

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT – REGULAR JANUARY MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of the Lake County Forest Preserve District met on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at the District General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order – With a quorum present in the room, President Jessica Vealitzek called the meeting to order at 9:17 a.m. and hearing no objections, confirmed electronic attendance for Commissioners Michael Danforth and Sara Knizhnik, both due to employment.

2.0 Roll Call of Commissioners – Board Secretary Gragnani called the roll and 13 Commissioners responded present: Campos, Casbon, Danforth, Hart, Hewitt, Knizhnik, Kyle, Parekh, Pedersen, Roberts, Schlick, Vealitzek22, and Wasik. Commissioner Hunter arrived at 9: a.m. Absent: Altenberg, Clark, Cunningham, Frank, and Maine.

3.0 Moment of Silence – President Vealitzek observed a moment of silence.

4.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Vice President Roberts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5.0 Addenda to Agenda – None

6.0 Public Comment – There was no public comment for items not on the agenda.

7.0 President’s Report, Special Recognition and Committee Appointments

President Vealitzek, Vice President Roberts and Commissioner Hart attended the Lake County Chamber of Commerce 18th Annual Forecast Lake County luncheon. The keynote speaker was Thomas Walstrum, Senior Business Economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

8.0 Executive Director’s Report - Executive Director Kovach reported on:

- Introduction of new Administration department staff;
- President approved a dog exercise area fee waiver associated with a commemorative gift;
- Notified the Board of a change to a partnership agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers for Des Plaines Phase II projects, the local cost share estimate went from \$0 to \$228,846, however, this is a \$92 million project overall.
- Community Engagement & Partnerships summary of commemorative gifts promotion;
- Summary of campaign to promote the purchase of golf gift cards in December;
- Preservation Foundation year-end summary on fundraising;
- Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration at Dutch Gap is out to bid; and Phase I of multiple referendum-funded projects has begun; 92 acres of restoration is underway at Greenbelt which includes federal funds;
- Staff work day at the Native Seed Nursery; 2025 recap of plants grown at the Nursery;
- Dunn Museum attendance during winter break; Hike Lake County program recap;
- Social media report for 2025; Virtual Lunch & Learn programs held in 2025 for staff;
- The District’s 2025 Risk Management Review with PDRMA and financial incentive earned; \$2000 grant from PDRMA for a dustless sander system;
- Letter from Waukegan Port District requesting that the Forest Preserve District concur with an assessment that the proposed new runway would have a de minimis impact on Waukegan Savanna Forest Preserve. A discussion ensued; the letter will be sent out to the Board. The District will need to perform some invasive clearing in order to do a survey of trees in the area, and signage should be put up explaining why the clearing is taking place.

9.0 Unfinished Business – None

10.0 Consent Agenda – Motion by Commissioner Pedersen, second by Vice President Roberts to approve the Consent Agenda, items 10.1 and 10.2:

10.1 Approval of Minutes: December 10, 2025

10.2 Approve a Resolution Awarding a Contract for Phase II Engineering Services for Public Access Improvements within Lake Carina Forest Preserve to Civiltech Engineering, Inc., in the Contract Price of \$214,267.05. **EXHIBIT No. 6250**

With a roll call vote being had, the motion to approve the Consent Agenda passed by a vote of:
AYES: 14, NAYS: 0

11.0 New Business – Report of Standing and Special Committees:

11.1 Resolution Approving Collective Bargaining Agreement with Illinois Fraternal Order of Police
Motion by Vice President Roberts, second by Commissioner Hart to Approve a Resolution Approving a Three-Year Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police. With a roll call vote being had (leave for previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 14, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6251**

11.2 Resolution Awarding Contract for Recreational Facilities Construction at Lakewood
Motion by Commissioner Schlick, second by Commissioner Kyle to Approve a Resolution Awarding a Contract for the Construction of Recreational Facilities at Lakewood Forest Preserve to Premier Design + Build Group, LLC, in the Contract Price of \$3,905,468.07. With a roll call vote being had (leave for previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 14, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6252**

11.3 Resolution to Purchase 0.82-Acre Parcel as an Addition to Grant Woods Forest Preserve
Motion by Commissioner Hunter, second by Commissioner Pedersen to Approve a Resolution to Purchase an approximately 0.82-acre Parcel in Unincorporated Grant Township known as the A. Woodville Property, for \$37,000.00 as an addition to Grant Woods Forest Preserve. Public Comment was given by Grant Benjamin, Ingleside, who spoke in favor of the acquisition. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 14, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6253**

12.0 Petitions and Correspondence - None


13.0 Miscellaneous Business – None.

14.0 Closed Session – None

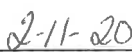
15.0 Potential Action following Closed Session - None

16.0 Adjournment – With no further business before the Board, President Vealitzek adjourned the meeting at 10:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Julie Gagnani, Board Secretary



Date Approved

ROLL CALL

LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF LAKE)

REGULAR JANUARY 14 SESSION, 2026

9:17 am.

ROLL CALL		COMMISSIONERS	QUESTIONS																		
P	A		Consent Agenda	11.1 FOP Contract		11.2 Lakewood Facilities		11.3 Woodview Purchase													
			Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	
1	X	Altenberg, Marah X																			
2	✓	Campos, Esiah	✓																		
3	✓	Casbon, Carissa	✓																		
4	X	Clark, Jennifer X																			
5	X	Cunningham, Mary Rose X																			
6	✓	Danforth, Michael	✓																		
7	X	Frank, Paul X																			
8	✓	Hart, Sandra	✓																		
9	✓	Hewitt, Diane	✓																		
10	X	Hunter, J. Kevin X	✓																		
11	✓	Knizhnik, Sara Frederick	✓																		
12	✓	Kyle, Angelo	✓																		
13	X	Maine, Ann X																			
14	✓	Parekh, Paras	✓																		
15	✓	Pedersen, Linda	✓																		
16	✓	Roberts, Gina	✓																		
17	✓	Schlick, Adam	✓																		
18	✓	Vealitzek, Jessica	✓																		
19	✓	Wasik, John	✓																		
13 6		TOTALS	14 0	14 0	14 0	14 0															
			Notes:			LEAVE	LEAVE	LEAVE													

Hunter @ 9:22 am. (14)