a typo was made, Ms. Palmer provided the corrected figure by dropping an "8". Outside Auditors are in the office this week to perform the external audit for FY 13. Zoo and Liability are

hurting, but some things are being done to take care of that. It is hoped that the Zoo begins to increase revenue to no longer be a drain on the remainder of the Forest Preserve.

Motion by Maranda, second by Adams to approve the report.  
Carried.

#### Loud Thunder Report

Mr. Mills reported that this month was better than typical, saved money without running the mower. New Gator has been very helpful to get to locations and take care of storm damage. 22 Volunteers came out for United Way Day of Caring to assist with staining picnic tables and such. Mowing is underway. Camping better than last year at this time; however Mr. Mills wants to do even better. Wants to work with the public and media events. He put together a list of boat rental which we will take over next spring. A list of boats, trolling motors, batteries, etc. was established. Lyle's inventory had 14 foot John Boats - there were several that never left the beach. Rubber John Boats are much less costly (\$500) and will fit two men to fish out of as opposed to the \$1800 aluminum boats. He doesn't see a point for them at this time. Want to save money initially. President Ballard said he has 2 at his place and they have been perfect for about 14 years. Would like to try a couple to reduce costs. Want to go out to bid on some items. Don't want used battery or trolling motors. Simmer stated that paddle boats are very minimal usage. He suggested that kayaks be added. Mr. Mills stated that he increased the number of kayaks and reduced the aluminum boats. This is based on experience and usage over the past years. Mr. Mills has contacts with an individual who will rent boats as needed for events. The Pontoon boats are big revenue makers. They run about \$500 for a new boat. Anything that does not have power can be rented by under 18 individuals.

President Ballard asked the committee for direction. Simmer felt that adding a pontoon and dropping a paddle boat to increase the revenue stream. The committee authorized Mr. Mills to check prices on the items and proceed.

Motion by Simmer, second by Dueysen to proceed obtaining prices.  
Carried.

Mr. Craver advised that with taking over the boat rental and patrolling the park, he feels it would be beneficial to have a park office. One centralized location for check in and such. Directions, camp offices, boat rentals. Mr. Craver felt that it would help to better serve our campers. He requested to select an engineer/architect proceed with a camp office. The Marvin Martin Trust fund will be utilized. A site plan

is needed to indicate where the roadway goes and where the camp office is. It needs to be visible.

Motion by Simmer, second by Shelton to proceed with the plans for a camp office. Carried.

Mr. Craver added that we need to do something with the ranger residence, a bump out to better accommodate Ben's needs. Need to secure some costs.

Motion by Shelton, second by Dueysen to approve the plans to the Ranger's House. Carried.

Inspection by Simmer

Amenities at the park made it look nice. It is very dead and dry out there. Looks very good other than the dry. Move forward with electricity and water towards the back. Move campers back near the duck blind drawing. Run their generators in the very back where it won't be loud. Currently, after 10 PM, the generators must be turned off. Mr. Mills was willing to change the process and keep the equestrian campers cooler away from the tents. He felt that it would be a major use in the park for the equestrians. Costs and such will be reviewed for the upcoming seasons. Horse cleaning stations would also be beneficial.

Motion by Maranda, second by Adams to approve the reports. Carried.

Indian Bluff

Mr. Craver provided the report. (Record) The golf course is doing well despite no rain. There has been increased use in irrigation and chemicals because of the lack of rain. Several outings for the remainder of the year. There has been a dip on Sunday when the Bears play, he stated. Aeration of the greens will be upcoming. Course looks good and revenue steady. Season passes are now calendar year. May have a discount for early bird golf passes. Also, the carts are getting older. Would like to utilize the cart improvement fund to purchase them. \$5500 to \$7500 for new, less trade in of the existing carts. In October, will have a sale in November on the carts. \$1500 per cart - try that first before the trade in/RFP. Simmer felt that the campgrounds may want to purchase some as well.

Motion by Simmer, second by Adams to market and sell the 80 carts and to move forward with the purchase of new. Carried.

Simmer then provided his inspection. It is amazingly green. Equipment was neatly put away on the storage shed. He would like to see some

of the items that are stored outside tucked away for better visual. A small privacy fence or somehow cleaning it out will be addressed. First pavilion did not have painted picnic tables. Simmer felt that would be utilized more if painted.

Motion by Burns, second by Adams to approve the reports. Carried.

Illiniwek

Mr. Petersen stated that had a good month of August and has allowed them to work on various items. Record camping month for August full every weekend. Over Labor Day Weekend had some vandalism in the remodeled bathroom. It was minimal work to fix the shower head and soap tray. Taming of the Slough is bringing bikers to the park. Pricing on items for the park have been obtained. For the bathroom - hard water at the park has calcification issues. Eriksen Plumbing recommends a filter - about \$700 per building (\$2100) to put a filter system to prolong the restrooms, showers and faucets. A new toilet runs about \$1000.

Motion by Simmer, second by Adams to proceed with the filter system. Carried.

Garbage Proposal - Allied Waste and Millennium were requested to bid. Millennium is about \$75 per month cheaper and about \$30 cheaper on call dumpster. Would reduce by about \$350 per month. He will continue to review prices and will bring forth in October with a recommendation.

Adams provided his inspection. It looked real good out there; he did see the shower room issue. Redid the sidewalk into the shower house, but didn't replace the front sidewalk and it is tipping back. He talked to the Laborer's Hall and they could do volunteer work to replace the sidewalks if the FP pays for the concrete. Would bring their apprenticeship project. Adams added that the restrooms are very hot. If there were some sort of ventilation, a box fan to circulate. Petersen stated that tried to get that in the remodel but never got a quote. Many people have expressed interest in Wi-Fi at the park. Petersen has someone coming out on Monday to look at that very issue. He will present information at the October meeting. There are many campers who want to be extended campers - maybe 6 spots could be utilized for that. It is a popular request, and our policy is two weeks. Will be discussed when get closer to the opening of next season. Don't want to create a problem for the staff. Standards could be created on the extended/seasonal campers.

Motion by Simmer, second by Shelton to approve the reports. Carried.

Niabi Zoo

Mr. Craver reported that the zoo is doing very well. Membership to the zoo was also discussed. Zoofari October 12th. Heinzman is at AZA conference. Glass has been ordered for eagle exhibit. Despite the heat, school starting, the zoo is still doing well. President Ballard stated that we may want to discuss limited hours after Labor Day in the future because the staffing is higher and we don't have the visitors. Will review attendance figures for the last several years for Labor Day to the end of November. Very few field trips occur after Labor Day, most of them are in May. Reduce the number of days that are open after Labor Day in an attempt to reduce expenses.

Mr. Craver added that the collection plan is on display. More detail will be presented next month. It is a guide of what animals are brought in and out and geared towards those 7 exhibits. Requests will still come before the committee to dispose or trade animals.

Mr. Adams provided the inspection report - there were six lights out. Water is getting below the sidewalk and probably should be crack sealed. Ventilation is needed in those restrooms as well. Restroom by the bird house has a wall kicked in on the female handicapped stall.

Motion by Simmer, second by Maranda to approve the reports.  
Carried.

Director's report

Mr. Craver reported that the NWS Server work is moving along. Hope to make the switch September 23rd. Time and Attendance system for the zoo has bugs working out. Forest Preserve Master Plan is a revision of the 2008 plan based on public input. List of items and concerns that will be addressed thru budgeting over the next several years.

Mr. Craver asked about a camping report - it was missing from his packet, it appears that the printer skipped a page. That will be provided at full board.

Motion by Adams, second by Shelton to approve the report. Carried.

Adjourn 433 pm

Shelly Chapman