

**Forest Preserve Committee
Minutes
December 21, 2004**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve Committee met Tuesday, December 14, 2004 in the East Conference Room at the DeKalb County Administrative Building, at 6:00PM. Ms. Fauci called the meeting to order with everyone in attendance with exception to John Gudmunson and Robert Rosemier.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Fauci approved minutes from the previous meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Hannan added review of the Skid Steer loader bids as well as discussion of the Sportsmans Club trail easement discussion in rural Waterman. Mrs. Turner made the motion and Mr. Lyle seconded the motion to approve the agenda as ammended.

WELCOME NEW FOREST PRESERVE COMMITTEE

All committee members and others were invited to introduce themselves and tell a little about what has brought them to the Forest Preserve Committee: Greg Millburg, Larry Anderson, Howard Lyle, Terry Hannan, Anita Turner and Ky Ready and Julia Fauci. Following the introductions, Mr. Hannan provided a slide presentation showing the preservation and resroration of FP areas, natural resource mangement, maintenance, recreation and educational opportunities..

FOREST PRESERVE ACTIVITY UPDATE

Ad hoc Land Acquisition Committee: Ad hoc Land Acquisition Committee, a citizens and public official group was formed to study the land and population changes within DeKalb County regarding plans to expand and acquire future Forest Preserve. The idea of a referendum is being discussed and past chairman Jeff Metzger formed the Ad hoc land acquisition group to study and get information on future Forest Preserve acquisitions, costs of a referendum, and a vision for future open space that may be presented to voters. A question was raised to Ms. Fauci in response to a question of similarities between the Ad hoc Committee and the Greenways and Trails Committee, Mrs Fauci responded that The Greenways and Trails Coalition is doing a plan for future trails and Green corridors, however they are two separate groups. Ms. Fauci stated that there was one main decision at the last Ad hoc Committee Meeting which was to postpone any referendum action being on the Spring 2005 ballott as there was not enough time to prepare what would have needed to be brought to the board this January. It could be postponed for the Spring 2006 ballot as well as opinions differ on the Ad hoc Committee. This committee will meet in January 2005. Again it was confirmed that they are two separate groups. Mrs. Turner mentioned the importance of having presentations and publicity such as the slideshow Mr. Hannan presented in order to show people the *treasures* in DeKalb County.

OSLAD Grant: Mr. Hannan made a presentation in Springfield at the end of November 2004 applying for a grant *Open Space Land Acquisition Development*

which is an IDNR Grant program for acquisition and development of Forest Preserves.

Mr. Hannan stated that this grant was a good opportunity for making improvements at Potawatomi Woods. So far, Forest Preserve staff, volunteers and contracted labor helped with the major clean up of this Forest Preserve, farm fields were rented out for no-till conservation farming. Potawatomi Woods is accessible for people to picnic, fish, hike, cross country ski, and has an equestrian trail. Money that would be matched by IDNR in the grant has been donated by the DeKalb/Sycamore Sunrise Rotary in celebration of their 2005 Centennial year (\$25,000), a private foundation in Sycamore wanting to assist with installing handicap accessible trails and a wildlife observation deck (\$25,000). The DeKalb Community Foundation donated \$10,000 and there was a \$1,000 donation from the Sycamore Sportsmans Club. With \$61,000 in combined donations as well as Forest Preserve monies, a grant for \$140,000 was applied for to install picnic tables, picnic, water, shelters, play equipment, handicap accessible trails, interpretive trails, a prairie/oak savannah native landscaped picnic and habitat area, a canoe launch, and a bridge across Kingsbury Creek into McQueen FP from Potawatami Woods.

Mr. Hannan stated that this is a competitive grant, with 20 million available state wide and 32 million being applied for. Ms. Fauci brought up the thought off how it may be beneficial that we are sharing the access road, the as the State Park entry is through Forest Preserve property . Mr. Hannan stated that with the good record that the Forest Preserve has in completing projects and the partnerships involved, the project being waterbased along the Kishwaukee, handicap accessibility, as well as benefitting the nearby State Park users – there are many factors that put the the Forest Preserve in good standing to receive this grant. Mr. Hannan also mentioned that the Forest Preserve is fortunate to have the donations of \$61,000 which allowed for the application for this grant. The status of the grant will be known at the end of January 2005.

US Fish & Wildlife grant: Mr. Hannan mentioned a \$3,000 grant was applied for and awarded for restoration of the very unique sedge meadow habitat at Potawatomi Woods.

Mr. Hannan stated that Capital Improvement grant money is continuing for Forest Preserve capital improvement projects.

DeKalb County Community Work Initiative: Mr. Hannan stated that he, Jerry Smith and Paul Miller attended a meeting in which there will be a five year partnership with the DeKalb County Community Foundation and the Grand Victoria Foundation. This is a new program in which DeKalb County Community Foundation will join forces with 17 other community foundations throughout Illinois addressing issues within their community focused in three general areas: childcare, workforce development and land use and protection. This partnership will create an endowment fund using monies from the Victoria Foundation and DCCF for these three areas. DCCF would like to include the Forest Preserve District under Land Use and Protection. Mrs. Fauci inquired about something in place already where people could donate to the foundation and Mr. Hannan agreed that there is a fund there that people can

donate to for land acquisition however this is separate from that fund and is a nice gesture in that the DCCF and Grand Victoria Foundation has included the DeKalb County FP District. Mr. Hannan confirmed that it will be a while until monies are received and the endowment is built up. Ms. Fauci asked if money will trickle in to which Mr. Hannan related that once the endowment is built up there is a percentage earned and then can be distributed on an on-going basis.

C2000: This IDNR Grant, Conservation 2000 is available to private and public land owners specifically for habitat restoration, water quality, etc. As an example of private land owners: Rick Hoffman and his neighbors along the Kishwaukee river in NW DeKalb County received C-2000 monies for protection of three miles of the Kishwaukee river with erosion control measures, streambank stabilization and tree planting, it is called Clearwater Legacy project. Mr. Hannan explained how the state was divided into watershed boundaries instead of just County boundaries. DeKalb County is part of KREP – Kishwaukee River Eco-system Partnership and well as FREP – Fox River Eco-system Partnership. DeKalb County has received approx. \$55,000 from this grant program for invasive species removal (garlic mustard, reed canary grass, sweetclover, canada thistle, buckthorn and others), these plants can take over and disrupt native plant communities. This grant program could be cut and Mr. Hannan asked for Forest Preserve Committee support. Ms. Fauci made the motion to write a letter in support of the C2000 Grant program and Howard Lyle seconded the motion and the FP Committee approved. Mr. Hannan agreed to writing the letter and including a copy with the meeting minutes (see attached).

Skid Steer Loader Acquisition: Mr. Hannan explained that this is a piece of equipment that will help with snow removal, drilling holes, moving dirt, construction projects and is a versatile machine that can be used at all the forest preserves. The current John Deere tractor/loader is 29 years old and is not dependable. Mr. Hannan did get three bids and stated that this is something Capital Improvement grant money could be used for. The three bids that were received were from John Deere (\$17,500), CSR Bobcat (\$17,470) and Case (\$18,500). Mr. Lyle mentioned that the Bobcat is of very good quality. Mr. Hannan stated that the pluses of the Bobcat are that it is low bid, that it could be purchased from CSR Bobcat in DeKalb and the forest preserve has received good service from them, and FP staff recommended the Bobcat. Also the versatility with attachments, the Rated Operating Capacity and weight of the Bobcat. Mr. Hannan continued explaining that the ROC on the Bobcat is rated equivalent to the next model up from the John Deere. Ms. Fauci brought up the use of gas, what statistics were available and Mr. Hannan communicated that both the John Deere and Bobcat are 56 horsepower. Different options were communicated and a recommendation was made to accept the CSR Bobcat bid. Ms. Fauci asked for a motion to purchase the Bobcat. Mr. Hannan also stated that this could be paid for in two installments. Also, it was asked if staff had opportunity to use this equipment and upon confirming that staff had a good experience using this equipment. Howard Lyle made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Turner to send to the Board for approval of purchase The motion was passed and all were in favor.

Aurora Sportsmans Club Development: a 700 acre piece of land with part of that acreage being along Preserve Rd. between Waterman and Shabbona is a proposed sportsmans club to include trap-shooting, pistol range, archery and camping. Mr. Hannan stated one of the objectives of Greenways and Trails plan is when new developments come in is to look at possible trail links and to request access when it when it could provide a link such as the Waterman and the Forest Preserve, to Shabbona and the State Park. Mr. Hannan suggested that *now* is the time to ask to be considered for an easement through their property. Ky Ready from the planning department mentioned that this is in its early stages of development and that a request of a 15 foot easement on this size of a property should not be an issue. Mr. Ready also recommend that this request should be made now and Mrs. Fauci agreed. Seventy percent of this land will stay active farmland. Mrs. Fauci motioned to get this request on the table as interest to Greenways and Trails planning stating that the request would be for a 15 foot easement along length of property along Preserve Rd. for possible future trail connection. Mr. Ready stated that there are plans for a clubhouse, cabins for winter camping and tent camping areas. After confirming that Preserve Road is a Township Road Ms. Fauci asked what Paul Miller's thoughts were. Mr Ready stated that the objective is to confirm that this development meets ordinances. Ms. Fauci entertained the motion to request a 15 foot easement along length of the proposed Sprtsmans Club property along Preserve road. Mr. Anderson raised the question of miles remaining to connect trails and the likelihood of donations of easement being made. Mr. Hannan related the easements that were donated for the DeKalb - Sycamore trail and Mrs. Turner related a story of a land donation in St. Charles for trails. Ms. Fauci brought up that this should be on the table so that regardless of any expansion this easement will be accounted for. There was discussion about long-term uses and benefits of the trail for the community. A motion was made by Mrs. Turner to forward this request to the Planning and Zoning Committee, seconded by Mr. Lyle and approved by the Committee.

Chronic Wasting Disease: Mr Hannan stated that IDNR wished to continue their deer herd reduction program and (with the same program as last year) hunt at night at Potawatomi Woods and MacQueen. The Committee agreed to continue working with IDNR.

Mr Hannan stated that another small wetland bank credit sale was received.

Attached are monthly reports and Forest Preserve activities.

A motion was made to adjourn, seconded and the meeting ended at about 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Fauci, Chairman