

**Lake County Forest Preserve District
Planning Committee Minutes – August 29, 2022**

On Monday, August 29, 2022, the Planning Committee met at the Lake County Forest Preserve District's General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to order – Vice Chair Marah Altenberg called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

2.0 Roll Call – Committee Secretary Gragnani called the roll and seven committee members responded: Vice Chair Marah Altenberg; Carissa Casbon, Diane Hewitt, Kevin Hunter, Linda Pedersen, Gina Roberts, and John Wasik. Absent: Chair Terry Wilke; Dick Barr.

Also Present:

Mary Ross Cunningham	John Nelson	Maureen Shelton
Ann Maine	Mary Kann	Helena Keller
Julie Simpson (Zoom)	Nan Buckardt	Patrice Williams, Veterans Affairs (Zoom)
Alex Kovach	Pati Vitt (Zoom)	Quincy McCall, Veterans Affairs (Zoom)
Mike Tully	Julie Gragnani	Matt Norton, <i>Corporate Counsel</i>
Randy Seebach	Ken Jones	John Ryan, <i>Mill Creek WB, LLC</i>

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Vice Chair Altenberg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None

5.0 Approve Minutes – Motion by member Hewitt, second by member Casbon to approve the minutes from August 1, 2022. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the minutes were circulated for signatures.

6.0 Public Comment (for items not on the agenda) – None

7.0 Executive Director Comments – Executive Director Kovach reported on:

- New landscaping plan for the General Offices property has begun with removal of invasive trees;
- Education Department reached nearly 37,000 participants and is on track to exceed 2019 numbers;
- More than 350 people waited in line to meet artist Bill Sienkiewicz at the Museum;
- 2022 Concerts in the Plaza welcomed 20,000 guests to nine concerts;
- Second annual SeptOberfest at the Independence Grove Beer Garden with programming;
- Rusty patch bumble bee was positively identified at Pine Dunes Forest Preserve;
- Leadership team met to work on the 2023 annual budget.

8.0 Correspondence – Director Kovach noted that there was correspondence but it related to the Fort Sheridan agenda item and he would present it at that time.

9.0 Unfinished Business - None

10.0 New Business

10.1 Policy direction regarding a request from the US Department of Veterans Affairs for the conveyance of a 4.7-acre parcel adjacent to Fort Sheridan National Cemetery at Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve for the expansion of the Cemetery - Mr. Kovach showed the cemetery on a map including the adjacent 4.7 acres of District property being proposed as a cemetery expansion. He provided background of the project

including a recent open house where public input was provided, and the June 27 Committee of the Whole to review the public comments and was given direction to bring the matter back to the Planning Committee for policy direction on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and to reach out to Congressman Schneider to make sure he is aware of the matter and flush out any other opportunities, such as the adjacent Army Reserves property, which has not been identified as surplus property. Mr. Kovach is in the process of securing a meeting with the Congressman.

He noted that Patrice Williams of Veterans Affairs (VA) was connected on Zoom to provide information as needed. Approximately 55 ceremonies per year are anticipated. The VA has relayed that there is an informal agreement for overflow parking on the adjacent Army Reserves property, and the VA is working on formalizing this agreement for parking. Mr. Kovach reviewed additional input received including two recent letters of support to the Board, 73 additional signatures on the online petition for a total of 699; and recapped public comments received at the open house and during the public comment period.

If direction is given to work with the VA, staff would actively work on terms for a MOU. Simultaneously, staff will request the District's Legislative Committee to add the authority to convey the property to its legislative calendar since the State must pass legislation to give the District the authority to convey the land to the VA. He then explained that the VA's National Cemetery Administration would assume management of the entire cemetery in perpetuity, relieving the District of that responsibility.

Patrice Williams of VA confirmed that everything Mr. Kovach had said was correct. Mr. Kovach then responded to questions from the committee members and a discussion ensued. Ms. Williams noted that there is still space for full-casket burials, and that the expansion will be above-ground only for cremated remains. Quincy McCall, Cemetery Director of the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery and the Fort Sheridan National Cemetery, clarified who is eligible for burial at the cemetery.

Vice-Chair Altenberg called for public comment; comments were given by the following, all in favor of the conveyance of land to expand Fort Sheridan National Cemetery:

John Froemke, Sr. (on Zoom)	Joe Trumble	Marco Dabetic
Dutch DeGroot	Michael Peck	Sean Galacke
Paul J. Hettich	John Madejczyk	Mark Arriaga
George Gandara	Harold Beyne	Alan Ayers
Todd Renihan	Thom Koch, Jr.	Bill Sturm
Brett Nila	Wayne Kern	Art Ellingson
Robert Welch	Paul Brian	BJ Voit (on Zoom)

Following public comment, the unanimous consensus of the committee was to proceed with working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the VA and to work on the legislation. Mr. Kovach provided additional information on access and parking, and added that the VA has not yet prepared specific designs for the layout of the cemetery.

10.2 Policy direction regarding the negotiation of a temporary easement and long-term restriction to allow the grading of District property to provide for a compensatory stormwater storage area for Lake County Division of Transportation's Patriot Path at Independence Grove Forest Preserve - Mr. Kovach summarized the project using a map, noting that the proposed Patriot Path will connect the Des Plaines River Trail and the Robert McClory Bike Path. Director Seebach explained the compensatory storage and design, and responded to questions. The consensus of the committee was to proceed with the negotiations.

10.3 Recommend approval of a Resolution to acquire an approximately 133.5-acre property in Newport Township, known as the Mill Creek WB, LLC property as an addition to Sedge Meadow Forest Preserve – Motion by member Roberts, second by member Hewitt to approve the recommendation. Director Kovach showed the three parcels on a map and explained that this property is a wetland bank and the District will assume responsibility for the long-term management of the property. Land Acquisition Manager Ken Jones introduced John Ryan of Mill Creek WB, LLC and they summarized the details of the agreement. There are two wetland banks, one permitted by the US Army Corps of Engineers, the other by Lake County Stormwater Management Commission. Once the wetland credits have all been sold, the current owners will give the deed to Mr. Ryan; and then the property will be conveyed to the District. Terms include establishment of an endowment fund for the wetland banks, to be used for long-term management of the property. Once the US Army Corps of Engineers gives its final approval, the remaining credits can be sold, and the ownership transfers will take place. Mr. Kovach added that the endowment for ongoing maintenance will go to the Preservation Foundation. Mr. Kovach and Attorney Norton responded to questions and a general discussion ensued. Mr. Ryan added that the parcels already have a conservation easement on them. With a voice vote being had, the motion to approve passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.




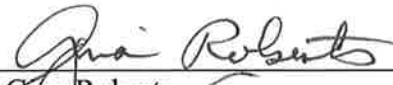

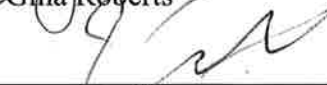

11.0 Miscellaneous Business – None

12.0 Closed Session – Motion by member Casbon, second by member Hunter 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: 7, NAYS: 0. The committee went into closed session at 3:00 p.m. and returned to open session at 3:10 p.m.

13.0 Potential Action following Closed Session – None

14.0 Adjournment – Vice Chair Altenberg noted that the next meeting would be a joint meeting on October 3, 2022 and adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

APPROVED:

	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>		<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
 Terry Wilke, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 J. Kevin Hunter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Marah Altenberg, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Linda Pedersen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Dick Barr	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Gina Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Carissa Casbon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	 John Wasik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Diane Hewitt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			