

Journal of Proceedings
STUDY SESSION – BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
Rotary Hill Shelter, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, Mahomet, Illinois
Thursday, August 6, 2020, 6:00pm

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners met at a Study Session on Thursday, August 6, 2020 at Rotary Hill Shelter, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, Mahomet, Illinois. Commissioner Kerins called the Special Meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Commissioner Hays called the roll. The following Commissioners were present: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay.

REMOTE ATTENDANCE – None

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS – Commissioner Kerins asked public members present if they would be staying for the Special Meeting, and if they were, he would postpone Public Comment until that time. Those in attendance indicated in the affirmative. Commissioners were unanimous in their agreement to postpone public comment to the start of the Special Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

NEW BUSINESS

A. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OPTIONS: LIMITING RATE INCREASE

District Executive Director Wuellner provided a statement regarding the District financial history and the need for the referendum.

Commissioners Kerins stated he has been on the Board for eight years and this subject has been studied and discussed over that time. Kerins asked the other Commissioners for their comments.

Commissioner Goodman noted the District and Board have approached this in a very professional way, and he noted full support.

Commissioner Herakovich noted that with COVID-19, this might seem like the worst time, but this is also the best time, as it has been clear we are an essential service. We have seen a significant increase in usage since the pandemic. Herakovich also noted that access is universal; everyone can and does visit the preserves no matter their race/gender/socioeconomic class.

Commissioner Hays noted that, after being on the board, he has learned what it takes to keep facilities up to date and user areas in good shape. This is the time to ask the voters.

Commissioner Livesay thanked everyone that has been involved in process, noting the long time it has taken to get to this step. Livesay thanked staff for doing all they do for serving the District, and also noted all the other agencies whose clientele use the services the District provides, including but certainly not limited to Champaign County schools. Livesay noted that the referendum is a very modest ask and will be significant for the District's sustainability.

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Kerins noted over the years he has been on the Board he has seen the list of projects that need to be done and those that cannot get done due to the lack of funding, and the amount of grants the District has been able to secure. He noted that many projects do not qualify for grants, and that is why this funding is so badly needed. Kerins asked Wuellner what could happen if the referendum does not pass. Wuellner noted that amenities will be closed and services reduced, such as the swimming beach and paddle boats. We may have to shorten the camping season and start charging more for museum and education programs. Commissioner Herakovich noted that if we are not able to repair the spillway at Lake of the Woods that the road going through the preserve over the dam may have to be closed. Wuellner agreed with Herakovich that that could be a possibility. Livesay noted programs have grown so much that we have outgrown our facility at Homer Lake. Students are currently being turned away and that is likely to continue.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Herakovich made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 6:50 pm. Hays seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay. Motion carried.

Scott Hays, Secretary
Board of Commissioners
Champaign County Forest Preserve District

Journal of Proceedings
SPECIAL MEETING – BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
Rotary Hill Shelter, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, Mahomet, Illinois
Thursday, August 6, 2020, 6:30pm

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners met at a Special Meeting on Thursday, August 6, 2020 at Rotary Hill Shelter, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, Mahomet, Illinois. Commissioner Kerins called the Special Meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Commissioner Hay called the roll. The following Commissioners were present: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay.

REMOTE ATTENDANCE – None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gordon Salm of Mahomet representing the Golf Committee thanked the Commissioners and the District for their work and applauded their approach to the referendum during the past years. Salm noted, in regard to the golf course, a new golf committee and volunteers have been created, and the record attendance at the course this year is bringing so many new visitors to the District. Salm encouraged the Board to approve Resolution 2020-08.

Fred Newport of Champaign commended the staff at the District, praising their passion for the District mission, and noted the number of grants that staff have been able to obtain is stunning. Newport stressed the Board needs to sustain and maintain District facilities and grounds and educate the public on what the District has to offer, and is in support of the referendum.

Bill Ford of Urbana also noted his support for the referendum and stated how impressed he has been with District management, as well as the activities and programs that are provided.

Dave Leake of Champaign also spoke in support of the referendum vote. Leake thanked the Board and staff for obtaining certification of the first Dark Sky Park in the state of Illinois, noting how staff was able to cut costs of the project by building their own light fixtures. Leake said the District is now seeing visitors to the Dark Sky Park coming from not only Illinois, but other states as well.

Commissioner Kerins thanked all in attendance this evening and thanked those that spoke, and also noted comments of support to the referendum vote were sent in prior to the meeting from: Roger Digges, Urbana; Susan Appel and Kent Snodgrass, Champaign; Bill Ford, Urbana; Deborah Rugg, Urbana. Kerins noted the comments will be included on record with the minutes of the meeting.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS – None

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Resolution 2020-08, Providing for and requiring the submission of the proposition of increasing the limiting rate for the Champaign County Forest preserve District, Champaign County, Illinois, to the voters of said Forest Preserve District a the general election to be held on the 3rd day of November, 2020.**

Commissioner Herakovich moved the Board approve Resolution 2020-08, providing for and requiring the submission of the proposition of increasing the limiting rate for the Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Champaign County, Illinois, to the voters of said Forest Preserve District at the general election to be held on the 3rd day of November, 2020.

Commissioner Goodman seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay. Motion carried.

- B. **Resolution 2020-09, authorizing specific commissioners and staff to handle District financial transactions and investments**

Commissioner Goodman moved the Board approve Resolution 2020-09 Financial Signatories, which would authorize specific commissioners and staff to handle District financial transactions and investments. Commissioner Livesay seconded. District Finance Director, John Baker, noted this is an annual document after Board officers are appointed at the July Board meeting. A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay. Motion carried.

- C. **Concrete Installation – Lake of the Woods Peninsula OSLAD Project**

Commissioner Herakovich moved the Board approve the proposal for concrete (Materials and Installation) at Lake of the Woods Peninsula form A&R Mechanical Services, Inc. of Urbana for Thirty-one Thousand Twenty-Eight Dollars and Twelve Cents (\$31,028.12). Commissioner Hays seconded. Commissioners thanked staff for noting all bidding information on the proposal and noted this is an OSLAD (Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development) grant project. A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay. Motion carried.

- D. **Purchase of Two Open-Air Shelters – Lake of the Woods OSLAD**

Commissioner Herakovich moved the Board approve the proposal for the Open Air Shelters Materials (Materials and Delivery) at Lake of the Woods Peninsula from EnWood Structures for Thirty-Three Thousand One Hundred Seventy-One Dollars (\$33,171.00). Commissioner Hays seconded. It was noted again that this is another portion of the same OSLAD funded project. A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

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MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Herakovich made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 6:50 pm. Hays seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Goodman, Hays, Herakovich, Kerins and Livesay. Motion carried.

Scott Hays, Secretary
Board of Commissioners
Champaign County Forest Preserve District