

**Lake County Forest Preserve District
Planning Committee Minutes – August 31, 2026**

The Planning Committee met on Monday, August 31, 2026, at the Lake County Forest Preserve District General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to order – With a quorum present, Chair Paul Frank called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2.0 Roll Call – Committee Secretary Gragnani called the roll and five committee members responded: Chair Frank, Vice Chair Jennifer Clark, Carissa Casbon, Gina Roberts, John Wasik. Michael Danforth joined the meeting at 9:07 a.m. Absent: Linda Pedersen

Also Present:

Alex Ty Kovach

Matt Norton, Corporate Counsel

Ken Jones

Kevin Kleinjan

John Nelson

Pati Vitt

Alyssa Firkus

Mary Kann

Rebekah Snyder

Ron Davis

Ryan Brandt

Mike Bonn

Julie Gragnani

Debbie Boness

Angie Sifuentes

Paula Ali

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Member Casbon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda – None

5.0 Approve Minutes – Motion by Clark, second by Roberts to approve the minutes of August 3, 2026, open and closed session. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

6.0 Public Comment – None

7.0 Executive Director Comments - None

8.0 Correspondence – None

9.0 Unfinished Business - None

10.0 New Business

10.1 Recommend approval of a Resolution (i) supporting the District's application to the Illinois Dept. of Transportation for Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant funding for the Des Plaines River Trail Bridge over Lake Cook Road Rehabilitation Project; and (ii) approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County – Motion by Casbon, second by Clark to approve the recommendation. Planning Director Kevin Kleinjan summarized the project, which will be to replace all approaches to both ends of the bridge. The bridge consists of two spans. The approaches are in deteriorating conditions, which he explained using photos. The maximum grant from ITEP would be \$5 million with a local match of \$1.25 million. If successful, the local share will be a 50/50 split between both Districts for engineering and concrete bridge deck repairs, and a pro rata share for the approaches. The new agreement has been agreed to by both Districts, replacing the previous agreement. Director Kleinjan responded to questions and a general discussion ensued. He explained that Cook County Forest Preserve had an agreement with Cook County Dept. of Highways to perform inspections on the bridge, however the last inspection was in 2023. A safety inspection has been done and the bridge is safe but it is recommended to complete the repairs within the next five years. With the new agreement,

Lake County Forest Preserves will take the lead in doing inspections. Director Kleinjan reviewed the grant application cycle deadline of October 5. He noted that phases I and II preliminary engineering, design and permitting is not included in the grant application. This will allow the project to still proceed on a timely schedule should the grant not be awarded. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Committee.

10.2 Recommend approval of a Resolution authorizing the submission of a Grant Proposal to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to support hydrologic restoration at Lakewood Forest Preserve Motion by Casbon, second by Roberts to approve the recommendation. Community Engagement & Partnerships Director Rebekah Snyder summarized the grant proposal for a Section 319 grant in the amount of \$500,000, with a District match of \$800,000. The CIP includes funding for Lakewood restoration, however, due to the large amount of the District match, staff is seeking Board authorization. The grant was applied for last year but not accepted. The District was encouraged to apply again this year with a larger match. Natural Resource Director Pati Vitt responded to questions regarding the restoration project and a general discussion ensued. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the Finance Committee.

10.3 Recommend approval of a Resolution (i) approving an Easement Agreement with 21569 Milwaukee Ave, LLC for a Septic Field and Deep Well Easement, (ii) approving the release of a Right of First Refusal, and (iii) approving the release of an Expired Temporary Access Easement, for property west of the Des Plaines River Trail within the Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area - Motion by Clark, second by Casbon to approve the recommendation. Land Preservation Director Ken Jones explained three parts to this recommendation. He summarized a right of first refusal on a parcel adjacent to the Alyea property the District acquired in 2003. This parcel was going to be sold in 2023 and the District was contacted to see if it wanted to exercise its right to purchase it. The District was not interested, and the owner has now requested that the release be in writing. He then explained a temporary access easement across private property for the District to access its property for trail construction, which expired many years ago. The owner has requested a written release of the temporary easement. Lastly, when the District acquired the property there was a well and septic field that services an adjacent home. The exact location of the well and septic field was not known at closing so the contract was amended at closing to provide that the District would grant a well and septic field easement if the well and septic are determined to be on the property. The well is on the property and staff believes the septic field is there also, but it has not been located. Director Jones responded to questions and Attorney Norton added that the well and septic easement would end if the private home it serves were to be removed, and he will double check on whether the easement would have to remain if a new home were to go up. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.4 Recommend approval of a Resolution to purchase an approximately 4.6-acre parcel as an addition to Lotus Country Conservation Preserve (Elliott W. Frank Property) for \$450,000.00 - Motion by Clark, second by Casbon to approve the recommendation. Director Jones summarized the property, noting that this is a tough preserve to add on to with few options. The price is not out of line, but higher due to the buildings on the property. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

11.0 Miscellaneous Business – Member Casbon asked for additional information on the local watersheds as they relate to the forest preserves. Executive Director Kovach referred to the watershed map and member Casbon added that she would also talk with Natural Resource Director Vitt.

12.0 Closed Session – Motion by Wasik, second by Casbon to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the purchase or lease of real property, and the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 6, NAYS: 0. The committee went into closed session at 9:43 a.m. and returned to open session at 10:37 a.m.

13.0 Potential Action following Closed Session – None

14.0 Adjournment – Chair Frank adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m. and noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 5, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. Meeting jointly with the Operations and Finance Committees.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Gragnani
Committee Secretary

Date Approved: 10-5-2026