

**Lake County Forest Preserves  
Finance Committee Minutes – February 5, 2026**

On Thursday, February 5, 2026, the Lake County Forest Preserve District’s Finance Committee met at the District’s General Offices in Libertyville, Illinois.

**1.0 Call to Order** – Chair Gina Roberts called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2.0 Roll Call** –Committee Secretary Gragnani called the roll and four committee members responded: Chair Gina Roberts, Marah Altenberg, Diane Hewitt, and Linda Pedersen. Arriving after the roll: Sandy Hart (1:03 p.m.) and Vice Chair Ann Maine (1:11 p.m.) Absent: Angelo Kyle

**Also Present:**

Jessica Vealitzek, President	Alyssa Firkus	Laurel Diver
Alex Kovach, Executive Director	Dan Stearns	Mike Bonn
Matt Norton, Corporate Counsel	Kevin Kleinjan	Debbie Boness
John Nelson	Pati Vitt	Julie Gragnani
Mary Kann	Ron Davis	Maureen Shelton

**3.0 Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Roberts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4.0 Addenda to the Agenda** – None

**5.0 Approval of Minutes** – Motion by Hewitt, second by Altenberg to approve the open and closed session minutes of the January 8, 2026 meeting. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

**6.0 Public Comment for items not on agenda** – None

**7.0 Correspondence** – None

**8.0 Unfinished Business** - None

**9.0 New Business:**

**9.1 Invoices and Requisitions** - Motion by Altenberg, seconded by Hewitt to approve the legal billing for the month of November 2025. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the invoice was passed for signatures.

Member Sandy Hart joined the meeting at 1:03 p.m.

**9.2 Approve amendments to the Procedures section of Personnel Policy 4.14 – Organ Donation Leave**

Motion by Pedersen, seconded by Altenberg to approve the amendments. Executive Director Alex Kovach and Administration Director Mary Kann explained that the amendments are needed to align with recent statutory changes addressing the eligibility of part-time employees for paid organ donation leave and to further define how pay is calculated for both full- and part-time employees taking such leave. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

**9.3 Recommend approval of an Ordinance amending Personnel Policy 4.3 – Military Training and Leave of Absence; and approve amendments to the Procedures section of Personnel Policy 4.3** - Motion by Altenberg, seconded by Pedersen to approve the amendments to the Procedures, and to recommend approval of the Ordinance amending the Policy. Director Kovach gave an overview of the amendments, noting changes to state law requirements. Director Kann added that changes were made to clarify how

annual military training leave is compensated. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation to approve the Ordinance was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

9.4 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Contract for Purchase of a three-year License for Microsoft Software Products, to Dell Marketing L.P., in an amount not to exceed \$187,153.98 - Motion by Hewitt, seconded by Hart to approve the recommendation. Director Kann gave an overview of the products and services included in the contract. IT Officer Debbie Boness responded to questions and added that there is a savings of \$10,000 per year over the current contract. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

9.5 For Information Only – Independence Grove 2025 Financial Recap – Facilities Director Dan Stearns gave an overview of the financial performance at Independence Grove in 2025. He summarized the Independence Grove Operations Budget, Visitor Center revenue and expenses, Visitor Center Operations Revenue/Loss, Beer Garden revenue and expenses, Beer Garden net operating revenue, Marina revenue and expenses, Marina net operating revenue, and the Independence Grove combined revenue and expenses, and combined net operating revenue. Director Stearns then responded to questions and a general discussion ensued. During discussion, member Maine suggested additional marketing strategies for the marina such as quick posts on social media offering specials.

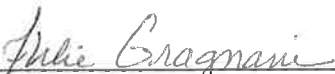
**10.0 Miscellaneous Business** – Chair Roberts noted that she received a request from a Commissioner to review the District’s Purchasing Policy’s \$60,000 threshold for purchases that need to come to the Board. Attorney Norton clarified the request, noting that the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act was recently amended so that the threshold for purchases of materials, supplies, etc. to require competitive bidding was raised from \$30,000 to \$60,000. For services, the threshold remains at \$30,000. The District’s Purchasing Policy is written so that when the State’s threshold is amended, the District’s threshold automatically changes to match the State. President Vealitzek added that it is up to the Finance Committee to decide whether it wants to review the Policy at this time. If it decides to take up the matter, she suggested having staff determine what purchases were made that fell within this scenario. Director Kovach suggested looking at purchases made during the past year and the committee agreed. A review of the policy, including the analysis of the past year’s purchases made over the \$30,000 threshold, will be placed on a future agenda.

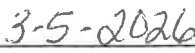
**11.0 Closed Session** – None

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

**13.0 Adjournment** - Chair Roberts declared the meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Julie Gragnani, Committee Secretary

  
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Date approved