

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT BOARD
September 5, 2007

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:08 a.m., thus ending the summer recess.

Consideration of the FPD Finance Agenda began with the speedy approval of ten pages of disbursements and continued with other financial matters, most of them handled with little difficulty.

The only lengthy discussion occurred when Comr. Timothy Schneider (R-15) questioned an apparent discrepancy between the number of salaries to be paid on one department and the (lower) number of employees receiving them. He was told that the missing employees had been fired and then rehired by court order, but not all of them were still available. After some discussion, Comr. Schneider said he would like a full report, and Comr. Mike Quigley (D-10) agreed, adding that this was the first time the Board had heard of the matter. Comrs. Anthony Peraica (R-16) and Deborah Sims (D-5) explained that in 2002 about 80 employees had been fired to save money, an action that was contrary to the union contract. The employees filed suit, and the court ordered their reinstatement, but by then most of them had drifted away and only about 10 were available. Apparently the unclaimed money should go to various FPD funds, such as those for land acquisition and self-insurance. The item was approved as Comr. Schneider wondered aloud whether all the commissioners would get a reliable number for the available money by budget time. The Finance Committee meeting was adjourned at about 11:02 a.m.

The regular Board meeting opened with

- the reading of a resolution memorializing Arthur L. Janura, who had been general superintendent of the FPD from 1964 to 1991.
- Approval was given to the appointment of Sophia Shaw Siskel as president and chief executive officer of the Chicago Botanic Garden
- and Dennis A. White as chief attorney of the FPD.
- During consideration of a proposed license permitting Orland Park to construct a sanitary sewer on District land, Comr. Quigley asked whether applicants for such licenses ever look for alternatives to District land; he was told that they do, and Comr. Joan Murphy (D-6), who had attended proceedings on such matters, agreed, but Comr. Quigley still voted 'no.'

In other matters,

- approval was given to a resolution proclaiming September 29 as Public Lands Day in Cook County;
- a resolution proposed by Comr. Quigley that would ban or regulated bottled water on District lands was sent to committee;

- and Comr. Larry Suffredin's (D-13) 2007 survey of permit server satisfaction in the northeast Preserves was submitted to the Board (lack of cleanliness in washrooms or comfort stations was the most consistent complaint.)

The meeting ended at 11:45 a.m.

After the meeting adjourned, George Blakemore, a frequent observer at Board meetings, passed around material indicating his belief that, according to law, the resignation of Bobbie Steele as a commissioner had created a vacancy requiring an election in 2008.

Observed and reported by Daphne Daume