

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
January 26, 2021**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve Operations Committee met virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. Chairman Roman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Those Members virtually present were Ms. Mary Cozad, Ms. Maureen Little, Ms. Suzanne Willis, and Chairman Craig Roman. Mr. Patrick Deutsch, Mr. Tim Hughes, and Ms. Terri Mann-Lamb were absent. A quorum was established with four Members present and three absent at the time of roll call.

Others present via Zoom included Forest Preserve District Superintendent Terry Hannan, Luke Garver, and Kathy Lampkins

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Ms. Little and seconded by Ms. Cozad to approve the agenda as presented. Those Members voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Ms. Little Ms. Willis, and Chairman Roman. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Willis and seconded by Ms. Little to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2020 Meeting. Those voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Ms. Little Ms. Willis, and Chairman Roman. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Mr. Tim Hughes and Mr. Patrick Deutsch arrived. The roll now reflects six present and one absent.

IDNR REQUEST FOR SHARPSHOOTING ACCESS AT POTAWATOMI WOODS FP FOR CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) PROGRAM

The Committee welcomed Mr. Luke Garver, Wildlife Biologist, from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Mr. Garver thanked the Committee for allowing him to be present and share his report along with once again formally requesting to enter Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserve in Kirkland, Illinois in order to manage (in the form of sharpshooting) resident deer to conduct Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing.

Mr. Garver further explained that management using sharpshooting to supplement hunter harvest allows the Department to conduct localized, focused deer reductions in small areas known to have CWD. The IDNR's goal is to reduce disease transmission rates by lowering densities in infected areas, to reduce environmental contamination from infected deer, and to remove sick deer from the population at a higher rate than deer are becoming newly-infected. Advantages of sharpshooting include: (1) reductions are limited to areas with disease, so healthy populations in the remainder of a county are not impacted as they would be if we relied solely on hunting for management; (2) sharpshooting can be conducted on properties that do not normally allow hunting (or allow only very limited hunting), so management can occur in areas that normally serve as refuges to hunting; (3) focused sharpshooting has been shown to remove sick animals at

a higher rate than hunting programs; and (4) sharpshooting can target specific high-risk deer social groups known to have CWD. Sharpshooting also provides detailed, localized surveillance information about disease distribution and prevalence rates within infected areas.

The Potawatomi Woods area is of great concern to the IDNR. This area has produced a large number of positive tests of CWD infested deer. Following the close of deer hunting seasons in January, teams of IDNR staff that are trained/certified for sharpshooting begin culling deer wintering in or around known CWD locations. All IDNR sharpshooting activities are carried out between now through March on Monday – Thursday evenings.

Sharpshooting areas are generally limited to locations within a 2-section buffer zone around each known CWD-positive section (1 section = ~1 mile²). Sharpshooting is only conducted with the permission of the landowner. All animals (including fawns) from which suitable tissue samples could be collected are tested for CWD. Additional tissue samples are collected for genetic testing and evaluation of reproductive status at the University of Illinois Champaign/Illinois Natural History Survey. All deer with negative CWD test results are processed and donated to the Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Depending on the relative success of a given area dictates how much time the IDNR will spend in that area as well as the prevalence of the disease in that area. The IDNR finds themselves scattered around Northern Illinois quite a bit these days but they can also say that they have been able to keep the disease relatively in check and at a relatively constant prevalence rate throughout. Although they are getting some spikes in the Kirkland area, they have found the prevalence rate to be at a 1-3% rate which is a success as opposed to what the State of Wisconsin is currently being faced with at about 50%.

Ms. Cozad moved to approve allowing the IDNR into Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserve to continue their Chronic Wasting Disease Sharpshooting Management Program. Ms. Little seconded the motion. Those voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Mr. Deutsch, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little Ms. Willis, and Chairman Roman. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

MONTHLY REPORTS & ACTIVITIES

Mr. Hannan briefly reviewed that the Committee was sent the [Forest Preserve Monthly Report](#) covering November, December 2020 and January 2021. They were also provided the [December/Early January Natural Resource Report](#).

Mr. Hannan highlighted that the Great Western Trail Extension work began in Fall 2020 and will continue into mid-2021. The Great Western Trail Extension will continue west along the former R.R. Right of Way on the Sycamore Forest Preserve north boundary, across the east branch of the Kishwaukee River and connect to the City of Sycamore, Sycamore Park District parks and trails and Sycamore Schools. This work is being done with an 80% I.T.E.P. Grant sponsored by Sycamore Park District and DeKalb County Forest Preserve District. The Great Western Trail also connects eastward into the Kane County and DuPage County trail systems.

A bid letting will happen in the Spring for the replacement of the 60-year-old bridge over the Kishwaukee River at Russell Woods.

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ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Hughes and seconded by Mr. Deutsch to adjourn the Committee Meeting. Those Members voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Mr. Deutsch, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Little Ms. Willis, and Chairman Roman. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Roman, Chairman

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary