

**Lake County Forest Preserve District  
Diversity and Cultural Awareness Committee  
January 31, 2022**

On Monday, January 31, 2022, pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the January 7, 2028 Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, and the Written Determination of the Lake County Forest Preserve District President attached to the Agenda, the Diversity and Cultural Awareness Committee met via Audio and Video conference and at the Lake County Forest Preserve District's General Offices.

**1.0 Call to Order** - Chair Mary Ross Cunningham called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

**2.0 Roll Call** - Committee Secretary Gragnani called the roll and four committee members responded: Mary Ross Cunningham, Chair; Carissa Casbon, Gina Roberts, Jessica Vealitzek. Vice Chair Marah Altenberg joined the meeting immediately after the roll call.

**Also Present:**

Angelo Kyle, President  
Alex Ty Kovach, Executive Director  
Matt Norton, Corporate Counsel  
Mary Kann  
Mike Tully  
Randy Seebach  
Nan Buckardt

**Also Present:**

John Nelson  
John Tannahill  
Pati Vitt  
Rebekah Snyder  
Dan Stearns  
Laurel Diver  
Jean Korando  
Julie Gragnani

**3.0 Pledge of Allegiance** – Member Casbon led the pledge of allegiance.

**4.0 Addenda to the Agenda** – None

**5.0 Approve Minutes** – Motion by member Casbon, second by member Altenberg to approve the Minutes of January 25, 2021. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 5, NAYS: 0.

**6.0 Public Comment** – None

**7.0 Correspondence** - None

**8.0 Unfinished Business** – None

**9.0 New Business**

**9.1 Recent Activities Report** – Administration Director Mary Kann reported on NEOGOV, the District's new applicant tracking system, which uses blind applicant features that conceal the applicant's confidential information. Implementation is nearly complete. Director Kann then showed a graph on the staff's ethnicity as compared to the 2020 Census.

Education Director Nan Buckardt reviewed the Education Department's training programs for education staff and volunteers; youth training program being held at Greenbelt for the Green Youth Farm; and programs presented in Spanish. She explained a land acknowledgement statement that her staff is working on that will honor the native Americans who settled this region. She also summarized the "Our Voice is Black History" project activities and award submissions; and a spring 2023 exhibit and programs at Dunn Museum that will highlight underground railroad certified stops. Director Kann continued with a summary of Directors' participation in a joint community service volunteering project last fall at the Northern Illinois Food Bank. Director Kann reported on the status of implementation of Phase 1 of the District's ADA transition plan. Phase 1 is to be completed by end of December 2024. Of 823 identified tasks, 250 items have been addressed. Planning Director Randy Seebach summarized the ADA projects that his staff has completed including

Schaeffer Road crossing and accessible parking stalls at Buffalo Creek Forest Preserve. Projects underway include design of the new Ryerson Educational facility accessible education loop trail, new accessible route from the Welcome Center to the new facility, and redesigned accessible parking for the Welcome Center.

9.2 Staff Diversity and Inclusion Committee Update – Human Resources/Risk Manager Laurel Diver, who chairs the committee, provided an update of items the staff committee worked on during the past year, including the development of a career video for each department, a pilot project using a racial equity assessment tool, an internship program for students, and recommendations for this coming year’s diversity trainer. President Kyle noted that he and Executive Director Kovach will be meeting with local planners regarding the first national Juneteenth celebration and how the District could get involved. A general discussion ensued.

9.3 Recommend approval of Ordinance Adding Personnel Policy 4.11 – Employee Volunteering Time Off to the District’s Personnel Policies and Procedures – Motion by member Casbon, second by member Vealitzek to approve the recommendation. Director Kann explained that staff wanted to bring this item to the Diversity Committee and then on to the Finance Committee, and explained the proposed new policy to allow employees the option to receive up to eight hours of paid time off per year to serve as volunteers in non-profit community programs in Lake County. The employee’s manager would have to approve the time off and the organization. Executive Director Kovach added that this would be a type of on-the-job training for District staff by getting out into the community. Director Kann responded to questions from the committee members and a general discussion ensued, including that volunteering for political activities is not allowed, and that volunteering is encouraged but not required. Director Kovach added that this type of paid volunteering day is common in the private sector, and that networking will also provide education about the forest preserves to the public.

Following discussion, the motion to approve the recommendation passed by a vote of: AYES: 5, NAYS: 0. The recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval.

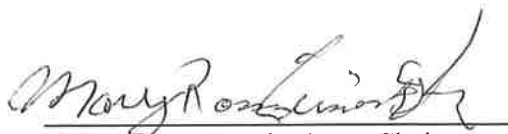
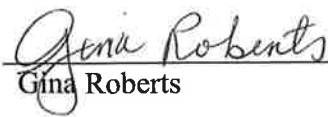
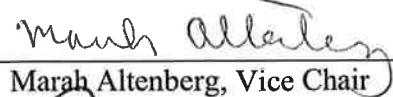
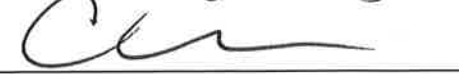
10.0 **Miscellaneous Business** - None

11.0 **Closed Session** – None

12.0 **Potential Action following Closed Session** - None

13.0 **Adjournment** – With no further business, Chair Cunningham declared the meeting adjourned at 12:14pm.

**APPROVED:**

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>		<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>
 Mary Ross Cunningham, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Gina Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Marah Altenberg, Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Esiah Campos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Carissa Casbon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			