

August 8, 2016

MEMORANDUM

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

Executive Director (Dan Olson)

- Sangamon Valley Public Water District easement under the bike path at Lake of the Woods has been completed with the signing of the Acknowledgement and Release.
- I would like to thank our U-tern (U of I intern) Callie Hennessey, for working with us this summer. Callie is majoring in Industrial Psychology and sought us out to get experience in administrative duties especially human resources. Callie helped design and complete projects that we will be using over the next several years.
- Interviews for HR Generalist Position are going well. Our goal is to have the position filled by mid-September.
- The CAC has been working diligently on outreach. They have been instrumental in getting word out about the CCFPD. In working towards the Dark Sky Certification Program, they have completed a draft of the Lightscape Management Plan that is currently being reviewed by the Champaign Urbana Astronomical Society and the CAC. The CAC is also reviewing the Hidden Acres Site Plan to get it in a final form.
- We are currently seeking to fill three CAC member positions. Four members terms will be coming to an end in Dec. One member has asked for reappointment. If you know of good candidates, please let me or Lisa know. You may recall, CAC member Eileen Borgia had announced her resignation during the Joint Board Meeting in June. However, she will be back on the Committee after plans changed for her.
- Our new Volunteer Coordinator, Kristin Tetzlaff will be moving to the area and beginning work with us in late August. Kristen has a variety of experience with volunteer coordination and education in zoo settings including Walt Disney World's Animal Kingdom.
- Other meetings include website design meetings, Director's meetings, NRPA Awards and Scholarships Committee.

Deputy Director/Grants (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- We were approved by The Nature Conservancy for tools and equipment through the Volunteer Stewardship Network. The VSN grant outfits our volunteers with rakes, pruners, and other tools for invasives control, trail management, and prescribed burning.
- The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation will submit a grant application to the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois by the end of August to retrofit lighting at the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve under the Dark Skies initiative. The grant will not exceed \$5,000 and does not have a match requirement.
- The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation reviewed a proposal from its fundraising committee on the allocation of a sizable bequest left to the Museum of the Grand Prairie. In consultation with museum staff and in accordance with the donor's interests, the foundation agreed to allocate a portion of the bequest to renovation of the Children's Discovery Room. The balance will be invested to grow the gift for future museum projects and needs.
- Work on the Grants Policy and Procedure continues. Staff is currently revising a first draft. A copy for Board review should be available in September.
- The 3rd annual River to Rail Ride will be held on Saturday, September 24. All routes begin at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve again this year. So far, ride sponsors include Carle Foundation, Gifford State Bank, and Durst Cycle & Fitness. SJ Broadcasting is an

in-kind sponsor providing air time for marketing the event. Volunteers are needed – please contact Mary Ellen if you are able to give a few hours of your time between 7:00am-2:00pm.

Administration (John Baker)

- Received initial capital and operating budget submissions from all departments and have begun inputting these in our Budget Planning database. Reviewing submissions for missing and duplicate data, new services requests, budget requests beyond the 2015 base budget and vendor increases.
- Presently updating budget projections per Board questions at the July meeting, these include updating golf to reflect the recent declining trend in golf rounds, factoring this golf impact on District fund balances and reserves, and adjusting reserves projections to reflect average 5% annual expenditure savings.
- Invested in two certificates of deposit at Longview (\$225,000 for five months @ .40%) and Prospect (\$230,000 for six months @ .63%) banks respectively.
- Informed Chad Lucas, Sikich lead auditor for the District, that the Board had approved extending the current contract for 2016 and 2017 audits. The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation indicated its agreement that Sikich would serve as their audit firm for the next two audits.
- Met with Phil Hult regarding District Treasurer duties and financial reports produced by staff.
- Reviewed and reconciled 2016 payroll deductions for health care, dental and other insurance through July 31. In 2015 we found discrepancies between employee insurance enrollments and payroll deductions. These discrepancies were reconciled in preparation for the now completed 2015 audit. This year we have been monitoring payroll deductions closely, so it has been good to find payroll deductions in compliance with employee enrollments.
- Have begun reconciling pavilion rental reports monthly as recommended in the 2015 audit document. Received official notice from the Village of Rantoul about its reduced TIF District and the parcels being returned to the general tax rolls.
- Coordinated a half-day CCFPD employee event at Salt Fork Center on August 10.
- Processed many seasonal staff terminations and continued advertising for open positions.
- Attended Authorized Agent training for the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund. Mary and John alternate attending these sessions, with each attending once every two to three years.
- Received \$600 payment from Sangamon Valley Public Water District for the easement underneath the bike trail and Sangamon River.
- FE Moran is still working on updating District alarm contracts.
- Reviewed and approved agreements with the following: Bloomington Media for golf marketing spots, Retired & Senior Volunteer Program for volunteer support at the Museum, Harris Computers for upgrading supporting software for the District's financial system.

Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- Social media update: on Facebook CCFPD has 1,434 (+21) followers; Lake of the Woods Golf Course has 722 (+2); Kickapoo Rail Trail has 1,165 (+28); Museum of the Grand Prairie has 612 (+6). Homer Lake Interpretive Center 92 likes (+5). CCFPD has 222 (+24) Instagram followers. Kickapoo Rail Trail has 73 (+4) followers and CCFPD has 440 (+7) followers on Twitter.
- Chambanamoms held two play dates at CCFPD this summer with great success. The first one was at Lake of the Woods on Tuesday, June 21 with over 100 people attending. The

second was at the Homer Lake Natural Playscape (pictured below) on Thursday, August 4 and had over 150 people attend. The data collected during these events showed that 50% of the attendees had never been to either location before.



Natural Resources (Mike Daab)

- Natural Resources staff attended the North American Prairie Conference in Bloomington-Normal in July. The conference was full of great sessions regarding establishing and managing prairies and savannas. Staff took field trips to the Nature Conservancy's Nachusa Grasslands and Kankakee Sands, as well as ParkLands Foundation sites.

Planning and Construction Department (Jon Hasselbring and Mike Fry)

- The Planning and Construction Departments coordinated the purchase and installation of new chairs for the Museum Education Center.
- The Construction Department and Lake of the Woods Operations has worked diligently over the last few weeks to complete cold patch asphalt repairs and road widening to crumbling roads near headquarters and Elk's Lake Pavilion (see attached photo). The water main running below this road was also replaced by a plumbing contractor. This work was completed ahead of sealcoating, which will be scheduled once the road repairs have properly cured.
- The Planning Department would like to thank local boy scout Joe Churm for installing new trail markers on the 3-mile running trail at the Buffalo Trace Prairie.(pictured at right) Joe raised all funds for this project and borrowed installation equipment from the CCFPD. Prior to the installation, Joe met with Jon Hasselbring and Mary Beck to coordinate project requirements. He also completed a personal protective equipment and safety training course led by Doug Sanders.



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

- Staff completed 3 bunker renovations bringing the total to 30.
- Staffs main emphasis this month was irrigation repair, completing 4 major repairs.
- We had a very successful Junior Golf Camp July 11 through the 15th!
- Completed first draft 2017 budget.
- We have equipped the Beverage Cart with a new mobile credit card device, this should increase beverage sales and give us the opportunity to use for other District events as needed.
- Dave Huber followed up with Daniel Regan from Golf Now regarding the Golf Now Tool Kit Plus marketing platform, this option would integrate with our current POS and reservation system and upgrade our website with search optimization tools as well as help us use “dynamic pricing” to increase revenue during peak times and discount slower times for more overall rounds and revenue. We can activate this option with 1 additional trade out tee time (we now give them 2 for the software and website hosting that we were paying \$3000.00 for previously)
- Events: June 21st & 28th – Junior Golf Clinic – 51 golfers; June 23rd – Slumberland Outing – 20 golfers; July 5th – Mahomet Business Group Outing - 12 players; July 11th – 15th Junior Golf Camp – 25 golfers; July 28th- Lake of the Woods Junior Open Tournament - 44 players; August 1st – Champaign Rotary Corn Roast - 40 Players; August 2nd - Mahomet Business Group Outing - 12 players; August 6th & 7th – Lake of the Woods Men’s Club Championship – 19 players

Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- The Museum is hosting the Smithsonian Museums on Main Street exhibit, Water/Ways until August 27. Museum staff picked the exhibit up from Franklin Creek Grist Mill on July 12, erected the exhibit on July 13, trained docents on July 14 and opened the exhibit on the 16th of July. Several public programs have accompanied the exhibit.
- We continue to explore ways to better serve those with disabilities. Stacey Clementz set up two programs this summer, one at Homer Lake and one at Lake of the Woods, for CUSR summer camp groups. Both were huge successes, and plans are being made for next summer.
- Library programs were also a huge success again this summer. The Library’s summer reading program theme was “Read for the Win,” and Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) offered a program called “Animal Athletes,” while the Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) offered “Games for Everyone.”
- Eco-Adventures, Grand Prairie Kids, and Garden Day Camps were again a great success; a new program called Girls Explore, run collaboratively with the Champaign Park District, brought students to HLIC and MGP. The first week was entitled, “Girls Explore the Prairie State”, the second week “Girls Explore Archaeology.”
- Pam Leiter attended the North American Prairie Conference, and co-led a field trip to two prairie sites.
- Mark Hanson attended the Association of Midwest Museums Conference in Minneapolis, MN.
- The latest copy of Illinois Antiquity, the publication of the Illinois Association for the Advancement of Archaeology, features an article on the “Ohio Nine Gal Tavern Site—Mahomet, Illinois”, the collection which was featured in the 2015 Hidden Underfoot exhibit, and is part of the permanent collection of the MGP.
- Stacey Clementz and Pam Leiter conducted Interpretive Naturalist interviews early in August, and hope to have someone hired by the end of August.

- The Museum of the Grand Prairie welcomes a new registrar, LaraAnn Canner. LaraAnn has worked at the Museum of Science and Industry, the Brauer Art Museum and is currently combining her work at the MGP with a part-time position at the Champaign County Historical Archives.
- The MGP also welcomes Monique Cullotta as our new Garden Program Specialist. Monique has a degree in Agronomy from ISU and spent several years as a trainer/teacher in the banking industry.
- Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation trained staff about disability awareness during the Museum and Education Department July staff meeting.
- Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter are serving on the KRT Education Committee, which is drafting an interpretive sign plan for the complete trail.

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

- Little Grassy Fish Hatchery of Makanda, IL dropped 506 channel catfish at Lake of the Woods on July 14th. This was done under the Illinois Hatchery System to improve the quality of fishing in the State.
- Michael Dale and Jim Blythe visited the Missouri Botanical Garden on July 28th to gain new ideas and insight. See attached memo from Michael Dale.
- In cooperation with the CN department, staff have been performing road repairs on the section between Headquarters and the Big Oak restroom facility. This has consisted of shoulder work, removal of alligatored sections, and base replacement. Sealcoating has been scheduled for late August.



- Jim Blythe and Michael Dale visited the Missouri Botanical Garden on July 28, 2016. We wanted to get new ideas for things we could do in the Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden. In particular we looked at the following items:
 - Combinations of different plants and colors that complement each other.
 - Various labeling methods from large trees to small annuals.
 - How diverse beds are used throughout the garden landscape.
 - Pests and plant control issues and how they deal with them.
 - Safety issues, what is deemed acceptable and how to alleviate concerns.
 - Conditions (sun, shade, moisture etc.) and how they affected plantings.

- How their employees work in and around garden visitors.
- Use of none plant items throughout the garden to enhance the visitor experience.



- We believe CCFPD will benefit from our trip to the garden on several different levels. We know we are not on the same level as the Missouri Botanical garden, but we learned a lot of different things we can translate to our park. Trips like this a couple times a year can really open our minds to new ideas and ways of doing things.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- Staff improved the roads in the park by filling some pot holes with cold mix asphalt.
- IDNR stocked 900 six inch catfish. They stock catfish every summer and we normally get 1,200.

Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- We have cleared the user trail on the north end of the preserve in preparation of bringing concrete to the culvert repair area, which will complete the project. The trail has been cleared of mostly autumn olive and honeysuckle in order to fit the truck to get to the location.

- Staff met at Pt. Pleasant to discuss trail construction, mostly concerning design of an outlook area. Because of the area we decided to construct a natural berm with rock outcropping, a new bench, and the current interpretive sign placed on the overlook.
- Dan Olson, Jon Hasselbring, Bill Ford from the CAC, and Matt met to discuss planning our next steps with the Dark Sky Certification process.
- Matt attended the Starwatch program put on by the Champaign Urbana Astronomical Society the first weekend in August, held at Middle Fork. It was a perfect night; we were able to see incredible sights such as the rings of Saturn, several constellations, a galaxy, and several nebula. The event was well attended, with up to 40 guests.