

**KENDALL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

JUNE 15, 2016

I. Call to Order

Finance Committee Chair Cullick called the meeting to order at 4:37 pm in the Kendall County Board Room.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Koukol, Wehrli, and Cullick all were present.

III. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Wehrli made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Koukol. Aye, all. Opposed, none.

IV. Citizens to be Heard

No public comments were offered.

V. Approval to Forward Claims in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$29,060.07.

Commissioner Koukol made a motion to forward claims to Commission in the amount of \$29,060.07. Seconded by Commissioner Wehrli.

The Finance Committee reviewed the claims list.

Commissioner Koukol inquired into claim number 263 for Unique Products and Services. Chairman Cullick reported that the claim was for cleaning supplies.

Commissioner Wehrli inquired into claim number 293 for Verizon, and asked how many phones were coded to the bill. Director Guritz reported that there are somewhere between 12-15 cell phones assigned, with three wireless internet service connections at The Rookery, Hoover residence, Harris grounds building, and Ellis House. Switches were made over to Verizon to reduce overall costs.

Director Guritz reported on electric utility costs for Hoover, noting that bills are still high for the 'Hoover Multiple' meter which includes the new shop, Meadowhawk Lodge, and the pump station.

Director Guritz reported on expenses incurred to locate and retest the monitoring alarm cables between The Rookery and the bunkhouses. The goal is to avoid additional monitoring costs for switching over to radio-based systems.

Commissioner Wehrli inquired into claim number 266 for Marty Vick. Director Guritz reported that the costs was for the initial service call for the Ellis refrigerator. Mr. Vick placed the service call charge on his personal credit card.

Commissioner Davidson entered the meeting at 4:40 pm.

Commissioner Davidson inquired into claim number 443 for Kendall County Soil and Water. Director Guritz reported that the claim is for Natural Resource Tour expenses that will be fully reimbursed by the Forest Foundation.

Commissioner Koukol inquired into the return of security deposits. Commissioner Wehrli reported that these are refunds of security deposits for completed events.

Finance Committee Chair Cullick called the question. Aye, all. Opposed, none. Motion unanimously approved.

VI. Discussion of Changes in Law for FLSA Exempt Employees – Impact and Exempt Status Change

The Finance Committee discussed changes in Federal law concerning FLSA exempt employees.

Director Guritz reported that the State's Attorney's Office had sent out notification of Department of Labor changes to the minimum salary requirements for exempt employees.

Beginning December 1, 2016, exempt employees must earn a minimum salary of \$47,476. This is a significant increase over the previous minimum salary of \$23,660 per year.

Currently, the District employs three FLSA exempt positions; the Executive Director, Superintendent of Grounds and Resources, and Grounds Supervisor and Resident. Of these three positions, only the Grounds Supervisor and Resident position's salary is below the minimum threshold, currently earning an annual salary of \$33,000.

As part of the changes, the District cannot count the value of the residence benefit as part of the salary compensation package. Either this position will need to become non-exempt, with policy changes in place to reduce total compensable hours, or the District will need to increase this position's salary to achieve the minimum threshold.

The Finance Committee reviewed the calculation of overtime payments that would have been incurred if the Grounds Supervisor and Resident has been paid as a non-exempt employee from December 1 through the end of May. Total overtime salary equivalent cost is \$6,519.

Commissioner Gryder entered the meeting at 4:50 pm.

The Finance Committee asked whether the position could be charged rent to offset a portion of the salary increase. Director Guritz stated that he would need to consult with the State's Attorney's Office to address this question considering the contract currently in place, and would provide an update to the Committee.

The Finance Committee discussed the market salary for the Grounds Supervisor and Resident position.

Commissioner Wehrli stated that the District should increase the salary to the minimum threshold, and examine the opportunity for amending the residence lease agreement to offset a portion of the increased salary cost.

VII. Grounds Maintenance Staffing Levels Discussion

Director Guritz reported that Chris Bazos, Grounds Maintenance (PT) for Hoover Forest Preserve has given his two-week notice of resignation.

At Ellis House and Equestrian Center, Marty Vick is working to keep his hours below the 30-hour per week threshold, but both seasonal positions have started and are helping to keep up with grounds maintenance and events.

The Finance Committee discussed a report presenting impacts to grounds maintenance staffing levels. Director Guritz presented a report identifying impacts from reduced staffing levels experienced over the past year. Several priority projects have been delayed, with additional cost impacts for outside contractual support. Staff is currently focused on covering schedule gaps, and addressing core service and maintenance activities.

The Finance Committee discussed whether seasonal positions could help support District efforts in future years.

Commissioner Wehrli stated that the weekend part time positions are difficult to fill, and until filled, impacts remaining staff members who have to cover those responsibilities.

Director Guritz stated that the purpose of the report is to let Commission know that staff is doing the best we can with our limited resources, and to build awareness should the public register complaints about preserve impacts as staff members work to address priority projects and extend staff coverage.

VIII. 2016 LWCF Grant Application Timeframe, Tasks, and Cost Estimates for Professional Services

The Finance Committee discussed the proposed 2016 OSLAD/LWCF grant application for the purchase of property bordering Maramech Forest Preserve.

Director Guritz reported that tasks completed included working with Kendall County GIS to develop an acquisition boundaries map, including a proposed preserve entrance, parking area and trail loop.

Preliminary ecological assessments have also been completed. Within Little Rock Creek, there are a number of rare fish species of note. This stretch of the creek is rated amount the top 5% for stream quality in Northeastern Illinois.

Along the upland and slope areas, the area is dominated by large oak trees. Rating is “Class C,” but does contain some notable species. The floodplain is largely degraded, but includes a small remnant fen area.

The appraisal has been completed, and the acquisition area reduced to 135-acres to for a maximum purchase cost of \$1.5 million that will be written into the application.

Director Guritz reported that if the Board approves the Resolution of Authorization to apply for the grant, remaining application tasks will be completed by the application deadline of July 1.

As part of the application, Commission may want to consider a proposal received from Upland Design for a total cost not-to-exceed \$1,800.00 in order to prepare exhibits for the presentation to the IDNR that is part of the grant application process.

IX. Hoover Forest Preserve – Fire Alarm Monitoring Line Repair Updates

Director Guritz presented an overview of findings from the re-inspection of the alarm monitoring cable between The Rookery and Blazing Star bunkhouse.

AB Links tested the lines for signal, and found that signal is still carried through the line.

USIC located the underground lines. At this point, we know that the lines are carried through conduit at the point of entry into all structures. Whether the entire line is encased remains to be seen.

Wire Wizard was able to locate a working pair, but a new trouble alarm has been triggered, that will be looked into later in the week.

The Finance Committee discussed the issue, and provided direction to test remaining pairs between The Rookery and Blazing Star bunkhouse before securing quotes for replacement of the between the two buildings.

X. Executive Session

None.

XI. Citizens to be Heard

No public comments were offered.

XII. Other Items of Business

No other items of business were discussed.

XIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Koukol made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Gryder. All, aye. Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Guritz
Executive Director, Kendall County Forest Preserve District