

*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  
October 24, 2017**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve Committee met on Tuesday, October 24, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., at the Sycamore Forest Preserve's Lions Shelter in Sycamore, Illinois. Chairman Brown called the meeting to order. Those Members present were Mr. Bagby, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Roman, and Chairman Brown. Ms. Little was absent. A quorum was established with six Members present and one absent.

Others present were Terry Hannan, Pete Stefan and Gary Hanson.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**It was moved by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, seconded by Mr. Roman, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the September 26, 2017 meeting.**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**It was moved by Mr. Bagby, seconded by Mr. Roman, and it was carried unanimously to approve the meeting agenda as presented.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**MONTHLY REPORTS & ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Hannan reviewed the monthly reports and shared that he received a very nice letter from a Forest Preserve visitor that also has a hobby as a photographer. The gentleman and his wife congratulated Mr. Hannan and his staff for the carefulness and creativity with which they are maintaining and improving the County Forest Preserves.

The annual Jeff's Trees event took place on October 7<sup>th</sup> at Swanson Grove. Friends of Jeff Arnold come from all over the United States and gathered for the 10<sup>th</sup> year to plant 60 native Illinois trees and shrubs. Mr. Hannan reviewed photos from the event with the Committee and commented on what a great event it was not only this year but every year.

The 1835 Miller-Ellwood Cabin was recently featured in the local Resource Magazine. The magazine interviewed and featured the County's Forest Preserve staff and volunteer. Longtime Kingston farmer and auctioneer, Rex Nelson who lived in the farmhouse that the cabin was encased in, was also interviewed for the story regarding the cabin's history.

Mr. Hannan additionally reported that two huge cottonwood trees that were blocking the East Branch of the Kishwaukee River at the Sycamore Forest Preserve were removed in August. The trees were creating dams full of debris and restricting normal water flow. This work will help lessen flooding by allowing flood water to flow through the area.

Mr. Hannan noted that the monthly staff reports, the Natural Resource Management Activities Report, and the shelter house and camping permit information was all included in the Committee's packets and encouraged everyone to take a look at that information at their leisure.

Mr. Hannan also reported that the Frank O'Barski Memorial Bench, along with some Sycamore Trees, was located there at the Sycamore Forest Preserve back by the prairie. Additionally, Frankie Benson and some members of the church Frank used to attend contacted Mr. Hannan recently about naming the equestrian trail at Chief Shabbona Forest Preserve after Frank in his honor due to his love of horses. The individuals have received donations to have a sign made and Mr. Hannan shared that he would recommend that the Committee support the naming of the trail. Mrs. Haji-Sheikh clarified that Mr. O'Barski was additionally a member of the riding club that utilizes the trail at Chief Shabbona. There was unanimous consent from the Committee to proceed forward in naming the equestrian trail at the Chief Shabbona Forest Preserve in honor of Frank O'Barski.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mrs. Haji-Sheikh thanked Mr. Hannan for putting the bike rack up forwards the entrance of the Sycamore Forest Preserve. Mrs. Haji-Sheikh additionally told the Committee how the racks were acquired through a grant that was written and awarded to the DeKalb County Convention and Visitors Bureau but in a joint effort her and her husband drove down to central Illinois to pick the racks up. There are several installed around the County and she noted that she is happy that the last of them are finally being installed.

Mr. Roman shared that the Illinois State Historical Society is offering all 102 counties a tree that descends from an original "Johnny Appleseed" tree as part of the state's 200th birthday celebration. The Committee agreed it would be good to either plant their tree by the 1835 Miller-Ellwood Cabin in Kingston or near the Educational Center at Russell Woods in Genoa.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mr. Porterfield moved to enter into Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5) – Land Acquisition. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously by roll call vote.**

*The Committee reconvened in Open Session at 6:22 p.m.*

**Mrs. Haji-Sheikh moved to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with the Sycamore Park District for the provisions of providing the shared costs and services associated with the construction and engineering of the Great Western Trail Extension Project which includes/extends from the East End of Sycamore Forest Preserve to Old Mill Park in Sycamore, Illinois. Mr. Porterfield seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

#### **FY 2018 BUDGET**

##### **\$25,000 Additional Host Fee Funding Reduction Appeal**

Mr. Hanson reiterated to the Committee that The FY 2018 Administrative Budget Recommendation called to redirect Forest Preserve District's \$75,000 of the Host Fee from the

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Solid Waste Tipping Fees (for up to three years) to the County's General Fund to help the overall budget shortfalls. Since that time, there was an appeal made to redirect the additional \$25,000 to the General Fund and use it as "reserves" for the County. Mr. Hanson shared that he was present tonight to argue against the appeal and noted that he doesn't do this lightly because Mr. Jones is the one who filed the appeal and he has been very supportive to the entire budget process. Mr. Hanson shared his reasons for why he thinks the money should stay with the Forest Preserve and commenting that the Forest Preserve has contributed their fair share to the County's budget problems at this point. Mr. Hanson stated to the Committee that his recommendation is to deny the appeal.

Mr. Hannan addressed concerns about not having the \$75,000 for at least the next three years and where he would cut and redirect funds and reserve funds to cover that loss. Mrs. Haji-Sheikh noted that as she expressed at the last meeting, she does worry about losing this money long-term and the effect it could have on the Forest Preserve District's Budget.

**Mr. Porterfield moved to deny the appeal to increase the redirection of the Landfill Host Benefit Fee allocation from the Forest Preserve District from a \$75,000 redirection to a \$100,000 redirection. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion. The motion carried with one opposition from Mr. Bagby.**

#### **FY 2018 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE & LEVY**

Mr. Hannan presented the FY 2018 Annual Appropriation Ordinance and Levy to the Committee to review and forward onto the full Board of Commissioners.

**Mr. Bagby moved to approve and forward the FY 2018 Annual Appropriation and Levy Ordinances to the full Board of Commissioners recommending its approval. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved by Mr. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Porterfield and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman Bob Brown

  
Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary