

July 11, 2016

MEMORANDUM

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

Executive Director (Dan Olson)

- The Fourth of July weekend proved busy again this year. It is always a treat to see so many people out enjoying the day. There was good attendance at the campground despite the drizzle. Attendance was down a bit at Freedom Fest this year most likely because the holiday fell on Monday.
- I want to personally thank Dr. Chris White for a decade of service as a Citizen's Advisory Committee member and a Commissioner. On a personal level, Chris has been a great sounding board for me in both the Natural Resources and Executive Director positions. On the professional level, Chris has been instrumental in many of the projects at the District as will be recognized by Resolution. Thank you Chris.
- Commissioner Kerins asked that I put a reminder/update to the remaining study sessions for 2016 in this packet. We have the following study sessions and general agreed upon topics:
 - **July 21** – FY2016 Topic: Budget Projections – Agenda already approved.
 - **September 15** - Topic: Meet with Foundation to plan projects/fundraising for the new year – Agreed upon by Commissioners but not voted on.
 - **November 5** – Board Retreat – Potential topics discussed include: Strategic Planning, Board self –evaluation, referendum, golf, and board trainings on general topics (boot camp type). No topics were voted on.
 - **November 10** – Topic: Special Budget Presentation Meeting and Community Engagement Group – Agreed upon by Commissioners but not voted on .
- I am very proud of the staff, as they have been working very hard on putting together a 2017 Budget. It is difficult to project out the needs so early in this year, but they have done well with what we have asked them. I anticipate several changes to what we are presenting before we ask for final approval of the budget.
- *Doug Ireland (with Cycles Plus in Danville) was given an IAPD/IPRA Community Service Award for his work on the Kickapoo Rail Trail during the Vermilion County Conservation District Board Meeting. The award was jointly nominated by the CCFPD staff, the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation, the VCCD, and the VCCD Foundation. Doug was thankful for the award and later said, "It was good to hear the nomination, because you don't realize how much we have done for the trail."*
- *Since our last meeting we had four more fundraisers for the KRT. The KRT Dualathlon (Second Annual) had a good day. This is a fundraiser started by IAPD/IPRA Community Service Award winner Doug Ireland and Cycles Plus that occurs in the Kickapoo State Park. Not only does it raise money, but it has raised awareness about the trail. Peter and Alex Davis with Champaign Cycle had a viewing of the cycling movie Not Bad and the Illinois premiere of Not 2 Bad at the Art Theatre with proceeds going to the KRT. The Foundation's Rockin' for the Trail with local favorite Brat Pack had a good turnout. We will have numbers in the Foundation Report. We had big sponsorship for that event and a very nice silent auction. Second, the Ride to the Depot, highlighted in Mary Ellen's report.*
- We are sad to say goodbye to Jan Runion our HR Generalist as she has accepted a job in Macon County. Jan came into the new position approximately three years ago and has tackled quite a few things including new technologies, Compensation Committee work,

updating a lot of policy as well as a whole host of other items. Thank you to Jan, you will be missed.

- As you know, we have been looking for appropriate events to bring to our sites. The Healing Wall, the traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall replica was on site for several days at the Lake of the Woods Peninsula. It was truly an honor to have it and an honor to work with those involved in bringing it to Champaign County. The arrival was showcased with a thousand flags placed on Tin Cup and Lake of the Woods Road, Honor Guard, Local Law Enforcement and Local Fire. There were more than 6,000 visitors to the wall during it's time here. We received several compliments on how fitting the location was for everyone including the inspectors from the national program and how well the grounds looked during the event.
- I spent time with the NRPA Awards, Scholarship, and Fellowship Committee this month. I continue to be pleased with the incredible quality of Parks and Recreation agencies and individuals we have in the United States and look forward to attending NRPA this year.
- The Foundation received \$1,546.71 from the annual distribution of the Ida Haack endowment held with the Community Foundation. This endowment is specifically for the Museum of the Grand Prairie.

Deputy Director/Grants (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- *On July 1, the District learned that it would receive its largest donation to date for the Kickapoo Rail Trail project – a \$150,000 gift from Jimmy John and Leslie Liautaud. Although the revenues from summer and fall events are not yet in, this donation should help to close the gap in phase one construction for the west end of the trail.*
- *On July 10, Peter Davis and his Champaign Cycle crew hosted the Ride to the Depot bicycle ride as a fundraiser for the KRT. The perfect summer weather day brought out more than 180 riders to the event. Proceeds from the day totaled about \$4,500. Thanks so much to Peter and Champaign Cycle!*
- The District wrapped up both its volunteer and fundraising commitments in accordance with requirements of the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation's Stewardship Challenge Grant. The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation raised more than the necessary \$7,000 in private funding, while numerous volunteers committed time and energy to invasives control, river clean-up, and general stewardship activities – all directed toward restoration of the Sangamon River Forest Preserve. A reimbursement request has been sent to ICECF for the \$25,000 awarded to our foundation under this grant program.

Administration (John Baker)

- Filed the 2015 District audit with the State Comptroller, Champaign County Clerk, the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB) and the Park District Risk Management Association. The MSRB filing is a federal requirement for state and local government agencies that issue tax-exempt bonds. Published a Notice of Audit Availability in the News-Gazette as the Public Funds Statement issued in the past is not required when audits are completed and available no later than June 30 for the District.
- Met June 30 to kick off the initial 2017 budget preparation with District Department heads, discussed department projects and capital requests, as well as District financial projections. Provided instructions and forms for submitting capital, equipment and operating budgets.
- Met with headquarters employees about equipment and facility needs at Heritage Hall/Administration building and adjacent area.
- Updated fiscal projections for all District funds with actuals through June 30, 2016 and revised projections for future years.

- Received official notice from the City of Urbana about the impact of its plans to create a new TIF District, termination of Urbana TIF 1 and remove several significant portions parcels from Urbana TIF 2. CCFPD may anticipate additional revenues of approximately \$7,000 annually from these actions, pending the District's RY 2016 levy payable in 2017.
- Secured resolutions of payment disputes with Frontier Communications and Fred Pryor Seminars totaling \$2474 in credits to the District.
- Continued working with FE Moran toward upgrading fire and security alarm service from 2G (phasing out as of January 1, 2017) to 4G wireless. We have tentatively scheduled this work with Moran for early November. Moran has submitted about 60% of the contracts needed.
- Finalized the golf lease purchase payment arrangements with De Lage Landen financial services and the agreement with The Brat Pack for the Foundation's July 9 fundraiser at City Center

Human Resources (Jan Runion)

- Prepared, distributed and collected responses for Employee Engagement Survey as outlined in the Strategic Plan. Sent an email to all employees with overall results.
- Successfully completed the Sr. Human Resource Professional exam and received certification.
- Worked with intern to complete the HR Manager Manual.
- Worked with intern to complete the Anti-Discrimination and Harassment training for Supervisors.
- Completed First Aid/CPR/AED training.
- Participated in webinar on Developing Effective Pay for Performance plans.
- Interviewed, selected and offered candidate the Volunteer Coordinator position.

Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- Social media update: on Facebook CCFPD has 1,413 (+58) followers; Lake of the Woods Golf Course has 720 (+10); Kickapoo Rail Trail has 1,137 (+138); Museum of the Grand Prairie has 606 (+9). Homer Lake Interpretive Center 87 likes (+23). CCFPD has 198 (+28) Instagram followers. Kickapoo Rail Trail has 69 (+7) followers and CCFPD has 433 (+4) followers on Twitter.
- We have two MTD Bus Tail ads this month advertising the Water/Ways Smithsonian Exhibit opening at the Museum of the Grand Prairie on Saturday, July 16.
- Freedom Fest ran very smooth this year. We received \$6,985 in sponsorship dollars and collected \$8,474.97 in admission fees and donations.

Natural Resources (Mike Daab)

- The Natural Resources crew continued with invasive plant management, including spraying, mowing, and hand removal of weeds over several acres.
- Seed collection is beginning to pick up, and NR Technicians have made a first visit to area Nature Preserves to collect local ecotype seed for the Kickapoo Rail Trail restoration. Seed from CCFPD preserves is also being collected for various restoration projects.
- Michael Daab attended the first meeting of the regional Pollinator Coalition at Parkland College on July 7.
- M. Daab attended a Mahomet River Trails Committee meeting on June 29, where discussion of a Sangamon River Trail from Fisher to Allerton Park in Monticello was discussed. CCFPD would potentially host several public access areas for paddlers. The committee also currently has a grant application out for a multi-use path that would connect Lake of Woods to the west side of Mahomet, and eventually to River Bend.

- M. Daab helped interview a candidate for the CCFPD Volunteer Coordinator position on June 24.
- We arranged for injection treatment of two ash trees to prevent Emerald Ash Borer infestation at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center in June. This is the second treatment the trees have received, and it will last until spring of 2018. We will be making a concerted effort to remove several declining ash trees in the Preserves over the winter.

Planning and Construction Department (Jon Hasselbring and Mike Fry)

- *Cross construction continues to make progress with rough grading and perimeter erosion control barrier installation. Construction activities in St. Joseph have advanced to fine grading.*
- *Lisa Sprinkle and Jon Hasselbring delivered a Kickapoo Rail Trail presentation to the Champaign Kiwanis on June 24. Forest Preserve Friends Foundation member Bob Espeseth was in attendance.*
- *Mary Ellen Wuellner, Brian Taylor, and Jon Hasselbring visited rail trails in South Suburban Chicago on June 24 with staff members of the Urbana Park District and Champaign County Bikes. Managing members of the Old Plank Road and Cal-Sag Trails provided tours of multiple trailheads and offered helpful details regarding cross agency collaboration and trail management.*
 - *One of the highlights of this trip was visiting the Breidert Green trailhead in Frankfort, IL. This trailhead is a great example of a forest preserve district working with a supportive village government and eager building owner to enhance the look and feel of a trail in a given community (please see attached photo). In this case, the village and building owner invested in capital improvements and are responsible for maintaining the adjacent upgraded surface and landscaping. Whereas the forest preserve's trail commission maintains the trail surface itself.*
 - *We noticed several similarities between this trailhead and the mini-mall in downtown St. Joseph. Service entrances were converted into storefronts and the building's exterior was improved. Stamped/stained asphalt and upgraded landscaping were provided in the fifteen feet between the trail edge and adjacent retail building. An abandoned grain elevator was converted into a communications tower and visual icon for the downtown area. Inspired by these similarities, attached to the staff report is a series of **concept renderings** for Kickapoo Rail Trail surface/landscaping/building access between Main Street and Second in St. Joseph.*
- Phase 1 of the Homer Lake Sailboat Launch / Overflow Spillway project is complete. Construction for Phase 2 will continue later this fall.
- Construction Department and Golf Course Maintenance staff members utilized surplus asphalt material from the new bridge project to improve deteriorating cart paths.
- Drainage improvements were made outside of the golf course pro shop, including the installation of a trench drain and underground tiles.
- Plumbing and electrical improvements were completed at the Lake of the Woods Peninsula toilet building, including a new hot water heater, tempered mixing valves, faucets, frost-proof hose bibb, and new electrical outlets.

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

- Golf maintenance staff completed 7 bunker renovations. We plan to complete 2 more this year.
- The Junior Golf Camp was held July 11-15 with max participation of 25 kids.
- Upgraded Golf Now Point-of-Sale and credit card software to full PCI compliance.
- June 4 & 5 Naughtin Open 38 Players; June 7 - Mahomet Business Group; June 10 – Bulldog Open 64 players; June 14 – Carle EMS 67 players; June 16 – Parent child 44 players; June 17- Larry Harvey Memorial outing 30 players; June 18- Talks Mentoring outing 38 players.

Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- Summer camps and our summer public programs are in full swing. And our Counselors-in-Training are doing great. We are so lucky to have such a great group of 11-17 year olds.
- Stacey Clementz led a successful teacher training on June 6 titled “Don’t Leaf Out Technology: Environmental Applications of STEM in the Classroom.” It was held in the Museum Education Classroom.
- Stacey Clementz joined the District’s Sustainability Committee.
- We are working on getting feedback on the Interpretive Plan from local teachers and volunteers. After their feedback Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter will be incorporating all feedback and presenting a final version for Board approval.
- In June 2016, the Museum of the Grand Prairie broke all previous monthly attendance records.
- As a result of its closing, the Chanute Air Museum donated several pieces of equipment to the Museum of the Grand Prairie for use in collections management. Computer and monitor, scanner, tripod, copy stand, Digital SLR camera, and reference books were all donated with a value of \$2450.
- Museum and Education Department supporter Marilyn Sinclair passed away in June. Donations in her name have been made to the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation for the ME department and will be placed in the Education for the Underserved Fund.
- The lead-up to Water/Ways event was held at Spurlock Museum on Saturday July 9. *Waterlife*, a documentary about the degradation of the the Great Lakes and efforts to solve it, was shown. Spurlock donated the projectionist and auditorium time to the ME Department (value \$600).
- Additionally at the lead-up event students from University High School showed the finished product from the Youth Access Grant (funded by the Smithsonian), created with Ed Program Specialist, Susan Voskuil. The students produced a short movie called “Polluting our Waterways.” After viewing it, our contact at the Smithsonian said in an email to Susan, “You’ve done a really wonderful job with these students and I hope you realize what amazing work you all completed.” It will be on display in the Worth of Water exhibit.
- The Museum and Education Department reactivated the CCFPD as a Retired Senior Volunteer Program station.
- Photographers Dave Stone and Dan McHale are showing their Water Wildlife photographs in the Artist’s gallery this summer as an adjunct to the Water/Ways exhibit.
- In connection with the Wall that Heals, the MGP mounted a small exhibit showcasing new collections, particularly those from the Vietnam era, around the stairwell.
- The Museum said goodbye to Susan Voskuil, our Education Program Specialist. Susan has taken a position in Sacramento, California at the Verge Center for the Arts.
- The Museum of the Grand Prairie hired Shelly Green as our new Customer Service Retail associate.

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

- Doug Sanders and Tammy Bruehl attended NRPA's webinar *Zika and Parks: What You Need to Know*. Dr. Janet McAllister from the Centers for Disease Control presented an overview and preventative measures.
- Staff prepared the Peninsula area and provided assistance throughout the *The Wall That Heals* event (June 23-26). Patrick O'Neil, representative of the Wall, commented that LOW was one of the most picturesque locations they had ever visited. He also commented the cooperative effort made by event organizers and LOW staff raised the bar for future locations.
- Staff continue to renovate several of the beds in the Botanical Garden. Among these are a rose garden around the flag pole, a variety of grasses and hostas in the pagoda bed, and redesign of the lilac bed along the new bike trail. Miniature flags were also placed throughout the landscaped beds during the Independence Day celebration.
- Staff prepared the grounds for Freedom Fest and facilitated the operational aspects of the events.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- I went with Jon, Mary Ellen and Urbana Park District staff to tour some bike trails in the Chicago suburbs. I enjoyed seeing the old farm implements along sections of the trail as well as the other artwork that was used to identify a trail system.
- We assisted the Interpretive staff with the Take Me Fishing event.
- We cooked supper for the joint Board / CAC meeting. This tradition has been going on since the early nineties.

Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- The campground had a very successful 4th of July weekend, being fully booked and having great weather. We had a challenging turn-around with the I and I Tractor Show starting after the holiday weekend, with another fully booked weekend. Visitors came in from all over the United States, with thirteen states represented.
- I have been working with Mike Daab and Jon Hasselbring concerning the Pt. Pleasant project on the south property of Middle Fork. We have met with an engineering firm discussing the issues we are seeing on that property.
- A representative from NRCS brought a group to our waterfowl sites at Middle Fork for a wetland plant identification tour and class.
- We are evaluating several sections of trails this summer for re-route potential. Several trails are experiencing heavy erosion near the river edges.