

May 15, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

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

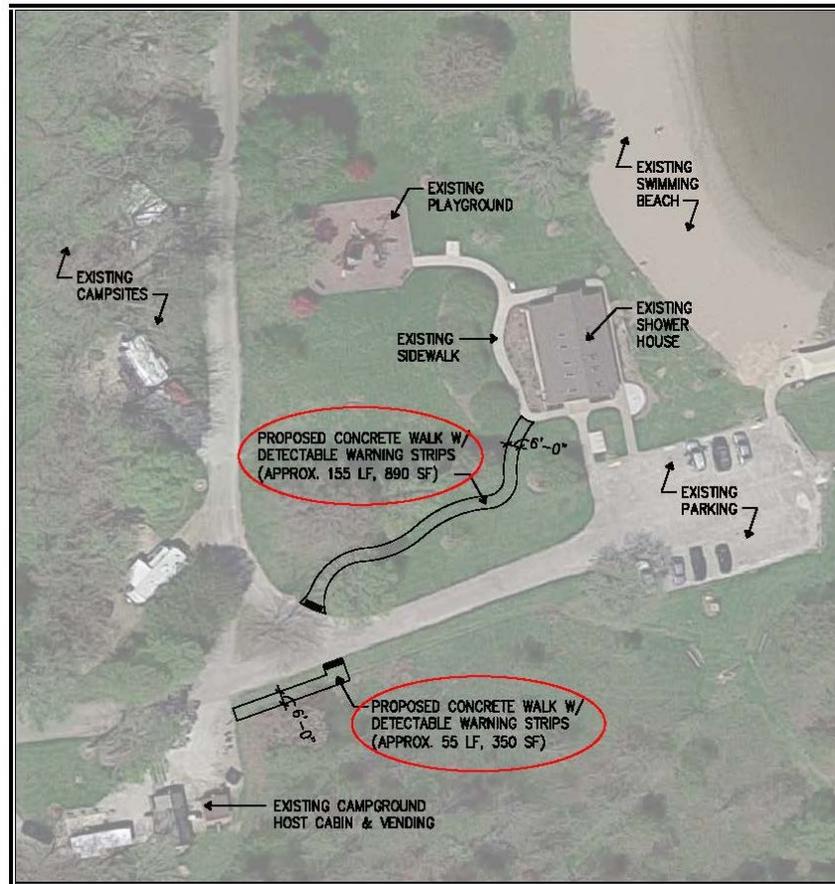
**Executive Director (Dan Olson)**

- Matt Kuntz gave an inspirational presentation at the Champaign Urbana Astronomical Society monthly meeting on lighting retrofits towards the Dark Sky program. Matt took it a step further and let everyone know that in the many years of working with CUAS at Middle Fork, his appreciation for the night sky and their education efforts has greatly grown.
- There are so many people I would like to thank this month for supporting our efforts. To name just a few, the staff at Champaign Cycle, specifically Peter and Alex Davis for a successful Used Bike Sale, the owners of Blind Pig and Cowboy Monkey and their staff, the City of Urbana engineering and administration departments, the Saline Branch Drainage District Commissioners, and Neutral Cycle in Champaign for two different bikes one for auction and one for raffle.
- We thank the Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation for presenting the CCFPD with a Merit Award recognizing the Natural Playscape at Homer Lake as a unique resource to connect people with nature and engage county residents of all ages with the natural environment.
- The CAC held both a regular meeting and a special meeting with the CUAS this month. Andy Little gave an overview of the Middle Fork to the members. The agenda was packed and we did not get to our annual orientation during the meeting. The special meeting was to update the CUAS on the Dark Sky program and as a call for assistance on the next two steps of the certification process.
- I have been working again this year with the NRPA Awards and Scholarships Committee to score applications for national awards, scholarships, and fellowships given by NRPA. It is truly eye opening to see the level of professionalism and efforts to support communities across the nation by parks and recreation agencies.
- Peter Davis from Champaign Cycle was invited to speak at the Mahomet Rotary Club on the newest technology in pedal assist bikes. He did an excellent job explaining many of the benefits of the KRT and how the new technology can fit into a good cycling routine at any CCFPD site.

**Deputy Director/Grants (Mary Ellen Wuellner)**

- On May 2, we learned that the Friends Foundation's four applications to the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Public Amenities grant program were approved. The following amenities were proposed in the applications. Amenity purchases may not exceed \$5,000 per site.
  - Hidden Acres: new trailhead sign, boot brush education station, two benches
  - Patton Woods: interpretive sign to replace existing deteriorated sign
  - Pt. Pleasant: kiosk trailhead sign, two benches
  - Sangamon River: trailhead sign to replace existing outdated sign, dark sky compliant lighting for walkway access to restrooms

- The Friends Foundation also submitted a \$4,800 request for funding to the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois for the installation of an accessible sidewalk at the Middle Fork campground. Funds are available periodically from an endowment created through a Kellogg *Access to Recreation* grant previously awarded to the CFECI. If awarded, the grant would allow us to continue addressing accessibility improvements across our sites. In this case, the ADA sidewalk would provide access from the campground to the shower house, playground, and beach at Middle Fork, as shown in the sketch below.



- I attended the IAPD Legislative Conference on May 3 in Springfield. Key presentation and discussion points included the state budget crisis, the proposed property tax freeze, the proposed minimum wage increase, how the IAPD reviews legislation for impacts to parks and rec agencies, and the W-2 and park/preserve revenue data compiled under a recent IAPD research study. It was a very interesting conference and I would encourage interested management staff to attend in the future.
- The \$200,000 Bike Path grant, frozen by the state of Illinois since March 2015, has been extended a second time by INDR, to June 30, 2018. The grant administrator at the IDNR indicates that, if the grant funds are released, the funding could still be used to offset Phase 1 expenses, despite that section being nearly completed.

### Human Resources (Fran Bell)

- During the past month, Human Resources has been focused on hiring throughout the District. With a few exceptions, all seasonal positions have been filled for 2017. We have been extremely busy onboarding the 47 employees that have been hired since February. Approximately half of the employees that have been hired in 2017 are returning seasonal employees.

## 2017 Hiring by the Numbers

(as of May 15, 2017)

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Posted Positions</b>	<b>Applications Received</b>	<b>Employees Hired</b>
Construction	1	8	1
Golf Course (inc. Pro Shop)	6	71	26
Homer Lake	1	23	1
Interpretive Center	2	12	3
Lake of the Woods Operations	3	42	7
Middle Fork	3	22	6
Museum	2	10	2
Natural Resources	1	6	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>47</b>

- The Compensation Committee, chaired by Human Resources, held its first meeting of the year in late April. Committee members discussed goals for the upcoming year as well as developed a brief outline of how those goals would be accomplished. In addition, the committee established a regular meeting schedule for the remainder of the year.
- Human Resources has started holding “I’m Listening” meetings with staff throughout the District. Three meetings were held in April with various units. The purpose of these meetings is to provide the staff with on-site easy and regular access to HR and to provide an outlet for employees to share successes, ask questions, make suggestions, and express areas of concern. Feedback from these meetings will be aggregated and shared with the applicable administrative staff.

### **Administration (John Baker)**

- Finished reconciliation and internal financial review for both the District and the Foundation in preparation for the Sikich audit field work. This occupied most of the past month’s activities.
- Begun preparing the timeline and tasks for the 2018 budget development.
- Signed up expiring District acreage for the Conservation Reserve Program.
- Attended the IMRF rate meeting on April 26 in Champaign. IMRF’s investment return for 2016 was 7.71 %, just above the 7.5% that is annually credited to employee pension reserves. This will impact District rates beginning in 2018. The District’s pension funding ratio (for non-retired employees) as of December 31, 2016 was 80%. Including retired employees increases the funding ratio to 89%.
- Worked with Safety Committee to finalize the Emergency Response Quick Guide.
- Met with the HR Generalist and Volunteer Coordinator on volunteer background check procedures.
- Attended the Central Illinois Safety Group and the annual Park District Risk Management Agency meetings. PDRMA shared information from its annual report and the 2016 District review (see attached).
- Filed state and federal 990s forms for the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation.
- Drafted Forest Preserve Friends Foundation financial policies (based on current practices) for internal review before presentation to FPPF for their consideration.

### **Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)**

- Social media update: on Facebook CCFPD has 1,729 (+1) followers; Lake of the Woods Golf Course has 750 (+4); Kickapoo Rail Trail has 1,861 (+53); Museum of the Grand Prairie has 771 (+0). Homer Lake Interpretive Center 122 likes (+4). CCFPD has 338 (+23) Instagram followers, Museum of the Grand Prairie has 91 followers. Kickapoo Rail Trail has 87 (+4) followers and CCFPD has 160 followers on Twitter.
- I attended Effective Marketing for Successful Fundraising at IUPUI Fund Raising School in April.
- I was on CiLiving in early May with Andy Garver from The Blind Pig and WCIA Morning Show with Eric Puffer from Stone Brewing to promote the Bastards on the Patio event on May 18.
- I did two live call-ins to Q96 to promote upcoming events and talk about the Kickapoo Rail Trail in early May.
- I manned the booth for the Illinois Association of Conservation and Forest Preserve Districts at the 2017 Parks Day in Springfield on May 2.

### **Natural Resources (Mike Daab)**

- Michael Daab participated in a Green Jobs panel discussion at Parkland College on April 19th. The hour went quickly as students, and moderator Thor Peterson, asked questions of the panel of local sustainability professionals.
- The Great Garlic Mustard Hunt has wrapped up for the spring. Volunteer participation was down this year, and garlic mustard growth was up following a mild winter. Natural Resources staff has been experimenting with alternative management techniques in order to help us cover more acreage in the short window we have for garlic mustard management in the spring. The current favorite is using a specific type of brushcutter blade to cut down patches of garlic mustard at the time of flowering.
- Michael Daab took part in the Upper Sangamon River Conservancy's Sangamon River Showcase on April 22, 2017. The USRC put together a great event, which included Jon Manuel of the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District showing the effects of erosion with a rainfall simulator, Trent Thomas showing off the fish of the Sangamon River that he had collected earlier in the morning, assisted short canoe and kayak paddling on the river, and an Isaak Walton Cabin full of displays of USRC projects including RiverWatch, mussel sampling, river cleanups, Adopt-A-Highway, and more.

### **Planning and Construction Department (Jon Hasselbring and Mike Fry)**

- The Construction department and Middle Fork staff have completed two gravel parking lots near the campgrounds. These lots will provide additional parking spaces for campers and their visitors, and improve pedestrian safety on campground roads.
- The Construction department has completed a number of small and important projects, including replacing a section of deteriorating wall at the golf course maintenance building and building electrical repairs. These repairs will prevent further damage to buildings and alleviate safety concerns.
- Jon attended the International Trails Symposium in Dayton, OH. Highlights of the conference were sessions focused on trail apps and technology, trail town programs, trail signage recommendations, and designing/building sustainable trails.
- Mary Ellen and Jon met with Green View staff members at the Botanical Garden to discuss the pond and waterfall rebuild concepts, and the gardens in general.
- Mary Ellen and Jon met with the Second Wind Running Club to discuss additional markers for the Buffalo Trace running circuits.

### **Lake of the Woods Golf Course (Dave Torrens and Dave Huber)**

- During our last Audubon International Re-certification Site Visit, one of the recommendations was to install butterfly gardens. With the help of Michael Dale, the Botanical garden staff planted several butterfly attracting plants in the landscape bed near the proshop. They also added landscape plantings throughout the beds around the proshop and main entrance.
- The construction department replaced a portion of water damaged wall in our south maintenance building.
- News reports stated April's precipitation was 2nd highest of all time. The golf course recorded 5.65" in 2017 compared to 2.74" in 2016. Aside from a few areas, the golf course drains quickly lessening the disturbance in play.
- We have completed our seasonal hiring process for now, we were very pleased with the quality of applicants and I believe this is one of the best mix of seasonal employees we have had for some time. It is very gratifying that Chris Edmondson has received a much deserved promotion and David Sebestik and Nick Berger who were in all of our junior golfer programs here at Lake of the Woods years ago are now going to run the Pro Shop! Chris, David and Nick are outstanding individuals and we are fortunate to have their talent and personalities on our team.
- Dave Huber has been nominated for the Bill Heald Career Achievement Award for the Illinois PGA Section. Mr. Heald was on my PGA selection committee the final step in the PGA apprentice program in 1986 and I had a long professional association with him over the years. I have also been nominated for the Richie Hammel Award for the Illinois PGA Chapter.
- Chris Edmondson has nearly completed his Food Service Sanitation course in order to attain his Food Service Manager Certificate.
- Outings and Events: April 22<sup>nd</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> Season Opener Tournament 55 - 2 player teams for 110 players; May 7<sup>th</sup> New Horizon Church Outing - 42 players; May 13<sup>th</sup> American Water Outing - 24 players.
- As you probably know June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 will be my last day here as head Golf Professional/Manager at CCFPD after 27 + years. I have enjoyed my time here and on behalf of myself and my family I would like to thank everyone involved in making this major portion of my Professional Golf career productive and memorable. Dave Torrens has been an excellent Department head and I have benefited greatly from Dave's collaborative and fair management style. Even while juggling many extra duties and responsibilities the on course work has never suffered. Dan Olson has been very even handed and level headed Director who I always felt I could bring any issue or problem to and get a fair and honest resolution. As I have gained experience in business and life I have come to really appreciate that quality in an administrator. Finally I cannot express strongly enough how much I truly appreciate the support and confidence the board of commissioners has provided me over my tenure.

### **Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)**

- Katie Riopelle presented a paper at the American Alliance of Museums Annual Conference on May 9, 2017. This year's conference theme was, *Gateways to Understanding: Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion in Museums*. Katie's paper was entitled, *Adventures in Public Programming: The Path Toward Cognitive Accessibility*, in a session called *Don't Forget About Us! Engaging Sometimes Forgotten Audiences*. Jennifer Grove, Registrar at the Museum of the Grand Prairie, also attended the conference.
- Mark Hanson spoke to veterans at the Veterans Administration Illiana Health Care System in Danville for Library Week. He spoke not only about his work at Chanute, but also about the programs, exhibits and recreational opportunities available for veterans at the MGP, HLIC and the larger CCFPD.

- Pam Leiter attended the first meeting of the advisory committee for the University Y's New American Welcome Center. Many good things will come of this initiative, and there are an astounding number of community leaders interested in being involved.
- Pam Leiter also represented CCFPD at the Students for Environmental Concerns expo at the Illini Union.
- Barb Garvey spoke to the research cluster in Public History, funded by the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities at the University of Illinois on April 12. The Public History Group is interested in doing projects within the community with organizations that share that mission.
- The Museum and Ed Department continue to work with Kristin Tetzlaff on the transition to Volgistics volunteer management system. For instance, we are creating a specialized form on VicNet for our Counselors in Training.
- Homer Lake Interpretive Center had about 6 inches of water in the crawlspace after the heavy rains in early May, and Ops had to bring in a pump to drain it.
- As more museum volunteers are technically able, we are able to use more workers at computer workstations. This necessitated an upgrade of our Past Perfect Museum Software (for collections management), which was accomplished this month.
- Evelyn Neill, whose grandfather built the museum annex as a family home, stopped by the museum this month. She confirmed much that we already expected, that LAS had once been a pig barn and that the square room under the porch of the annex was intended as a bomb shelter.
- The museum welcomes Sam Horsch as an intern. Sam is a Master of Divinity student at Boston University. A native of Gibson City he will be helping us process the taped oral history interviews from the East Frisian project the museum undertook in the 1990s. East Frisian (Northern German) immigrants were a significant cultural group and a major force in draining the northeast quadrant of the county, the Flatville-Gifford area.

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

- The majority of time this past month has been performing seasonal opening procedures. This has consisted of cleaning and prepping rental facilities, activating water amenities, well testing, cleaning up the grounds for mowing, and resurfacing playgrounds.
- The hiring of seasonal staff is going well. Several individuals have already started working a condensed schedule and this will be expanded by the end of May. For the past month, the department also took advantage of Champaign Regional Planning Office's WEX program. We have two individuals through this program working approximately 20 per week.
- Andy Livingston assisted the construction department with a concrete pour at the MF campground host site.
- Michael Dale and staff are in the process of reclaiming the Botanical Garden from Mother Nature's winter visit. They have reconditioned several beds, planted an abundant amount of annual and perennial flowers, mulched, transplanted various grasses and other plants from the greenhouse, and designed a new bed with old tree stumps and logs found in Rayburn-Purnell Woods. They also have started the



gardening efforts in the Discovery Garden. The newest feature this year is the repurposed road pavers that Sheila Stout painted for the walkway into the garden.

**Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)**

- The campground hosts have started their position at the campground for this summer. Our hosts are starting their sixth year in this position, and do a wonderful job working with staff and our guests.
- Lincoln's Challenge Academy has completed their spring volunteer semester with Middle Fork. The cadets completed close to 560 volunteer hours.
- The Construction Department has built two parking lots inside the preserve, one at the shower house and another inside the campground area.