1996 S. Kirk Rd. Suite 320
Geneva, IL 60134

Forest Preserve District, Planning and Utilization Committee Meeting Minutes

President Bill Lenert, Chair Cherryl Strathmann, Vice-Chair Deborah Allan, Alex Arroyo, Mavis Bates, Chris Kious, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis

Thursday, October 30, 2025 9:30 AM 3rd Floor Board Room

I. Call To Order

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioner Molina

PRESENT	President Bill Lenert
	Chairman Cherryl Strathmann
	Vice Chair Deborah Allan
	Commissioner Mavis Bates
	Commissioner Chris Kious
	Commissioner Myrna Molina (Remote)
	Commissioner Ted Penesis
ABSENT	Commissioner Alex Arroyo

Also Present: Commissioners Lewis, Roth; Exec. Dir. Haberthur & Dep. Dir. Monroe; Finance Mgr. Carrano & staff Wolff; Ops. Dir. Jensen; NRM Dir. Chess; Dir. of Planning & Land Protection Rooks-Lopez; HR Dir. Clough; Chief of Police Burger; Dir. of Comm. Engagement Metanchuk; Admin staff Figliozzi, Rafferty and Attorney Sterk of Ancel and Glink.

II. Approval of Minutes from September 25, 2025

RESULT:	**APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**
MOVER:	Chris Kious
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Cherryl Strathmann
ABSENT:	Alex Arroyo

III. Public Comment (Each Speaker is limited to three minutes)

9:41AM Thomas Burgan, Geneva resident, spoke about the wooden deck on the bridge of the Fox River Trail. He noted that the material needs maintenance. He brought a piece of the decking to the Committee meeting. Additionally, Mr. Burgan discussed issues such as scooters and e-bikes, he stated that the courtesy and etiquette of the public has declined.

IV. Bids and Proposals

None.

V. New or Unfinished Business

TMP-25-1183 Resolution Authorizing an Amendment to a Use and Licensee Agreement with Dundee Township for the Use of the Barn at the Schweitzer Forest Preserve

The Forest Preserve District of Kane County last approved Dundee Township's request to use the barn at the Schweitzer Forest Preserve for a satellite maintenance facility on May 8, 2007. This proposed agreement renewal would continue the existing partnership between the District and Dundee Township. The renewal terms of the license agreement are as follows:

- A 15-year term, extending the license through May 31, 2040.

- Agreement includes allowance for automatic renewal for an additional 5-year term, unless either party provides a cancellation notice by December 1st of the year immediately preceding the end of the Renewal Term. The remaining terms of the agreement are unchanged. Important terms of the original agreement include:
- Township shall pay District $1.00 annually to utilize the building.
- Township shall be responsible for all costs associated with improving, operating, and maintaining the structure.
- Township shall hold the district harmless for any injuries or property damage that occurs from their use of the structure. Dundee Township will be responsible for any funding associated with improving, operating, and maintaining the barn.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Allan discussed the barn, she noted that this structure is unique and stunning, she expressed her excitement to have Dundee township partnering with the District to continue to maintain the structure. Commissioner Kious noted that the District and Dundee Open Space has continued to have a positive relationship.*

RESULT:	**MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO:	Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
MOVER:	Chris Kious
SECONDER:	Deborah Allan
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Cherryl Strathmann
ABSENT:	Alex Arroyo

TMP-25-1299 Resolution Approving Bids for Herbicide Control of Woody Resprouts at Various Preserves

In the face of modern fire suppression and landscape fragmentation, invasive species represent a massive threat to biodiversity. Invasive plant species come in many varieties, but two main distinctions land managers make to categorize management are herbaceous (herb-like, for example: garlic mustard and wild chervil) or woody (a plant that produces wood for structure; shrubs and trees, in essence: buckthorn and honeysuckle). District staff, contractors, and volunteers annually clear dozens of acres of invasive woody growth from the preserves. The removal of mid- and over-story individuals from a woodland opens the forest floor to sunlight. The sunlight equally favors both beneficial species and invasive non-natives and it is common to see seedlings of invasive species thrive in these conditions. The contracted work detailed below will target invasive woody species for chemical spot control. Through this process, we will promote desirable plants and restore both the structure and function of the woods. Successive years of effort will reduce the effort and cost needed to maintain these areas in perpetuity. The District publicly advertised a bid for control of woody re-sprouts across eight preserves split between nine projects and received seven responses. The qualified, lowest bid for each of the projects are as follows:

Project 1 – Big Rock Forest Preserve – (50.1 acres): Bid of $32,715.30 by Davey Resource Group Inc.
Project 2 – Bliss Woods Forest Preserve – (56.4 acres): Bid of $30,738 by Tallgrass Restoration, LLC
Project 3 – Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve – (4.7 acres): Bid of $3,070.98 by Bluestem Ecological Solutions
Project 4 – Burnidge Forest Preserve – (24 acres): Bid of $13,394.88 by Woods to Wetlands
Project 5 – Dick Young Forest Preserve – (94.6 acres): Bid of $24,886.11 by Pizzo and Associates, Ltd.
Project 6 – Grunwald Forest Preserve – (32.7 acres): Bid of $17,942.49 by Woods to Wetlands

Project 7 – Hampshire Forest Preserve – (76.1 acres): Bid of $36,375.80 by Tallgrass Restoration, LLC
Project 8 – Settler's Hill Golf Course – (18 acres): Bid of $8,989.20 by Woods to Wetlands
Project 9 – Big Rock Forest Preserve – (43.4 acres): Bid of $25,041.80 by Davey Resource Group Inc.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Penesis asked about the Grunwald Forest Preserve project. Dir. Chess responded that staff decided to tackle the project in house. Chair Strathmann asked about poke weed. Dir. Chess explained that poke weed is a native species, however can be aggressive. He noted that poke weed can be mitigated with other species.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY VOICE VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
MOVER: Mavis Bates
SECONDER: Deborah Allan
AYE: Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Cherryl Strathmann
ABSENT: Alex Arroyo

TMP-25-1314 Resolution Approving a Contract with Wight and Company for Professional Design Services for an Urban Ecology Field Station at Arlene Shoemaker Forest Preserve

Dir. Rooks-Lopez presented the contract with Wight and Company. The proposed urban ecology field station was included as a key project for the 2024 Land Acquisition & Preserve Improvement Referendum. It includes the construction of a nature center in Aurora. Patron data suggests that school groups, community groups and the general public in Kane County's urban centers, especially Aurora, need a nearby nature center that has programs, educational exhibits, and outdoor infrastructure relevant to their unique urban ecology. Arlene Shoemaker Forest Preserve is situated within the heart of Aurora, with connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and walking trails to a nearby elementary school. In addition, the Illinois Prairie Path Aurora Spur runs along the northern boundary of the Preserve. An urban nature center here will allow the District to better reach under-served communities, at-risk youth, and low-income families that reside and attend school in Aurora. In addition, the urban ecology focus will fully support the District's mission.

The District plans to seek funding assistance from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Park and Recreation Facility Construction Grant (PARC) which, if awarded, could reimburse 75% of the project cost up to $2,800,000. A successful PARC grant application will require a site plan as well as preliminary facility design and costs for the Urban Ecology Field Station. To help with the design, permitting and grant preparation for this unique project, the District utilized a request for qualifications process to select a consultant. Twelve firms responded; Wight & Company was selected. A scope of work was developed and a total fee of $50,000 was established. Additionally, $5,000 shall be set aside as contingency to cover any unanticipated additional costs that may arise during design, for a total contract price not to exceed $55,000.

DISCUSSION: *President Lenert asked what the total amount would be if awarded the PARC grant. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that traditionally it has been a 75% split. The last grant in 2023 was capped at $2.8M. She noted that the District would not know until the grant is fully released and the project would be an estimated $4M expense.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY VOICE VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee
MOVER: Deborah Allan

SECONDER:	Ted Penesis
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Cherryl Strathmann
ABSENT:	Alex Arroyo

VI. Closed Session to Discuss Land Acquisition, License Agreements, Potential Litigation and Personnel

None.

VII. Communications

Dir. of Community Engagement reported on the recent ribbon cutting on October 16, 2026 at Brunner Forest Preserve. The IAPD Gala was held on October 24, 2026. The District was recognized for their 100th Anniversary and Commissioner Myrna Molina was recognized for 15 years of service. Dir. Metanchuk presented the TrackChair, all terrain wheelchair that will be available at Creek Bend Nature Center. Individuals will be able to check out the wheelchair to make trail hikes accessible. Commissioner Gripe mentioned solar panel vendors in Kane County. He asked about the land and vegetation of the solar farms. Exec. Dir. Haberthur stated that the key is choosing the right plants. You lose the pollinator maintenance if you do not choose the flora and fauna wisely.

VIII. Chairman's Comments

None.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:06AM.

RESULT:	**APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**
MOVER:	Chris Kious
SECONDER:	Mavis Bates
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Mavis Bates, Chris Kious, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis, Cherryl Strathmann
ABSENT:	Alex Arroyo

Chair Cherryl Strathmann
Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

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Recording Secretary