

January 5, 2015

MEMORANDUM

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

Executive Director (Dan Olson)

- In late November we officially said goodbye to retired Construction Supervisor Bryan Stevens. Bryan retired earlier in the year and I asked him to stay on in a part time capacity as we filled the open position as well as the Planning Director position. Bryan came to the District in 1997 after working for several years in construction and planning at the Rantoul Air Force Base. During his time he worked on many different improvements as well as building projects beginning with the Salt Fork Center at Homer Lake. We wish him the best in his retirement.
- Interviews for the planning director position continued through December.
- Preliminarily it appears that the responses to the year-end Nature's Appeal has had more responses and more dollars donated than last year. We will have further detail in February's report.

Administration (John Baker)

- Filed the 2015 Budget and Appropriation Ordinance with the County Clerk's office.
- Received approval for Conservation Reserve Program renewals at Middle Fork and Sangamon River CRP tracts.
- Finalized employee hourly rates for 2015 and updated these in our financial system along with employee benefit deductions, IMRF contribution rates, and federal and state tax rates for 2015 Payroll processing.
- Invested District monies in three certificates of deposit, Bank of Rantoul; Central Illinois Bank; and Bank of the Ozarks (through Illinois Park District Park District Liquid Asset Fund).
- Processed the District's bond principal and interest payment toward retiring the 2011 bond issue.
- Transferred \$25,000 additional IMRF contribution towards employee pensions.
- Initiated 2014 year end closing procedures, including pulling 2014 payroll reports, W2 and 1099 data, closing accounts payable, payroll, and general ledger transactions for 2014.
- Set up the 2015 financial budget codes and reports in the General Ledger.
- Processed and executed contracts for Paylocity payroll processing, Lake of the Woods trash hauling and Museum of the Grand Prairie floor refinishing.
- Completed two federal surveys - Annual Local Government Survey and Farm Survey
- Updated and posted the Open Meetings Act Report that identifies public employees who receive more than \$75,000 annually in compensation from the District.

Construction (Mike Fry)

- Removed old carpet and installed new carpet in Interpretive center at Homer Lake.
- Assisted Ops with movement of large artifacts from LAS to Sangamon River.
- Assisted Museum staff in moving displays/artifacts to prep for floor refinishing.
- Finished base trim boards for perimeter of new museum exhibits.
- Heat treated logs and began construction of log bench for new exhibits.
- Unclogged and maintained overflow at River Bend.

Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- MGP staff were very happy with the 261 in attendance at “To Grandmother’s House We Go.” HLIC staff were also pleased with good attendance at Homer for the Holidays and Remarkable Reptiles programs at Homer Lake.
- HLIC staff is working with the Developmental Services Center for January’s Remarkable Reptiles program.
- The MGP staff saw over 300 students in the first two weeks of December, with new interest in the historic Christmas programs after a several year drop-off.
- Planning for summer camps, seasonal staff hiring and summer camp volunteer recruitment has begun.
- HLIC staff are working together with the Natural Resources Department and the Volunteer Coordinator to reinstate the Frog Call Monitoring citizen science program. A training will be held Feb 7.
- The Museum and Education Department bids farewell to our fall seasonal naturalist, Cara Grabowski. Previously, she also worked as a summer camp educator and before then as a volunteer. It was valuable to have her help as a staff-person this year!
- LOW Operations and Construction assisted MGP staff with the emptying of Large Artifact Storage in preparation for its demolition and rebuilding later this year.
- The Museum and Education Department scored a 100 percent on the PDRMA accreditation, the first in CCFPD history.
- The ME Department held its annual retreat in December wherein we determine priorities, set a schedule for PDRMA trainings and publications, and summarize our yearly accomplishments.

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

- Golf maintenance staff registered for the 2015 Illinois Turfgrass Foundation Conference.
- Staff scheduled the Illinois Pesticide training in Champaign.
- Maintenance staff continues with winter service of the equipment.
- In keeping with the recommendations of the NGF Golf report we ran a new Season Pass Sale promotion this December. The sale went very well with 33 passes sold for a total of \$18,650.00. Ten of those 33 Season Passes were new season pass customers.
- Update on the Simulators:

We were hoping to have the \$30,000 investment in the 2 Simulators paid for by the end of 2014, I am happy to say we are right there! From the time we started with one simulator in October of 2012 through the end of 2014, total revenue for the green fees, league fees and practice fees alone totals \$25,253.00. Food and beverage revenue increased \$1,300.00 per year for 2013 & 2014 the over the same months between nonmember and the end of February compared to before we had the simulators an additional \$2,600.00 and merchandise increased over the same period by \$1,015 per year for an additional \$2,030.00 that brings us to a grand total of \$29,883.00. Starting in 2015 Simulator revenue will be over our 30K investment going forward. Ongoing expenses for screens, mats, projectors, additional courses, and miscellaneous repairs will be well under the annual revenue.

- In the NGF golf report Rich Singer estimated that we make between 2% and 20% profit on merchandise sales in our Pro Shop. Our actual merchandise sales for 2014 were \$142,106.00 with a cost of those goods sold of \$84,294.00 - a profit of \$57,812.00 for a 40.68% sales margin.
- Now that the roof is repaired over the Snack Bar area we are working on one of the recommendations of the NGF golf report which was to improve the physical condition of LWGC golf course and support amenities. To this recommendation we plan to deep clean and paint the snack bar as well as improve the menu signage and overall lighting before opening in the spring.
- As you may know each year I generate teaching revenue from group golf lessons, junior clinics and a Junior Golf Camp that goes 100% to the District, below are the totals for the last five years as well as my individual lesson income from golf lessons that I keep 100% over the same time period.

2014 District \$ 4,357.00	DP Huber \$935.00
2013 District \$ 3,950.00	DP Huber \$1,805.00
2012 District \$ 4,047.00	DP Huber \$1,706.00
2011 District \$ 4,090.00	DP Huber \$750.00
2010 District \$ 4,877.00	DP Huber \$1,985.00

Natural Resources (Mike Daab)

- Winter invasive plant clearing continued at Homer Lake and Buffalo Trace through December.
- Mike Daab, Brian Taylor, and Matt Kuntz attended a lunch workshop with IL Department of Natural Resources Goose Biologist Roy Domazlicky. The workshop, hosted by Urbana Park District, was well attended and informative. Matt and Brian were able to contribute valuable knowledge to the discussion based on their experiences at their Preserves. We are following up with Mr. Domazlicky to explore options for modified goose management, particularly at the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve.
- We have received our final seed orders and donations for the year. We have seed set aside for savanna projects at Homer Lake, the HWY 150 construction project between Urbana and St. Joseph, and some prairie and woodland restoration sites in need of additional native species or plant cover.

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

- In late October we switched our “On-Call” cell phone plan to a Verizon’s Local Government Wireless account. We were paying approximately \$78 per month on our previous plan. After reviewing our cell phone usage for the past year, the new plan projects an annual savings of approximately \$750.
- As in previous years, a Christmas tree drop-off area has been set up near the service drive off of Route 47. The trees collected will be recycled and utilized by the Natural Resources and Operations departments.
- With the assistance of volunteers, Larry Beckett is in the process of restoring the nature trail on the east side of the Botanical Gardens. In addition, the construction staff are reconstructing the wishing well. These combined efforts are an extension of the renovations of the Enabling Garden this past summer. (see before/after trail photos)
- In an effort to assist park visitors and emergency service responders in the location of facilities at Lake of the Woods and Riverview Retreat Center, Tammy Bruehl develop and posted address signs on rental facilities.
- Andrew Combes and Larry DeVore completed the fourth quarter ADA inspections of door closures and water faucets. In addition, they performed the end of the season inspections of bridges, boat docks, and decks.
- Staff assisted the MGP department in the relocation of artifacts in preparation of the floor resurfacing and LAS construction projects.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- I attended a luncheon at Urbana Park District where IDNR and local agencies discussed techniques for managing Canadian geese. Many of the techniques that were discussed have already been tried by the Forest Preserve.
- The construction crew added about eight inches of blown insulation to the maintenance facility and residence attic. I expect a noticeable improvement at the maintenance facility since it only had six inches of insulation. (see picture)
- The staff built five additional ADA picnic tables.
- We have been seeing two Bald Eagles in the park and along the river over the last few weeks.

Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- Staff has started routine maintenance on our vehicle fleet, along with tractors and equipment.
- More research continues on the Willow Pond rehab scheduled for 2015. Mike Daab and I will be meeting with more contractors with experience in this subject.
- Work continues with the trail construction on the south end of the Forest Preserve property scheduled for 2015.

- Staff have been able to remove several trees this winter inside the user areas of the preserve, mostly hazardous or invasive.
- The fuel efficient vehicle has been ordered and should arrive within the next two months.
- Applications are being reviewed currently for the campground host position.

Volunteers (Pat Simpson)

- The December report covers the month through Dec. 19th only. I was out of the office from Dec. 19 through Jan. 5th, 2015 to avoid logging more than 1000 hours in 2014.
- Working with Ellen Andrews, a major focus of December was on updating and reviewing the Comprehensive Volunteer Tracking System first implemented in early 2014. After entering any outstanding information on volunteer names, contact information, form status, and hours of work, we moved to develop a roster of volunteers for whom essential information was missing. This roster will provide a jumping off point for contacting volunteers in early 2015 and requesting that they fill out any waiver and/or emergency contact forms that still need to be completed, as well as supplying any missing contact information.
- I initiated materials development for a staff training on the importance of volunteers and how to work with them. This training will be delivered in 2015.
- I held a special training session on basic trail stewardship with a current Parkland student and a recent college graduate now working at Wolfram on Dec. 11. These two young people will be working on the Nature Trail in Mabery Gelvin Garden.
- Katie Smith, Chelsey Walsh, and I met with Dan Olson on Dec. 11 to discuss progress on preparation for a new phase of a Frog Survey Project. The first training for this project is scheduled for Feb. 7, 2015.

Special Projects (Tom Pike)

- Ordered Middle Forks 2015 Ford Fusion car.
- Received the Swiss Valley a professional structural assessment from ESI Consultants, LTD.
- Updated facilities inventory with new items.
- Researched and did a spreadsheet on the inventory of NGK spark plugs for chain saw, leaf blowers and small engines.
- Getting ready to start the process on ordering district wide janitorial supplies for the year of 2015.
- Starting to renew the district FCC radio license.

January 5, 2015

MEMORANDUM

From: Mary Ellen Wuellner, Deputy Executive Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Grants and Fundraising Coordination, Administration Department Annual Report

History of Grants Coordination at CCFPD

In 2008, the District created a grants coordination component within the Administration Department to address the growing need for revenue to meet District facility and programming needs. Prior to that time, District staff members had been submitting grant applications on an as-needed, project-by-project basis. Hiring a grants coordinator in 2008 centralized that function into the administration department, thus alleviating the time burden on planning, education, and operations staff and allowing the District to seek out and receive more federal, state, and private funding opportunities than it otherwise could.

When I assumed deputy director responsibilities in 2012, some grant preparation work went back to the departments, particularly for small grants. At that time I took on a greater role with the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation, managing donor tracking and reporting while coordinating fundraising efforts for the Kickapoo Rail Trail and Botanic Garden projects. In my current role, I also oversee the site operations staff at Lake of the Woods, Homer Lake, and Middle Fork, as well as the Museum and Education Department.

Grant and Fundraising Priorities

Two documents guide much of the grant and fundraising priorities for the District. The master plan and the strategic plan provide the framework for the pursuit of grant funding in the areas of land acquisition, museum support, educational programming, and natural resources management. Most environmental and natural resource granting agencies require applicants to demonstrate that a project is listed in or at least referenced by context within a master plan. Therefore, a periodic review of master planning documents is critical to ensuring that we can identify funding as the District's long-term goals and priorities change.

While the master plan provides the broad context for grant planning, the District's strategic plan, annual updates to the strategic plan, and the annual budget process are the principal resources that guide yearly grant decisions as well as the fundraising priorities of the Foundation. With the recent revision of the strategic plan, the District now has an excellent road map for the development of grant and donation goals. In 2015, specific strategic objectives will be developed to identify the grants and fundraising efforts we should pursue over the next several years.

Other documents, such as the Education Department's Interpretive Plan and Trailside Interpretive Plan, also provide justification for pursuing grant funding to finance specific projects, such as Museum of the Grand Prairie and Homer Lake Interpretive Center facility improvements and exhibits, educational programming, and trailside signage.

Major Grant-Funded Projects and Granting Agencies

The District has benefited greatly over the years from a large number of land acquisition and facility construction or renovation projects, most of which would not have been accomplished without significant grant resources. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has historically

been the largest source of grant funding for the District. Below is a listing of major grants provided to the District by IDNR over just the last five years:

- 2010 OSLAD, Sangamon River Development, Grant: \$126,000, Project Cost: \$252,000
- 2010 Public Museum Capital Grant, Museum of the Grand Prairie Education/Storage Center, Grant: \$500,000, Project Cost: \$1.4 million
- 2011 OSLAD, Middle Fork (Pt. Pleasant Wetland Addition) Land Acquisition, Grant: \$119,000, Project Cost: \$246,000
- 2012 Public Museum Capital Grant, Grand Prairie Story, Grant: \$57,571, Project Cost: \$68,500
- 2012 Recreational Trails Grant, Kickapoo Rail Trail (Champaign Co.) Acquisition, Grant: \$318,420, Project Cost: \$626,512
- 2013 Bike Path Grant, Kickapoo Rail Trail (CC) Construction, Grant: \$200,000, Project Cost: TBD
- 2014 Public Museum Capital Grant, Large Artifact Storage, Grant: \$238,200, Project Cost Estimate: \$260,000

Illinois Department of Transportation alternative transportation grant resources have assisted the District with several recent and ongoing trail projects. The Kickapoo Rail Trail project, in both Vermilion and Champaign Counties, stands to benefit from more than \$6 million in grant funds. These grants were used, in part, for the purchase of the rail corridor with the balance being used for construction of the trail.

The District has also been fortunate to receive several large natural area acquisition grants recently from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, an independent foundation located in Chicago. ICECF provides funding for land preservation and energy-efficient public facility projects in Illinois, using a \$225 million endowment provided by Commonwealth Edison. The acquisitions of Sangamon River Forest Preserve, Patton Woods addition (at Middle Fork preserve), the Point Pleasant Wetland addition (Middle Fork), a 5-acre addition to Middle Fork, and the 28-acre Sylvester Woods Expansion were all funded in part by grants from ICECF.

Grant/Fundraising Priorities for 2015

Projects that will continue to take priority for grant funding in 2015 are similar to last year. These include the Kickapoo Rail Trail, improvements to the Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden, District-wide interpretive signage, the Homer Lake Interpretive Center, and accessibility modifications across the preserves. The Friends Foundation has made the Rail Trail and the Botanical Garden two of its highest priority fundraising projects again this year. As we get further into the new year, I look forward to the development of strategic plan actions in the grant and fundraising areas, as directed by the Board of Commissioners and the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation.

January 6, 2015

MEMORANDUM

From: Jan Runion, HR Generalist

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Human Resources Department Annual Report for 2014

Description

The Human Resources Department is located in the Headquarters Building at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve in Mahomet and consists myself as Human Resources Generalist. The HR Generalist is a new position formed in early 2014.

Responsibilities

Human Resources develops and maintains performance management, employee training, compensation, benefits, recruiting, auditing and policy for the 37 full-time staff and approximately 100 part-time and seasonal staff annually. This includes handling all benefits and leave paperwork, providing staff orientation, maintaining current job descriptions and advising employees and supervisors about training opportunities, employment laws and District policies.

HR staff became familiar with or kept up to date on current employment issues by attending training on the Affordable Healthcare Act, Family and Medical Leave Act updates, Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund certification class and the Illinois Government Training on cybercrime, organizational ethics, audit updates and health care reform. HR staff and supervisors attended the PDRMA training conference on "Managing Performance Evaluations".

HR chaired the 2014 compensation committee, which proposed new salary ranges for each job group and developed the compensation policy for 2015. HR discussed with the Compensation Committee the concept of pay for performance for District employees and initiated a six-month employee review process. In addition, modifications were made to the Employee Evaluation form and will continue to be modified to enhance the evaluation process. HR reviewed, revised and condensed multiple job descriptions for the District.

This year multiple positions were filled, i.e., Construction Manager, Natural Resources Technician, Museum Registrar and Marketing Specialist. In addition the process for recruiting a Planning Director was initiated. HR and support staff posted the positions, reviewed resumes, scheduled phone and on-site interviews and made offers. HR support staff also scheduled "meet and greets" for new employees along with onboarding and orientation.

An audit of employees' personnel files was conducted a separate medical files were created for each employee. The I-9 Forms were also audited and corrected as per government policy. A review of Federal and State posters at each location was made and any new posters were distributed. In addition, the District's Workplace Harassment policy was revised and is now the Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, which has been distributed to all locations.

District benefits for full-time employees consist of health and dental insurance (District pays 100% for each full-time employee and 0% for dependents), IMRF pension contributions.

\$25,000 life insurance, free camping and admission to District events/programs, one free pavilion rental annually, and reduced golf rates. The District also pays for an employee assistance program, provided by Perspectives EAP. Employees may also participate in the District's deferred compensation and flexible spending programs and as a payroll deduction opt for additional life, disability or accidental death or dismemberment insurance coverage. Under certain conditions the District also will reimburse employees for up to 8 semester hours of college courses.

Human Resources reviewed many healthcare insurance options, including Health Savings Accounts and Health Reimbursement Accounts as possibilities for future years to reduce healthcare costs for the District. The process of reviewing other healthcare insurance possibilities will start earlier in the year so the District can effectively communicate any changes to all employees. Tracking of all employees' hours started in November to determine who is eligible for healthcare coverage per the Affordable Care Act. The new HR/Payroll software will aid in tracking hours and in filing ACA compliant reports.

January 6, 2015

MEMORANDUM

From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Marketing Department Annual Report for 2014

Description

The Marketing Department creates all of the District publications and promotional pieces, handles customer inquiries and rentals, communicates with the media, coordinates preserve grand openings and District special events, cultivates partnership opportunities, and oversees our website. The department consists of two full-time employees, a marketing coordinator and an administrative assistant, and one part-time employee, a customer service assistant.

Marketing Coordinator – Lisa Sprinkle – coordinates advertisements, marketing, and newsletters. Updates website and email additions and subtractions. Responds to newspaper and media requests. Assembles the Board of Commissioner monthly board packet.

Administrative Assistant – Megan McKenna – Answers phones and checks District general email. Serves as the graphic designer for the district and works closely with marketing coordinator to develop materials. Supports customer service assistant with rental requests and walk-in requests. Megan left the District at the end of October 2014 and a new structure was put in place that included the new Marketing Specialist below.

Customer Service Assistant – Angie Clayton – Any building rental requests and agreements, wedding bookings and requests, walk-in requests. Angie joined the District in 2007 as a part-time employee. In November 2014 her position was upgraded to full-time and she will take on the administrative duties that were a part of Megan's position.

Marketing Specialist – A new part-time position developed after Megan left in October. This position will primarily be a graphic designer for the District and will help answer phones and work with customers. Adrienne Kizer was hired and starts in early January 2015.

Responsibilities

Brochures

The District creates and maintains brochures for each preserve, annual fees, weddings, Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden, Museum of the Grand Prairie, Homer Lake Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Natural Playscape, Middle Fork River Campground, and a District-wide brochure. This year the five preserve maps were updated and restyled.

Program Guides

Program guides were new this year, and were developed so we could change the focus of the Leaflet to a more Natural Resources based publication. Program guides were printed 3 times this year (Jan-April; May-Aug; and Sept-Dec) and include all educational programs put on by the Museum and Education Department.

Newsletters

The Leaflet was changed from a quarterly newsletter to a bi-monthly newsletter in 2014 and will be mailed to 5,000 people 6 times this year.

The Leaflet contains stories about timely topics happening throughout the District, upcoming programs, Donor lists, Foundation information and other information pertinent at the print time. Additional copies are available at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center, Museum of the Grand Prairie and the headquarters office. *The Leaflet* is designed in-house.

Social Media

The District uses Facebook and Twitter as avenues to promote public events, programs, summer camps, news from various departments (natural resources, Botanical Garden, operations, etc.) As of January 2015 we have 859 followers on Facebook and 323 Twitter followers.

Television

The District appears on WICD's Sunrise This Morning every Thursday morning at 5:30 or 6:40am. Continuing in 2015 we will appear on WICA's CiLiving once a month. These appearances are another way to promote public events, programs, summer camps, news from various departments (natural resources, Botanical Garden, operations, etc.).

Print Advertisements

The most popular way we promote the District's activities is through printed advertisements. General ads for the District, Lake of the Woods Golf Course and programs are submitted to several annual publications with custom ads designed for newspapers and specialty publications (golf, wedding, park districts) to promote programs, lectures, open houses, and grand openings. Over 50% of the marketing budget is spent on print advertising.

Flyers are developed for public programs, educational programs, and summer camps. These are posted around in rental facilities throughout the preserves, Museum of the Grand Prairie and Homer Lake Interpretive Center. There is also an extensive list of libraries and businesses that post these flyers.

CCFPD Website

The marketing coordinator is in charge of updating the CCFPD public website and a secure-private website for staff, Board of Commissioners, Foundation and Citizen Advisory Committee members.

Rentals

The customer service assistant's main responsibility is to coordinate all rental requests. The District maintains thirteen rental facilities at three preserves that can accommodate small groups up to groups of 200. Wedding facilities are also available at the Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden and Salt Fork Center at Homer Lake.

News Releases

News releases are developed throughout the year to inform the public of upcoming events, programs, upcoming management practices, and openings and closings of streets and/or facilities. Releases are sent to statewide list of over 100 newspapers.

Freedom of Information Act

The marketing coordinator serves as the designated Freedom of Information Officer of the District. The Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a state statute that provides the public the right to access government documents and records. The law provides that a person

can ask a public body for a copy of its records on a specific subject and the public body must provide those records, unless there is an exemption in the statute that protects those records from disclosure (for example: records containing information concerning trade secrets or personal privacy).