

Forest Preserve District Board  
June 7, 2006

Unlike the County Board meeting of the previous day, the FPD Board Meeting started late, and ended shortly after noon, attracted a small number of spectators, and elicited relatively little discussion.

During consideration of the Finance Agenda, there was some discussion as to why the contract for roofing rehabilitation of 20 comfort stations at Busse Woods had been awarded to the second low bidder (the low bidder could not meet the specifications.) Regarding an item concerning contracts for refuse disposal sites, Comr. Peraica (R-16, Riverside) asked if there was a schedule for cutting grass; he had noted that the grass was growing tall. He was told that the normal schedule is every 12 to 15 days, but that the recent heavy rains had necessitated some adjustment. Noting that two of the refuse disposal site contracts had gone to other than the low bidder, Comr. Earlean Collins (D-1, Chicago) asked for more detail about the failure of bidders to meet specifications, and General Superintendent Steven Bylina said this would be provided.

The regular Board agenda opened with a request for authority to submit seven sites in the FPD totaling approximately 3,360 acres for Illinois Nature Preserves Commission dedication. Slides were shown illustrating the work of the commission. Comr. Carl Hansen (R-15, Mount Prospect) asked about the significance of the designation and was told by Superintendent Bylina that it provided a greater level of protection. Comr. Hansen asked for a more detailed explanation and was told it would be forthcoming.

Another request for further information came from Comr. Larry Suffredin (D-13, Evanston), who wanted more details concerning an application from the Village of Northbrook for permission to locate, operate, and maintain a storm sewer and outfall structure and to regrade a roadside ditch on FPD property. Comr. Gregg Goslin (R-14, Glenview) said he had inspected the site and the changes would not affect the natural flow of water. However, Comr. Mike Quigley (D-10, Chicago), citing the damage water can cause, asked for clarification as to who has authority in such matters. He added that a broader policy is needed, and Superintendent Bylina agreed.

Commissioner Peraica objected to the appointment of the firm of Neal & Leroy as special counsel in eminent domain proceedings against property known as One Aloha Lane, located on land needed to form a buffer for the Wolf Road Prairie. Despite efforts to stop him by Comr. Joseph Moreno (D-7, Chicago), who was in the chair, Peraica insisted that such appointments can only be made by the County's chief executive and, in the absence of Pres. John Stroger (D-4, Chicago), who was in the chair, Peraica insisted that such appointments can only be made by the County's chief executive and, in the absence of Pres. Stroger, due to illness, there was none. However, the request was approved, Peraica voting 'no.'

Matters raised by public speakers included a complaint that a small concern was being forced out of business because of nonpayment by a contractor. Superintendent Bylina noted that the matter, which involved some architectural renderings, was still in dispute.

A representative of the Friends of the Forest Preserve thanked the Board for approving the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission dedications, supporting Earth Day, and proceeding with the Wolf Road Prairie buffer.

Paula Fitzgerald of the Natural Forest Advocates urged updates of the project at Spring Creek to include protection of the bob-o-link and a woodland sparrow.

George Blakemore scolded Commissioner Moreno for specifically reminding him of the three minute limit on public speakers and suggested that this smacked of racism since the other speakers had not been given such a warning. He wanted to say that he wanted to be able to report to his community that progress had been made in employing blacks at Brookfield Zoo and the Botanic Garden.

Observed and reported by Daphne Daume