

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Forest Preserve Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Forest Preserve Committee Minutes
May 22, 2018**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve Committee met on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., in the Legislative Center's Gathertorium in Sycamore, Illinois. Chairman Brown called the meeting to order. Those Members present at roll call were Mr. Bagby, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Mr. Roman, and Chairman Brown. Mr. Porterfield was absent. A quorum was established with six Members present and one absent.

Others present were Terry Hannan, Gary Hanson, Mark Pietrowski, and Kathy Stelford.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, seconded by Mr. Roman, and it was carried unanimously to approve the meeting agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Bagby and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the April 24, 2018 Forest Preserve Committee Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT CODE

County Administrator Gary Hanson reiterated that the newly written Forest Preserve Code was distributed at the Committee's last meeting. Since that time, he received comments from Chairman Brown, Mr. Roman, and then the Chief Civil Assistant State's Attorney made some additional comments as well. Mr. Hanson walked through the different comments that were obtained and the Committee Members provided their feedback on what to incorporate in the Forest Preserve District Code and where.

As far as compensation, Mr. Hanson explained that the intent was in regards to keeping the compensation the same as it currently is. He noted that there are two ways to pay Forest Preserve Commissions under the Illinois State Statute, one is a per diem that cannot exceed \$36 dollars/day and the other is a salary that cannot exceed \$3,000/year. Mr. Hanson shared that when they were trying to put this together the thought was put into how they can keep everything the same to ensure that County Board Members who are on the Forest Preserve Committee are not mistreated by being paid less or being paid more for being just on that Committee. So the final idea was to go with the salary model and to do that they had to take the per diem being paid to the County Board Members (\$85) and take that by the normal amount of meetings in a year (11) and take that calculation and pay that out on an annual basis (distributed among their paychecks). The same thing was done with the Committee Chairperson. The amount was used and annualized and paid out over time. Mr. Hanson added that what happens on a salary is when

someone doesn't show up, they still get paid but he didn't know of any other way to work this. If they went to a per diem model they could only pay \$36 and everyone wouldn't be paid equally.

The Committee discussed adding language in their code that would outline if a Member misses three consecutive Committee Meeting, the President, at his discretion, may request that the Commission, in conjunction with the County Board, reassigns the member to a County Board Committee and a County Board Committee member be assigned to the Forest Preserve District Standing Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Bagby, seconded by Ms. Little and it was approved unanimously to forward the Forest Preserve District Code to the full Board of Commissioners recommending its approval.

MONTHLY REPORTS & ACTIVITIES

Mr. Hannan reviewed the Forest Preserve's monthly reports with the Committee Members. Mr. Hannan reported, as usual, in the months of April and May there were maintenance and safety checks of building and grounds, seasonal mowing, Firewood cutting and splitting, storm clean-up, shelter house and toilet cleaning, litter pick-up and disposal, road grading, trail maintenance, equipment maintenance, scheduling shelter rentals and collecting shelter and camping fees, and drinking water sampling. Shelter houses and Lodges are used every weekend by scouts, families, and other groups throughout the County. The Natural Resource Center Educational Staff is teaching school groups and Summer Camps at Russell Woods and making classroom visits. Additionally the PDRMA Risk Management and Loss Control review and forest preserve safety is in progress for 2018 compliance.

Mr. Hannan also briefly reviewed the maintenance and project reports and joked about how April had just about every season in the one month. There were photos shown of Scout campers in spring weather and snow at MacQueen Forest Preserve. He also shared that it is with great sorrow that he was informed that Russ Gremel of Chicago Area Troop #979 has passed away. He was two months shy of his 100th birthday. Mr. Gremel was one of the oldest Scout Members in Illinois. He camped with his Scouts for twelve years at the MacQueen Forest Preserve.

Mr. Hannan continued to share that P.A. Nehring Forest Preserve also had hundreds of Emerald Ash Borer dead ash trees removed along trails with more work to be done. The Trails have been closed for safety reasons until the work is completed. He also thanked Mr. Carl Kuhn, Chief Shabbona Preserve Manager for the last nine years. Mr. Kuhn retired recently and Mr. Hannan expressed that he did great work maintaining the buildings and grounds and trails at the forest preserve and managing the shelter house reservations.

Additionally reviewed was the District's Project and Maintenance Staff Reports, the Natural Resources Management Activities Report, and the Monthly Attendance Site Report for April 2018.

Mr. Hannan also reported that the Sycamore Park District received word recently that it is one of IDOT's 2018 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant recipients. The District's grant application was approved for the full amount requested, \$1,698,980.

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Forest Preserve Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

This grant will fund 75% of the engineering and construction cost for a .8 mile paved trail segment from the new Sycamore Forest Preserve to Page Street in Sycamore. The Sycamore Park District and DeKalb County Forest Preserve District have entered an intergovernmental agreement for shared planning, implementation and funding of the grant's local match, \$424,750. The total project cost is \$2,123,730. This is the second of three segments that when completed will connect Sycamore Forest Preserve (location of the current western end of the Great Western Trail) to the Brickville Road parking access to Sycamore Lake and Leon Larson Parks by following the old railroad right of way. The first segment, Sycamore Middle School to Brickville Road, was also funded by an IDOT grant to Sycamore Park District in 2016 with construction beginning on that portion this summer. The Park District will submit an application for the third segment, Page Street to Old Mill Park, during the next granting cycle in 2020. Funding for this state program is provided by the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) which focuses on establishing alternate transportation routes in communities throughout the country.

Mr. Hannan also recently met with the Engineer for the Somonauk to Sannauk Trail and those plans are expected to be done soon. The hope is to have a summer bid letting and so work can begin in the fall.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Haji-Sheikh provided the Committee with an update of the City of DeKalb path that travels from NIU's Lagoon and goes under Lincoln Highway and under the railroad tracks to Prairie Park.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Bagby moved to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Land Acquisition per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5) at 6:45 p.m. Mr. Roman seconded the motion and it carried by a 6-0-1 roll call vote. Those voting yea were Mr. Bagby, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Mr. Roman, and Chairman Brown. None were opposed and Mr. Porterfield was absent.

The Committee entered back into their Open Meeting at 7:19 p.m.

APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF FUTURE DONATION AGREEMENT IN SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

Mrs. Haji-Sheikh moved to approve a generous future land donation agreement in Sycamore Township. Mr. Hughes seconded by motion.

Chairman Brown noted that he would abstain from voting due to not feeling completely comfortable with all of the wording in the Agreement. Mr. Bagby inquired if the Chairman would feel more comfortable if there was wording added in the motion "pending review by Legal Staff". Chairman Brown agreed with adding that wording.

Mrs. Haji-Sheikh and Mr. Hughes accepted the friendly amendment to allow the motion to read: to approve a generous future land donation agreement in Sycamore Township, pending review by Legal Staff. The motion carried unanimously.

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Forest Preserve Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Little, seconded by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Bob Brown

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary