Lake County Forest Preserves
Finance Committee Minutes – August 6, 2026

On Thursday, August 6, 2026, the Lake County Forest Preserve District's Finance Committee met at the District's General Offices in Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order – With a quorum physically present, Chair Gina Roberts called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2.0 Roll Call –Committee Secretary Gragnani called the roll and five members responded. Present: Chair Gina Roberts, Vice chair Ann Maine, Marah Altenberg, Sandy Hart, Linda Pedersen. Member Diane Hewitt arrived at 1:07 p.m. Absent: Angelo Kyle.

Also Present:

Jessica Vealitzek, President	Alyssa Firkus	Sandy Meyers
Alex Kovach, Executive Director	Ken Jones	Debbie Boness
Betsy Gates-Alford, Corporate Counsel	Ryan Brandt	Laurel Diver
John Nelson	Jamie Medina	Meg Bonham
Steve Neaman	Julie Gragnani	Andrew Kim, Speer Financial
Rebekah Snyder	Kim Mikus Croke	

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Roberts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.0 Addenda to the Agenda – No Addenda. At this time, Community Engagement & Partnerships Director Rebekah Snyder introduced Ryan Brandt, Executive Director of the Preservation Foundation.

5.0 Approval of Minutes – Motion by Maine, second by Altenberg to approve the joint committee minutes of June 1, 2026. Voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

6.0 Public Comment for items not on agenda – None

7.0 Correspondence – None

8.0 Unfinished Business - None

9.0 New Business:

9.1 Invoices and Requisitions - Motion by Hart, seconded by Altenberg to approve the legal bills for March, April, and May 2026. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the invoice was passed for signatures. In response to a question, Attorney Gates-Alford noted that the bills for legal services contain attorney-client privileged information and therefore as a matter of practice are not emailed out to committee members or linked to the agenda.

9.2 Recommend approval of an Ordinance providing for the issue of not to exceed $35,000,000 General Obligation Bonds, Series 2026, of the Lake County Forest Preserve District, Lake County, Illinois, for the purpose of paying the costs of those capital projects set forth in the ballot proposition approved by the voters of the District at the November 5, 2024, general election, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof – Motion by Altenberg, second by Maine to recommend approval. Finance Director Steve Neaman summarized the bond issue; this will be the second issuance of the referendum bonds. The proceeds will be used for land acquisition and the restoration projects listed in his presentation. He advised the committee that Moody's changed their rating system for special districts and they now consider the District a component of the County of Lake. Andrew Kim of Speer Financial commented further on this and noted that the District could consider switching from Moody's to Standard & Poor's for future bond issues, because the Moody's new rating system misrepresents the District as it is not a component of the County of Lake. A discussion ensued and Speer Financial will research this further for the next bond issuance. On the motion to recommend approval, with a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

9.3 Recommend approval of an Ordinance establishing fees and charges for District permits, programs, services and facilities (Annual Fee Ordinance) - Motion by Hewitt, second by Hart to approve the recommendation. Executive Director Kovach began with a summary of health insurance costs for 2027. HMO's are going up 17% and PPO's are going up 21%, to result in an additional $600,000 in costs to the District. IPBC recommends that the District replace its current high-deductible PPO plan with the Blue Choice PPO plan, which would save about $135,000. The fee ordinance adjustments proposed today will be one of the strategies to try to close the gap.

Finance Director Neaman gave an overview of the fee ordinance and noted that property liability and workers' compensation costs are also going up. Education Director Alyssa Firkis reviewed fee changes for her department. Questions and discussion ensued regarding senior group program fees at "no or reduced" charges on Page 4, Item (7) (G). Motion by Maine, second by Altenberg to amend the Senior Group Permits, Page 4, to remove Item (7)(G). Voice vote being had, the motion to amend passed unanimously.

Chief Operations Officer John Nelson reviewed the changes to Facilities and Golf department fees. During this review, motion by Maine, second by Altenberg to amend the picnic site permit fees, Page 10, to remove (1)(F) Senior Group Permits. Voice vote being had, the motion to amend passed unanimously. The concerts at Independence Grove was reviewed and discussed including weather factors and cancellations. Changes in golf fees was reviewed and Mr. Nelson responded to questions. He noted that golf fees were last increased three years ago, and there are under 12 senior passes grandfathered in remaining in effect. On the motion to recommend approval – as amended – with a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

Member Hart asked that agenda item 9.8 be taken next because she may need to leave before the end of the meeting; there were no objections.

9.8 Recommend approval of a Resolution approving five-year Objectives for the Lake County Forest Preserve District's Strategic Plan (2026-2030) – Motion by Hart, second by Hewitt to approve the recommendation. Director Kovach gave an overview and then reviewed each final objective and tactics developed for each objective.

During the presentation, member Hart left the room at 2:20 p.m.

The Partners In Capacity consultant was present on Zoom to respond to comments. Mr. Kovach added that a strategic plan will be developed specific to Education. On the motion to recommend approval, with a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

9.4 Recommend approval of a Resolution awarding an Annual Support and License Agreement for MUNIS Financial Software to Tyler Technologies, Inc. in the Contract Price of $155,552.90 - Motion by Altenberg, second by Pedersen to approve the recommendation. Finance Director Neaman provided a brief summary and with a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

9.5 Approve an amendment to the Procedures Section of Personnel Policy 3.2 – Overtime - Motion by Hewitt, second by Altenberg to approve the recommendation. Deputy Director of Human Resources Laurel Diver summarized the amendment, which results from a grievance settlement. With a voice vote being had, the motion passed unanimously.

9.6 Recommend approval of a Resolution approving an Amended Project Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Restoration of Dutch Gap Forest Preserve - Motion by Pedersen, second by Altenberg to approve the recommendation. Director Kovach explained that the ACOE needs to amend the agreement so that they can raise the $10 million cap on the amount they can spend on the project due to increased construction costs. Director Ken Jones provided additional information and with a voice vote being had, the motion to approve passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

9.7 Recommend Approval of an Ordinance adopting a Social Media Policy - Motion by Hewitt, second by Pedersen to approve the recommendation. Community Engagement & Partnerships Director Rebekah Snyder explained the new policy in detail, which will guide staff use and management of District-managed social media accounts, outline limitations on public commentary, engagement with District-managed pages, and help ensure compliance with applicable law. Director Snyder responded to questions and with a voice vote being had, the motion to approve passed unanimously. The recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for approval.

10.0 Miscellaneous Business – None

11.0 Closed Session –Motion by Pedersen, second by Altenberg to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation and probable or imminent litigation. Roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: AYES: 6 (Altenberg, Hart, Hewitt, Pedersen, Maine, Roberts); NAY: 0. Vice Chair Maine left the meeting after the roll call at 2:45 p.m. The committee went into closed session at 2:45 p.m. and returned to open session at 2:55 p.m.

12.0 Potential Action Following Closed Session – None

13.0 Adjournment - Chair Roberts declared the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Gragnani

Julie Gragnani, Committee Secretary

9-3-2026

Date approved