

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
APRIL 9, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Committee members - D. Cremeens, R. Simmer, K. Maranda, E. Sowards, L. Moreno.

**ABSENT:** K. Swanson, C. O'Brien.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jeff Craver, District Director; Lee Jackson, Niabi Zoo Director.

Dr. Simmer called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:34 PM on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, in the Administration Building at Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Illinois.

Dr. Simmer called for a motion approving the March Committee meeting minutes.

**MOTION:** Mr. Cremeens moved to approve the March Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

No request for public comment was submitted.

Dr. Simmer mentioned some good PR that Niabi had received recently, and stated that it was always nice to see good things being said about the parks.

Dr. Simmer called for a motion to approve the Forest Preserve General Fund claims in the amount of \$52,366.35, Niabi Zoo Fund claims in the amount of \$118,507.48, Liability Fund claims in the amount of \$351.50, Golf Course Improvement Fund claims in the amount of \$768.86, Loud Thunder Spillway & Improvements Fund claims in the amount of \$116,986.09, Marvin Martin Fund Claims in the amount of \$150.00, and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$226,739.04.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the claims and Treasurer's Disbursements. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Dr. Simmer called for a motion to approve the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Dr. Simmer called for a motion to approve the Appropriation Amendment for Niabi Zoo Fund appropriating \$50,000.00 for capital projects.

**MOTION:** Dr. Moreno moved to approve the Appropriation Amendment for Niabi Zoo Fund appropriating \$50,000.00 for capital projects. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Dr. Simmer asked which projects the money would go to.

Mr. Carver explained that it was for the cat house doors, and the primate exhibit. The Society had agreed to pay for those projects, so this a budget neutral appropriation amendment.

Motion carried.

Dr. Simmer called on Mr. Craver for the discussion of the Loud Thunder camping improvements bid letting.

Mr. Craver stated that, at the moment, the bidding for the camping improvements at Loud Thunder was in a holding pattern. The OSLAD grant contract needs to be signed before bids can go out, and the District has not yet received that paperwork. The plans remain the same as the Committee saw in January this year. All the camping improvements would be bid at the same time. The only aspect of the grant that would need to be bid separately is the playground. As soon as the paperwork comes in staff would like to put the bids out. That may mean that the timing will not allow the Committee to review the bids before the Commission meeting. There are two ways to address this. One, the Committee has a special meeting to review the bids before the Commission meeting, or the bids get reviewed at the Commission meeting. This could be in May or June. Hopefully it will not be any longer than that. What would the Committee like to do?

The Committee briefly deliberated, and came to a consensus that having a special meeting to review the bids before the full Commission met was the best option.

Mr. Craver stated that there have been several hiccups with the cabins. The pre-fab cabins that the District was considering will not meet code due to the lack of insulation and sprinkler system. This will likely mean that an architect will need to draw up plans for a cabin that will have these features, and the cost will be much more than anticipated. Originally all the bids were to be done at the same time, however now the cabins would likely need to be bid separately. It is also important to keep in mind that, depending on where the bids come in for the other improvements, there may not be enough funds to build the cabins.

Dr. Simmer and Dr. Moreno brought up pre-fab residential homes as a possible solution to the code requirements that could keep costs lower.

Mr. Craver stated that going that direction would require a different type of foundation than what is in the current bid for the improvements. The only other question for the Committee was whether to put in the impact agreement language into the bids, or wait to put that language in at a later time.

Dr. Simmer asked how that would affect the bids.

Mr. Maranda stated that it did not affect the costs of the project. It simply means that there is no interruption in construction.

Mr. Craver explained how things had worked in the past for impact agreement language.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to put the impact language into the bid documents. Dr. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Dr. Moreno moved to hold a special meeting before the regular Commission meeting to review the bids for the Loud Thunder camping improvement projects should the timing of the opening not coincide with the regular monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee in May or June. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Dr. Simmer called on Mr. Craver for the discussion of the trade-in and purchase of new equipment for Illiniwek and Indian Bluff.

Mr. Craver stated that staff at Illiniwek wanted to trade in the wide area mower for a zero turn mower. The trade in value of the wide area mower is more than the cost of the zero turn, so staff would like to use the remaining trade in money to go towards an equipment purchase at Indian Bluff. The remaining cost for the John Deere 4066R compact tractor would come out of the Golf Course Improvement Fund. Funds for that purchase were budgeted in the fiscal year 2020 budget, so that money would be freed up to use for other purchases. This would not affect the purchase of the golf carts.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the purchase of the John Deere 4066R. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Dr. Simmer called for a motion to approve the charity event at Illiniwek.

**MOTION:** Dr. Moreno moved to approve the charity event at Illiniwek. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Dr. Simmer asked Mr. Craver if there was anything from his report that he wanted to bring attention to.

Mr. Craver stated that the cart path project will hopefully go out to bid by the end of the month. The Marvin Martin Fund loan has been paid back, and the trail bridges have been built. Facilities are open, and hopefully there will be good weather in the near future. There will likely be some extra costs in seeding because of the flooding. The boat rental retaining wall project will start again at the end of April.

Dr. Simmer asked Mr. Jackson if there was anything he would like bring attention to in his Niabi Zoo report.

Mr. Jackson stated that Niabi is continuing to move forward toward the AZA reaccreditation. The perimeter fence project is going out to bid. Opening day for Niabi is Saturday, and there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new primate exhibit on April seventeenth. The AZA inspectors will be out to finish the inspection in June.

There was a brief discussion on the minimum wage increase over the next few years in which the Committee was informed that fees would need to be increased and/or taxes raised in order to keep the District at the level service that is now.

Dr. Simmer 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. Moreno seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Adjourned the meeting at 4:24 PM.

Submitted by:  
Cassie Sullivan  
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant