

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
JUNE 10, 2025**

PRESENT: Committee members – K. Swanson, R. Simmer, J. Woods, E. Sowards, D. Mielke, C. Layer.

ABSENT: L. Moreno.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Lee Jackson, Niabi Zoo Director.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:35 PM on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, in the class room of the Administration Building at Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Illinois.

E. Sowards, K. Swanson, J. Woods, R. Simmer, D. Mielke, C. Layer.

TOTAL PRESENT 6

L. Moreno.

TOTAL ABSENT 1

President Swanson called for a motion approving the May Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the May Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$789,017.42.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$789,017.42. Dr. Mielke seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the transfers of appropriation.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the transfers of appropriation. Mr. Layer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the resolutions regarding the General Fund transfer of appropriations to Niabi Zoo Fund, additional fiscal year 2025 appropriation in the Niabi Zoo Fund, fiscal year 2025 Niabi Zoo Fund appropriations for Mixed Primate and Otter

Exhibit Improvements, the Bike Path Grant Improvements, and Cooling system for Biodiversity Building at Niabi Zoo.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the resolutions regarding the General Fund transfer of appropriations to Niabi Zoo Fund, additional fiscal year 2025 appropriation in the Niabi Zoo Fund, fiscal year 2025 Niabi Zoo Fund appropriations for Mixed Primate and Otter Exhibit Improvements, the Bike Path Grant Improvements, and Cooling system for Biodiversity Building at Niabi Zoo. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson made three calls for public comment. There were no requests for public comment.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the revised fiscal year 2026 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinances for the General Fund, Niabi Zoological Preserve Fund, IMRF Retirement Fund, FISSA Fund, Audit Fund, and Development of Forests and Construction of Improvement Fund.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the revised fiscal year 2026 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinances for the General Fund, Niabi Zoological Preserve Fund, IMRF Retirement Fund, FISSA Fund, Audit Fund, and Development of Forests and Construction of Improvement Fund. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the purchase of a Ford F-150 in the amount of \$43,673.00.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the purchase of a Ford F-150 in the amount of \$43,673.00. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson stated that bids for the Great River Trail Project will need to be forwarded to the Commission meeting next week. The bid opening isn't until the sixteenth. The only other option is to decide the bids in July, which would delay the project another month.

There was consensus to decide the bids next week at the Commission meeting.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the staff recommended proposal for Actuarial Services for GASB 75 reporting.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the staff recommended proposal for Actuarial Services for GASB 75 reporting. Ms. Woods seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that the District received four proposals for actuarial services. Focusing on the two lowest proposals, which does not include the District's current external auditing firm, USI. Lauterbach & Amen, LLP, based out of Naperville, is the lowest bid. Lauterbach does the County's, and staff is recommending Lauterbach & Amen, LLP.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the MindFire Communications Agreement for Services in the amount of \$80,225.00.

Dr. Simmer asked if this was for the full year.

Mr. Craver stated that the jump in price that being seen is due to the additional services of redoing the District's website and the Bluff's website. This is in addition to the regularly performed services that MindFire has done for the District in the past several years.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the MindFire Communications Agreement for Services in the amount of \$80,225.00. Mr. Mielke seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the amendment to Zoo Director salary of \$1,000.00.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the amendment to Zoo Director salary of \$1,000.00. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson asked if there were any questions from the Committee on the routine reports.

There were no questions.

President Swanson asked Mr. Jackson if there was anything he wanted to bring to the Committee's attention.

Mr. Jackson stated that there are several new exhibits this year. A few have already opened up. There is good progress on the cat house.

Dr. Simmer asked how the train was performing.

Mr. Jackson stated that the train had running well this year.

Mr. Craver added that the District needs to get at least three more years out of the current train. The bonds for the zoo will be complete in 2028, and the hotel/motel tax money will be

around until 2033. With any luck the District will be able to use the extra cash in the budget to purchase a new, or gently used, train.

Mr. Craver then went over a brief summary of the history of the hotel/motel tax money that the zoo has been receiving over the years.

Mr. Jackson stated that a new bid will have to be acquired for, preferably, an electric train.

President Swanson asked Mr. Craver if there was anything he wanted to bring the Committee's attention to from the report this month.

Mr. Craver stated that the reports were pretty self-explanatory this month, but was happy to answer any questions.

There were no questions.

President Swanson reminded the Committee that in July the Committee will be meeting at Indian Bluff Golf Course, then called for a motion to approve all routine reports from the Director and Department Heads as presented.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve all routine reports from the Director and Department Heads as presented. Ms. Sowards seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called the meeting adjourned at 3:58 PM.

Submitted by: Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant