

**Lake County Forest Preserves
Finance Committee Minutes – May 14, 2025**

On Wednesday, May 14, 2025, a special meeting of the Lake County Forest Preserve District's Finance Committee was held at the District's General Offices in Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order – With a quorum present in the room, Chair Gina Roberts called the meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. and confirmed remote attendance for member Marah Altenberg.

2.0 Roll Call – Committee Secretary Gragnani called the roll and five committee members responded: Chair Gina Roberts, Vice Chair Ann Maine, Marah Altenberg, Diane Hewitt, and Angelo Kyle. Absent: Sandy Hart and Linda Pedersen.

Also Present:

Jessica Vealitzek, President

Adam Schlick

Alex Kovach, Executive Director

Matt Norton, Corporate Counsel

John Nelson

Mary Kann

Alyssa Firkus

Dan Stearns

Pati Vitt

Ron Davis

Ken Jones

Rebekah Snyder

Julie Gragnani

Maureen Shelton

Laurel Diver

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Roberts dispensed with a Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None


5.0 Public Comment – None


6.0 Waiver of Initial Hire Restriction for Natural Resources Candidate – Executive Director Kovach reviewed the Ethics Ordinance regarding hiring of family members of Commissioners and department directors. He explained that Magen Hanson was hired as a temporary ecological technician in the Natural Resources Department. A week into her employment, she mentioned in a conversation that Commissioner Hart is her aunt. On her employment application, she checked No to the question asking if the applicant has any “relatives or friends working for the District”. Director Kovach recommended that the committee waive the Ethics Ordinance in this instance because the Commissioner did not influence Director Kovach or staff on the hiring; the position is temporary; and Ms. Hanson was the most qualified candidate in the applicant pool according to the Natural Resources Director and Director Kovach. A general discussion ensued and member Maine voiced concerns about advocating for relatives of Commissioners and felt the Ethics Ordinance should be reviewed again by the Ethics Committee. President Vealitzek added that the question on the application needs to clearly define family members. The committee agreed that the application question is not clear as worded; a Commissioner is not an employee, and the term “relatives” is not clearly defined. Director Kovach felt It should mirror the language in the Ethics Ordinance.

Following discussion, motion by member Hewitt, second by member Kyle to waive Section 25-1 of the District's “Ordinance Regulating Ethical Conduct and Political Activities by Elected Officials and Employees” for the purpose of hiring applicant Magen Hanson, and finding that it is in the best interest of the District to hire the applicant, taking into account the District's personnel needs, the qualifications of the applicant, and the ability of the District to avoid any workplace conflict arising out of the applicant's family relationship. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of AYES: 4, NAYS: 0, ABSTAIN: Maine.

7.0 Adjournment - Chair Roberts adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Julie Gragnani, Committee Secretary


Date Approved