

**Lake County Forest Preserve District  
Operations Committee Meeting Minutes - Monday, March 31, 2025**

The Operations Committee of the Lake County Forest Preserve District met on Monday, March 31, 2025 at the District's General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

**1.0 Call to Order** – With a quorum physically present, Chair Knizhnik called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

**2.0 Roll Call** – Committee Secretary Shelton called the roll, and four committee members responded: Chair Sara Knizhnik, Vice Chair Adam Schlick, Member Carissa Casbon and Member Kevin Hunter. Absent: Member Esiah Campos, Member Mary Ross Cunningham and Member Paras Parekh.

**Also Present:**

Jessica Vealitzek, <i>President</i>	Rebekah Snyder	Diana Dretske
Alex Kovach	Dan Stearns	Kim Mikus
John Nelson	Pati Vitt	Mike Zahalka
Ron Davis	Debbie Boness	Nataly Garcia Campos
Alex Eichman	Michael Bonn	Jessica Chong
Alyssa Firkus	Alicia Fullerton	Maureen Shelton
Mary Kann	Matt Mulligan	Betsy Gates-Alford, <i>Corporate Counsel</i>

**3.0 Pledge of Allegiance** – Vice Chair Schlick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4.0 Addenda to the Agenda** – None

**5.0 Approval of Minutes** - Motion by Member Hunter, second by Member Casbon to approve minutes from the February 3, 2025 Operations committee meeting open and closed sessions and the March 6, 2025 Joint committee meeting. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

**6.0 Public Comment** – None

**7.0 Executive Director Comments** – Executive Director Ty Kovach highlighted items from his report and he and staff responded to questions on:

- Preservation Foundation endowment update and Lillard donation;
- Tree Canopy Monitoring Program;
- 2024 stewardship volunteer program recap;
- 2025 golf season is underway;
- Independence Grove 2025 season with beer garden, gatehouse and marina;
- Fox River marina boat launch is now open;
- Maple Syruping program recap;
- Dunn Museum food donation admission for Libertyville Food Pantry;
- Every Acre Strong: The Community Campaign for Lake County Forest Preserves;
- Acorns to Oaks events in March hosted by the Foundation;
- Visiting members of the American Alliance of Museums as part of the accreditation process;
- Restoration Ecologist Ken Klick will retire in June after 30 years.

**8.0 Correspondence** – None

## 9.0 Unfinished Business – None

## 10.0 New Business

- 10.1 Approve a motion to (i) release certain Committee closed session minutes, (ii) retain as confidential all other Committee closed session minutes not previously released, and (iii) delete verbatim recordings of closed sessions of meetings, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Motion by Vice Chair Schlick, second by Member Casbon to approve the recommendation. John Nelson, Chief Operations Officer summarized the recommendation. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- 10.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for the purchase of four 2025 Ford F-250 4x4 Crew Cab Pickup Trucks at \$52,159.00 each; and one 2025 Ford F-250 4x4 Regular Cab Pickup Truck at \$48,731.00, to Currie Motors Frankfort, Inc., in the Contract Price of \$257,367.00. Motion by Member Hunter, second by Vice Chair Schlick to approve the recommendation. Mr. Nelson introduced the recommendation. Director of Facilities Dan Stearns summarized the recommendation and responded to questions. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the full board for approval.
- 10.3 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for the Purchase, Removal, and Installation of Police Vehicle Equipment to Havey Communications, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$74,006.40. Motion by Member Hunter, second by Vice Chair Schlick to approve the recommendation. Mr. Nelson summarized the recommendation. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the full board for approval.
- 10.4 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract to Purchase Axon Taser 10s and Related Components to Axon Enterprise, Inc. in the amount of \$106,920.00 amortized over five years (Repeals prior Resolution). Motion by Member Hunter, second by Member Casbon to approve the recommendation. Mr. Nelson summarized the recommendation and explained that in February the taser equipment was approved by committee and board as a “lease” and that it should have been labeled a “purchase” of the equipment. Mr. Nelson noted that the approval of this Resolution to purchase the tasers will also repeal the prior approved Resolution, but that the pricing and other terms remain the same. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance committee for approval.
- 10.5 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract to Revels Turf & Tractor in the Contract Price of \$36,880.00 for the purchase of a Tru-Turf RE50 Lithium Electric Greens Roller. Motion by Member Casbon, second by Vice Chair Schlick to approve the recommendation. Director of Golf, Alex Eichman summarized the recommendation and responded to a question on the maintenance of the roller. Mr. Nelson explained the funding for this electric roller. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance committee for approval.
- 10.6 Recommend approval of an Ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget by \$53,515.94 for updating interior exhibits and enclosures at the Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area Welcome Center. Motion by Vice Chair Schlick, second by Member Casbon to approve the recommendation. Director of Education, Alyssa Firkus summarized the recommendation explaining that funds for this update will come from the fall classic fundraiser events. Director Firkus noted that District staff would like to utilize the Welcome Center to its fullest potential and deepen engagement for the 9,000 visitors that

come to the Welcome Center annually and that the update to the exhibits and enclosures will enable visitors to engage with and explore through various interpretive elements, including Education's live animals. Director Firkus showed images of what the Welcome Center could look like with this update and responded to questions on the update, where the animals will be housed and the hours of operation. Mr. Nelson further explained the budget amendment and that the funds from the fall classic fundraiser are being transferred from the Preservation Foundation to the District. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance committee for approval.

- 10.7 Recommend Approval of a Resolution Approving an amendment to the Collections Management Policy for the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County. Motion by Member Hunter, second by Member Casbon to approve the recommendation. Director Firkus explained that the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) initial review of the museum operating documents and during the accreditation site visit, AAM suggested that the Collections Management Policy add elements outlined in other core documents to make it a more comprehensive document. Director Firkus reviewed all the changes with the committee including the change to reflect the final rule for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Director Firkus noted that the Executive Director has been given authority to approve other museum documents, and she reviewed those updates made to the Strategic Institutional Plan and Institutional Code of Ethics. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously, and the recommendation was forwarded to the full board for approval.

- 10.8 Approve and Accept New Donations to the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections. Motion by Member Hunter, second by Member Casbon, to approve the recommendation. Director Firkus highlighted the new donations in a presentation and responded to questions. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

#### 11.0 Miscellaneous Business

- Member Casbon requested that the committee consider installing electric vehicle chargers for public use at our preserves and invest staff time to investigate this. A general discussion ensued. With consensus from the committee, staff were directed to bring a policy direction on this topic to a future Operations committee meeting.
- Chair Knizhnik commented on how pleased she was with the recent CIP article in the Daily Herald.

#### 12.0 Closed Session – None

#### 13.0 Potential Action Following Closed Session – None

#### 14.0 Adjourn – Chair Knizhnik noted that the next meeting is May 5, 2025 and the meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen E. Shelton  
Committee Secretary

Date Approved: May 5, 2025