

March 9, 2015

MEMORANDUM

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

Executive Director (Dan Olson)

- We are very happy to announce the arrival of the new Planning Director Mr. Jonathan Hasselbring. Jonathan spent years working for an architectural firm in Chicago and will remain a licensed architect during his time with us. He began March 2nd and has already hit the ground running.
- We have had some productive meetings with Fehr Graham and are attempting to complete design engineering with them.
- I want to thank staff and Commissioners for a smooth preliminary meeting and interview round with Sikich auditors. Requests are well underway for their field review which will begin on April 6.
- Please note that there is a new item in the Upcoming events section of the Board Packet that includes a property dedication near the Sylvester Woods prior to the June meeting.
- The local Legislative Breakfast went well despite a low turn-out. Senator Scott Bennett was on hand to take questions. Jason Anselment from IAPD also provided us with an update on legislative activities. In short, funding and budget are on everyone's mind. There is a concern for many of the grants for parks and recreation being swept. We were reminded that cuts are only in proposal at this point and that many funds are dedicated to their causes, which makes sweeping or cutting them a legislative act to get through.
- The compensation committee took part in a webinar on pay-for-performance. Many on the committee have reviewed several options and educational pieces on the issue.
- Other meetings include: I met with Mahomet Village Officials about several items they are considering to see if partnerships may be available. I have been attending the quarterly Metropolitan Intergovernmental Council meetings. The MIC meetings have been helpful in seeing the broader Champaign County picture when it comes to community services.
- Sikich auditors were on site February 26 meeting with me, Andrew Kerins and several staff members for a pre-field review.

Deputy Director/Grants (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- Two grant applications will be submitted in mid-March for Kickapoo Rail Trail funding. An online grant application was due by March 17 to The Andersons Foundation. This request, for \$75,000, is a required follow up to a meeting that several Forest Preserve Friends Foundation members and I held at the Champaign grain facility last month. Submitted by March 16 was a grant application to Vermilion Healthcare Foundation, for \$50,000/year over three years.
- Champaign Cycle will once again be sponsoring its Used Bike Sale to benefit the Kickapoo Rail Trail. Bicycles can be donated or consigned to Champaign Cycle through mid-April with the bike sale scheduled for Saturday, May 2. All proceeds from donated bikes and 20% of the proceeds from consigned bikes will go toward trail construction.
- I have been working with a team of park, recreation, and forest preserve personnel from across the state to develop a campaign to raise awareness of the value of parks, preserves, and related programming in our communities. IPRA is sponsoring this effort, termed "Unplug Illinois", which will consist of marketing and promotional materials as well as a

community toolbox that includes written personnel, board, and planning resources for park districts and forest preserves to share with each other.

Human Resources (Jan Runion)

- Attended several Paylocity trainings (Web Time, Employee Self Service, Supervisor's Training).
- Addresses FMLA and attendance issues for personnel.
- Attended SHRM meeting on the Affordable Care Act.
- Scheduled interviews for Assistant Site Superintendent of Lake of the Woods.
- Met with supervisors to discuss their individual needs on Paylocity, time and attendance.

Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- Champaign County Forest Preserve District was represented at the Sports and Outdoor Expo, March 6-8 at the Fluid Events Center. The Expo was put on by the SJ Broadcasting Company. More than 3000 individuals attended the event.
- We received the new Kickapoo Rail Trail window clings and acrylic plaques for donors. The window clings will be given to all donors and the plaques are for people or business that make a donation of \$5000 and above.

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

- Staff received this year's *All-American Selections* seed packets. In addition, an order for a variety of ornamental grasses, vegetables, and herbs was received from Park Seeds. Efforts are taking place in the greenhouse to start seed germination and potting of plants.
- The 72" commercial grade blade has been received and install on the Kubota RTV900. This has significantly expedited the amount of time spent on snow removal for sidewalks and the IDOT bike trail. The unit is part of the 2015 Equipment budget.
- Staff replaced the wheel fenders on the 16' Interstate cargo trailer. This maintenance was performed as part of the service preparations for the bi-annual truck and trailer inspections in March.
- Staff cleaned up and prepared the Lake of the Woods Pavilion and Peninsula area for the Annual Special Olympics Polar Plunge that was held on February 28, 2015. According to event organizers this year's event consisted of fewer participants due to the Illini Plunge held the following week at Memorial Stadium.
- The staff have been coordinating with the planning department in the ordering and receiving of this year's supply order. Once all items have been delivered each individual department will be notified so they can pick up their supplies.
- On March 15, 2015 the LOW, RBFP, and SRFP expanded their hours of operation from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. On April 26, 2015 we will further expand our hours of operation from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- Roy attended the Great Lakes Park Training Institute at Pokagon State Park in northern Indiana.
- Plowing and shoveling snow on the weekends seems to be the norm the last couple of months, and it was like that last year as well.

- We have been removing autumn olive and honeysuckle along the road near the Salt Fork Center. We have areas where it has become difficult to mow without getting scraped or poked by exotics.
- The Natural Resources Department has been removing exotics in the Flickerwoods area. This has greatly improved sight lines for visitors who enjoy the trail, and it has also made it possible for people driving through the park to see further into the woods. (See Picture)



Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- Work continues with the Willow Pond rehab project. Mike Daab has asked for quotes from soil coring companies, which is our first step in the process. Soil sample cores will be made around the pond to determine what materials could be under the pond, then coring other areas determining clay deposits.
- Middle Fork staff are building new trail directional posts to be placed at the three ways and intersections of our trail system. Some posts are replacements, where others will be new installs.
- We have received the new interpretive signage for the Pt. Pleasant trail to be developed this year.
- Staff has been removing hazardous trees out of the user areas for most of the month.
- We welcome our new planning director Jon Hasselbring. Meetings have been scheduled to discuss the upcoming year with projects set for Middle Fork.