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, Dale Berman, Chris Kious, Myrna Molina, Ted Penesis

Thursday, June 26, 2025 9:30 AM 3rd Floor Board Room

I. Call To Order

The Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee meeting was held Thursday, June 26, 2025 at the Administration Offices located at 1996 S. Kirk Road, Suite 320, Geneva, IL 60134. Chair Strathmann called the meeting to order at 9:30AM.

Remote Attendance Approval

Commissioner Molina

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

Also Present: Commissioners Gripe, Juby; Exec. Dir. Haberthur; Dir. of Finance Petschke & staff Carrano & intern Thompson; Ops. Dir. Jensen; NRM Dir. Chess & staff Blackburn; Dir. of Planning & Land Protection Rooks-Lopez & staff Tegge; HR Dir. Clough; Chief of Police Burger; Dir. of Comm. Engagement Metanchuk; Admin staff Figliozzi, Rafferty and Attorney Hodge.

II. Approval of Minutes from May 29, 2025

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

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

Kim Haag, long time steward of Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve, spoke highly of the Centennial celebration event on June 8th and the art piece installation. Haag commented that the stewards would like to implement temporary movable signs during areas of restoration, noting that the volunteers would be willing to take on the expense.

IV. Bids and Proposals

TMP-25-751Resolution Approving the Purchase of One (1) Schulte XH1500 Mower for the Natural Resource Management Department

Dir. Chess presented the purchase of the mower for the Natural Resource department. Based on the District's replacement schedule, one (1) Schulte XH1500 mow deck was approved for replacement in the 2025/26 budget. The Natural Resource Management department currently

owns and operates two Schulte XH1500 mow decks. These decks are 15-feet wide with dual batwings, and are pulled behind large tractors, across the landscape. Primarily, these mowers are utilized to control herbaceous biennial and annual weeds, like sweet clover and wild parsnip. Additionally, they are instrumental in the creation of burn breaks in the fall and spring. The current mow decks were originally purchased in 2001 and 2004, making them 24 and 21 years old and approaching the end of their life expectancy. After 20 years of hard work, busting through brush and bouncing across the uneven prairies, both units are starting to experience increased maintenance issues. These range from hydraulic malfunctions to broken blades, gear boxes, and jumpers. The replacement of one mower will allow staff to focus repair efforts on the second unit, while ensuring that at least one tractor is mowing at all times. We are requesting the utilization of the Sourcewell Joint Purchasing Program for the purchase of the replacement mow deck. German-Bliss Equipment Inc. of Princeville, IL is an authorized Sourcewell dealer. Schulte has a Sourcewell contract providing a 32% reduction off of MSRP for the mower. As the attached quotation reflects, the total purchase price is $45,171.60.

DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Linder asked about the high price of the mower. Dir. Chess explained that this type of mower lifts in order to drive on the roadway safely, which is why the higher expense. Commissioner Bates asked about the amount of mowing during the summer season. Dir. Chess responded that he understood the concern regarding the right amount of mowing. He added that the District targets weeds and have a selective mowing plan for the county. Exec. Dir. Haberthur explained that the Operations Department focuses on mow reduction and the Natural Resource Management team adds seed and restoration where feasible.*

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

TMP-25-758 Resolution Approving a Bid for Construction of Phase II Site Improvements at Brunner Family Forest Preserve

Landscape Architect Tegge presented the bid for the phase II construction at the Brunner Forest Preserve. The Brunner Family Forest Preserve (709.22 acres) and Buffalo Park Forest Preserve (28.46 acres) total 737.68 acres and are located in the northeast corner of Kane County. In 2024, the District completed improvements including a new shelter, bathroom, trail connection from the northerly parking lot to shelter/bathroom parking lot, and a new sled hill. Additional improvements that are being proposed for Phase II include grading and drainage improvements along the older section of limestone trail and resurfacing the section of asphalt trail. The District conducted a formal bid process for the improvements. Bids were publicly advertised with 36 document takers through the online biding platform and four bidders responding. The responsible, lowest bidder is Obsidian Asphalt Paving, Inc. with a base bid of $459,706.71. Additionally, $15,293.29 shall be set aside as contingency to cover any unanticipated additional costs that may arise during construction, for a total project amount of $475,000.00.

DISCUSSION: *None.*

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

ABSENT: Alex Arroyo, Dale Berman

V. New or Unfinished Business

TMP-25-732 Resolution Approving a Contract with Wight & Company for Professional Design and Grant Assistance Services for a Wildlife Observation Platform at Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve

Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the contract with Wight and Company. Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve contains the first wetland mitigation bank created by the District. The volume and diversity of birds that have returned to this wetland is unrivaled by any previous projects completed by the District. Multiple state and federal threatened and endangered species have been seen utilizing the site, and the word of this success is widespread amongst the "birding" community. As a result, birders have inundated the site hoping for glimpses of these rarities. This increase in visitors to the preserve has created issues with the establishment of the wetland plants required for the mitigation bank. The proposed wildlife-observation platform was included as a key project for the 2024 Land Acquisition & Preserve Improvement Referendum. It includes the construction of a raised observation deck that would be installed close to the water. It would allow visitors of differing abilities access to view the birds and the wetland, without causing damage to the plant community and disturbing the birds' activities. The District plans to seek funding assistance from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Open Space Land Acquisition & Development grant (OSLAD) which, if awarded, would reimburse up to $600,000 for development. A successful OSLAD grant application will require a site plan as well as preliminary design and cost for the wildlife platform. To help with the design, permitting and grant assistance for this unique project, the District utilized a request for qualifications process to select a consultant. Six firms responded; Wight & Company was selected. A scope of work was developed and a total fee of $26,000 was established. Additionally, $1,000 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 $27,000.
DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Allan commented that the lookout would be a great attraction for Kane County visitors as well as residents. President Lenert asked if the engineering was part of the grant expenses. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that the concept plan is not part of the reimbursable packet, however the design and construction is.*

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

TMP-25-726 Resolution Approving a Contract with Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. for Professional Engineering Services

Dir. of Planning and Land Protection Rooks-Lopez presented the request for engineering services. In 2024, the District acquired 298 acres in Huntley, at the southwest intersection of Illinois Route 47 (IL-47) and Interstate 90 (I-90). The property includes old oaks, a never-plowed sedge meadow, and more than 25 acres of prime waterfowl habitat. During the acquisition process, it was discovered that the approved entrance to the property is located at the edge of the eastbound I-90 exit ramp and IL-47. As part of the acquisition, an access easement on IL-47 was granted to the District by the adjacent property owner and the Village of Huntley. However, before a new entrance can be constructed, the District must also seek approval from IDOT. CBBEL was retained by the Village of Huntley in 2021 to prepare an intersection and traffic-light study for this section of IL-47, and therefore has a privileged understanding of the project area, existing site conditions, and needs of the Village of Huntley. A scope of work was developed,

and CBBEL submitted a proposal for engineering and permitting services for $34,200. Additionally, $4,000 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 $38,200.
DISCUSSION: *None.*

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

TMP-25-727 Resolution Approving a Contract with WBK Engineering for Professional Engineering Services to Relocate the Eakin Creek Crossing at Rutland Forest Preserve

Dir. Rooks-Lopez presented the request for engineering services with WBK engineering. Rutland Forest Preserve is a large preserve located just west of Elgin on Big Timber Road. The area of the preserve north of Big Timber Road has been improved with picnic areas, parking, and trails. The area south of Big Timber Road has some areas of wetland along Eakin Creek, which flows through the site, however a majority of the site is currently farmed in the District's agriculture program. Currently, access to the agricultural field utilizes an easement with the adjacent land owner. The current crossing over the creek is very narrow for the wide farming equipment, and the supporting footings are beginning to fail. In 2017, WBK Engineering was retained by the District to review the existing conditions and recommend the best approach to address concerns. It was determined that the best long-term solution would be to abandon and remove the existing crossing, and construct a new wider structure further to the east. The new location would allow the District to eliminate the shared access easement with the adjacent land owner, to reduce risk and establish a future public access to the southern half of Rutland Forest Preserve. The wider crossing will be safer for the current farmer and District maintenance vehicles it and will be designed in such a way as to accommodate pedestrians when the area is restored. WBK has a privileged understanding of the project and required permitting, as the engineer that completed the initial study for the District. A scope of work was developed, and WBK submitted a proposal for engineering and permitting services of $27,760. Additionally, $3,000 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 $30,760.
DISCUSSION: *Commissioner Gripe asked who was currently utilizing the roadway. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the farmers are utilizing the roadway with heavy equipment. Commissioner Gripe voiced his concern of the condition of the bridge currently. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded that the District is working on the three-barrel culvert crossing to ensure it is wider and safer for the current need. Commissioner Allan asked about a cost share with the farmer. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the District has this project in the capital improvements, additionally, the District had done a cost share with tenants for the tile drainage in the past.*

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, Dale Berman

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

None.

VII. Communications

Dir. of Comm. Engagement Metanchuk highlighted the current environmental education programs, fishing clinics include casting, knot tying, and fish identification. The Kane Foundation will be hosting the second annual golf outing in September at the Hughes Creek Golf Course.

VIII. Chairman's Comments

Chair Strathmann commented that the Centennial celebration was well attended and the unveiling of the art installation was a great experience for the residents of Kane county and visitors.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:26AM.

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

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Gabriella Figliozzi

Gabriella Figliozzi
Recording Secretary