

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 20, 2009**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve District Committee met Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at Administration Building, Conference Room East at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were committee members, Ms. Fauci, Ms. DeFauw, Mr. Newport, Ms. Turner, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Augsburger, Mr. Gudmunson and Mr. Walt and Superintendent Hannan. Mr. Stuckert was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Fauci called the meeting to order and then asked if there were any changes to the September 15, 2009 minutes. Ms. Turner moved to approve the minutes as noted, seconded by Mr. Newport and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Fauci asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Hearing none, Ms. Turner moved to accept the amended agenda, seconded by Mr. Walt and the motion passed unanimously.

FY2010 BUDGET

Ms. Fauci began by noting that the action for the evening was to place the budget on file for viewing by the public. The budget will be placed at four physical locations for public review. She noted that this action was not a final vote of approval. Ms. Fauci asked if there was any additional discussion. FY 2010 levy and appropriation ordinances will be voted on at the November Commissioners meeting.

Mr. Augsburger moved to place the FY 2010 budget on file, seconded by Ms. Turner and the motion passed unanimously.

FOREST PRESERVE MONTHLY REPORTS AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Hannan began by handing out the Wetland Bank revenues and fund balances to the members who were not at the last meeting. Mr. Hannan noted that the monthly usage and attendance figures were in the member's packets.

He commented that though the Boy Scouts Camporee was somewhat lightly attended (70 attendees, rather than the anticipated 150) possibly due to poor rainy weather, the boys did a number of service projects. He noted that the Scouts did some invasive plant removal, a seed collection and held a mini-seed stomp and also tree planting during the event. The group also attended the Sunrise Rotary's presentation of a \$15,000.00 donation to the Forest Preserve for new shelter, landscaping and handicapped accessible trails.

Mr. Hannan noted that the packets also contained follow up information from Ms. Doty on classes held at the NREC.

He further commented that the Illinois Department of Public Health held their annual inspections at Russell Woods and MacQueen and the District received an excellent report.

A public Star Party was also recently held at Afton and attended by 60 to 70 people. The astronomers attending obtained some amazing photographs with cameras mounted to their homemade telescopes and the group expressed their thanks to the District for allowing them to hold their two public events at Afton this year,

Mr. Hannan also reported that the “No Trace Left Behind” camper training held during the Scout Camporee at Afton was a great success.

He then noted that Wetland Bank monitor report was also included in the packet and that the Army Corps of Engineers recently inspected the bank and gave an excellent management and maintenance review.. The district has also been encouraged to expand the bank to the Afton Addition. Mr. Hannan noted he would prepare the permit applications to the Corp of Engineers for Bank expansion this winter.

Ms. Fauci asked what happens to Districts who do not receive favorable reports on their Wetland Bank activities. Mr. Hannan noted that they are not allowed to then continue selling the credits.

Mr. Hannan then noted that the “Jeff’s Trees” group had planted oaks and hazelnut and, with their donation of \$1100.00 this year, have been averaging about \$1100.00 to \$1500.00 annually in donations to the District to purchase trees to plant.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Ms. Fauci commented that she had attended the Fall Camporee and truly enjoyed the experience.

She went on to note that this is the 100th anniversary of the Burnham Plan that created a series of public preserves and ultimately secured the natural lakefront (and “emerald necklace”) around the city for the citizens rather than being held by private interests.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMMENTS

Ms. Fauci asked if there were any Committee comments. Mr. Anderson asked about a monthly expense line that seemed rather high this month. A credit card transaction appeared to be about \$900 and he wondered what that was for. Mr. Hannan noted that he would review the expense and report back to Mr. Anderson and the Committee on the details of the transaction.

Mr. Anderson asked if all charges were reviewed monthly prior to payment and Mr. Hannan noted that he personally reviews all bills and expenses and account management prior to submission to the Finance Office for payment. Ms. Fauci noted that was a very good practice. She further noted that the use of credit cards by the staff members was the most efficient way of maintaining a good record of the transactions.

EXEMPT EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

Ms. Fauci noted that she was now moving to the Exempt Employee Evaluation of Superintendent Hannan. She began by noting that she had received a letter from County Board Administrator, Ray Bockman, noting that Mr. Hannan had successfully met all goals set for the prior year. She then asked Mr. Hannan to expand on those goals. He commented that the successful completion of the Land Acquisition grant was one goal as well as the successful continuation of wetland bank revenues and sales. He noted that he had also focused on expansion of District safety and Risk Management improvements, in collaboration with PDRMA and that these had also gone very well. Land preservation as directed by the voter referendum approval is going well.

Mr. Hannan also commented that this had been a much busier year than normal with so many area residents foregoing travel due to the economic situation and instead vacationing in their local communities. He noted that the District had a very good increase in volunteer activities and acquisitions, such as the Ellwood Cabin restoration and Land Stewards. Forest Preserve staff has also done very good work in maintenance and management of 14 forest preserves.

Ms. Fauci extended the thanks of the Committee to Mr. Hannan and staff for continued excellent service to the County. She closed by noting that, despite how much they might wish otherwise, nor how deserving the recipient, it did not appear that there would be funds available for County staff bonuses this year.

Ms DeFauw extended thanks to Mr. Hannan as well for his tact and diplomacy as the District navigated through so many land acquisition discussions over the past years. Ms. Fauci commented that it was extremely disappointing that the land acquisition grant from the USDA was lost due to the process happening too quickly and passing of a family member for the local seller involved. Mr. Hannan noted that there might actually be some better news on that acquisition, but would have to report more fully on that during the Executive Session.

LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Ms. Fauci then asked for a motion to enter Executive Session. Mr. Anderson moved the Committee into executive session for the purpose of discussing current information on District land acquisition, seconded by Ms. Turner. A roll call vote was held and the motion passed with 8 Committee members voting in the affirmative, and none in the negative and one absent. Following the Executive Session, Ms. Turner moved to return the Committee to public session, seconded by Mr. Walt. A roll call vote was held and the motion passed with 8 Committee members voting in the affirmative and none in the negative and one absent.

Ms. Turner noted that she had heard that Mr. Stuckert had been attending Law and Justice Committee meetings lately and might have made a Committee switch. Ms. Fauci noted that she had not been informed of that but that she would look into the situation.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Turner moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Augsburger and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Fauci, Chairperson
Forest Preserve District Committee
JF:kjr