

**Lake County Forest Preserve District
Diversity and Cultural Awareness Committee
February 6, 2023**

On Monday, February 6, 2023, the Diversity and Cultural Awareness Committee met at the District's General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

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; Marah Altenberg, Vice Chair; Carissa Casbon, and Gina Roberts. Absent: Esiah Campos.

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
Ron Davis
Rebekah Snyder
Laurel Diver
Anamaria Chavez Stiller
Sandy Meyers
Julie Gragnani
Kim Mikus Croke

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Cunningham led the pledge of allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None

5.0 Approve Minutes – Motion by member Roberts, second by Vice Chair Altenberg to approve the Minutes of January 31, 2022. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the minutes were circulated for signatures.

6.0 Public Comment – Public comment was given by Susan Zingle, Wadsworth, and Douglas Ower, Zion; who spoke against the Waukegan Airport project.

7.0 Correspondence - None

8.0 Unfinished Business – None

9.0 New Business

9.1 Employee Diversity Committee – Human Resources Manager Laurel Diver gave a presentation highlighting the activities of the Employee Diversity Committee over the past year. She gave an overview of the annual all-staff diversity training held last December; several career fairs held at high schools; creation of two nature camp counselor positions to give opportunities to under-represented youth; and target hiring a YCC crew from Waukegan, funded by three grants.

9.2 Community Engagement Initiatives – Administration Director Mary Kann gave a presentation highlighting the community engagement initiatives undertaken during the past year. A new Personnel Policy for Employee Community Engagement Program approved by the Board last year allows an employee to take 8 paid hours each year to assist a 501c3 or charitable organization in Lake County; and director levels and above are to complete a community service project each year. She summarized the organizations staff volunteered with over the past year. She also noted that the District received an award from the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (NACPRO) for the “Our Voice is Black History” exhibit. She also gave an overview of the new exhibit “Through Darkness to Light – Photographs along the

Underground Railroad” and noted that Museum attendance attracted every Lake County zip code, and all but 2 Lake County zip codes were represented in the Education Department’s overall programming, although programs were held in those areas at the libraries.

9.3 Accessibility Update –Director Kann updated the Committee on the status of Phase 1 of the District’s ADA Transition Plan including new benches being installed that have an arm rest and an open side for wheelchairs to get closer to the bench. The surfaces around the benches will be asphalt to eliminate uneven surfaces and erosion. At the Ryerson Welcome Center, the accessible stalls have been upgraded with concrete pads and new curb cuts for accessible connection to the new accessible trail. Near the new education building, accessible parking stalls have been added. She also summarized a new multi-language chat feature on the website for those with speech or hearing disabilities.

Mr. Kovach added that the District-wide ADA assessment was done four years ago that identified where the District needs to make changes, and there is now an implementation plan over the next 10 years. Funds will be set aside in the CIP each year for ADA improvements. Mr. Kovach and Director Kann responded to questions and a general discussion ensued.

9.4 Staff Profile – Director Kann showed charts comparing the District’s hiring ethnicity profile from 2019 – 2022 to the 2020 census data. Executive Director Kovach provided additional details.

9.5 Education Outreach Activities – Education Director Nan Buckardt gave an overview of her department, noting that there are now two bi-lingual educators. Director Kovach added that there are bilingual staff at the General Office front desk, in the Human Resources and Finance Departments, and at Greenbelt Cultural Center. Director Buckardt noted that the Science Explorer applications are also available in Spanish and summarized training attended by the educators during the past year. Education programs included Museum low-sensory hours and kits, and bi-lingual hikes. Director Buckardt responded to questions regarding the sensory program.






10.0 Miscellaneous Business – Chair Cunningham provided a summary of the Profiles in Excellence program held the previous day at Greenbelt Cultural Center. President Kyle also commented.

11.0 Closed Session – None

12.0 Potential Action following Closed Session - None

13.0 Adjournment – With no further business, Chair Cunningham adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Marah Altenberg, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Esiah Campos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Carissa Casbon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			