

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT – REGULAR SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of the Lake County Forest Preserve District met on Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at the District General Offices, 1899 West Winchester Road, Libertyville, Illinois.

1.0 Call to Order – With a quorum present, President Jessica Vealitzek called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m..

2.0 Roll Call of Commissioners – Board Secretary Gragnani called the roll and 13 Commissioners responded present: Campos, Casbon, Clark, Danforth, Ewing, Frank, Hewitt, Hunter, Knizhnik, Maine, Roberts, Vealitzek, and Wasik. Commissioner Hart arrived after roll call at 9:01 a.m. Commissioner Altenberg arrived at 9:03 a.m. Commissioner Parekh arrived at 9:10 a.m. Absent: Kyle, Pedersen, Schlick.

3.0 Moment of Silence – President Vealitzek called for a moment of silence.

4.0 Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Ewing led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5.0 Addenda to Agenda – None

6.0 Public Comment (for item not on agenda) - None

7.0 President’s Report, Special Recognition and Committee Appointments

- Reminder of the October 5, 2026 joint committee meeting at 8:30 a.m. for budget review.

8.0 Executive Director’s Report:

- Updates on various grants applied for and awarded;
- Event for donors at Pine Dunes to study and document night pollinators;
- 2026 Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring Program field season;
- Staff attended Prairie State Conservation Coalition regional gathering;
- Festival de Cultura, Comida y Vida at Nippersink Forest Preserve;
- SeptOberfest at Independence Grove Beer Garden, Sept. 2 – Oct. 29;
- Afrofest at Greenbelt Cultural Center on August 15;
- New scenic overlook at Grassy Lake Forest Preserve is now open;
- Lake Plain coordinator has been leading monthly workdays and nature-based events;
- Native American contemporary Birchbark and Quillwork Trays at Dunn Museum;
- Nature Funfest at Round Lake Park District on August 29;
- Bess Bower Dunn’s birthday celebrated on August 23 at the Dunn Museum;
- 34th Annual Potawatomi Trails Pow Wow in Zion on August 21-23;
- Fall issue of Horizons magazine is now available;
- Recent social media post generated several positive comments.

9.0 Unfinished Business – None

10.0 New Business - Consent Agenda - Motion by Commissioner Frank, seconded by Commissioner Hart to approve the Consent Agenda, item 10.1:

10.1 Approval of Minutes: August 12, 2026

With a voice vote being had, the motion to approve passed unanimously.

11.0 New Business – Report of Standing and Special Committees:

11.1 Resolution Approving Contract for Educational Program Strategic Plan Development

Motion by Commissioner Roberts, second by Commissioner Altenberg to approve a Resolution Approving a Contract for Development of an Educational Program Strategic Plan to Partners In Capacity, LLC in the Contract Price of \$75,000.00. With a roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6303**

11.2 Resolution Approving License Agreement with Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods

Motion by Commissioner Knizhnik, second by Commissioner Casbon to approve an Ordinance Approving a Building Use and Management License Agreement with Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods for the occupation and use of the Brushwood Building and Grounds at the Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area. With a roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 14, NAYS: 2. EXHIBIT No. 6304**

11.3 Resolution Approving MOU with Northern Illinois Native Seed Exchange

Motion by Commissioner Knizhnik, second by Commissioner Parekh to approve a Resolution Approving a Memorandum of Understanding with the Northern Illinois Native Seed Exchange. With a roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6305**

11.4 Ordinance Approving License Agreement with Openlands for Restoration Activities

Motion by Commissioner Knizhnik, second by Commissioner Wasik to approve an Ordinance Approving a Restoration Project and License Agreement with Openlands for restoration activities at Almond Marsh Forest Preserve. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6306**

11.5 Resolution Supporting Grant Application and IGA with Forest Preserve District of Cook Co.

Motion by Commissioner Frank, second by Commissioner Roberts to approve a Resolution Supporting an Application to the Illinois Department of Transportation for Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Grant Funding for the “Des Plaines River Trail Bridge over Lake Cook Road Rehabilitation Project” and Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6307**

11.6 Resolution to Submit Grant Proposal to Illinois EPA for Hydrologic Restoration at Lakewood

Motion by Commissioner Frank, second by Commissioner Clark to approve a Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a Grant Proposal to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to Support Hydrologic Restoration at Lakewood Forest Preserve. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6308**

11.7 Resolution Approving Easement Agreement and Releases within Ryerson Conservation Area

Motion by Commissioner Frank, second by Commissioner Altenberg to approve a Resolution Approving an Easement Agreement with 21569 Milwaukee Ave, LLC for a Septic Field and Deep Well Easement, the Release of a Right of First Refusal, and the Release of a Temporary Easement, for property west of the Des Plaines River Trail within the Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6309**

- 11.8 **Resolution to Purchase 4.6-acre Addition to Lotus Country Conservation Preserve**
Motion by Commissioner Frank, second by Commissioner Altenberg to approve a Resolution to Purchase an approximately 4.6-acre Parcel as an addition to Lotus Country Conservation Preserve (Elliott W. Frank, LLC property) for \$450,000.00. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6310**
- 12.0 **Petitions and Correspondence - None**
- 13.0 **Miscellaneous Business – None**
- 14.0 **Closed Session –** Motion by Commissioner Hart, second by Commissioner Hewitt to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees. With a roll call vote being had, the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 16, NAYS: 0.** The Board went into closed session at 10:33 a.m.
- Commissioner Ewing left the meeting at 10:34 a.m. The Board returned to open session at 10:43 a.m.
- 15.0 **Potential Action following Closed Session:**
- 15.1 **Approve a Resolution Approving an Amendment to an Employment Agreement**
Motion by President Vealitzek, second by Commissioner Clark to approve a Resolution Approving and Amendment to an Employment Agreement. Attorney Norton summarized the amendment to the employment agreement with the Executive Director as discussed in closed session. The amendment deletes the provision of a District take-home vehicle, and replaces it with a \$500.00 monthly vehicle allowance. With a roll call vote being had (leave for the previous roll call minus Commissioner Ewing), the motion passed by a vote of: **AYES: 15, NAYS: 0. EXHIBIT No. 6311**
- 16.0 **Adjournment –** With no further business before the Board, President Vealitzek adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Julie Gragnani, Board Secretary

10-14-2026

Date Approved

ROLL CALL

LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF LAKE)

REGULAR SEPTEMBER 9 SESSION, 20 26

10:33 10:43 am.

ROLL CALL		COMMISSIONERS	QUESTIONS																			
P	A		11.1	11.2		11.3		11.4		11.5		11.6		11.7		11.8		INTO		15.1		
			Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay	Aye	Nay
1		Altenberg, Marah @ 9:03	✓		✓		✓											✓				
2	✓	Campos, Esiah	✓		✓		✓											✓				
3	✓	Casbon, Carissa	✓		✓		✓											✓				
4	✓	Clark, Jennifer	✓		✓		✓											✓				
5	✓	Danforth, Michael	✓			X	✓											✓				
6	✓	Ewing, Brandon	✓		✓		✓											✓				
7	✓	Frank, Paul	✓		✓		✓											✓				
8		Hart, Sandra @ 9:01	✓		✓		✓											✓				
9	✓	Hewitt, Diane	✓		✓		✓											✓				
10	✓	Hunter, J. Kevin	✓		✓		✓											✓				
11	✓	Knizhnik, Sara Frederick	✓		✓		✓											✓				
12	X	Kyle, Angelo																				
13	✓	Maine, Ann	✓			X	✓											✓				
14		Parekh, Paras @ 9:10	✓		✓		✓											✓				
15	X	Pedersen, Linda X																				
16	✓	Roberts, Gina	✓		✓		✓											✓				
17	X	Schlick, Adam X																				
18	✓	Vealitzek, Jessica	✓		✓		✓											✓				
19	✓	Wasik, John	✓		✓		✓											✓				
13		TOTALS	16	0	14	2	16	0	16	0	16	0	16	0	16	0	16	0	16	0	15	0
									LEAVE		LEAVE		LEAVE		LEAVE		LEAVE				LEAVE MINUS	

Notes:

March @ 9:03 (15)
Paras @ 9:10 (16)

Ewing out 10:34

EWING