

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
MAY 8, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Committee members - K. Swanson, K. Maranda, D. Cremeens, E. Sowards, R. Simmer; C. O'Brien.

**ABSENT:** L. Moreno.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jeff Craver, District Director; Lee Jackson, Zoo Director; April Palmer, Auditor; Todd Collins, Club House Manager.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:30 PM on Tuesday, May 8, 2018, in the Club House at Indian Bluff Golf Course in Milan, Illinois.

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

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the April Committee meeting minutes. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

No request for public comment was submitted.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the claims for the Forest Preserve General Fund in the amount of \$69,803.51, Niabi Zoo Fund claims in the amount of \$121,496.92, Liability Fund claims in the amount of \$60.00, Loud Thunder Spillway & Camping Improvements Fund claims in the amount of \$19,832.00, Marvin Martin Fund claims in the amount of \$3,637.42, and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$3,205.02.

**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 the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund.

**MOTION:** Dr. Simmer moved to approve the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the resolution regarding additional funds for Niabi Zoo.

**MOTION:** Dr. Simmer moved to approve the resolution regarding additional funds for Niabi Zoo. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Ordinance establishing the compensation of members and officers of the Rock Island County Forest Preserve Commission.

**MOTION:** Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Ordinance establishing the compensation of members and officers of the Rock Island County Forest Preserve Commission. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Abused & Neglected Child Reporting Act Policy.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the Abused & Neglected Child Reporting Act Policy. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the 2018 Park & Recreation Compensation Survey and Salary Recommendations.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the 2018 Park & Recreation Compensation Survey and Salary Recommendations. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

President Swanson stated that there has not been a compensation study done for some time, and there are some discrepancies. Mr. Craver can explain in more detail.

Mr. Craver stated that a salaries survey was done by a management association who were contacted by Illinois Parks & Rec Association (IPRA). The District participated in this survey, and was sent approximately fifty job descriptions. Those were matched to job descriptions within the District. There was an algorithm used to determine the weighted averages for the different budget ranges. The report shows the comparisons. Some of the positions in the survey were not applicable. Zoo positions were not included in the survey, so District staff looked at the latest AZA salary survey from 2014. For the ranges you see in the report, it takes the weighted average and goes 20% up and 20% down. Looking at the union positions, those all fall within the range, or are higher. However, the non-union salaries are where there is a notable discrepancy. Union salaries increase at a faster rate due to the fact that the union not only gets the general wage increase (GWI) each year but also gets step increases. The non-union employees only receive a GWI. This has led to some of the union employees making more than their supervisors. The recommendation is to close the gap, and make things closer to what are best practices within the Park and Recreation field.

President Swanson stated that the value of studies like this is not to fix everything in year one, but set the ranges that Jeff was talking about so you know as you move forward where you need to accelerate, and where you can afford to decelerate.

Dr. Simmer stated that there has been some concern previously regarding losing good employees because the District is underpaying them. The employee is trained and time is invested in them, but a better offer comes along because the salary their making is less than what someone in that position usually makes.

Ms. O'Brien asked if there was a plan regarding the budget for these increases.

Mr. Craver stated that there was. If approved, the increases would go into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, which is the beginning of the new fiscal year. The District's IMRF rate is low enough that there shouldn't be an impact in the fund. The FISSA Fund should also be fine. In the General Fund and Zoo Fund there are a couple of small equipment purchases that could be postponed if necessary. In the budget for fiscal year 2020, which staff will be starting on soon, those increases will be included in the budget.

Motion carried.

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

Ms. Palmer stated that all funds are underspent in their budgets, which is good to see. On the Fund Balance report we take a look at the current fund balances and compare them to the five-month reserve. The District has only recently switched to a five-month reserve. Most of the Funds can meet this reserve. There is no reason for concern because the tax distribution will be in June, and the parks have opened and are bringing in revenue. For the Cash Balances report, some of the funds are up from last year, which is always nice to see. The loan to the Liability Fund from the General Fund is to be paid back before the end of the fiscal year.

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

Mr. Collins stated that the season started out slow due to the weather, but things have started to pick up. I'm looking into ways to increase revenues. Some of the options that are being pursued are information on gaming machines, golf simulators, and renting out the club house during the winter for events.

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

Mr. Jackson stated that the field trip schedule is filling up. The weather gave a very rough start to the season, but things are picking up. There was a vet care audit done recently in preparation for the AZA inspection, and that audit went very well. There were a few tweaks recommended, but the overall vet care procedures are where they need to be. The changes to

the website are nearly complete. There will be approximately seventy-seven pages of content on Niabi's website. The master planning is still a work in progress, but there is an update.

Mr. Jackson presented a rough draft map of some of the changes being suggested for the next twenty years of Niabi's operation, and went through some of the ideas which were represented on the map. This included moving some of the existing collection, and expanding with new animals, exhibits, and amenities.

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

Mr. Craver stated that the parks are busy, and things are turning green. The river is coming up, and if it rises much further, Illiniwek may lose a couple campsites to flooding. The weather was bad in the beginning of the season, but the weather has turned nice. River Action will be at the Commission meeting this month; they are a great partner. The playground for Loud Thunder has been ordered. Phase three of the Dorrance trail system is underway.

Ms. Palmer informed the Committee that she would be losing her payroll specialist, and the process has begun to find a new one. Please bear with the office in regards to payroll as it will be short staffed while we find and train a new person.

President Swanson gave an update on the house bill that was discussed last month. Unfortunately, it will not come up this year. However, next year is another opportunity, and the District can try again.

Adjourned the meeting at 4:33 PM.

The Committee went on a tour of the Indian Bluff Golf Course where Mr. Craver pointed out various projects and areas that would need attention. No discussion of the issues took place.

Submitted by:  
Cassie Sullivan  
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant