

July 10, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners
From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Coordinator
Re: July Staff Report

Deputy Director/Grants (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- I have been reviewing applications for the Administrative Assistant position. As of this date, forty applications have been submitted. I have also been assisting the Museum/Education Department with recruitment for the Public Programs/Visitor Services Coordinator position.
- A grant of \$4,800 was awarded from the Community Foundation's Access to Recreation endowment to construct a walkway from the campground to the shower house and swim beach at the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve. This project will be completed as part of the parking lot expansion currently underway.
- A volunteer stewardship network grant was submitted in early July for tools and equipment totaling \$760 to assist with our trail steward and other volunteer land management projects. Grants are provided by the Illinois Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.
- With the state budget impasse resolved, I have been working with the grant administrative staff at IDOT and IDNR to determine the status of our frozen grants. KRT Phase 2a and 2b were held up pending a budget but both federally-funded projects are now unfrozen. We are also looking for a status update on the two state-funded museum grants – \$57k for the Grand Prairie exhibit (awaiting reimbursement) and \$238k (awaiting contract execution) – and the \$200k state-funded Bike Path grant for Phase 1 of the KRT (awaiting reimbursement). I will keep the board updated as I get information.

Human Resources (Fran Bell)

- Due to several recent staff resignations, there are currently three positions (two full-time and one part-time) vacant at the District. In preparation for posting these positions, Human Resources worked with department heads to review and update job descriptions for these vacancies. All three vacant positions have been posted for applicants and are currently in the recruitment stage.
- The Administrative Assistant position, which was approved by the Board of Commissioners and the FPF Board in June, was posted for applicants. Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled.
- The Compensation Committee, led by Human Resources, met in June to discuss and review several District policies related to compensation. The Committee researched several issues and discussed possible changes to propose for FY18.
- Human Resources developed an employee survey to measure climate, culture, and employee engagement. The survey was sent to all full-time and part-time staff as well as any seasonal employee who has worked for the District for at least one full season. Results of the survey will be tabulated once the survey deadline has passed. Human Resources will utilize this data to assess employee satisfaction to maintain a positive work culture and employee morale (one of the HR initiatives identified in the District's strategic plan).

Administration (John Baker)

- Prepared and requested publication of the 2016 Public Funds Statement in the News Gazette. This is required when an audit report is delayed beyond six months after fiscal year end.
- Reviewed and recommended improvements to the Vanishing Acts and KRT Study agreements, reviewed Electronic Systems Transaction contract for potential electronic sales and marketing towards increasing golf rounds and maintaining customer loyalty.
- Updated the District's information on the State of Illinois grant portal to apply the 10% de minimis rate for indirect costing to future grants where indirect costing applies.
- Continued conducting employee orientation sessions and have scheduled AED/CPR training for 25 employees to gain or maintain American Heart Association for CPR and first aid.
- Consulted with PDRMA on supervisor questions regarding liability for drone usage and architectural planning.
- Mary Beck, along with Lisa and Mary Ellen, attended Freedom of Information and Open Meetings training conducted by the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor.
- Reviewed and resolved various issues for full-time leave pay outs, IMRF reporting and 457B transfers for employees leaving District service.
- Met July 6 to kick off the initial 2018 operating budget preparations with District Department heads. We will be meeting again July 19 to discuss department projects and capital requests, as well as District financial projections.
- Met with headquarters employees about equipment and facility needs at Heritage Hall/Administration building and adjacent area, as well as the administration operating budget.
- Updated fiscal projections for all District funds with actuals through June 30, 2016 and revised projections for future years.
- Mary and Betty coordinated the work of Catholic Heart Work Camp volunteers who cleaned and organized the Administration basement, washed windows, and cleaned and removed graffiti in the Hi Tower. They were a very positive and energetic volunteer group and left many memories here at HQ and in the botanical garden where they also worked. Many thanks to them, Lake of the Woods Operations and Michael Dale for helping with the volunteer work. The basement task in particular was a big step forward with many obsolete items recycled or discarded and quite a bit of usable space freed up.



Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- Social media update: on Facebook CCFPD has 1,817 (+88) followers; Lake of the Woods Golf Course has 824 (+74); Kickapoo Rail Trail has 1,892 (+31); Museum of the Grand Prairie has 781 (+10). Homer Lake Interpretive Center 137 likes (+15). CCFPD has 362 (+24) Instagram followers, Museum of the Grand Prairie has 97 (+6) followers. Kickapoo Rail Trail has 87 (+4) followers and CCFPD has 160 followers on Twitter.
- Made a presentation at the Champaign Public Library's Fit and Fabulous series. I spoke about the ways people can enjoy the Champaign County Forest Preserves including the best places to picnic, trails to walk, bike paths and of course, the great programs offered.
- 2017 Freedom Fest was a success! It rained for about an hour around 4 p.m., but we ended up with over 3,200 attendees. We had 4 vendors with 5 booths this year: Chester's BBQ, Snack Wagon, Celestial Delites, Beck's Taffy and Flip Flops Shaved Ice. We had over 50 volunteers and staff that worked that day and made it a great event!

Natural Resources (Mike Daab)

- Jacob Pruiett, Brad Nelson, and Austin Haskett successfully passed the Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) aeronautical knowledge test following a preparatory course at Parkland College. The course covered regulations, airspace, weather, and more, and now these Natural Resource staff members are ready to fly drones for CCFPD. Drones can be used for monitoring, land management, publicity, and educational purposes.
- Natural Resources and other CCFPD staff met with Natural Resources Conservation Service staff as they inspected the waterfowl areas at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve on June 15th. The field experience was helpful for learning about differences in available drones, and how they are used in the field.
- NR staff have needed to water newer planted trees and shrubs at Lake of the Woods, Sangamon River Forest Preserve, and Homer Lake due to the lack of precipitation in these areas.
- NR staff have planted a cover crop of millet in the Buffalo Trace prairie restoration site that is to be planted over the winter of 2017-2018. The area had been sprayed to burn down weeds earlier in the season, and the cover crop will serve to fight re-invasion by weeds, as well as reduce erosion.
- Spiderwort seeds have been collected, kicking off the seed collection season for 2017.
- NR staff have been researching capital equipment needs for 2018 and beyond. In particular, equipment needed to manage natural areas along the KRT is being considered.

Planning and Construction Department (Jon Hasselbring and Mike Fry)

- The Construction Department removed deteriorated concrete and brick pavers adjacent to the HI-Tower and poured a fresh concrete plaza with sidewalk approaches and a refinished water fountain. This project vastly improves the functionality and aesthetics of one of the District's iconic features, and provides an accessible route for patrons who are visiting the HI-Tower and CCFPD headquarters. Lake of the Woods staff provided the finishing touches by planting and dressing up landscape beds. Many thanks to everyone involved in this project!
- The Construction crew installed new metal egress doors and hardware at the Museum's emergency exits. This project is part of the District's ongoing efforts to meet current building code standards and make improvements listed in CCFPD's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan.
- Construction staff modified the rental boat dock at Lake of the Woods. The modifications will allow the facility to remain open and provide safer boat loading for patrons when lake water levels are low.
- Jon passed the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airman Knowledge Test for Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (SUAS). In other words, Jon is now certified to fly drones.



Lake of the Woods Golf Course (Dave Torrens and Chris Edmondson)

- June was a good month player-wise. We had 4024 players, the most in June since 2013. Hopefully a positive trend and sign of things to come.

- Junior Clinics have completed for 2017. They are held every year, each Tuesday in June (4 total sessions). Ages range from 8-17. We had 40 kids participate in the clinics this year.
- We hosted the Mahomet-Seymour High School summer school PE Class for 2 days. They had 35 kids. They hit range balls and played the Par3 Course and Foot Golf. They will return with another class in July.
- We met with Jon Hasselbring to discuss capital projects for the golf course for 2018.
- Outings and Events: June 13, Carle EMS – 37 players; June 15, Parent-Child Tournament - 42 players; June 21, Blair Group – 28 Players; June 21, Slumberland – 15 players; June 23, Bulldog Open – 108 players; June 29, Golden Glove Grasshoppers – 33 players; June 29, Mahomet Rotary – 28 players
- We have implemented a new program, led by David Sebestik, called Parent-Child Golf. This event will be held Sunday evenings on the Par 3. There will be prizes and the event is open to all ages and abilities. Our goal is to get more kids to the golf course and then participate in an activity with their parents. The first event was Sunday, July 9, 2017.
- We have continued to renovate bunkers and repair irrigations leaks. Staff installed 7 new sprinkler heads.

Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- The Museum and Education Department has had a busy month in June as always, with summer staff and Counselor-in-Training trainings, summer day camps, Museum and Playscape Mondays, library programs, Sunday concerts and more.
- The Museum and Education Department is exploring how to use the rental system in ActiveNet to process school program facility use and program fees.
- We will bid farewell to Chelsey Walsh, Public Program Specialist (HLIC) at the end of July. She has accepted a full-time position at a Genetic Counseling company, pursuing a long-time career goal. Chelsey has been with us for about 4 years, starting as a seasonal and continuing in a permanent part-time position as Public Program Specialist. In her time here, she reinstated the District's Frog Call Survey program, made scout programs stronger, experimented with new public programs, and gave presentations at several conferences. We wish her the best in her career!
- Katie Riopelle, Public Programs/Visitor Services Coordinator (MGP) for the past five years served her last day on Monday, June 26. Katie and her husband, Cameron, are moving to Miami, Florida where he has a new job with University of Miami. During her tenure MGP public programs quadrupled in attendance, and expanded from 7 to 35 per year. Katie presented papers at 2 national conferences, and published an article about managing a museum shop. The search for her replacement is well underway.
- Pam Leiter was interviewed by a UIUC professor for a research project looking at Consumer Tranquility – that is, how consumers seek out retailers, service providers, products and experiences to feel peace, contentment, and serenity.
- The MGP is once again part of the Smithsonian's Museum Day Live! This gives the museum additional publicity on a national level.
- The ADA ramp and the sidewalk leading from the rear of the museum were mudjacked to correct issues with height difference.
- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative-** The Museum and Education Department continues its year- long Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative with Pam Leiter leading discussion and research. The following bullet points are related to our DEI meetings and actions:
 - Pam Leiter organized a first meeting with Urbana Park District senior staff to share resources & ideas related to DEI, and we plan to meet every other month. Champaign Park District staff will join us in the future.

- Pam and Katie Snyder have been attending meetings of the Health & Wellness working group of the New American Welcome Center (NAWC) at the University Y. We also attended an idea sharing meeting for Welcoming Week, hosted by NAWC. Pam shared notes from that meeting with the Golf Course and the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Katie Snyder attended Unit 4 School District's Minority Teachers Recruitment and Retention Committee Retreat. She was invited by Jamila Appleby an ESL teacher at Stratton Elementary.
- Rising 6,7,8 and 8th grade boys from DREAAMS (Driven to Reach Excellence and Academic Achievement for Males), a new educational support program for black youth, came to visit the museum on June 21, 2017. The program was arranged by Katie Snyder through a collaboration with Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. The visit included a Scavenger Hunt in the Botanical Garden, a session building forts in the area north of the Museum and a guided tour of the MGP.
- A group of 35 early elementary school students came to the MGP from Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club. Katie Snyder led a special program on early settlers, including a soap-felting craft. They also did a cultural history walk through the Botanical Garden.
- For a second year, the MGP ran a successful all day Native American Camp. This year Beverly Smith, Assistant Director of the Native American House at the University of Illinois offered a bead making activity as well as telling the Three Sisters story.



Lake of the Woods, River Bend, Sangamon River and Botanical Gardens (Doug Sanders)

- Staff assisted the construction and natural resource departments with tree removal and sidewalk repairs around the HI-Tower. They are also in the process of renovating the landscaped beds that surround this area. These tasks are part of the 2017 capital project efforts.
- Since early spring, staff have been utilizing the new pressure washer that was purchased as part of the capital equipment inventory. This has made a great impact esthetically throughout LOW. To mention a few of the items that have been cleaned over the past couple of months are: sidewalks, buildings, boat/fishing docks, and picnic tables.
- Thanks to Kristin Telzlaff for recruiting the Champaign Catholic HEART volunteer group the week of June 19th. This group was a fun energetic bunch of young adults that assisted staff in cleaning up around the west maintenance complex, the inside of the Hi-Tower, and the basement of HQ. Staff dropped off an entire truckload of electronic related items to Mack's Recycling from the HQ cleanup efforts. They were awarded with free paddleboat rides on their last day of work.
- Staff once again did an amazing job preparing the preserve for the annual Freedom Fest event. On top of their normal duties, they spent approximately two weeks performing extra duties around the grounds for the event. They were also very efficient in the cleanup efforts this year. It only took 4.5 hours to return LOW to pre-event status.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- June has become one of the busiest months of the summer season with Girl Scout Camp, Take Me Fishing, Music on the Lake, the joint Board Meeting, and this quarter's District wide staff meeting.
- The Kickapoo Rail Trail cleanup day went very well on Saturday, June 10. Volunteers started on the west side of the bridge in St Joseph and groups divided up and walked sections of the trail all the way to Walmart in Urbana.
- I met with Eric Mast with Open Road Paving to go over the sections of road that will be seal-coated this fall.

Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- We have started initial budget research consisting of capital equipment and projects, operating and technology needs for FY 2018.
- We had a long but successful 4th of July weekend at the campground. Most of our guests booked a five day getaway with us for the long holiday weekend.
- Special thanks to the staff at Natural Resources Conservation Service and Soil and Water Conservation District for letting us watch them use drone technology during our annual wetland inspections at Middle Fork. A drone was used during the inspection of both the North and South Waterfowl areas.



Volunteers (Kristin Tetzlaff)

- The big focus for volunteerism in late June/early July was Freedom Fest!
- Freedom Fest 2017 by the numbers*....
 - 502.25 total volunteer hours between committee work, day the event, and volunteer clean-up
 - 39 individual volunteers assisted the day of Freedom Fest
 - three volunteer groups helped serve meals to volunteers on July 4th or helped clean-up the park the following day
 - five volunteer committee members helped plan the event and four assisted the day of the event

*The aforementioned numbers only account for unpaid work done. The actual number of hours, manpower, and committee size are significantly greater when staff time is added.