

**Cook County Forest Preserve District  
Board Meeting  
October 3, 2004**

The meeting was called to order at 10:12am by Cook County Board President, Bobbi Steele. All commissioners were in attendance except for Comm. Sims who arrived at 10:30am and Comm. Butler who arrived at 10:35am.

The meeting was immediately recessed for the Forest Preserve District Finance Committee Meeting which was called to order by the vice-chairperson of the committee, Comm. Goslin. The revised agenda, which was available at the meeting, had apparently been distributed to the commissioners the previous day but several of them did not have copies. The revised agenda contained a Statement of Revenues and Expenditures (Cash Basis) for the Forest Preserve District for 8 months of the present fiscal year. Comm. Goslin asked John Donovan, the FPD Comptroller to review the statement and answer questions from the commissioners. According to the financial report,

- Revenues in all categories except for Golf, Winter Sports, and Damage Claims were very close or over budget expectations for the 8 month period.
- All expenditures were under the budgeted amount for the same period. Mr. Donovan explained that the Golf line item was only indicating 16.9% of the budgeted amount to date because
  - contractual arrangements for timing of payments. He stated that Billy Caspar Golf, the private contractor that runs the golf courses, pays base rent of \$350,000 in installments during the year, and they are current with those.
  - The rest of the budgeted revenue comes from gross liquor sales at the courses and that payment will be made in February 2007 according to their contract. It is anticipated that they will meet or exceed their budgeted amount.
  - Comm. Quigley wanted an update on the status of the Caspar contract – what adjustments needed to be made to the contract if any and what types of capital improvements were being planned, if any.
  - Lenny Moore, the CFO for the FPD, stated that capital improvements would help with customer satisfaction. He also stated that the contract is a 10 year contract which runs until 2012, but Comm. Quigley stated that he thought there was a possibility of renegotiation of the contract before that.
  - Comm. Quigley also stated that a separate meeting should be scheduled to discuss concerns with the golf courses. Comm. Collins stated she thought a separate meeting would be useful since she had many questions regarding capital improvements on the golf courses and funding for such.
  - The Director for Recreational Permits stated that Billy Caspar Golf, the contractor, has been very pleased with how the contract has gone so far, and their revenues have increased. He indicated that they would like to explore capital improvements as part of any renegotiations on the contract.

- Comm. Peraica asked about the License Agreements line item in the financial statement, which indicated that it was 615% over budgeted revenue. He was informed that the revenue was the result of collections of past due amounts owed to the county from previous years and was a one time source. The Miscellaneous revenue line item also was 618% over budget and this too was attributed to one time sources. He also asked about the General Maintenance expenditures line item which was at 64% of expected expenditures to date. Mr. Bylina, the FPD Superintendent, stated that this was the result of savings due to unfilled entry level positions in the maintenance department. Equipment purchases also accounted for some savings.

Comm. Gorman had questions about Urban Concessions but deferred any questions since there were no specifics on any contracts. Comm. Daley agreed that a separate meeting on the golf courses would be a good idea. Comm. Suffredin stated that this was the most positive financial statement from the FPD in many years and shows that it is being well run. Comm. Steel pointed out that she has been the FPD Finance Chair until very recently.

- All action items on the Finance Agenda were approved as recommended.
- Comm. Silvestri made name corrections to the Litigation Subcommittee report before it was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 10:43am.

The FPD Board meeting reconvened immediately and all commissioners were present. The following agenda items were discussed.

Item #4 concerning a long term lease by the Oak Park Tennis Club for tennis courts in the FP in River Forest. Comm.

- Comm. Silvestri introduced an amendment to the request which involved incrementally raising the rent over the next few years from \$2000 annually to \$3000 annually. Comm. Murphy thought the rent was too low, suggesting \$5000 as a better figure. Comm. Peraica spoke in favor of the long term extension on the lease stating that the club provides 9 courts for public use and will be undertaking some capital improvements on the courts. Comm. Collins stated that she thought the amendment to the lease should have been ready for distribution to the commissioners but she did agree with Comm. Peraica on this issue that this was a good example of a public/private partnership.
- The amendment was approved and the item was referred to the Finance Committee for consideration.

Comm. Peraica then asked about the status of the Sauk Creek Trail construction project, and he was told that it will soon be completed with perhaps some planting being deferred to the spring.

He also asked about the Cermak Pool which is in the design phase and should be completed for use by June 2008.

Item #6 – concerning routing of storm water away from Ted Stone Forest in Hodgkins. Comm. Peraica requested information about this project and was told by Supt. Bylina that this would rectify a long standing problem in this area. The Friends of the Forest Preserve has been instrumental in advocating for this project.

Item #13 – concerning recommendation for development of a non-profit foundation. The previous FPD superintendent explained that there are various activities that the FPD has difficulty funding from its regular budget.

- A private foundation with a private board and 501C3 status would help to raise money for such activities.
- This request is for money for legal counsel to help develop the foundation.
- Comm. Moreno stated that there are pro bono lawyers available to help with such endeavors and provided a name.

Item #14 - concerning President's Community Advisory Council regarding FP moratorium on controlled burns. Comm. Murphy wanted to know if the council was recommending that the moratorium be lifted on burns in all areas. Supt. Bylina stated that it did and also said that the schedule of all burns is made available and publicized in advance. Pres. B. Steele then read Executive Order #6 which lifts the ban on controlled burns on Forest Preserve land.

Comm. Sufferdin

- introduced a resolution recognizing the 22 student interns that worked in the FPD Summer Intern Program in 2006.
- He also introduced an amendment to an ordinance that would allow the FPD Superintendent to issue permits to allow bow and arrow demonstrations under certain guidelines.

Comm. Quigley asked about an acreage report that outlines how many acres the FPD owns and how many are under development. The report was available and distributed to the commissioners.

All action items on the agenda were approved as requested.

Mr. Steve Mayberry, the Public Information Officer for the FPD gave a demonstration of the new website for volunteers - [www.fpdccvolunteer.org](http://www.fpdccvolunteer.org) . He stated that the FPD has 9000 volunteers and they save the district about \$1m/year by their activities.

17 persons requested to make public comments – 6 waived their right to speak.

- Two volunteer stewards spoke in support of the ecology restoration programs in the FP.
- Another speaker spoke of bringing his students to the FP for a work day and what a positive experience it was.
- The Director of the Brookfield Zoo, commended Pres. Steele for her Executive Order concerning controlled burns in the FP.

- Two persons spoke against the controlled burns stand saying it was “a sad day” and that the cost of the flawed program should be investigated.
- A spokesperson for the Nature Conservancy recognized Pres. Steele for her leadership and endorsed the stewardship of the land that has been evident under Supt. Bylina.
- A spokesperson for Corpslands also spoke in support of the recommendation and stated that they hoped to continue to partner with the county in future endeavors.

The meeting was adjourned at 12noon.

Cynthia Schilsky  
Observer for LWV of Cook County