Lake County Forest Preserve District
Joint Committee Meeting: Planning Committee; Operations Committee; Finance Committee
June 1, 2026

On Monday, June 1, 2026, the Planning, Operations, and Finance Committees met jointly at District General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call of each Committee – At 8:30 a.m., President Jessica Vealitzek convened the joint meeting and confirmed electronic attendance via Zoom for Commissioner Michael Danforth for the Planning Committee. The President asked each Chair to call their committees to order:

- **Planning Committee** – Chair Paul Frank called the Planning Committee to order and asked for a roll call. Present: Chair Frank, Vice Chair Jennifer Clark, Carissa Casbon, Michael Danforth, Linda Pedersen, Gina Roberts, John Wasik. With all seven members present, a quorum of the Planning Committee was confirmed.
- **Operations Committee** – Vice Chair Adam Schlick called the Operations Committee to order and asked for a roll call. Present: Vice Chair Adam Schlick, Esiah Campos, Carissa Casbon, Kevin Hunter, Paras Parekh. With five members present, a quorum of the Operations Committee was confirmed. Absent: Chair Sara Knizhnik, Mary Ross Cunningham.
- **Finance Committee -** Chair Gina Roberts called the Finance Committee to order and asked for a roll call. Present: Chair Roberts, Vice Chair Ann Maine, Marah Altenberg, Diane Hewitt, Linda Pedersen. With five members present, a quorum of the Finance Committee was confirmed. Member Sandy Hart arrived at 8:34 a.m. Absent: Angelo Kyle.

Also Present:

Jessica Vealitzek, *President*	Ken Jones	Steve Neaman
Alex Ty Kovach, *Executive Director*	Kevin Kleinjan	Julie Gragnani
Betsy Gates-Alford, *Corporate Counsel*	Mary Kann	Debbie Boness
John Nelson	Pati Vitt	Kevin Galindo
Alex Eichman	Rebekah Snyder	Kim Mikus Croke
Alyssa Firkus	Ron Davis	Maureen Shelton

2.0 Pledge Of Allegiance – Commissioner Hewitt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None

4.0 Public Comment for item not on agenda – Natalie Paldrmic of Grayslake spoke against the use of toxins on forest preserve public trails.

5.0 Correspondence – None

6.0 New Business – Planning Committee:

6.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution finding that use of property at Waukegan Savanna Forest Preserve for airport runway purposes will have de minimis impact on Waukegan Savanna: Motion by Vice Chair Clark, seconded by member Casbon to recommend approval. Executive Director Kovach gave an overview of what has happened to date with this transportation project. He noted that public access and restoration at the preserve has funding of $11 million from the 2024 referendum and will happen between 2027 and 2031. He gave a presentation, noting that the project calls for 0.25-acre fee simple acquisition of District property and 18.3 acres of permanent avigation easement. The current avigation easement is 76.6 acres and would be terminated. The 18.3 acre easement would continue to have restrictions but be available for the public to access. He summarized the results of a recent tree inventory, outlined recent public input, and showed several aerial maps of the site including past proposals and the current project. He reviewed the staff recommendation memo, noting that of the 18.3 acres of avigation easement, 12.9 acres are already subject to height limitations imposed by the current 76.6-acre easement. The portions not subject to height restrictions are primarily former road rights-of-way. The District has no plans for any active recreational improvements within the conveyance parcels. The Port District states that it will comply with the tree preservation and replacement requirements of the Forest Preserve License & Easement Ordinance, with respect to any trees removed within the avigation easement. The approval of this resolution does not approve the transfer of the conveyance parcels to the Port District; it merely supports a de minimis impact finding as contemplated under Federal regulations.

Director Kovach responded to questions and then Chair Frank called for public comments. The following people spoke:

- Douglas Ower, representing the Sierra Club – vote No on the de minimis finding.
- Diane Ower of Zion - against the de minimis finding.
- Bob Gillengerten of Antioch – in favor of the de minimis finding.
- Kevin Considine, representing Lake County Partners – in favor of the de minimis finding.
- Mary Fran Troha of Waukegan – against the de minimis finding.
- Kiera Lane, representing Clean Power Lake County – against the de minimis finding.
- Susan Zingle of Wadsworth – against the de minimis finding.
- Peter Manhard, representing Lake Co. Transportation Alliance – in favor of the de minimis finding.
- Brian Palka – in favor of the de minimis finding.
- Chris Geiselhart, representing Lake County Audubon Society – against the de minimis finding.
- Elizabeth Webster of Grayslake - against the de minimis finding.
- Kathie Hayden of Wadsworth - against the de minimis finding.
- Mayra Mendez of Zion - against the de minimis finding.
- Tom Evers, representing Abbott – in favor of the de minimis finding.

Executive Director Kovach responded to additional questions and several Commissioners provided comments. During this time, Craig Louden, representing the Airport's consulting engineer, responded to questions regarding why an outside environmental entity did not conduct the environmental assessment, noting that the FAA has their own internal environmental team and legal team.

On the motion to recommend approval, with a roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 6 - Casbon, Clark, Danforth, Frank, Pedersen, Roberts. NAY: 1 - Wasik. The recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

The committees took a 5-minute break at approximately 10:16 a.m.

President Vealitzek turned the agenda over to Finance Committee Chair Roberts:

7.0 New Business – All Committee:

7.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution adopting Annual Budget Policies for Fiscal Year 2027 – Chair Roberts asked for a motion and second from each committee to recommend approval:

- **Finance Committee** - Motion by Hewitt, second by Maine to recommend approval of a Resolution adopting the Annual Budget Policies for Fiscal Year 2027.
- **Planning Committee** - Motion by Clark, second by Casbon to recommend approval of a Resolution adopting the Annual Budget Policies for Fiscal Year 2027.
- **Operations Committee** - Motion by Campos, second by Hunter to recommend approval of a Resolution adopting the Annual Budget Policies for Fiscal Year 2027.

Finance Director Steve Neaman reviewed the revisions made to each page of the Budget Policies section. During the review, Finance Committee member Maine commented on page 8, Section 7 Debt Management Policies, item 7.3. She recommended revising the sentence to reference "in accordance with the Downstate Forest Preserve Act" to avoid the need for future policy amendments to change the amount. A discussion ensued and there was a motion by member Maine, seconded by Finance Committee member Hart to amend the sentence to read: "Net General Obligation debt shall not exceed 2.3 percent of the assessed value of taxable property within the District in accordance with the Downstate Forest Preserve Act." Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously by the Finance Committee. The committees had no other suggested revisions to the Budget Policies.

Following discussion, each committee voted on its original motion to recommend approval - as amended:

- **Finance Committee –** voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- **Planning Committee -** voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- **Operations Committee** – voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

The Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

7.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution approving the 10-year Capital Improvement Plan for the 2027 Budget - Chair Roberts asked for a motion and second from each committee to recommend approval:

- **Finance Committee -** Motion by Maine, second by Hewitt to recommend approval of a Resolution approving the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan for the 2027 budget.
- **Planning Committee -** Motion by Casbon, second by Clark to recommend approval of a Resolution approving the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan for the 2027 budget.
- **Operations Committee -** Motion by Hunter, second by Campos to recommend approval of a Resolution approving the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan for the 2027 budget.

Chief Operations Officer John Nelson presented the adjustments and additions to the CIP. Projects adjusted were: Lake Carina, Oriole Grove, Gander Mountain, Grainger Woods and Ray Lake, which he showed on maps and summarized. He responded to questions with input from Planning Director Kevin Kleinjan. Also, the Lake County Greenway Corridor project has been added to the CIP. The District has entered into a grant agreement with the State of Illinois for up to $1 million in funding to facilitate transfer to the District of land parcels no longer needed by the State for the once-proposed Route 53 extension. Staff responded to question and a brief discussion ensued. Mr. Nelson then reviewed the revisions to the Unfunded Projects list and responded to questions.

Following discussion, each committee voted on its original motion to recommend approval as presented:

- **Finance Committee –** voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- **Planning Committee -** voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- **Operations Committee** – voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

The Resolution was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

President Vealitzek turned the agenda over to Operations Committee Vice Chair Schlick:

8.0 New Business – Operations Committee and **Finance Committee**:
8.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Five-Year Contract for Unified Communications Services to RingCentral, Inc., in an amount not to exceed $138,585.60 – Vice Chair Schlick asked for a motion and second from the Operations and Finance Committees to recommend approval:

- **Operations Committee -** Motion by Schlick, second by Campos to recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Five-Year Contract for Unified Communications Services to RingCentral, Inc., in an amount not to exceed $138,585.60.

- **Finance Committee -** Motion by Maine, second by Hart to recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a Five-Year Contract for Unified Communications Services to RingCentral, Inc., in an amount not to exceed $138,585.60.

Administration Director Mary Kann summarized the scope of the contract and responded to questions. On the motions to recommend approval:

- **Operations Committee** – voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- **Finance Committee -** voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the full board for approval.

8.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution approving a Branding Agreement with Tighthead Brewing Company Inc., to produce, release, and distribute Trailhead India Pale Ale - Vice Chair Schlick asked for a motion and second from the Operations and Finance Committees to recommend approval:

- **Operations Committee -** Motion by Schlick, second by Hunter to recommend approval of a Resolution approving a Branding Agreement with Tighthead Brewing Company Inc., to produce, release, and distribute Trailhead India Pale Ale.
- **Finance Committee -** Motion by Hart, second by Hewitt to recommend approval of a Resolution approving a Branding Agreement with Tighthead Brewing Company Inc., to produce, release, and distribute Trailhead India Pale Ale.

Chief Operations Officer Nelson summarized the scope of the agreement. He responded to questions and a general discussion ensued. Member Maine noted that the District promotes health and wellness and was uncomfortable with this branding. On the motions to recommend approval:

- **Operations Committee** – voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.
- **Finance Committee -** voice vote being had, the motion passed with member Maine voting No. The recommendation was forwarded to the full board for approval.

9.0 New Business – Operations Committee:

9.1 Approve Minutes of May 4, 2026 – Motion by Schlick, second by Parekh to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2026 Operations Committee meeting. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

9.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding a One-Year Contract for a Recreation Management Software Platform to RecTrac LLC dba Vermont Systems, in the Contract Price of $33,190.00 – Motion by Schlick, second by Hunter to recommend approval. Community Engagement & Partnerships Director Rebekah Snyder summarized the contract for a new software platform. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.0 Miscellaneous Business – Operations Committee - None

11.0 Adjourn Operations Committee – Vice Chair Schlick adjourned the Operations Committee at 11:24 a.m. Next meeting is August 3, 2026.

President Vealitzek turned the meeting over to Finance Committee Chair Roberts:

12.0 New Business – Finance Committee:

12.1 Approve Minutes: May 7, 2026 open and closed session – Motion by Hewitt, second by Hart to approve the Finance Committee minutes from May 7, 2026. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

12.2 Invoices and Requisitions – None

13.0 Miscellaneous Business – Finance Committee - None

14.0 Adjourn Finance Committee – Chair Roberts canceled the meeting scheduled for June 4, 2026 and adjourned the Finance Committee at 11:25 a.m. Next meeting is August 6, 2026.

President Vealitzek turned the meeting over to Planning Committee Chair Frank for the remainder of the agenda:

15.0 New Business – Planning Committee:

15.1 Approve Minutes of May 4, 2026 open and closed sessions - Motion by Casbon, second by Clark to approve the minutes from May 4, 2026. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

15.2 Approve a motion to (i) release certain Planning Committee closed session minutes, (ii) retain as confidential all other Committee closed session minutes not previously released, and (iii) delete verbatim recordings of closed sessions of meetings, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act as provided in Exhibit 1 to memo dated June 1, 2026 – Motion by Roberts, second by Clark. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

16.0 Miscellaneous Business – Planning Committee: None

17.0 Closed Session – Motion by Wasik, second by Roberts to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the purchase or lease of real property. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 5, NAYS: 0. The Committee went into closed session at 11:27 a.m. and returned to open session at 11:45 a.m.

19.0 Potential Action following Closed Session - None

20.0 Adjournment – Planning Committee: With no further business, Chair Frank noted that the next meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2026 and adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Gragnani

Julie Gragnani
Committee Secretary

Approved: Planning Committee 8-3-2026

Approved: Operations Committee 8-3-2026

Approved: Finance Committee 8-6-2026