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, February 26, 2026 9:30 AM 3rd Floor Board Room

I. Call To Order

The Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee meeting was held Thursday, February 26, 2026 at the Administration Offices located at 1996 S. Kirk Road, Suite 320, Geneva, IL 60134. Vice Chair Allan called the meeting to order at 9:50AM.

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioner Gumz, Molina

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

Also Present: Exec. Dir. Haberthur; CFAO Petschke; Finance staff Carrano; Ops. Dir. Jensen; NRM staff Johnson & Blackburn; 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 October 30, 2025

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

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

None.

IV. Bids and Proposals

TMP-26-250 Resolution Approving Bids for Pond Management at Three Forest Preserves

NRM Manager Johnson presented the bids. The Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve is approximately 32 acres situated south of Bowes Road in the Bowes Creek Country Club subdivision. The site contains three large artificial ponds (totaling approximately 8 acres). There are also three smaller degraded ponds at the site (approx. 0.6 acres). The 3 larger ponds experience periodic algal blooms and invasion by aquatic weeds. The residents of Bowes Creek find the algae and aquatic vegetation unsightly and have requested that the portion of their HOA dues that come to the District for the management of this site be used for pond management. Similarly, Arlene Shoemaker Forest Preserve is approximately 118 acres located on the east side of Aurora. Within the preserve are two stormwater management ponds totaling 8.5 acres within a neighboring subdivision. Residents of that subdivision frequent express concerns about the health of the ponds including access to

fishing amenities and the ability to maintain appropriate depths for adequate stormwater capacity. The Burnidge Forest Preserve encompasses 705 acres and is located along Big Timber and Coombs Roads, west of Elgin, IL. Along with the Paul Wolff Campground the most notable natural features of the preserve are the large tallgrass prairie recreations, wetland, and woodland restorations. The site also contains two artificially created ponds north of the campground. The larger of the two ponds is a popular spot for campers to fish and recreate. Currently this pond is invaded by aquatic weeds such as elodea and Eurasian water milfoil. The pond also experiences annual algal blooms despite some limited attempts at mechanical aeration. The algae and aquatic vegetation can make recreational fishing at this site challenging to impractical and multiple preserve users have reported that the condition of the pond is aesthetically unsatisfactory. Funds totaling $140,000 were budgeted in the Natural Resource Management Weed Management account in FY25/26. Sufficient funds of $26,433.02 are available to cover the first year of expenses for projects 1 and 3 at a total expense of $8,650.32. Funds totaling $35,000 are budgeted in the 2025/26 fiscal year for donated lands management specific to the Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve. Sufficient funds of $7,349.02 are available to cover the first year of expenses of project 2 at a cost of $6,733.34. Funds totaling $68,123.99 are available in the Bowes Creek escrow account to cover the second and third years of control.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Kious asked about the Bowes Creek contract. He asked about the housing development. Exec. Dir. Haberthur explained that Bowes Creek previously solicited their own contractors however they were expensive and The district moved forward and solicited quotes, essentially getting lower prices. Manager Johnson added that since utilizing the bid software Bonfire, the District has increased the outcome of bid response. Commissioner Allan asked if the contractors have specific equipment. Johnson responded that the contractors have special equipment designed for aquatics.*

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

TMP-26-252 Resolution Approving a Bid for Teasel Control At Three Forest Preserves

NRM Manager Johnson presented the bids. Invasive teasel (Dipsacus fullonum, Dipsacus laciniatus) was introduced to the United States in the 1700s to be used in the textile industry and as an ornamental species. Over time, the species has escaped cultivation and is now an ever-present threat to the biodiversity of the area. Teasel prefers sunny upland environments where it thrives as a monocarpic perennial that produces seed once before dying. This life cycle necessitates the presence of incredibly viable and abundant seed that can thrive within the seed bank for numerous years. As such, once established, a teasel population can survive for a decade or longer, even without the introduction of additional seed. The District currently controls teasel populations across all 24,000 acres of property. However, some populations have become well established prior to District ownership and will require significant control efforts to reach a maintenance level. The District has sought bids for spring and summer control of teasel across three of these preserves to aid staff efforts across the District. Funds totaling $50,000.00 were budgeted in fiscal year 2025/2026 for the Oakhurst FP Teasel Control project. Sufficient funds totaling $22,300.00 are available in Natural Resources account for project 1 totaling $12,200.76. Funds totaling $330,000.00 were budgeted in fiscal year 2025/2026 for the Settler's Hill Golf Course Natural Areas Improvements project. Sufficient funds totaling $51,810.80 are available in

Natural Resources account for project 2 totaling $22,528.00. Funds totaling $200,000.00 were budgeted in fiscal year 2025/2026 for the Stearns Road Natural Area Improvement project. Sufficient funds totaling $180,032.00 are available in Natural Resources account for project 3 totaling $35,738.64.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Bates asked what the District plans to plant. Manager Johnson responded that staff would be planting various native seed to revegetate the natural area. Exec. Dir. Haberthur stated that some plants have a natural ability to survive some types of herbicides. The wild flowers would be established while mitigating the teasel. Johnson added that the contractor would be responsible for removing the invasive seed heads in the area.*

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

V. New or Unfinished Business

TMP-26-255 Resolution Authorizing a Professional Engineering Contract withV3 Engineering for the Restoration of Wetlands at the Chicago Premium Outlets

The Forest Preserve District (District) manages a 75-acre complex of wetlands created as a mitigation effort following the creation of the Chicago Premium Outlet Mall. Originally designed and constructed in 2003 by V3, the wetland complex is comprised of a series of pools surrounding a re-meandered section of Indian Creek. Each pool is managed at a specific elevation through the use of water control structures and separated by a series of earthen berms. Extensive planting of native vegetation took place and V3 managed the site for several years until the Army Corps of Engineers signed off on the project in 2017. Upon sign off, the site was transferred to the District for long term maintenance. The initial construction took place over 20 years ago and there has been a lot of wear and tear on the berms. A combination of wave action eroding soil and beavers plugging water control structures has resulted in a multitude of breaches and repairs over the years.

Currently, there are several locations where the berms are failing, causing adjacent pools to sit at the same water level. This potentially compromises the storm water capacity of the wetlands as well as threatens the plant communities present within the wetlands. As the firm that did the original design and construction of this complicated project, V3 Engineering has a privileged understanding of the project and required permitting. A scope of work was developed to perform an evaluation of the berms in their current state and to engineer a solution to the problems at hand. Engineering services will provide the District with a design and a cost estimate on how to move forward with construction, ensuring the integrity of the wetland mitigation as originally designed. V3 submitted a proposal for engineering and permitting services of $39,300.00. Additionally, $5,000.00 shall be set aside as contingency to cover any unanticipated additional costs that may arise during design and permitting, for a total project amount of $44,300.00. Funds totaling $50,000.00 were budgeted and are still available for engineering, permitting, and design.

DISCUSSION: *Brief conversation regarding expenses for the project. Exec. Dir. explained that the District could have levied a small maintenance fee to mitigate long term expenses, however this was not agreed upon at the time many years ago.*

RESULT: **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**
TO: Forest Preserve District Executive Committee

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

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

None.

VII. Communications

A. Discussion of Settler's Hill Golf Course Irrigation Solution

Exec. Dir. Haberthur discussed a topic that would be presented as a resolution for approval at the Executive Committee meeting. The District has been working on a solution to resolve the irrigation system at the Settler's Hill Golf Course. He explained, the pump has not been working properly to irrigate the area. Last year, the District had authorization to truck grey water from the City of Geneva to irrigate the turf, since that time, the District has been reviewing options for a proper solution for this year. Dir. Haberthur noted that existing pipes may be a feasible solution from the old jail site, the engineering would determine the lines and what the District could utilize. Grey water has been a solution for other courses, and can be a positive solution for both the City of Geneva and the District. Dir. Haberthur noted that Waste Management is another player in potential funding. More information would be provided at the Executive Committee for approval.

Dir. of Community Engagement Metanchuk provided updates of the District's current events. The annual Maple Sugaring Days will be held on March 7th and 8th at Creek Bend Nature Center in LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve. More thank 2,000 people were in attendance last year. Lastly, Dir. Metanchuk noted that the spring ephemerals are coming soon and there will be information regarding a citizen's science project in the Treeline newsletter.

VIII. Chairman's Comments

None.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:41AM

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

Vice-Chair Deborah Allan
Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

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Recording Secretary