

**Lake County Forest Preserves  
Finance Committee Minutes – March 4, 2021**

On Thursday, February 4, 2021, pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the February 5, 2021 Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the Governor’s Executive Order No. 2021-4, and the Written Determination of the Lake County Forest Preserve District President attached to the Agenda, the Finance Committee met via Audio and Video conference and at the Lake County Forest Preserve District’s General Offices.

**1.0 Call to Order** - Chair Julie Simpson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2.0 Roll Call** - Committee Secretary Gragnani call the roll and all nine committee members responded: Julie Simpson, Chair; Paul Frank, Vice Chair; Carissa Casbon, Michael Danforth, Sandy Hart, Ann Maine, Judy Martini, Paras Parekh, and John Wasik.

**Also Present:**

Angelo Kyle, President	Jim Anderson	Debbie Boness
Linda Pedersen	Nan Buckardt	Kim Mikus Croke
Alex Ty Kovach	John Nelson	Julie Gragnani
Mike Tully	Rebekah Snyder	Matt Norton, Corporate Counsel
Steve Neaman	Dan Stearns	Mick Zawislak, Daily Herald
Mary Kann	Alex Eichman	Dan Forbes, Speer Financial

**3.0 Pledge of Allegiance** – Member Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4.0 Addenda to the Agenda** – None

**5.0 Approval of Minutes** – Motion by member Martini, second by member Parekh to approve the minutes of February 4, 2021. Roll Call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 9; NAYS: 0.

**6.0 Public Comment** – None

**7.0 Executive Director Comments** – Executive Director Kovach reported on:

- Board educational session 1 on March 5 following the County’s Committee of the Whole and session 2 following the March 9 Forest Preserve Board meeting;
- The Preservation Foundation’s recent meetings, donor activity, and grant awards;
- Virtual education programs, museum exhibit, and new history blog;
- 100 to 150 Covid-19 vaccines are given per day at Greenbelt Cultural Center;
- Online user demographics comparing January 2020 to January 2021;
- Staff monitoring the COVID guidelines to hopefully open picnic permits for groups up to 50 in April; and filling some open maintenance positions.

**8.0 Correspondence** – None

**9.0 Unfinished Business** – None

**10.0 New Business**

10.1 Recommend approval of Ordinance amending 2021 Budget Ordinance for development and operation of a beer garden at Independence Grove Forest Preserve, including amendments to (i) the General Corporate Fund for additional revenues and expenditures and (ii) the position inventory for additional staff - Motion by member Martini, second by member Wasik to approve the recommendation. Director Kovach made opening

remarks for a plan to operate a beer garden at Independence Grove Forest Preserve. Finance Director Neaman added that four food and beverage attendants will be added and staff anticipates the capital investment will be paid for in two years. Director Tully responded to questions about the operations and Attorney Norton addressed questions regarding liability; and a general discussion ensued. Following discussion, the motion to approve passed by a roll call vote of: AYES: 9, NAYS: 0; and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.2 Recommend approval of Ordinance providing for issuance of not to exceed \$68,000,000 General Obligation Refunding Bonds of the Lake County Forest Preserve District for the purpose of refunding certain outstanding bonds of said Forest Preserve District, providing for levy of direct annual tax sufficient to pay principal and interest on said bonds and authorizing sale of said bonds to purchaser thereof - Motion by member Frank, second by member Wasik to approve the recommendation. Director Neaman summarized the bond issuance to refund the 2010 A and B bonds. Currently, a savings of \$8 million is estimated, which will come directly off next year's tax bill. He explained a change from two bond ratings to one bond rating, to realize some additional savings and reduce cost of issuance. The sale will take place in April. Mr. Neaman responded to questions and Dan Forbes of Speer Financial explained floating rate bonds and the 8-year call date and advance refunding legislation. A general discussion ensued including exploring ways to reduce fees. After discussion, the motion to approve passed by a roll call vote of: AYES: 9, NAYS: 0; and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.3 Recommend approval of Resolution awarding Contracts to purchase Plant Protectant Products to Advanced Turf Solutions, Inc., BTSI, Clesens Inc., Chicagoland Turf, Conserv FS Growing Solutions, Inc., Pendleton Turf Supply, Reinders, Inc., SiteOne Landscape Supply, and VanDiest Supply Company - Motion by member Martini, second by member Frank to approve. Director Kovach summarized the recommendation, noting that Natural Resource and Golf purchases have been combined in the contracts, and pointed out withdrawn and rejected bids. The motion to approve passed by a roll call vote of: AYES: 9, NAYS: 0; and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.4 Policy direction on investigating mechanisms for establishing carbon and ecosystem service credits that can be sold on the open market and provide funding for future habitat restoration - Executive Director Kovach noted that staff has been researching carbon sequestration but now needs direction on whether to continue. He turned the presentation over to Natural Resource Director Jim Anderson, who gave an overview of how the carbon credit market works, which is done through registries and carbon brokers. Staff has been working with the Morton Arboretum's Chicago Regional Tree Initiative to identify firms that can certify, market and sell credits for carbon sequestration. Staff is meeting next week with brokers to initiate a feasibility study to establish marketable credits for the carbon sequestration provided by our current and recent reforestation efforts. The feasibility study is free; and the registry and broker would collect a fee for any credits sold on the open market, and profit the District receives would go to the Endowment Fund. Even if this doesn't work out, the assessment will give us information on our ecosystems as far as carbon storage. Mr. Anderson added that there could be an opportunity to work with potential donors regarding offsetting their carbon footprints. Mr. Anderson and Director Kovach responded to questions and a general discussion ensued. The direction of the committee was to continue exploring this concept.

#### **11.0 Miscellaneous Business - None**

**12.0 Closed Session** - Motion by member Parekh, second by member Casbon to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing 1) pending litigation; 2) the appointment and compensation of legal counsel; and 3) the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 9, NAYS: 0. The committee went into closed session at 2:08 p.m. and returned to open session at 2:39 p.m.

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

**14.0 Adjournment -** With no further business, Chair Simpson declared the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>		<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>
_____ Julie Simpson, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Ann B. Maine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ Paul Frank, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Judy Martini	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ Carissa Casbon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Paras Parekh	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ Michael Danforth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ John Wasik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ Sandy Hart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

**Secretary's Note:** Pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the March 5, 2021, Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the Governor's Executive Orders Nos. 2021-5, and Written Determination of the Lake County Forest Preserve District President, the Finance Committee met via audio and video conference on Thursday, April 8, 2021. These Minutes were approved by a Roll Call vote at that meeting:

AYES: 6 (Casbon, Danforth, Maine, Martini, Simpson, Wasik)  
NAYS: 0  
ABSENT: 3 (Frank; Hart (joined meeting after the vote); Parekh)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Secretary