



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

# Forest Preserve District, Planning and Utilization Committee Meeting Minutes

Chair Cheryl Strathmann, President Christopher Kious, President Pro Tem, Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michelle Gumz, Mike Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Mike Linder, Vern Tepe

**Thursday, May 30, 2024**

**9:30 AM**

**3rd Floor Board Room**

**I. Call to Order**

The Forest Preserve District Planning and Utilization Committee meeting was held Thursday, May 30, 2024 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.

- PRESENT** Chair Cheryl Strathmann
- Board Member Mavis Bates
- Board Member Ron Ford
- Board Member Michael Kenyon
- President Chris Kious
- Board Member Anita Lewis
- Board Member Vern Tepe
- Board Member Michael Linder (Remote)
- ABSENT** Board Member Michelle Gumz

**II. Approval of Minutes from April 25, 2024**

- RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT**
- MOVER:** Vern Tepe
- AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Cheryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe
- ABSENT:** Michelle Gumz

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

*None.*

**IV. Bids and Proposals**

**TMP-24-2246** Resolution Approving a Contract with V3 Companies, Ltd. for Professional Resident Engineering Services for the Removal of the Carpentersville Dam

*Chief of Planning and Land Mgmt. presented the contract with V3 Companies Ltd.*

In 2015, the District entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for the River Obstruction Removal Project for the removal of the Fabyan Causeway Island and Carpentersville Dam. The agreement included 100% reimbursement from the IDNR for engineering and construction costs up the \$3,500,000, of which \$2,510,796.68 remain for Carpentersville Dam removal. The District is responsible for costs associated with the impacts and repairs to the boat launch north of the dam estimated to cost \$45,000.00. A condition of the agreement requires the District to establish a contract for resident engineer services to perform construction observation and administration during the course of the demolition project.

V3 Companies, LTD., Woodridge, Illinois was hired in 2019 as the design engineer for the Carpentersville dam removal project, as such, V3 has a privileged understanding of the project and planned demolition. A scope of work was developed, approved by the IDNR, and a total not to exceed fee was established at \$106,570.00 for V3 to perform the duties of 'Resident Engineer' during the demolition of the dam.

Demolition quotes are being re-bid due to IDNR disqualification of all round 1 bids. The anticipated presentation of the winner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of bidding (subject to IDNR approval) is in July or August of this year. Funds totaling \$2,500,000.00 were budgeted by the District for engineering and demolition, of which \$2,184,875.00 remain for this project. The IDNR will reimburse the District 100% of the Dam removal and engineering costs up to the remaining \$2,510,796.68 under the agreement.

**DISCUSSION:** *Commissioner Kenyon asked how long the project has been in the works. Chief of Planning and Land Mgmt. Rooks-Lopez responded that the process started in 2015. Commissioner Bates asked if there have been any objectors to the removal of the dam. Exec. Dir. Haberthur clarified, this resolution is the construction observation and administration portion, the demolition will be presented once bids are awarded. He indicated that no controversy has been documented thus far with the Carpentersville dam, he understood there has been some controversy with other dams in Kane County. He stated that this portion of the dam is owned by the District.*

*Commissioner Tepe noted the expense and asked if the IDNR is responsible for the payment. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the IDNR is responsible for 100% of the cost, staff does not anticipate any issues. Commissioner Roth asked about the debris that will be released once the dam is removed, and if it will be taken out or released in the water. Exec. Dir. Haberthur noted that any release in the water is not toxic, it will mainly be dirt, this will be an "in the wet" project, permissible by Army Corps. to allow it to go down stream. Commissioner Roth noted that was a change in the project from a year ago. Exec. Dir. Haberthur stated that was the direction of IDNR and all the permits have been acquired with their regulations. Dir. Haberthur commented that any further questions regarding the release of material in the water or any liabilities would have to be directed to IEPA as this was implemented to their standards. Commissioner Allan via remote stated that many years ago, there was a dam in Batavia that was falling apart and it deteriorated naturally, to everyone's approval, the neighboring properties no longer flooded. She noted that some of that experience was too long ago for people to remember, she stated that this would be a reassurance that the river came first and that removing the Carpentersville dam will make a healthier river.*

**RESULT:** **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**  
**TO:** Forest Preserve District Executive Committee  
**MOVER:** Mavis Bates  
**SECONDER:** Ron Ford  
**AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Cheryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe  
**ABSENT:** Michelle Gumz

**TMP-24-2397** Resolution Approving a Bid for the Buffalo/Brunner Family Forest Preserve Site Improvements

*Chief of Planning and Land Mgmt. Rooks-Lopez presented the construction bid of site improvements for the Buffalo/Brunner Family Forest Preserve. A total of \$625,000 of funds were allocated in the FY23/24 budget to complete the construction of a shelter, bathroom, parking lot, sled hill, drainage improvements and trail connections and construction drawings development. Additional funds of \$100,000 were allocated in the*

FY24/25 budget due to increased construction costs since the project was originally planned. This project is partially funded by KDOT in the total amount of \$625,000. The original plan for Buffalo/Brunner Preserve was to construct a new lodge to upgrade the Raging Buffalo facility with assistance from KDOT in the amount of \$500,000. When this project did not move forward, the District evaluated other uses of the funding for the Preserve. In 2021, KDOT amended its agreement through a restatement and an additional \$125,000 would be provided to the District to construct a shelter and bathroom on site. The District conducted a formal bid process for the improvements. Bids were publicly advertised, with four (4) bidders responding. The responsible, lowest bidder is Midwest Excavators LLC. with a base bid of \$603,724.60. Additionally, \$15,928.46 shall be set aside as contingency to cover any unanticipated additional costs, that may arise during construction for a total project amount of \$619,653.06.

**DISCUSSION:** *Commissioner Bates asked about the restrooms and if these would be year-round. Dir. Rooks-Lopez responded yes, this will be structured for year-round use. Commissioner Roth noted that the District should look into portable sanitizer stations for areas that do not have running water.*

**RESULT:** **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**  
**TO:** Forest Preserve District Executive Committee  
**MOVER:** Michael Kenyon  
**SECONDER:** Anita Lewis  
**AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Cheryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe  
**ABSENT:** Michelle Gumz

**TMP-24-2393 Resolution Approving a Bid for the Installation of Two (2) Water Control Structures**

*NRM Dir. Chess presented the bid contract for the installation of the 2 water control structures.* Burlington Prairie FP is a 950-acre complex of tallgrass prairie mixed with various wetlands, including a sedge meadow/wet prairie complex comprising an Illinois State Nature Preserve. This large complex of community types currently supports populations of a variety of wildlife including state endangered reptiles and rare grassland birds like bobolinks. While some of these species are supported by the small remnant wetland present on site, the majority of the biodiversity present is located in the large restored prairies. Almost the entirety of the site was farmed historically and the process of restoration is ongoing. To enable farming, settlers installed drain tiles throughout the preserve. These buried tile lines collected sub-surface water and intentionally drained small wetlands. These tiles are still present today, where they continue to drain areas that would otherwise be wetlands.

The District has partnered with the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to evaluate two of these drained wetlands and develop a plan to restore the original hydrology. United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff have surveyed two wetlands and engineered plans that would create a combined 23 acres of surface water through the installation of new tile lines in concert with in-line water control structures. Construction on one of those potholes was completed in 2023 for \$32,690. Bids were sought presently to restore the hydrology of the second pothole. Two in-line water control structures are required to rehydrate the area and will result in the creation of approximately 8 acres of surface water within a restored prairie.

The District advertised and sent bids to 23 vendors, with 1 responding. The lowest qualified bid was received from Hartstrand Water Solutions, LLC., of Rock Falls, Illinois in the amount of \$14,410. Staff recommends a contingency of \$2,500 to cover any unforeseen additional costs that may arise during this project.

**DISCUSSION:** Commissioner Roth asked if the District had experience with this one vendor? Dir. Chess responded that staff has contacted references and have received all positive feedback. Staff has utilized this company in the past. Commissioner Bates asked about the Bobolinks. Dir. Chess responded that yes, in this area staff has seen and heard males calling and singing.

**RESULT:** **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**  
**TO:** Forest Preserve District Executive Committee  
**MOVER:** Mavis Bates  
**SECONDER:** Vern Tepe  
**AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Cherryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe  
**ABSENT:** Michelle Gumz

**TMP-24-2394** Resolution Approving a Bid for the Construction of an Electric Fence  
*NRM Dir. Chess presented the bid contract for the electric fence for the re-introduction of bison project.*

The tallgrass prairie once covered Illinois, and much of the Midwest, in an ocean of grass. These diverse and productive ecosystems persisted until 1837 and the invention of the steel plow. Prairies were rapidly plowed into rich agricultural fields, ultimately leaving Illinois with less than a tenth of a percent of its original 22 million acres of prairie. Restoring tallgrass prairie has been one of the primary goals of the District and it now manages several thousand acres of grasslands. Key to the historic management of these grasslands was disturbance, primarily driven by two factors: fire and grazing. Fire has been reintroduced across the landscape by staff, but the grazing component is still missing. Conservation efforts to preserve the North American bison have been wildly successful in the west, and more recently, conservation agencies within Illinois have started to reintroduce bison herds within their properties. The District is now faced with the opportunity to bring bison back to a restored prairie at Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve, aided by the acquisition of a \$90,100 grant from the Kane County Grand Victoria Riverboat fund to help construct the pasture fence.

The first step in the reintroduction process is to construct a fence around the future pasture. Specifications were created for the installation of both a 6-foot-tall and an 8-foot-tall woven wire fence. The fence would also contain three hot wires powered by solar panels as an additional deterrent to keep the bison contained. Discussions with current bison ranchers indicate that a 6-foot fence will be sufficient for containment and that the 8-foot height is not a necessary addition. The District originally advertised in August, 2023 for the construction of this fence. The lowest qualified bid was received from Farm Way Fencing, LLC of Kingston, Illinois in the amount of \$144,859.76 and was awarded in October, 2023. In the interim, the bidder defaulted leading the District to re-bid the project. In March, 2024 the project was advertised with one bid received. The lowest qualified bid was received from Provantage Systems, Inc. of St. Charles, Illinois in the amount of \$252,865 for the 7,350 linear feet of fencing. Negotiations with the sole bidder allowed the District to reduce the linear feet of the fence to 5,280 feet and bring the cost for construction to \$150,000. Staff additionally recommends a contingency of \$15,000 to cover any unforeseen costs that may arise during this project.

**DISCUSSION:** Commissioner Roth asked about the original fence height and if it was acceptable to have it lowered. Dir. Chess stated that the District is able to construct the lower height fence and it is accepted by the bison farmers. Commissioner Roth commented that he had heard a constituent was not in favor of the bison. Commissioner Kenyon stated that he has heard all positive things from constituents and they are excited about getting the bison. Commissioner Lewis echoed Commissioner Kenyon's comments, she asked when staff estimates their arrival. Dir. Chess stated that the bison are typically

*moved in the fall, this is in production and staff is working very diligently to get the fence constructed and able to get the liable partner on board. Commissioner Lewis asked if the District should be concerned they received only 1 vendor?*

*Exec. Dir. Haberthur expressed his frustrations, he explained that projects that are very specialized, will tend to have low bids. Commissioner Roth noted that this particular fence is highly specialized. Commissioner Bates asked about the acreage and if the District will have only females. Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded that the fence would cover 36 acres and the bison partners would help determine the need, whether mature females, etc. Commissioner Ford asked about the recommendations of the acreage ration to bison. Agricultural Coordinator Blackburn, responded that the District has met the guidelines required for the stocking rate, and the District is below the threshold.*

**RESULT:** **MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE**  
**TO:** Forest Preserve District Executive Committee  
**MOVER:** Michael Kenyon  
**SECONDER:** Anita Lewis  
**AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michael Kenyon, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Cheryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe  
**ABSENT:** Michelle Gumz

#### **V. New or Unfinished Business**

*Exec. Dir. Haberthur reported on the bid issues with the Carpentersville dam project. The bidders were disqualified as of yesterday, due to an IDOT prequalification certification, the vendors were in the process of renewing qualifications and waiting for the official certificate. Staff attempted to argue the point that the vendors could receive the qualification certificate permit prior to moving forward, as this is a standard issuance done annually at this time of year. Unfortunately, the state did not accept this argument. Staff will not be able to meet the deadlines for the next committee cycle in order to be awarded on July 9, 2024. Commissioner Tepe asked if IDNR is paying for the project.*

*Exec. Dir. Haberthur responded yes, the IDNR is reimbursing for the project, therefore they have the say of the vendors. Commissioner Kenyon asked if the IDNR would be hauling the debris. Exec. Dir. Haberthur stated that this project would be similar to the one mentioned earlier by Commissioner Allan in Batavia that the dam fell apart and the IDNR allowed it. Commissioner Ford supported the request to bring the item to the Full Board, he understood the deadlines and the committee cycle adding a month to the timeline. Chair Strathmann called for consensus to push this item to the July 9, 2024 Full Commission meeting once staff can secure the vendors with IDNR. Consensus was gained.*

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

*None.*

#### **VII. Communications**

*Comm. Affairs Dir. Metanchuk provided an update noting that summer camps are ramping up. Environmental Education is offering a few programs about cicadas. Dir. Metanchuk promoted the Kane forest Foundation first annual golf outing on September 12, 2024.*

*Exec. Dir. Haberthur gave a shout out to former Exec. Dir. Monica Meyers for helping with the Foundation and the logistics with the golf outing.*

#### **VIII. Chairman's Comments**

*None.*

**IX. Adjournment**

*The meeting adjourned at 10:17 AM*

**RESULT: APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE**

**MOVER:** Michael Kenyon

**SECONDER:** Mavis Bates

**AYE:** Mavis Bates, Ron Ford, Michael Kenyon, Anita Lewis, Cherryl Strathmann, Vern Tepe, Michael Linder

**ABSENT:** Michelle Gumz,

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

Respectfully Submitted,

*Gabriella Figliozzi*

Gabriella Figliozzi  
Recording Secretary