

**Lake County Forest Preserves
Special Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes
July 27, 2021**

The Lake County Forest Preserves Special Legislative Committee met on Tuesday, July 27, 2021. The meeting was held at Independence Grove Forest Preserve, Visitors Center, 16400 West Buckley Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order -With a quorum present, Chair Clark called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m.

2.0 Roll Call – Committee Secretary Shelton called the roll and five committee members responded: Jennifer Clark, Chair; Gina Roberts, Vice Chair; Paras Parekh, Linda Pedersen and Jessica Vealitzek.

Also Present:

Angelo Kyle, <i>President</i>	Mary Kann	Cassandra Torstensen, <i>Lake County</i>
Marah Altenberg	Steve Neaman	John Henning, <i>MCCD</i>
Carissa Casbon	John Nelson	Elizabeth Kessler, <i>MCCD</i>
Mary Ross Cunningham	Rebekah Snyder	Dan Didech, <i>IL State Representative</i>
Paul Frank	John Tannahill	Adriane Johnson, <i>IL State Senator</i>
Sandy Hart	Allison Fredrick	Joyce Mason, <i>IL State Representative</i>
Ann Maine	Kim Mikus Croke	Rita Mayfield, <i>IL State Representative</i>
John Wasik	Maureen Shelton	Julie Morrison, <i>IL State Senator</i>
Alex Ty Kovach	Derek Blaida, <i>Legislative Consultant</i>	Tom Weber, <i>IL State Representative</i>
Mike Tully	Gary Gibson, <i>Lake County</i>	Sam Yingling, <i>IL State Representative</i>
Nan Buckardt	Matt Meyers, <i>Lake County</i>	Mick Zawislak, <i>Daily Herald</i>

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Clark led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda - None

5.0 Public Comment – Chair Clark asked if there was anyone attending who wished to provide public comment for items not on the agenda. There were no responses.

6.0 Correspondence – None

7.0 Unfinished Business – None

8.0 New Business

8.1 Presentation and Discussion on the District’s Legislative initiative to amend the Downstate Forest Preserve Act. Executive Director, Ty Kovach introduced the item. Mike Tully, Chief Operations Officer presented it. Mr. Tully explained that the District’s Board of Commissioners approved the legislation initiative on April 9, 2019. This legislation is an amendment to the Downstate Forest Preserve Act maximum statutory tax rates. The district wants to raise the two main operating levies, the general fund levy is capped at .06% and the legislation would increase it to no more than .08%. The land development levy would be increased from .025% to no more than .045%. He shared the District’s successful referendum history and the favorable Attitude and Interested Survey that shows that the Forest Preserves are trusted and good stewards of tax dollars.

Mr. Tully showed a chart of the increase usage of the Preserves and explained that there is still work to done. The Green Infrastructure Model and Strategy has identified critical land acquisition and restoration targets. There are important trail connections yet to be completed. Multiple land banked preserves that have not seen any public access development. There is \$50

million of unfunded projects identified in the Board approved Capital Improvement Plan. He explained the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) and the restrictions imposed by this law. The maximum statutory tax rate set in the Downstate Forest Preserve Act will not allow the tax levy to rise even if the voters say yes to a PTELL referendum. He informed attendees that there is a long process to get to a bond referendum and this legislation, introduced by Senator Melinda Bush is one of the first steps.

Chair Clark commented that by making these changes, it allows us to ask the voters what they want. Commissioner Maine provided additional information on the 2008 referendum and suggested a graph be sent to the legislators that indicates what the levy rates have been over the last 10 to 15 years to show the District’s level of efficiency. Steve Neaman, Director of Finance spoke regarding the dollars not available in the future because of the PTELL formula.

Commissioner Wasik asked for examples of some of the projects the District would like to do. Mr. Kovach provided examples of these projects Millennium Trail, land restoration projects, Oriole Grove Master Plan, Chain of Lakes Trail, Lakewood Master Plan and Ryerson net-zero building.

Chair Clark thanked everyone for attending. President Kyle asked the Legislators to introduce themselves. The following legislators in attendance stood up to introduce themselves:

- Adriane Johnson, Illinois State Senator, District 30
- Rita Mayfield, Illinois State Representative, District 60
- Julie Morrison, Illinois State Senator, District 29
- Joyce Mason, Illinois State Representative, District 61
- Sam Yingling, Illinois State Representative, District 62
- Tom Weber, Illinois State Representative, District 64
- Dan Didech, Illinois State Representative, District 69

President Kyle thanked the Legislators for attending and for their recent support for the Stevenson House.

9.0 Miscellaneous Business – None

10.0 Adjourn – With no further business, Chair Clark declared the meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

APPROVED:	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jennifer Clark, Chair			Linda Pedersen	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gina Roberts, Vice Chair			Jessica Vealitzek	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Paras Parekh				

Committee Secretary’s Note: Pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the October 15, 2021 Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, and Written Determination of the Lake County Forest Preserve District President, the Legislative Committee met via audio and video conference on Monday, November 1, 2021. These Minutes were approved by a Roll Call vote at that meeting:

- AYES: 3 (Clark, Pedersen, Vealitzek)
- NAYS: 0
- ABSENT: 2 (Parekh, Roberts)

Margaret E. Shelton
 Committee Secretary