

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 12, 2019**

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

**ABSENT:** L. Moreno.

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

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:30 PM on Tuesday, February 12, 2019, in the Rock Island County Building on the second floor Rock Island, Illinois.

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

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

Motion carried.

No request for public comment was submitted.

President Swanson stated that he had a thank you card for the scout who did some work at Illiniwek for Commissioners to sign if they would like.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Forest Preserve General Fund claims in the amount of \$25,403.03, Niabi Zoo Fund claims in the amount of \$72,592.45, Liability fund claims in the amount of \$4,528.00, Development of Forests & Construction fund claims in the amount of \$755.69, Loud Thunder Spillway & Improvements Fund claims in the amount of \$35,626.21, Marvin Martin Fund claims in the amount of \$17,056.75, and Treasurer's Disbursements in the amount of \$19,048.53.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the claims and Treasurer's Disbursements. Mr. Cremeens 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:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the transfers of appropriation in the General Fund and Niabi Zoo Fund. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Appropriation Amendment for the Niabi Zoo Fund regarding the Robert & Florence A. Ruhnow Trust.

**MOTION:** Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Appropriation Amendment for the Niabi Zoo Fund regarding the Robert & Florence A. Ruhnow Trust. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver briefly explained that the funds were bequeathed.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Financial Certificate Statement for the Recreational Trails Program (Grant) for Grand Illinois Trail Restroom and Support Facility.

**MOTION:** Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Financial Certificate Statement for the Recreational Trails Program (Grant) for Grand Illinois Trail Restroom and Support Facility. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the Food Services Concessions Agreement with Sunshine Sammi for Niabi Zoo.

**MOTION:** Dr. Simmer moved to approve the Food Services Concessions Agreement with Sunshine Sammi for Niabi Zoo. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the low bid for the Primate Exhibit.

**MOTION:** Ms. Sowards moved to approve the low bid for the Primate Exhibit. Mr. Maranda seconded the motion.

There was a brief discussion on the previous bids for the cat house doors. The Committee rehashed the points from the previous bids.

President Swanson brought the Committee back to the current motion on the Primate Exhibit bids.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the low bid for the Cat House doors.

**MOTION:** Mr. Maranda moved to approve the low bid for the Cat House doors. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried. Dr. Simmer and Mr. Cremeens voted nay.

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

Ms. Palmer stated that no fund is over budget spent. Expenses are down from this time last year, as is the fund balance for Niabi. The Marvin Martin fund looks like it's in the negative fund balances, but the annual withdrawal funds will be coming in and will more than make up for that.

President Swanson called on Mr. Collins for his Indian Bluff Club House reports.

Mr. Collins stated that business has been slower than normal for this time of year due to the weather. However, revenues are within normal range for this time of year.

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

Mr. Jackson stated that staff has been working on the indoor part of the new primate exhibit. The Whale Shark speaker was the biggest attendance so far with sixty people. There weren't many surprises regarding the survey results. The two things that were surprising were the economic demographic of the average zoo goer, and that one of the common reasons that people come to Niabi is as a way to get together with family and friends. That was interesting to see.

President Swanson stated that there were a few letters to the editor and that sort of thing regarding shifting Niabi to private management models as a way to cease tax subsidy. Would encourage all the Commissioners to keep in mind that according to experts like Schultz & Williams, privately managed publicly owned zoos do still draw thirty to thirty-five percent subsidy from taxes. Currently the subsidy for Niabi is under thirty-five percent. So unless the admission is going to raise to \$45 - \$50, which people will not pay, tax subsidy is still going to be necessary.

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

Mr. Craver stated that he and Mr. Jackson refined the remaining zoo budget for the fiscal year. It is now a more balanced budget. Conferences are typically around this time of year, and staff is attending a couple of conferences.

Dr. Simmer stated that he had signed up for one of the commissioner boot camps provided by the IAPD, and encouraged others to do so if they could.

President Swanson stated that the minimum wage increase looks like it may pass. If that happens, over the course of the next couple years the minimum wage will increase to \$15.00 per hour with very few exceptions. Staff and the Commission needs to give some strategic thought to that situation. That would have a major impact on the District because the seasonals that are hired during the season are paid minimum wage. The District was awarded \$400,000.00 through the OSLAD Grant thanks to the hard work done by staff.

Mr. Craver stated that a lot of credit goes to Bi-State for their help in putting together the paperwork. Also, the grant awarded for the Illiniwek restroom facilities are one hundred percent reimbursable.

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 4:07 PM.

Submitted by:  
Cassie Sullivan  
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant