

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
DECEMBER 11, 2018**

PRESENT: Committee members - K. Swanson, C. O'Brien, D. Cremeens, R. Simmer, K. Maranda, L. Moreno.

ABSENT: E. Sowards.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Mike Petersen, Illiniwek Ranger; Lee Jackson, Zoo Director; Todd Collins, Club House Manager; Jay Verstraete, Golf Course Superintendent; April Palmer, Auditor; Scott Lohman.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:33 PM on Tuesday, December 11, 2018, in the Rock Island County Building on the second floor Rock Island, Illinois.

President Swanson called for a motion approving the November Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the November Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the November closed session minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the November closed session minutes. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

No request for public comment was submitted.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Forest Preserve General Fund claims in the amount of \$42,809.31, Niabi Zoo Fund claims in the amount of \$67,127.28, Golf Course Improvement fund claims in the amount of \$2,640.16, Development of Forests & Construction of Improvement Fund claims in the amount of \$11,839.10, Loud Thunder Spillway & Improvements Fund claims in the amount of \$21,780.05, Marvin Martin Fund claims in the amount of \$1,665.17, and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$1,151,073.50.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the claims and Treasurer's Disbursements. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the transfers of appropriation in the Forest Preserve General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund.

MOTION: Mr. Cremeens moved to approve the transfers of appropriation in the Forest Preserve General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Designation of Banks or Other Depositories Resolution.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Designation of Banks or Other Depositories Resolution. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve Mr. Jeff Craver as the District's FOIA Officer.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve Mr. Jeff Craver as the District's FOIA Officer. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the 2019 meeting dates and holidays.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the 2019 meeting dates and holidays. Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the fiscal year 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

MOTION: Ms. O'Brien moved to approve the fiscal year 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Niabi Zoo Master Plan.

MOTION: Dr. Moreno moved to approve the Niabi Zoo Master Plan. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Niabi Zoo Strategic Business Plan.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Niabi Zoo Strategic Business Plan. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the low bid for the Zoo Cat House Exhibit Transfer Door Project.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the low bid for the Zoo Cat House Exhibit Transfer Door Project. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Dr. Moreno stated that it was concerning to see such a big difference. Is there a reason for the difference?

Mr. Craver stated that the bids were asked for as a lump sum, and that is how they were provided to the District. A thru Z Consulting is a specialized company who does work for zoos.

Mr. Jackson stated that A thru Z Consulting does work for zoos all over the world, and they do fabricate their own materials.

President Swanson stated that the company is on the AZA's approved vendor list. That means that the company has the knowledge of what these doors will be put through.

Ms. O'Brien expressed concern that there was no warranty specifically stated for any of the bids.

Mr. Craver stated that a warranty could be written into the agreement.

Mr. Maranda brought to the Committee's attention that A thru Z Consulting is not registered in Illinois.

President Swanson stated that it had been a concern for him at first also, but when the work needed is so specialize it is important to look at who can give the best product in order to keep animals and employees safe.

Dr. Simmer stated that he felt the AZA approval was more important than where the company is registered, and besides that the company came in significantly less.

Ms. O'Brien asked if the vendor the District chose would affect Niabi's ability to reacquire the AZA accreditation.

Mr. Jackson stated that it would not necessarily hurt Niabi's chances, but it might mean that the project could not be completed as there has only been \$130,000.00 pledged for the project.

Mr. Maranda stated that the company is based out of Arizona.

Mr. Craver pointed out that while the County, whose construction needs tend to be more general in nature, has passed an ordinance regarding companies being registered in the state of Illinois, the District has no such policies or ordinances. In checking with the Civil Division the District does not have to worry about that as far as bid acceptance.

Mr. Cremeens asked if Mr. Jackson had any experience with this company personally.

Mr. Jackson stated that he did, and that his biggest concern about the conversation is that the low bidder has done this on five continents. We are talking about systems that have to keep our animals and keepers safe.

Dr. Moreno stated that based on what Mr. Jackson has stated, he no longer has the concern as to the large difference, and the savings in addition to the experience certainly is the better option.

Dr. Simmer stated that the other two companies, while being great for general contracting work, do not have the specialized knowledge that Niabi needs for this project. I call for the vote.

Motion carried. Mr. Maranda and Ms. O'Brien voted nay.

President Swanson called for a motion to bring into consideration the bid for the Zoo Primate Enclosure Project.

MOTION: Ms. O'Brien moved to bring into consideration the bid for the Zoo Primate Enclosure Project. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

President Swanson stated that it has been confirmed that Corners Limited is an AZA approved vendor.

Mr. Jackson stated that the actual structure has to sit on a concrete base, and Corners doesn't do concrete work. A local contractor would need to do the concrete work. Corners does not provide the permits, which cost around \$300.00 to \$400.00. Even taking those into consideration, they come in considerably less than the other bid.

Mr. Maranda asked where Corners was based out of.

Dr. Simmer stated that he was concerned about the things the Corners' bid lacked. How much of the other bid is the concrete work and permits?

President Swanson asked if the Committee thought the scope of the concrete work would be close to \$114,000.00, which was the difference in bid.

Mr. Jackson stated that the concrete work is estimated around \$12,000.00. Staff is currently getting estimates for that work.

Mr. Craver stated that the Civil Division will write up this agreement as well.

President Swanson stated that he appreciated the conscientious discussion. When going through the herpetology building with Mr. Jackson and the AZA inspectors hearing the praise for the wonderful job our keepers are doing was great. Then hearing that since the building was put together on kind of an inside deal, that the entire subsurface is washed away because it was not done with long term standards in mind. Then there are the businesses like Corners and A thru Z that stake their reputation on, not whether or not I want them to pave my alley, but whether zoo professionals are going to come back and use them again and recommend their company to other zoo professionals. We've tried the old way, going with local companies that

have no knowledge or experience in building what Niabi needs, and it has not served us well. With the professional leadership, the District now has the opportunity to do things the right way.

The vote was called for.

Motion carried. Mr. Maranda voted nay.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Strand Associates proposals for bid documents, construction and observation services pertaining to campground improvements and cabin construction.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Strand Associates proposals for bid documents, construction and observation services pertaining to campground improvements and cabin construction. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver explained that he was not able to get the documents that were handed out here at Committee into the packet because the documents had just arrived today. There are two documents. One proposed agreement for the campground improvements, and one proposed agreement for the cabins. These proposals are for putting together bid manuals, and construction and observation services. The project is infrastructure, and will only need a general contractor.

Dr. Moreno stated that the price of \$250,000.00 each for the cabins seems too expensive for the District to consider at this time.

Mr. Craver went through a brief explanation on the pricing of the cabins including the \$175,000.00 supporting infrastructure, and that the cabins will be put in if there is money after the camping improvements. It is recommended that the supporting infrastructure be put in place so that cabins could be put in at a later date. There are also options to decrease the cost of cabins depending on what the District chooses for the cabins.

President Swanson stated that given the price per cabin, it is a good idea to give it careful consideration as to if the revenue from the cabins will be worth the cost of putting them in.

There was consensus to separate the proposals, and vote on each individually.

AMENDED MOTION: Ms. O'Brien moved to approve the Strand Associates proposal for camping improvements at Loud Thunder not to exceed \$16,000.00. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to bring into consideration the Strand Associates proposal for cabins at Loud Thunder.

MOTION: Ms. O'Brien moved to bring into consideration the Strand Associates proposal for cabins at Loud Thunder. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

President Swanson asked what the Committee's feelings were on accepting the proposal, using the documents to put the cabin project out to bid and seeing what numbers come back.

Mr. Craver explained that the revenue stream that is planned to off-set the cost of the bond and improvements for which the bond was acquired are the full hook up RV spots. The cabins are a long term revenue source. The bonds will be paid off in twenty years, and the cabins will continue to bring in money for upwards of sixty to eighty years. These are essentially houses, and houses have a long life span. There will be maintenance required to keep them up, but they will continue to bring in revenue long after the bonds have been paid off. I don't expect that extra staff will be needed to cover the extra sites or cabins.

AMENDED MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approval the proposal from Strand Associates, not to exceed \$15,000.00, and called for the vote.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called on Ms. Palmer for the Auditor's reports.

Ms. Palmer stated that she had gotten through the draft of the CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report). The outside auditors were later than usual getting the draft to the Auditor's Office for review. In the CAFR there are significant changes from years past due to GASB 75. The monthly reports are on track, and the beginning balances on the Fund Balances report match to the audit.

President Swanson called on Mr. Collins and Mr. Verstraete for their Indian Bluff reports.

Mr. Verstraete stated that staff is working on winter projects. The walls and such for the weather shelter will be fabricated in the shop this winter and placed this spring.

Mr. Collins stated that he was working on promotions for the course.

President Swanson asked Mr. Petersen if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to in his Illiniwek report.

Mr. Petersen stated that staff is working on the forest management plan. Emerald Ash Bore has been found, and staff is removing those trees as well.

President Swanson asked Mr. Jackson if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to in his report.

Mr. Jackson stated that the AZA inspection went very well. Staff is very excited about how well it went. Unfortunately, since the zoo was not open they will have to come back for about a day and a half in the summer and complete the inspection. In speaking to other zoos in our region, the weather played a key role in the decrease of revenues. Zoos all across this region are reporting double digit percentage decreases in revenue due to the weather this past season.

President Swanson added that the inspectors were also very impressed at the improvements of Niabi's governance.

President Swanson asked Mr. Craver if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to in his report.

Mr. Craver spoke briefly on the Audit, and stated that it would be presented to the Commission on Tuesday.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve all routine reports for the District.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve all routine reports for the District. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Adjourned the meeting at 4:45 PM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant