

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

**SEPTEMBER 6, 2017**

**I. Call to Order**

Acting Committee Chairman Prochaska called the Operations Committee meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Kendall County Board Room.

**II. Roll Call**

Commissioners Hendrix, Purcell, and Prochaska all were present.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Hendrix made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Purcell. All, aye. Opposed, none.

**IV. Citizens to be Heard**

No public comments were offered by those in attendance.

**V. Preferred Catering Program Audit Overview and Directions**

Director Guritz presented the District's Preferred Catering Program audit of the insurance coverages in place for preferred catering and bartending firms in comparison with the current and recently approved insurance coverage requirements.

Director Guritz presented a recommendation to survey preferred catering firms to determine whether the increased insurance coverage requirements will impact business decisions on whether or not to enroll in the program for the upcoming year.

Commissioner Purcell noted that due to the limited number of wedding events, it is likely that requiring firms to take on additional cost for insurance would result in fewer participating firms. Director Guritz agreed that the increased requirements will likely impact participation, particularly with the combined requirement for \$5M combined commercial and umbrella general liability and \$1M property damage.

Commissioner Purcell stated that if the District is going to support these types of events, than having more choices available to clients is an important consideration.

The Operating Committee provided direction to survey catering firms to determine cost impact(s) and intention to participate in the upcoming year, and return this information for Operating Committee review for consideration.

## **VI. Equestrian Center Budget Model and End-of-Year Projections Analysis**

Director Guritz presented a revised budget model and end-of-year projections for the Ellis Equestrian Center's program cost centers.

Director Guritz reported that the budget model was prepared, with discussions held with Ellis Equestrian Center staff to discuss the current budget situation, and develop the staffing model and projections included within the cover report and backup spreadsheet information.

The Ellis Equestrian Center budget is currently operating at a deficit of just over (\$6,000) as of 8/30/17, with end-of-year projections below net gain budget projections by (\$14,000).

Director Guritz presented a second spreadsheet report showing the potential maximum net gain for the program is just under \$32,000, with the FY 17-18 budget targeting FY 16-17 net gain projections of just over \$7,000.

Director Guritz stated that current Ellis Equestrian Center staff understand the issue, and are committed to turning this around in the coming year, with particular focus on limiting part-time staff hours to the budget constraints as discussed in the cover report.

Director Guritz stated that any program expense for administration over the baseline amount that may be budgeted for the upcoming year will be for targeted marketing efforts, and only if the equestrian center is achieving budget projections over the course of the upcoming year.

The Operating Committee discussed the current situation, asking whether it is time to consider reducing the scope of public services, and possibly eliminating District equestrian program services at the facility. Director Guritz stated that given the District's budget constraints, this may need to be considered, but that he would like one more year to see if the program can be turned around and post a positive gain in the upcoming year.

The Operating Committee reviewed the budget model assumptions and end-of-year projections, noting that the next three months will be important to watch to determine whether the equestrian center staff are committed managing the program to the budget model.

Commissioner Hendrix stated that the program is worthwhile, and would really like to see the program hold its own, understanding that the District also cannot sustain the program if budget objectives cannot be achieved.

Director Guritz reported that the budget plan is to code all horse care salaries to the Sunrise Center North cost center. This will include revenues from a proposed apartment lease, and related part time salary expenses directed towards horse care only. The equestrian center administrative costs will be coded to lessons, birthday parties, and other programs (pony

club), with program salaries incurred within the specific programs to provide the best opportunity for tracking direct program expenses.

Director Guritz noted that overall, the Ellis House and Equestrian Center budget is operating just below projections for the year.

## **VII. Ellis House Weddings and Rentals Budget Model and End-of-Year Projections**

Director Guritz presented a report on the Ellis House weddings and facility rentals cost centers and end-of-year projections. Generally, the program is on track for meeting budget projections in the coming year.

The report disclosed that only two wedding events are contracted for the upcoming fiscal year, which is far below the number of booked events typically contracted at this time of year.

Director Guritz stated that if the number of contracted events does not increase significantly over the next two months, the Board will need to consider whether or not to run the program at a projected zero-net gain in the upcoming year, or eliminate tent-rental events in the upcoming year.

Director Guritz stated that if the figures are not improved, the District will need to consider reductions in staffing levels and/or position reductions for the upcoming fiscal year.

The Operating Committee discussed the program, concurring that absent a significant increase in contracts for the upcoming year, the Board may need to consider elimination of the wedding program services.

Commissioner Hendrix expressed concerns over the number of bookings for the upcoming year.

The Operating Committee discussed the long-term sustainability of the Ellis House and Equestrian Center given the program challenges experienced in the current and upcoming year.

Commissioner Hendrix stated that part of the problem could be the diversity of program opportunities which is limiting overall public participation and program growth.

## **VIII. Operations Updates**

The Operations Committee discussed updates for the Henneberry Forest Preserve restoration project. Director Guritz reported that two preserve access options are under consideration. The first option requires Whitetail Ridge HOA Board approval, and would include approval of a change over just over \$23,000. The second option involves securing a 1-year access lease to complete the project, with the possibility of moving forward to acquire a maintenance access corridor to support land management and restoration

activities within the preserve. Both options will be updated for consideration at the upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting.

**IX. Executive Session**

None.

**X. Other Items of Business**

None.

**XI. Citizens to be Heard**

No public comments were offered by those in attendance.

**XII. Adjournment**

Commissioner Hendrix left the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Acting Chairman Prochaska called roll. With only Commissioners Purcell and Prochaska present, the meeting summarily adjourned at 7:00 pm due to lack of a quorum.

Respectfully submitted,

David Guritz  
Executive Director, Kendall County Forest Preserve District