

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 Operations Committee Minutes
October 27, 2020**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve Operations Committee met virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, October 27, 2020. Chairman Stoddard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Those Members virtually present were Mr. Tim Hughes, Ms. Maureen Little, Ms. Terri Mann-Lamb, Mr. Chris Porterfield, Mr. Craig Roman, Vice-Chair Jeff Whelan, and Chairman Paul Stoddard. A quorum was established with all seven Members present.

Others present via Zoom included Forest Preserve District Superintendent Terry Hannan, Chad Clauson, Tim Bagby, Kathy Lampkins, and Pete Stefan.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was requested to move Item #7: Award Resolution: Culvert Replacement on Great Western Trail up to Item #5.

It was moved by Mr. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Whelan to approve the agenda with the updated agenda ordering. Those Members voting yea were Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Ms. Mann-Lamb, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Roman, Vice-Chair Whelan, and Chairman Stoddard. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Ms. Little to approve the minutes from the September 22, 2020 Meeting. Those voting yea were Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Ms. Mann-Lamb, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Roman, Vice-Chair Whelan, and Chairman Stoddard. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

AWARD RESOLUTION: CULVERT REPLACEMENT ON GREAT WESTERN TRAIL

Mr. Hannan shared that this project involved the removal and replacement of a 100-year-old, 23-foot-long 6'x6' box culvert under the Great Western Trail east of Sycamore, IL.

On Monday, October 26th, at 2:30pm at the DeKalb County Highway Department bids were publicly opened and bidders were invited to attend the meeting in person or virtually via Zoom Video. Eleven bids were received and ranged from \$77,709.00 to \$148,953.56.

Alliance Construction from Woodstock, Illinois was lowest bidder meeting specifications in the amount of \$77,709.00.

This project will improve safety for hikers, joggers, bikers and snowmobilers on the trail and provide improved drainage from neighboring farmland. Funding for this project will be from the Forest Preserve District Tort and Safety Reserve Fund.

Mr. Chad Clauson of Wendler Engineering was on the Zoom Meeting to answer a couple questions and provide clarification on anything regarding the project, if needed.

It was moved by Mr. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Hughes to forward the Award Resolution to the full Board of Commissioners recommending its approval. Those Members voting yea were Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Ms. Mann-Lamb, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Roman, Vice-Chair Whelan, and Chairman Stoddard. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

MONTHLY REPORTS & ACTIVITIES

Mr. Hannan shared that the Great Western Trail Extension Project (approved by FP Commissioners) through Sycamore Forest Preserve and trail connections to Sycamore City, parks and schools has begun. The Forest Preserve District is a partner with grant sponsor Sycamore Park District on 80% ITEP engineering and construction grant for the GWT Extension Project.

The District was awarded a \$20,000 grant request from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation's Pollinator Meadow Grant Program. The grant would help fund prairie seed, herbicide application and seeding in former turfgrass fairways and convert them to colorful prairie pollinator meadows for the Riverwood Forest Preserve.

Mr. Hannan lastly shared that FP staff has posted signs advising river users to be responsible and respectful at Knute Olson and Russell Woods Forest Preserve's canoe and kayak launches.

APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 LEVY & APPROPRIATION ORDINANCES

No changes have been made to the Forest Preserve District's Levy or Budget since it was placed on file and there have been no questions on either, Mr. Hannan shared.

It was moved by Mr. Porterfield and seconded by Mr. Roman to forward the Forest Preserve District's FY 2021 Levy Ordinance and Appropriation Ordinance to the full Board of Commissioners recommending the passage of both. Those Members voting yea were Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Ms. Mann-Lamb, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Roman, Vice-Chair Whelan, and Chairman Stoddard. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Hannan thanked the Committee for their very meaningful support, time, effort and public service with the DeKalb County Forest Preserve District. In the past few years, preserving and improving land has been a great investment for now and future generations to enjoy the outdoor natural beauty in DeKalb County. These local treasures are greatly appreciated by many thousands of visitors. Forest preserve staff appreciates your support as well as the citizen support. The Potawatomi Woods Addition, Chambers, Nehring Addition, Somonauk Trail, Riverwood, Great Western Trail Extension connection into Sycamore and Afton South Prairie Wetland Bank construction are all wonderful recent additions to our Forest Preserve District public lands during your time with DeKalb County. Public dollars, grants and donations are valuable pieces of these land preservation partnerships.

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The benefits and value of having beautiful recreational, educational and natural resource areas in DeKalb County are many. The value of your tax dollars returns in preservation and restoration of native prairie, wetland and forest plant communities and diverse wildlife habitat areas, providing environmental education and volunteer opportunities for elementary high school and college students, service clubs, scouts and citizens. Forest Preserves provide well maintained and safe areas for a variety of outdoor recreational activities including long distance multi-use trails. Good health, spiritual and emotional well-being has been associated with those who take part in recreational activities and have a connection with nature. Clean water, flood control, recharging groundwater, soil conservation, water protection/conservation, and improved air quality are also beneficial functions of Forest Preserves.

Home values, especially near forest preserves, have more added value than in areas lacking in forest preserves, parks, trails and natural areas. Tax dollars invested in Forest Preserves return to area businesses, creating direct and indirect job opportunities for local purchases like gasoline, sporting goods, bicycles, running shoes, outdoor clothing, canoes, kayaks, fishing equipment, books, binoculars, cameras, sleds, x-country skis, camping and picnic supplies along with local restaurants, coffee shops, motel/hotel, transportation, and other retail business. Employers can attract and keep employees in areas with a strong commitment to the quality of life that forest preserves, parks and natural areas provide. The total Forest Preserve tax rate is less than 1% (7/10th of 1%) of a homeowner's property tax bill.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Mr. Hughes to adjourn the Committee Meeting. Those Members voting yea were Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little, Ms. Mann-Lamb, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Roman, Mr. Whelan, and Chairman Stoddard. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Forest Preserve Operations
Committee Chair

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary