

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
OCTOBER 10, 2017**

PRESENT: Committee members - K. Swanson, K. Maranda, D. Cremeens, C. O'Brien, E. Langdon.

ABSENT: R. Simmer, L. Moreno.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Ben Mills, Loud Thunder Ranger; Ross Smith, Illiniwek Assistant Ranger; Todd Collins, Club House Manager; April Palmer, County Auditor; Denise Bulat, Bi-State Regional Authority Executive Director; Amy Behning, MindFire Communications; Scott Lohman.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:30 PM on Tuesday, October 10, 2017, in the County Board Office on the second floor of the County Building, Rock Island, Illinois.

President Swanson called for a motion approving September Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION: Ms. O'Brien moved to approve September Committee meeting minutes. Mr. Langdon seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion approving September Public Hearing meeting minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve September Public Hearing meeting minutes. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

There was no request for public comment.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve claims for the Forest Preserve General Fund in the amount of \$52,792.31, Niabi Zoo Fund in the amount of \$161,516.18, Liability Fund in the amount of \$4,856.50, Bike Path Improvement Fund in the amount of \$565.09, Marvin Martin Trust Fund in the amount of \$1,385.72, and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$39,190.29.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda 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 transfers of appropriation in the Forest Preserve General Fund and the Niabi Zoo Fund.

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

Motion carried.

President Swanson asked the Committee if there were any of the four resolutions listed on the agenda that they would like to lift out and approve separately.

No one had any objections to motioning for the four resolutions together.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Appropriation Amendment for Niabi Zoo Fund-Pints Revenue and Expenses resolution, Appropriation Amendment for Niabi Zoo Fund-Revenue Appropriation resolution, Appropriation Amendment for General Fund-Property Tax & Personal Property Replacement Tax resolution, and the Appropriation Amendment for General Fund-Illiniwek Camping Fees resolution.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the Appropriation Amendment for Niabi Zoo Fund-Pints Revenue and Expenses resolution, Appropriation Amendment for Niabi Zoo Fund-Revenue Appropriation resolution, Appropriation Amendment for General Fund-Property Tax & Personal Property Replacement Tax resolution, and the Appropriation Amendment for General Fund-Illiniwek Camping Fees resolution. Mr. Langdon seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the 2017 Levy Ordinances for the General Fund of the District, Niabi Zoological Preserve Fund, IMRF Fund, Liability Fund, FISSA Fund, and Development of Forests & Construction of Improvement.

MOTION: Ms. O'Brien moved to approve the 2017 Levy Ordinances for the General Fund of the District, Niabi Zoological Preserve Fund, IMRF Fund, Liability Fund, FISSA Fund, and Development of Forests & Construction of Improvement. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a discussion on the Mission & Vision Statement for the District.

Ms. Denise Bulat stated that Bi-State Regional Commission has been working with the District to update the Park Plan. The goal is to have that completed by September of 2018. There were two public input meetings held. The first didn't have anyone from the public in attendance, the second was attended by a few people. MindFire is working to collect data for the update. There has been discussion with Mr. Craver on refreshing the mission and vision statements for the District. If the Committee could confirm that we're on the right track with the proposed changes, that would help us move forward with the work. Mr. Craver suggested putting in the "Purpose" section to explain why forest preserves exist. The current mission statement you can see, and right below that is the revised mission statement. It is more

concise. The revision on the vision statement was a collaboration with Mr. Craver, but there are also some other vision options listed for discussion. The reason for these proposed changes are because the District has made many improvements to the facilities and the professional staff, Mr. Craver felt that it would be a great time to focus on the true mission of a forest preserve both in the mission statement and perhaps in the vision statement. The changes look at the long term mission and vision of the Forest Preserve District. There is an option in the mission statement to use the word “conserve” or “preserve”, if there are any opinions on that?

President Swanson stated that he preferred the term “conserve” because that seems more accurate.

Mr. Craver spoke briefly on restoring habitat, then stated that in the previous plan the emphasis was on increasing the professional staff, and the quality of the amenities while keeping the fees affordable. When I was putting together a list of what was accomplished, it was clear that we’ve achieved many of the goals, and should start to move toward emphasis on being land managers with some camping, golfing, and Niabi as amenities. Narrowing the focus on maintaining what we have and adding to the land that we have to conserve natural habitats and resources that are quickly dwindling.

Ms. Bulat stated that in the second public input meeting the affordability of the camping and golfing were mentioned as positives that the District is doing well in. The vision statement is looking toward that managing goal as well; connecting nature and wildlife to people.

President Swanson stated that he would like to see all the things mentioned in the vision statement options to be included in the vision statement. Is there anything else that we should be aware of?

Ms. Bulat stated that the work had begun on this project, and a draft will be brought to either a group of individuals, or the full Committee.

President Swanson called for a motion approving the CLR Design Master Planning Services proposal for \$68,500.00.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the CLR Design Master Planning Services proposal for \$68,500.00. Ms. O’Brien and Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that this was something that specifically needs to be done for Niabi. It will be a little more detailed in terms of a plan and a vision for the zoo. This expense is in the budget. Mr. Jackson is familiar with many firms that do this type of work.

Mr. Jackson stated that he spoke to several firms, and chose this particular firm for the diversity of their experience. The process should take 6 to 8 months. When this process is done Niabi will have a guide to help us grow in a sustainable way over the next 7 or 8 years. It will be a cohesive strategy. The plan is something that Niabi will need to regain its AZA

accreditation. Throughout the process there will be workshops for staff, and Committee members are also invited to come.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the purchase of Vermeer BC1000XL wood chopper for the District at \$34,194.00 from Vermeer Corporate accounting pricing-NJPA Grounds Maintenance Contract #062117-VRM.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the purchase of Vermeer BC1000XL wood chopper for the District at \$34,194.00 from Vermeer Corporate accounting pricing-NJPA Grounds Maintenance Contract #062117-VRM. Mr. Langdon and Mr. Cremeens seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called on Illiniwek Assistant Ranger Ross Smith for presentation on the grant and scope of project for the prairie restoration at Illiniwek Forest Preserve.

Mr. Smith introduced himself, and stated that the project serves a dual purpose. It fulfills the mission of the District, and I need a project like this in order to graduate. The map that is in the packet shows the full scope of the ball diamonds portion of the restoration. The plan is to repurpose and recycle what we can from what needs to be removed, and replace it with a native grassland outdoor classroom. The infield area will be dug down so we can find the subsoil and mix in fill. That is where the oak savannah will be established, and the handout shows where the 6 to 8 trees will go. There is a gray water septic tank that will need to be removed, which should not be too difficult. There is also marked on the handout where there will be interruptive signage. The species of oak tree will be a Swamp White Oak because they are extremely hardy. There are several groups contributing to the project. \$8,000.00 from River Bend Action. I just received an email from Pheasants Forever which is pledging around \$2,500.00. Still waiting to hear back from Trees Forever, and I've spoken to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

President Swanson called for a motion approving the grant and scope of project for Illiniwek.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the grant and scope of project for Illiniwek. Mr. Langdon seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding Exelon Settlement Agreement.

Mr. Craver stated that in the packet is the original draft of the Agreement, but an additional handout was passed around to see the revised. There were just a few things that were adjusted. Staff recommends approval, and giving authorization to President Swanson to execute the agreement pending review from the Civil Division of the State's Attorney's Office.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding Exelon Settlement Agreement. Mr. Cremeens and Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

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

Ms. Palmer stated that the trial balance report and the fund balance report are within acceptable parameters. The Liability Fund has paid back \$100,000.00 of the \$150,000.00 loan from General Fund. That leaves \$50,000.00 for the Liability Fund to pay back to the General Fund.

President Swanson asked Mr. Smith if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to from the Illiniwek report.

Mr. Smith reported that the Halloween event was coming up, and the Tipi event did very well.

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

Mr. Jackson reported that the new bat exhibit is open, and was received very well. I'd like permission to officially turn over ownership of the elephants to the Little Rock Zoo. They have been down there for several years, but no paperwork has ever been done on that transfer. The main concern with this is the liability. Technically Niabi still retains ownership, so if something were to happen the District could be liable. We could also be asked to take them back, which Niabi cannot do.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve Mr. Jackson's pursuit of officially transferring ownership of the elephants.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve Mr. Jackson's pursuit of officially transferring ownership of the elephants. Mr. Langdon seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Jackson stated that he would also like support in working with the legislators regarding the free day rules.

Mr. Craver suggested that next month there be a resolution of support regarding that pursuit.

President Swanson stated that that was fine. Then asked Mr. Collins if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to from the Indian Bluff reports.

Mr. Collins reported that September had been a good month. Would like permission to offer the current golf course members the opportunity to buy the season pass for the 2018 season

at the 2017 price. In years past the next year's pass was offered at the current year price until the end of that calendar year. This would provide more incentive to people to buy the season pass membership; offering more perks.

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve offering the current golf course members the opportunity to buy the season pass for the 2018 season at the 2017 price. Mr. Langdon seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson asked Mr. Mills if there was anything he'd like to bring attention to from the Loud Thunder report.

Mr. Mills reported that revenues are significantly up from last year. There was some storm damage from the six inch rain that the area got the other week. Work on the trail project continues, and forest management work will begin in autumn.

President Swanson asked Ms. Behning if she could give an update on MindFire's work.

Ms. Behning gave a brief overview on some of the technical aspects of the data collection being done for the District, and stated that there should be an Executive Summary to present in November.

President Swanson asked Mr. Craver if there was anything else he wished to report.

Mr. Craver reported that the District is coming to the end of the busy seven month season. There are still several events at the parks, but things are starting to wind down.

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

MOTION: Mr. Maranda moved to approve the routine reports of the District as presented. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Adjourned the meeting at 4:29 PM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant