

*Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Forest Preserve District 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 District Committee Minutes  
May 24, 2016**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve District Committee met Tuesday May 24, 2016 at 6:00 pm in the Gathertorium of the County Administration Building. In attendance were committee members: Mrs. Turner, Ms. Polanco, Mr. Brown, Ms. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Metzger and Superintendent Hannan. Mr. Bagby arrived after the meeting was called to order and Mr. Emerson was absent.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Turner called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2016 meeting. Ms. Haji-Sheikh noted that there was a correction on page 4 of the minutes, changing “Mr. Turner” to “Ms. Turner”. Ms. Polanco moved to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Ms. Haji-Sheikh and the motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments

**MONTHLY REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Hannan began by noting that the monthly reports would be a bit late this month due to the volume of Preserve work currently being done.

He also noted that he had received word from Tasha Stogsdill that there will be no July County Board meeting, therefore there will be no Forest Preserve Committee meeting in June. The next scheduled meeting for the Forest Preserve will be 7-26-16.

Mr. Hannan commented that following tonight’s meeting, he would like the Committee members to drive out to the new Sycamore Forest Preserve to view the work that has been accomplished.

There are bids out for building the picnic shelters, roads and other work. There will also be bids for new asphalt on roads and parking and bids for a ramp to connect to the former railroad right of way to the Great Western Trail. Mr. Hannan noted that Nathan Schwartz would usually assist with engineering work on projects such as this, but since his department will be required to sign off on all the permits, it could create a potential

conflict of interest. As an alternative he recommending hiring an engineering firm to do the topography mapping, bid specs, paving material amounts, and secure the man permits needed to do work in the floodplain.

Mr. Hannan further commented that that the picnic shelter shelters and picnic tables will be metal construction to minimize the impact of future flood waters. He then showed a photo from 2007 that showed the area almost completely underwater.

He commented that there would also be limestone rock barriers placed soon along parking area and road edges to prevent any further vehicle or 4-wheel drive damage, such as had recently occurred.

Mr. Brown asked how the area fared during the recent heavy rains. Mr. Hannan noted that the banks did not overflow during this rain event.

Mrs. Turner asked if the stream bank stabilization project at the South Branch Prairie survived the recent heavy rainfalls. Mr. Hannan noted that the seed and sedge plants were able to get roots down and the erosion control matting and stone work does appear to be working. (Note: see photos in the May monthly report and natural resource management report)

He then added that there will be 2 NIU biology honor student interns working with Mr. Roloff this summer on many natural resource management projects. 8 Environmental Education Summer Camps begin June through August at the Russell Woods Natural Resource Center

Mr. Hannan then reported that he had recently met with the DeKalb County Trail Riders group regarding re-opening of a former trail at Chief Shabbona Forest Preserve. The group has agreed to assist with trail maintenance and cleanup of the paths to reduce any negative impacts with equestrian use. There will also be new signage for trail use responsibilities and restrictions that apply including the trail being closed when conditions are wet.

Mr. Metzger asked how long this trail area will be. Mr. Hannan noted that it will be about 1/2 mile.

Mr. Bagby asked how many riders may be taking advantage of this trail area. Mr. Hannan estimated it would be used mostly by local horse owners in the Shabbona area.

Mr. Hannan noted that the Genoa-Kingston trail project has interest of a group of Genoa High School student volunteers and he will be meeting with them soon.

Mr. Metzger noted that he has held discussions with a landowner who may be involved in a possible land preservation project and commented the landowners are working to find consensus.

Mr. Metzger also noted that 3 bridges were to be taken out on Somonauk road. The preparations had begun, but it was then discovered that there is a rare protected species of mussel near the sites. Due to this, the work has been delayed.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Ms. Haji-Sheikh noted she has taken a ride on the Generation Link trail and appreciates the work being done on the trail and surrounding areas. It was noted that Generation Link trail is part of County Farm Woods forest preserve and notes that a great deal of work has been done in that preserve improvement.

Mr. Brown noted that we are coming up on wedding season and wondered if people ask to be married in the Preserves.

Mrs. Turner noted that her youngest son was married at the Afton Preserve and it was a spectacular location. She noted that the weather was somewhat threatening that day, but things cleared up in time for the ceremony and it all came off beautifully. Mr. Hannan commented that there have been many ceremonies at Afton, MacQueen, Russell Woods, Sannauk and other preserves but noted it is generally just the ceremony held there and the reception held elsewhere due to alcohol restrictions.

Mr. Haji-Sheikh asked if there were any rules regarding rice throwing. Mr. Hannan noted that they recommend birdseed be used instead.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

**The Forest Preserve Committee then went to the Sycamore Forest Preserve for a walking tour of progress being made.**

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Turner, Chairperson  
Forest Preserve District Committee  
AT:kjr