

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
August 24, 2021**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve Operations Committee met for their regularly scheduled monthly meeting at Riverwood Forest Preserve in Genoa, Illinois on Tuesday, August 24, 2021. Chairman Roman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Those Members present were Ms. Mary Cozad, Mr. Tim Hughes, Ms. Maureen Little, Ms. Terri Mann-Lamb, Ms. Suzanne Willis, and Chairman Craig Roman. Mr. Patrick Deutsch was absent at the time of roll call. A quorum was established with six Members present and one absent.

Others present included Forest Preserve District Superintendent Terry Hannan.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Ms. Mann-Lamb, seconded by Mr. Hughes and approved unanimously by voice vote to approve the agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Cozad moved to approve the July 27, 2021 minutes as presented. Ms. Mann-Lamb seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Mr. Patrick Deutsch arrived. All seven Members were now present.

PLACING THE FY 2022 FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT'S ANNUAL APPROPRIATION & LEVY ON FILE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

Mr. Hannan reviewed that as previously discussed with Forest Preserve Committees and with Forest Preserve District Commissioners, as part of the long-range forest preserve acquisition, maintenance and management plan, the 2022 budget will continue the transition of more land acquisition funds to maintenance and management funds for all forest preserves and new land acquisitions as per the voter approved referendum in 2006.

The FY 2021 - 2022 budget will continue to reduce Tort reserves with culvert replacement and repairs along the Great Western Trail in 2021 and replacing the 60-year-old bridge across the Kishwaukee River at Russell Woods in late Fall / Winter 2021 and 2022.

FY 2021-2022 budget will use forest preserve land improvement and ITEP grant funds with the extension of the Great Western Trail west through Sycamore Forest Preserve and connect to the City of Sycamore and Sycamore Park District trails and parks. In 2022 will continue to work on the Genoa to Kingston Trail (G2K Trail) from west of Pleasant Hill Rd. (Hoppe Farmstead) into the Village of Kingston.

Land improvements, management and habitat restoration will continue at the new Riverwood Forest Preserve and at other forest preserves. Other land acquisition opportunities may be considered as well if offered by willing sellers or donors.

The Forest Preserve District's total property tax dollars for FY 2022 is being proposed at \$1,765,000.

Proposed 2021 Tax Rates collected in 2022:

General Fund	\$1,415,000	0.06000
F.I.C.A.	\$54,000	0.00227
I.M.R.F.	\$6,000	0.00026
Tort and Liability	\$290,000	0.01250

Total 2021 proposed Tax Rate for FY 2022 = 0.07503

A \$200,000.00 value home will pay about \$48.00 per year (\$4.00 per month) in Forest Preserve District property taxes in 2021 and the Forest Preserve tax will remain less than 1% of a home owner's property tax bill (about 7/10 of 1%), Mr. Hannan shared.

It was moved by Ms. Little, seconded by Ms. Mann-Lamb and was approved unanimously to forward the Resolution to place the District's Budget on file to the full Board of Commissioners as presented, recommending its approval.

MONTHLY REPORTS & ACTIVITIES

Mr. Hannan noted that he would have his formal reports for the Committee next month. The District was spending a lot of time cleaning up damaged trees and branches from the most recent storms that passed through the area.

Since they were at Riverwood Forest Preserve, Mr. Hannan provided the Committee with a brief history of how the preserve came to be and how it would not have been possible without the partnership of the Late Mr. Bob Wood.

The 103-acre Riverwood Forest Preserve (formerly the Oak Club Golf Course) which is nestled along the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River, was a 2020 acquisition and land preservation partnership that included a 50% grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, a private donation and DeKalb County Forest Preserve District funds. The former Oak Club golf course is being transformed to a public conservation and recreation area. Former golf cart paths are now hiking, biking, and cross-country ski trails, Kishwaukee River fishing access, and some trails are handicap accessible. Interpretive and educational signs are placed along trails describing the diverse landscapes, habitat and wildlife. Open green space and picnic areas, including a picnic shelter, are near the parking lot. There are mowed greenspace buffers near adjacent residential areas, and a few former tee – off areas provide beautiful views of Riverwood and the Kishwaukee River. Conservation work includes restoration of former fairways being converted from turfgrass to colorful prairie pollinator meadows, and the southern areas that connect to Knute Olson Forest Preserve will be oak savannah and prairie restoration projects. These will be multi-year conservation and land improvement projects.

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Sadly, Mr. Wood passed. The Riverwood project would not have been possible without his vision, work, and generosity, Mr. Hannan expressed.

The Committee briefly looked out among the prairie restoration work throughout the preserve. The restoration work was made possible from grant funds received through ComEd's Green Region Program.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Hughes and seconded by Ms. Willis to adjourn the Committee Meeting. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Roman, Chairman

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary