

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
DECEMBER 20, 2005**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve District Committee met Tuesday, December 20, 2005 at the Conference Room East at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were committee members, Ms. Fauci, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lyle and Mr. Rosemier. Committee members Ms. Turner and Mr. Gudmonson arrived after the call to order. Also in attendance were Mr. Hannan, Forest Preserve Superintendent, and guests Jim MacMurdo, Hank Denecke and William McMahon of the Kishwaukee Sunrise Rotary.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Fauci asked if there were any corrections or additions to the November 16, 2005 minutes. Hearing none, Mr. Lyle moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Rosemier, and the motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Rosemier moved to approve the Agenda as submitted, seconded by Mr. Anderson, and the motion passed unanimously.

**KISHWAUKEE SUNRISE ROTARY CENTENNIAL EVENT AT POTAWATOMI WOODS**

Ms. Fauci began by introducing Mr. Jim MacMurdo who then introduced the Committee to current Club President, Mr. Denecke and Race Chair, Mr. MacMahon.

He then began his report by noting that about five years ago the Board of Directors of the DeKalb Community Sunrise Rotary identified a desire for the relatively young club (existing since 1981) to place a stamp on the community and to embark on a project of some significance. In 2003, Rotary International, their parent organization, announced that 2005 would be the 100th anniversary of the Rotary Organization. Mr. MacMurdo then gave a brief synopsis of the history of the organization from its founding in Chicago in 1905. He noted that today, the Rotary is the world's largest and oldest service organization serving a multi-million member base.

He then went on to note that the International has charged each member club to identify and create a visible project in their community to specifically honor the centennial event. At about the same time, Mr. MacMurdo commented that he had been having discussions with Forest Preserve Superintendent Hannan regarding facility needs at the newly obtained Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserve. Following these conversations, the club considered a proposal at their October meeting to assist the Forest Preserve District as their centennial project. After approval of the proposal, Mr. Denecke presented Mr. Hannan with a \$25,000.00 contribution for shelter houses and playground as part of the Potawatomi Woods development project. To celebrate the centennial and project anticipated for the Spring of 2006, the club has also planned to inaugurate the 1st annual Sunrise Rotary 8K Run/Walk on May 20, 2006. He noted that they have presented plans for this event to the City Council of Kirkland and other groups. The organization had participated in an 8K run sponsored this year along the Chicago Lakefront at the Rotary Centennial Convention. This event was extremely well received, gathering over 3000 attendees from Illinois as well as internationally. He commented that while they did not expect to have anywhere near that number in the first year, the club did feel that they could generate 100-plus attendees for the event.

Mr. MacMurdo noted that tonight's presentation was the last hurdle in determining the final location and purpose of the event. The club has made arrangements with the DeKalb County Highway Department as well as holding discussions with Sheriff Roger Scott regarding road usage for the race. At this time, the plan would be to begin at Potawatomi Woods, go out to Kirkland Road, then north to Scout Road, across Scout Road to Pearl Street through the city of Kirkland, then back up Kirkland Road through the Forest Preserve and end again at the picnic

area. The Race Chair has verified that the mileage accomplished would meet the standards for certification by the U.S. Track and Field Association. The club has since applied for and received the requested certification.

He noted that the club would intend to hold this as an annual event, serving two purposes. First, to celebrate the Rotary Club participation in the improvements and donors at Potawatomi Woods and to, hopefully, garner publicity and visibility for the preserve itself. Second, this will be used as a fund raiser for additional Rotary projects in the future.

Mr. MacMurdo then closed by noting that the purpose for the presentation tonight was to ask that the Committee declare the May 20, 2006 date as the formal dedication of the facilities. He then asked Mr. Hannan if the facility had been fully completed. Mr. Hannan responded that there was still some work to be done, but that the Forest Preserve would be ready for the event by May 20th .

Mr. MacMurdo then asked if the Committee had any questions. Mr. Lyle commented that this project really sounded like a winner for the club and the Preserve. Ms. Fauci and Mr. Anderson commented that they felt it would be very effective in exposing the community to the Preserve. Mr. Rosemier suggested that local high school cross country and track teams should be contacted to increase attendance. Ms. Turner noted that there could even be participation by students from the University or community colleges.

Mr. MacMurdo commented that they had selected the date to specifically avoid conflicts with Mother's Day and the Memorial Day holiday as well as to try to assure reasonable weather.

Ms. Turner asked if it would be strictly a run or a run/walk. Mr. McMahan noted that in order for a race to establish itself on the CARA (Chicago Area Runners Association) circuit, an organization must be able to show that they have over 100 runners finishing in under the set time guidelines for the run. CARA will not take a first time event, so the hope of the race committee is that the race attracts the over-100 number of runners and also allows for some additional entrants to walk if they so choose.

Ms. Fauci asked if the group had made arrangements for medical assistance at the event. Mr. MacMurdo noted that Ralph Treager, owner of A-Tec Ambulance Service, had volunteered an ambulance for the event. This ambulance will follow the last runner in the event, and will also bring ATV's with additional medical personnel to travel the race course and provide immediate assistance where needed.

Ms. Fauci asked if they had established a cost for race entry. Mr. McMahan responded that they had budgeted for a cost of \$19.00 per entry. This will satisfy the entry fee and also provide a t-shirt as well. Mr. MacMurdo commented that he is in negotiations with a local industry to be the primary sponsor of the event to also assist with costs.

Mr. MacMurdo then closed by thanking the Committee for their time and consideration of the request.

Mr. Hannan commented that the donation received from the Rotary was very instrumental in spurring other donations to the project as well, ultimately resulting in \$60,000.00 raised and then partnered with a State of Illinois OSLAD grant of \$70,000.

Mr. Anderson moved to declare May 20, 2006 Rotary Race Day and formal Dedication of the Potawatomi Woods improvements, seconded by Mr. Lyle. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE CONTINUED MANAGEMENT REQUEST**

Mr. Hannan reported that the IDNR (Illinois Department of Natural Resources) has again requested, if needed, to conduct night hunting at the Potawatomi Woods and MacQueen

Preserve for purposes of herd reduction. The decision of whether this hunt will be needed will be made by the IDNR after a special three day Chronic Wasting Disease season in January. Mr. Hannan noted that this program has been in place and previously approved for the past two years.

Mr. Rosemier asked if there had been any negative feedback over the prior years. Mr. Hannan responded that there had not been. Mr. Rosemier then asked how long they typically take for this hunt. Mr. Hannan responded that they had previously gone from the middle of January through March first. The IDNR would close the entrance to the woods and hunt about once or twice a week at night. Mr. Anderson asked about the size and content of the harvests. Mr. Hannan responded that they had taken approximately 60 animals in the area they hunt (does and bucks) in the prior year and that they would then take the animals to Rockford for testing of the brain tissues. Ms. Fauci asked if any positive results in the past year. Mr. Hannan responded that there were not as far as he knew, but that the IDNR wanted to keep the area under observation because positives had been found in the Kirkland area. He noted that the IDNR's goal was to get the herd stable at about twenty to thirty deer per square mile. This is in response to the fact that there are areas along the Kishwaukee River that were running at over 150 deer per square mile. This heavy concentration can cause rapid spreading of the disease and a reduction of the herds can assist in controlling that spread.

Mr. Hannan then noted that a newsletter from the IDNR had been included with the minutes sent to the Committee that contained an article on the Chronic Wasting Disease program.

Ms. Fauci noted that in the past the decision to continue the program had been done by an informal consensus of the Committee rather than a formal vote. Mr. Rosemier asked if the decision had to be made by all the Commissioners. Mr. Hannan noted that it had typically been approved in Committee and then reported to the Commissioners.

Mr. Gudmonson asked if they would have more volunteers this year. Mr. Hannan responded that he had previously noted that they would be using the maintenance barn at the Potawatomi Woods to do tissue testing during the three day special season in January. He was not certain if the IDNR would use other individuals outside of their staff for the actual hunting and tissue testing.

Ms. Fauci asked if the IDNR also provides a service to local hunters by offering to test their captures. Mr. Hannan responded that they would test any deer shot to make sure they did not have the disease.

Ms. Fauci then asked if the Committee was in agreement to continue the program. By general consensus, the Committee agreed to continue.

#### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The heavy snowfalls have necessitated snow plowing as well as an increase in sledding at Sannauk and cross country skiers and snowmobiling in many of the Preserve areas. (See attachments)

He also noted that the prior weekend was the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. He reminded the Committee that in about every county in America as well as several provinces in Canada, there are two weekends in December that observers have gone out for the past 100 years to count birds in the same fifteen mile diameter circle for the purposes of establishing trends and habitats of bird species. He will report further on the results of this years' Count next month.

He then reported that the bridge project at Potawatomi Woods was proceeding as well as the observation deck. He noted that part of the grant and donation monies have been designated to create a trail system. The handicapped accessible trail will begin at the picnic area, then proceed

up to the observation deck overlooking the sedge meadow. Forest Preserve staff made quite a bit of progress on this portion of the trail with the staff completing prairie plantings and tree plantings prior to the ground freezing and impeding further work. The shelters will be started in the spring of 2006 or as winter weather permits.

Another project was to provide access to MacQueen Forest Preserve from the Potawatomi area. This will be accomplished by the bridge project that was started today. The project will continue over the winter with a combination of Preserve staff and contractors. This will be a footbridge crossing Kingsbury Creek to allow for the access.

Mr. Hannan commented that there has been an anonymous donation received. Mr. Hannan noted that this donation was the result of a meeting following a recent talk he had given at a local fund raiser at Blumen Gardens in Sycamore (this fundraiser netted \$400 from Blumen Gardens to be matched with the Potawatomi Woods grant). Following a later dinner discussion, he was presented by the donor with a \$25,000.00 annuity in the Forest Preserves name that gains 5% interest annually. Mr. Hannan commented that all he can say at this time is that the donor is a farmer in the Pierce Township area. Mr. Hannan had conversations with Ms. Fauci regarding directing the monies (received upon the donors passing) to the Merritt Prairie (located in Pierce township) and to establish a future picnic area and shelter in the east Merritt Prairie area named after the donor.

Mr. Hannan closed by commenting that he had a recent call on a possible one to two acre wetlands mitigation. He will report further on this as it develops.

Mr. Rosemier asked if it is the intention of the Forest Preserve District to pay off the County land acquisition loan prior to the referendum. Mr. Hannan responded that the due date for payoff is November 30, 2006, but that the money has already been budgeted with non-referendum funds. Mr. Rosemier commented that it would be advantageous to keep the fact public that this loan has already been budgeted for to alleviate any negative commentary prior to the referendum.

Mr. Hannan noted again this year there was extensive use of the shelters and Preserve facilities for Thanksgiving dinners by many local families. Mr. Steve Wade, from the Sannauk Preserve, sent along photos of family 2005 celebrations as well as a record book found at one of the shelters in the Preserve. This record book covered the period 1963 through 1972 and contained many interesting notes from Preserve visitors. Ms. Fauci commented that perhaps the book should be sent to the County Archives for preservation. Mr. Gudmonson asked if he could borrow the book until the next month.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER DISCUSSION**

Ms. Fauci began by reporting that just prior to the meeting, she had received an email from NIU geologist Colin Booth who had been working for some time on groundwater studies. In specific he had been working with the Troy Valley aquifer, which is the source of the drinking water for DeKalb and a number of other communities. Mr. Booth is asking to conduct research at Wilkinson Marsh. Ms. Fauci passed documentation that Mr. Booth had sent to the Committee and noted that she will place this request on the agenda for the January meeting.

Ms. Turner asked if there are any precedents regarding this sort of request. Mr. Hannan noted that there has been use of the Preserve areas for educational and graduate study purposes. Ms. Fauci asked if there was a formal request process for groups making these requests. Mr. Hannan noted that it has been a fairly informal process guided by the principle that any group using the facilities is always asked to respect the Preserve areas and to leave them as they find them or better.

Mr. Anderson asked if Mr. Booth was requesting any sort of monetary assistance from the Committee. Ms. Fauci responded that he was not seeking money, simply permission for himself and perhaps a graduate student to perform research and testing in the area. Ms. Turner noted

that after a brief review of the request, it appeared to her that that this sounded like very standard and non-invasive testing. Even so, Ms. Fauci commented that it would be her desire that Mr. Booth stay in close contact with Mr. Hannan during the process.

Mr. Anderson asked if they would be boring any holes in the grounds. Mr. Hannan commented that the Preserve staff has done some testing (piezometers) to monitor water table fluctuations for wetland mitigation hydrology. Mr. Lyle commented that he often performs similar testing in his position with the City of Genoa . He further commented that in his work, he has observed that there was vastly increased usage during last summers drought conditions. However, in addition, he noted that increased development has shown increased usage as well. Mr. Anderson asked if the water levels were dropping greatly. Mr. Lyle responded that it was not a dramatic drop.

Ms. Fauci noted that she had past discussions with Mr. Booth regarding the impact of increased asphaltting and runoff as well as development on the aquifer.

Mr. Hannan commented that he will contact Mr. Booth regarding the project. Mr. Rosemier asked if the Committee could request that Mr. Booth make a presentation to them following the work. Ms. Fauci noted that perhaps it would be good to ask Mr. Booth make a presentation earlier regarding his proposal.

Ms. Fauci then commented that she wanted to express her thanks and appreciation to the Committee and Forest Preserve staff for a very productive year of work. She also thanked Mr. Hannan for his efforts in Springfield to obtain the \$70,000.00 in matching funds from the State and other donations for the improvements in the Preserves. She then presented a humorous gift to Mr. Hannan from the Committee.

Mr. Rosemier closed by commenting that there would be quite a bit of work to come on the referendum efforts.

Ms. Turner moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Lyle. The motion passed unanimously.

Attached are monthly reports and Forest Preserve activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Fauci, Chairperson  
Forest Preserve District Committee

JF:kjr