

**FOREST PRESERVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
AUGUST 12, 2025**

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

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Craver, District Director; Ben Mills, Loud Thunder Ranger.

President Swanson called the monthly meeting of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee to order at 3:33 PM on Tuesday, August 12, 2025, in the park office of the Loud Thunder Forest Preserve in Illinois City, Illinois.

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

TOTAL PRESENT 7

TOTAL ABSENT 0

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

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

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the old year and new year claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$595,117.39.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the claims and treasurer's disbursements in the amount of \$595,117.39. Mr. Layer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the old year and new year transfers of appropriation.

MOTION: Ms. Woods moved to approve the old year and new year transfers of appropriation. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the resolutions regarding the FY25 Development of Forests and Construction of Improvements Fund – Bike Path Grant Project, and FY26 Niabi Zoo Fund additional appropriations – Niabi Zoo cathouse & eagle project.

MOTION: Dr. Simmer moved to approve the resolutions regarding the FY25 Development of Forests and Construction of Improvements Fund – Bike Path Grant Project, and FY26 Niabi Zoo Fund additional appropriations – Niabi Zoo cat house & eagle project. Mr. Mielke seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that the asphalt should be starting tomorrow.

Motion carried.

President Swanson made three calls for public comment.

Mr. Frank Preston of the Illinois City Saddle Club stated that the preserve staff have done a wonderful job. The only concern the saddle club has is the amount of children that come up to the horses during the shows.

Mr. Mills went through several things that the preserve does in order to help mitigate that danger including signs near the horse corral camp ground and arena, and the handouts for equestrian safety that those specifically staying in the horse corral campground receive upon check in.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the purchase of a Ventrac KN 4520N & accessories in the amount of \$54,399.60.

MOTION: Mr. Layer moved to approve the purchase of a Ventrac KN 4520N & accessories in the amount of \$54,399.60. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

President Swanson called for a motion to approve the dedication agreement between the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission and District for the Indian Bluff Hill Prairie & Buffer area.

MOTION: Dr. Moreno moved to approve the dedication agreement between the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission and District for the Indian Bluff Hill Prairie & Buffer area. Dr. Simmer seconded the motion.

Mr. Craver stated that the proposed agreement in the packet is for the area to essentially be untouched. For the District to maintain it, and remove invasive species. While the area will remain in the District's ownership, it will give Conservation Officers a way to enforce the laws protecting the land.

President Swanson stated that hill prairies were very special. There are some plants that will only grow in that eco system. The hill prairie at Indian Bluff is one of the few in this part of the state, and this is all about conservation and preserving nature for future generations to enjoy.

Motion carried.

President Swanson reminded the Committee that Mr. Craver would not be present at the next Committee meeting, then asked if there were any questions from the Committee on the routine reports.

There were no questions.

President Swanson reminded the Committee that in September the Committee will be meeting at Illiniwek Forest Preserve, then called for a motion to approve all routine reports from the Director and Department Heads as presented.

MOTION: Dr. Moreno 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 4:13 PM.

Submitted by: Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant