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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Forest Preserve District Committee Minutes
August 23, 2016**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve District Committee met Tuesday August 23, 2016 at 6:00 pm in the Somonauk Library in Somonauk IL. In attendance were committee members: Mrs. Turner, Mr. Brown, Ms. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Bagby, Mr. Metzger and Superintendent Hannan. Mr. Emerson and Ms. Polanco were absent. Guests included Bill and Arden Dewey, Somonauk Village President Aaron Grandgeorge, Village Administrator Beckey Morphey and Dale Harrolle, maintenance staff member for Sannauk Preserve and other preserves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Turner called for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2016 meeting. Mr. Bagby moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Brown and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mrs. Turner called for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Haji-Sheikh moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Metzger and the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2017 BUDGET

Mr. Hannan noted that the FY 2017 budget draft is now in the Committee's hands and they need to now place the budget formally on file for the September 21st County Board and Forest Preserve Commissioners meeting. The Committee will meet in September and October to further discuss the budget and a final vote would occur at the November Forest Preserve Commissioners meeting. He noted for the Committee that the total dollars for the 2017 budget are the same as in 2016. Mr. Hannan also pointed out the tax rate and commented that the Forest preserve District costs still represent less than 1% of a citizen's tax bill.

Mr. Hannan then noted that the package contained the resolution to place the budget on file as well as budget information and photos of projects and activities in the District. He also pointed out the forest preserve growth and management that is going on currently such as the addition of the new Sycamore Forest Preserve and the new connection to the Great Western Trail. And the additional 2 new forest preserve acquisitions pending and the future G2K (Genoa to Kingston) Trail, Shabbona Pathway and Somonauk to Sannauk Trail.

Mr. Metzger asked if there were any changes to the staff in light of the growth. Mr. Hannan noted that would be reviewed with staff and possible adding one position in 2017.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh commented on the well managed forest preserve budget and moved to place the 2017 Forest Preserve Budget on file, seconded by Mr. Bagby and the motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Turner asked if there were any Committee Member comments. Mr. Brown asked if the Forest Preserve District reported to any higher body than the County Board. Mr. Hannan noted that the District was created by a State statute, the County Board/ Forest Preserve Commissioners is their primary governing body

Mrs. Turner noted that PDRMA, the District's risk management partner, can make recommendations to the District, but no governance.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh complimented Mr. Hannan and noted that he has certainly made the work of the Committee a good partnership with his extremely thorough and informative reports and presentations.

Mr. Hannan commented that within the last month they had the engineering work completed for the road widening and parking areas, new asphalt and paint markings on roads and parking, trail construction, signage and compensatory floodplain storage, at Sycamore Forest Preserve and trail connection to the Great Western Trail. The engineers estimate the costs to be approximately \$340,000.00. However, Mr. Hannan pointed out that the 60 acre land had no cost to the District as it is being donated and that the District received a very generous anonymous donation of \$100,000.00 to help with the land improvements at Sycamore Forest Preserve.

Mr. Hannan then noted that the Highway Department held a bid opening for the work at Sycamore Forest Preserve and 5 bidders participated. He then handed out the bid details to the Committee along with a resolution to award the bid.

After a review of the bid, the Committee concluded the lowest bid was for Curran Construction Company at \$316,305.21. Ms. Haji-Sheikh moved the resolution to award the bid to Curran, seconded by Mr. Brown. A roll call vote was held with 5 members voting in the affirmative, none on the negative and 2 absent. The motion was passed.

Mr. Hannan asked if one of the picnic shelters at the Sycamore Preserve could be named the Sycamore Lions Shelter as the group has offered to raise funds for the picnic shelter project. The VFW have also asked if a shelter could be named the Veterans Memorial Shelter. Ms. Haji-Sheikh asked if the veterans could be asked to provide some financial assistance. Mr. Metzger asked if there were any formal guidelines for how District facilities are named and if none exist, that it might be wise to draft some for future use.

Mr. Hannan noted that there will also be a memorial bench installed and Sycamore tree planted in memory of Frank O'Barski.

Mr. Brown recently met with the Sycamore City Manager and noted that the city of very excited about the Sycamore Preserve. They feel it will spark business development at the eastern edge of the city. Mr. Hannan noted that the Forge Brewhouse and other businesses in the Sycamore trail area bring in a good amount of business from people biking the Great Western Trail.

Mr. Hannan then noted that they are still waiting on the FEMA permits at Sycamore forest preserve, but commented that the language in the original FEMA grant states that the end use of the property must be passive recreational area. There is a belief by County staff that this language should be enough to allow the District to proceed with the planned work.

Mr. Metzger noted that FEMA was somewhat concerned about any revenue that might be realized from the clearance of the land (scrap metal etc.).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Turner then asked for a motion to enter Executive Session. Mr. Metzger moved to take the Committee into Executive Session, seconded by Ms.Haji-Sheikh. A roll call vote was held with 5 Committee members voting in the affirmative, none in the negative and 2 absent.

Following the Executive Session, Mr. Metzger moved to return the Committee to public session, seconded by Mr. Brown. A roll call vote was held with 5 Committee members voting in the affirmative, none in the negative and 2 absent.

After returning to public session, Mrs. Turner noted that it was the consensus of the Committee to support pursuing appraisals for the land corridor associated with the Somonauk to Sannauk Trail.

Mr. Brown reminded the Committee that the Sandwich Fair was just around the corner. Ms. Haji-Sheikh commented that there was a new coffee shop called Common Grounds in DeKalb and they had recently joined the Pedal Pal.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Metzger moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Haji-Sheikh. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Anita Turner, Chairperson
Forest Preserve District Committee
AT:kjr