

March 6, 2017

MEMORANDUM

From: John Baker, Director of Business and Finance

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: 2016 Administration Department Annual Report

The Administration Department manages District budgeting and finance, purchasing, payroll, accounting, risk management, information technology and provides other business and support services.

2016 Accomplishments

- Coordinated District efforts to achieve a balanced budget for 2017, which includes \$95,389 reserve for anticipated 2017 savings. Continuously updated District financial projections to maximize funds available for addressing capital project needs and maintaining District cash flow while investing as much as practical for best District investment return.
- Implemented Activenet reservation system to provide online pavilion and program registration and museum store point of sale and inventory system. Activenet significantly upgrades District internal controls, upgrades pavilion rentals accuracy and replaces paper education program registrations. MediaCom telecommunications project.
- Completed MediaCom telecommunications project that replaced DSL service with 50/50 meg fiber optic connectivity.
- Proposed six new or updated financial policies, securing Board approval for all,
- Worked with vendors to implement Health Reimbursement Accounts including streamlining both HRA and flexible spending expenditures reimbursements to minimize out of pocket costs for employees.
- Provided reports to assist the Compensation Committee with 1) maintaining the P20 employee compensation 2) incorporating all District employee positions on the existing District pay scale.
- Coordinated the District's audit review with substantial progress made over the 2013 audit report (first Sikich audit), including the elimination of one of two material weaknesses and significant improvement in the other; elimination of five significant deficiencies; fully addressing nine of fifteen improvement recommendations and achieving significant progress on the remaining six. Sikich recommended seven new improvements in 2016, primarily in technology, and no new deficiencies or material weaknesses.
- Secured needed lease holder information from CSX (after two years of trying), and updated all KRT lease contacts and invoicing. By year's end all lease payments were current and regular invoicing of lease holders systematized.
- Updated District participation in the Illinois Funds to continue securitization of funds and obtain better rates of return on District investments.
- Secured Board approval of resolutions to join US Communities, a cooperative purchasing organization, to remove 2015 golf liabilities, to sell surplus equipment and for needed transfers of 2016 appropriations.
- Worked with FE Moran to upgrade District alarms to bring them into compliance with new 4G cell service standards.
- Increased District income 135% through focus on timely CD purchases and identifying best local and national rates. Total 2016 interest was \$16,325 compared with \$6,960 in 2015.
- Continued to ensure that legal and financial deadlines are met for the appropriations, tax levy, bond and other ordinances and that other statutory and regulatory requirements are met.

Who We Are

The Administration Department is located in the Headquarters Building at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve in Mahomet. The department is comprised of four staff members, two full-time: Director of Business and Finance, John Baker, and Human Resources/Risk Management Coordinator, Mary Beck, and two part-time positions: Payroll Assistant, Arnold Blair and Purchasing Assistant, Betty Strom.

What We Do

Financial Planning and Management

Annually, the Administration Department prepares the District's tax levy and budget appropriation ordinances and the working budget, as well as working with our auditors to prepare the District's annual audit. Income and expenses are reported below on a cash basis.

Summary of 2016 District financials:

Equalized Assessed Evaluation	\$ 3,621,081,528
Property tax levy	3,429,145
Debt Service Extension Base	224,608
Limiting rate (with bonding)	.095
Limiting rate (without bonding)	.089
Cash and investment balance at January 1	3,054,814
2016 Operating Revenues	4,362,217
2016 Capital Revenues	791,314
Total revenues	5,153,531
2016 Operating Expenditures	4,158,448
2016 Capital Expenditures	799,099
Total expenditures	4,957,547
Changes in Balance Sheet Assets/Liabilities	160,203
December 31 cash and investment balance	3,096,026
Total 2016 budget appropriation	11,484,553

As of 12/31/2016 the District received 92% of budgeted revenues and spent 87% of planned expenditures in 2016. Factoring in 2016 expenses paid in 2017, the District expended 97% of its budget. The under expenditure of the 2016 is attributable to capitol project savings (101,000)

On a weekly basis Administration monitors District funds and bank/investment accounts, transferring funds as needed to District checking to make weekly payroll and vendor payments. Sales taxes and Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) pension contributions are calculated and transferred monthly. Bank accounts are monitored on a daily basis as well as being reconciled at the close of each month. Summarized and detailed budget reports are provided to each department monthly as well. Fund projections are updated regularly.

In addition, Administration coordinates the annual budget preparation process, maintains and implements the District's financial policies; manages investments and district indebtedness, makes

bond payments, coordinates bond issues with financial and legal counsel, reports financials; and maintains appropriate internal financial controls to meet audit standards and ensure prudent handling of District funds.

Audit

In 2013 the District engaged the services of Sikich, LLC to serve as District auditor. Sikich is a leader in audit and financial services for many park and forest preserve Districts and came highly recommended for its thoroughness and clarity in auditing. For the preceding five years the District utilized the services of local auditors receiving no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. A major rationale for the change in auditors was the desire of Administration staff to “raise the bar” and to have fresh eyes review District financial procedures and controls. Sikich 2015 audit review indicated that the Administrative staff continue to progress in tightening internal controls.

Administration staff continued implementing several changes in 2016 to address audit recommendations, including the implementation of Activenet to enable online rental and education program reservations and for Museum store retail sales. At the same time, 2016 was the first full year for Paylocity. These systems have given administrative staff the tools for better review and increased accuracy in all District financial transactions. **Human Resources Support**

While the Human Resources Generalist work expectations include human resources policy development, investigations, compliance with state and federal human resources statutes and regulations, leading the District Compensation Committee, addressing the Affordable Care Act mandates, managing the employee evaluation system, and advising employees and supervisors about training opportunities, employment laws and District policies, Administration employees provide significant support to the HR Generalist role. Administration staff serves as back up for the Human Resources Generalist, and handles various HR tasks including drafting HR materials, data entry and filing for recruiting, hiring, evaluations, and termination records for 38 full-time and approximately 90 seasonal and part time staff annually. This includes benefits and leave paperwork, assisting with staff orientation, maintaining current job descriptions, monitoring staff leave availability and hours worked, assisting with annual staff recognition activities and annual training day.

Administration reviews and manages benefits contracts, and reviews and reconciles District benefits for employees to ensure their participation and accurate vendor payments. Benefits for full-time employees include health and dental insurance (The District paid 100% for each full-time employee and 0% for dependents), IMRF pension contributions (11.45% of employee’s pensionable wage), \$25,000 life insurance, free camping and admission to District events/programs, one free pavilion rental annually, and reduced golf rates. The District 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.

Payroll

Administration is responsible for processing District personnel costs which totaled \$2,916,121 in 2016, a 1.6% increase in payroll costs over 2015. Maintaining accurate and current personnel records is critical to paying employees biweekly and ensuring that benefit vendors. Employees also receive longevity bonuses ranging from \$100-\$500 depending on service years. Through Paylocity, the District maintains employee pay and leave information accessible only for each particular employees’ information.

Business Services

Administration provides a variety of accounts payable services to District departments including processing purchase orders for vendor payments, printing and mailing checks, maintaining vendor records, researching and resolving payment problems for employees and vendors, preparing deposits and recording revenues in the District's financial system, maintaining electronic and hard copies of all District financial transactions and contracts, pursuing bad check collections and maintaining an audit trail for all transactions. 2016 accounts payable transactions totaled \$2,109,336. This total includes Purchasing Card transactions which totaled \$141,775.

Administration also provides support to departments for information technology services, including software and hardware purchasing, maintaining the District's internal Voice over IP network, and providing a common shared network for departments to provide information and collaborate on cross-department projects. The District vendors for IT services are MicroSystems International (Champaign) for District server, e-mail and general desktop support, Champaign Telephone for the VoIP system, MediaCom and Frontier for internet connectivity and telephones, Wigi Wireless for Middle Fork connectivity, MSI for accounting, budgeting and purchasing, Paylocity for HR and payroll, and Accuraty for the District Website.

Business services also include negotiating vendor agreements such as for purchasing propane and electricity. Handling licensing and permitting for certain District activities is also provided by this department. The Director reviews contracts and purchasing activities to ensure compliance with District budget, financial policies, and state statutes and regulations.

Risk Management

The Risk Management Coordinator is the District's liaison with the Park District Risk Management Association, reporting District accidents and incidents, unemployment and worker's compensation cases, requesting training and managing field reviews. She also reports monthly accidents/incidents to the District's Risk Management Committee comprised of District departments heads. This committee discusses safety training/concerns and preventive practices. .

Employee training is offered District wide, and by departments as needed. Training has included; First Aid/AED/CPR, Vehicle Safety, Chain Saw, Vehicle Trailoring, Hazard Communication, Fall Protection, Harassment Prevention, Hazard Communication, Emergency Response and other miscellaneous in-service subjects. Training is provided to staff by PDRMA, GLPTI, IAPD, IPRA, NRPA, in-house and contracted outside agencies. Other risk management support at the District include fire extinguisher annual servicing, alarms system checks, first aid kit supplies, CDL testing/tracking, alcohol servers training (golf course staff), driver review/abstracts, criminal background checks and state police sex offender checks and public health reviews.

Other Services

Administration provides other services to the District and the public, including:

- Providing financial, logistical and meeting support to the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation
- Maintaining the District's capitalized asset inventory
- Arranging and providing support for Board and other meetings, including minutes, agendas and official record keeping
- Responding to legal requirements including providing the Public Funds Statement and Open Meetings Act Compensation reports; providing the list of staff/Board members required to file Economic Interests; preparing the annual Prevailing Wage Ordinance; as well as responding to survey and public information requests

- In addition Administration provides financial information on the District's public and secure websites as well as the Lake of the Woods internal network for public and staff.
- Maintaining the District's retention schedule
- Administering District farm leases, including those for the Conservation Reserve Program properties.

2017 Goals

Finish updating and secure Board approval for remaining District Financial Policies.

Collate and formalize administrative procedures in an electronic procedural manual.

Continue to ensure that all District financial and legal obligations continue to be met in a timely and optimal manner, including obtaining a successful 2016 District audit.

Ensure bills and payroll are timely and accurate and that purchasing procedures are followed.

Coordinate District discussions on financial sustainability, including appropriate means for increasing District revenues and identifying and implementing savings strategies without impacting the District and departmental missions.

March 6, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners
From: Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey, Director, Museum and Education Department
Pam Leiter, Assistant Director, Museum and Education Department
Re: Museum and Education Department Annual Report

Mission

The Museum & Education Department (M&Ed) serves more than 30 thousand people each year from all walks of life. Each day we bring people closer to their natural and cultural heritage, build lifetime memories, and increase awareness of the District. We accomplish this through our programs, exhibits, interpretive signage, collections, outreach materials, online initiatives and more. We are proud to be leaders in these efforts at the District!

The Department's mission statement, approved by the Board of Commissioners in 2009, was developed in consideration of the larger scope of the District's mission and vision.

Department Mission & Vision

- Our mission is to collect, preserve and interpret the natural and cultural history of Champaign County and east central Illinois.
- Vision: Through diverse experiences, we seek to inspire our audiences with a sense of connection to, and stewardship of, their natural and cultural world.

Planning Documents

The Museum and Education Department is guided by the following plans, which are keyed to the District's Strategic Plan. The last revision and approval date is in parentheses.

- **Interpretive Plan** (2016) Articulates the District's mission as it relates to interpreting natural and cultural resources. It defines objectives, themes, audiences, and media; the following plans and policies are guided by it.
- **Exhibit Plan** (2012/board approval to be sought in 2017) Guides the exhibits at the Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) and the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC), trailside interpretive signs, offsite exhibits and outreach materials, publications, website and social media content, and most non-personal interpretation.
- **Program Plan** (Draft 2017; board approval to be sought in 2018) As yet undrafted, this plan will guide the Department's programs for all audiences. These include but are not limited to: public programs, events, school, homeschool, scout, special request, and programs for underserved audiences.
- **Collections Planning Documents** (All documents will be submitted for Board approval in 2017)
 - **The Collections Plan** (2009/revision 2017) guides what the Department collects and how the department identifies surpluses and gaps, areas of overlap with other area museums and historical organizations (and how to avoid conflict with their stated missions).
 - **Collections Policy** (2016) defines the way the Department loans, acquires and deaccessions collections.
 - **Collections Procedures Manual** (2016) defines procedures used by the Department to care for its collection.
 - **The Collections Care Plan** (2017) guides improvements in the physical conditions for the collection.

Professional Standards

Staff maintain professional certifications and regularly present at conferences. We are guided by best practices in our field.

- The MGP follows best practices within its field following the standards of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). AAM-accredited since 1972, the MGP has undergone three re-accreditation reviews. The next review is due in 2022.
- We are guided by best practices from national interpretive organizations, such as the National Association for Interpretation (NAI). All permanent staff members are NAI-Certified Interpretive Guides. Katie Riopelle, Mark Hanson, and Barb Garvey (MGP-based employees) received this certification in 2016. Katie Snyder and David Evans will complete this certification in 2017.
- 2016 Conference presentations:
 - Chelsey presented a concurrent session at EEAI annual conference: “Sixth Sense: How To Adapt Activities for Different Ages”
 - Pam co-led a field trip to two prairie sites at the North American Prairie Conference
 - Katie Riopelle presented at the American Association for State and Local History Conference, as a panelist on the session “Don’t Forget Us! Serving Sometimes Forgotten Audiences.”
- Networking and leadership at the local, regional & state levels
 - Barb Garvey serves on the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area Steering Council
 - Pam Leiter serves on the Champaign County Museums Network, Champaign County Audubon Society and Grand Prairie Friends boards
 - Stacey Clementz is past president for the Environmental Education Association of IL (EEAI)

Audience and Programs

The Museum & Education Department served 34,652 people in 2016. We taught 11,092 schoolchildren and began thirteen new public programs in addition to the more than sixty we already offered (serving an additional 8,156 adults and children). More than 16,000 people visited our facilities, the Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) and the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC).

Natural History

The District’s Natural History programming and the Homer Lake Interpretive Center are thriving. We now reach more than 11,000 people each year, a huge increase from a previous era, accomplished in part by simply making adjustments to our part-time roles and budget. We look forward to the completed Kickapoo Rail Trail, which should bring even more visitors to the Interpretive Center.

NATURAL HISTORY NUMBERS										
Year	HLIC Visitation & HL Public Programs	School Programs			Public Programs				Offsite Programs	TOTAL
		HL	LOW	MF	LOW	MF	SR	RB		
2009	1,991	462	712	133	589	608	7	15	962	5,479
2010	2,569	619	767	56	709	635	0	11	927	6,293
2011	2,807	1,219	810	102	566	1,392	7	22	580	7,505
2012	3,402	1,296	1,578	134	454	1,210	33	0	1,059	9,166
2013	4,667	1,516	1,854	83	568	1,946	28	0	958	11,620
2014	4,215	1,740	1,236	117	450	1,043	7	0	1,723	10,531
2015	4,373	2,022	1,611	105	473	1,210	9	12	1,813	11,628
2016	4,419	2,043	1,856	107	466	984	29	26	1,499	11,429

General visitation at the Interpretive Center is primarily from Champaign County (~80% each year); about

60% of visitors are adults, 40% are children. (Note: 2013 was the first year that the playscape was open, which brought a lot of attention to Homer Lake.)

Cultural History

The Museum of the Grand Prairie has seen a remarkable increase in school program and public program attendance as well as visitation over the past six years, nearly doubling our school program numbers since 2013, quadrupling our public program attendance since 2012, and increasing visitation at the door by 40%. We attribute this increase to staff innovation and energy, a social media presence and marketing efforts.

Cultural History Numbers							
	MGP Visitation				School Programs	Public Programs	
Year	Total Visitors	In County	IL	Out of State	# Students	# Participants	TOTAL
2009	7,099	70%	18%	11%	4,630		11,729
2010	9,150	67%	22%	11%	3,796		12,946
2011	8,513	66%	22%	12%	4,569		13,082
2012	7,283	76%	19%	5%	4,186	947	12,416
2013	8,620	74%	21%	5%	4,669	1,562	14,851
2014	9,324	75%	16.4%	10%	5,543	2,653	17,520
2015	10,350	72.7%	16.7%	10.3%	6,181	4,165	20,696
2016	11,618	70%	16%	13%	6,202	5403	23,223

General visitation at the Museum of the Grand Prairie is primarily from Champaign County (70%) with 16% from Illinois outside the county and 13% from outside the state. An equal number of visitors are first time and repeat visitors and the adult/child ratio is 60/40%.

Program Highlights

Program highlights for 2016 included:

- Switched to ActiveNet online registration system
- We had 9 additional programs in the summer while the Water/Ways exhibit was here, resulting in a total of 19 water-themed programs during its stay. The opening of the exhibit included a speaker and numerous demonstrators including a water table and rainfall simulator. Additional programs included viewing of the movie *Waterlife* at the Spurlock Museum; talks on stream monitoring, drought conditions, and the local watershed; a rainbarrel workshop; and a panel discussion on the Mahomet Aquifer. A special treat was the Swimsuit Fashion Show held at the Botanical Gardens.
- Hosted a Certified Interpretive Guide workshop for the first time
- Other new programs: Nature at Night (spring), Families in the Forest, Botanical Illustration for Beginners, Turkey Time School's Out Day, Spring Break programs at MGP, programs for CUSR special needs, Girls Explore, etc.
- New school programs: Habitats, Gathering the Wagons, Artifact Analysis

Programs we offer regularly each year include:

- School, Homeschool and Afterschool Programs: Programs are aligned to state learning standards and are offered throughout the year. Afterschool programs at several locations were added recently.
- Public Programs: Public programs are conducted throughout the year at District sites and offsite. These programs include large events, concerts, nature hikes, preschool programs, lecture series,

programs at senior living centers, library programs, and special request programs from a wide variety of groups.

- *Workshops*: We offer a wide array of workshops for teachers and the public on a variety of topics, including environmental education curricula, survival skills, stream monitoring, and more.
- *Summer Camps*: Summer camps are among our most popular programs. Offered for preschoolers-5th graders, they include camps at the Museum, Interpretive Center, and in the Gardens.
- *Scout Programs*: Staff offers scout programs and programs for other groups as requested. Scout offerings have recently been expanded and a new brochure to promote scout programs was distributed.
- *Campground Naturalist Programs*: Naturalist programs take place each weekend, Memorial Day to Labor Day, at the campground.

Exhibits

This year the M&Ed Department was chosen as one of six venues in Illinois to host the Smithsonian Museums on Main Street exhibit, *Water/Ways*. It was mounted from July 15 to August 26 at the Museum of the Grand Prairie with companion exhibits *The Worth of Water* at the MGP, and *Fawnsfeet and Fatmuckets: Freshwater Mussels of Illinois* at the HLIC running throughout the year.

Exhibits: Museum of the Grand Prairie

The Museum of the Grand Prairie offers 9,000 square feet of exhibits, interpreting the cultural and natural history of Champaign County.

Permanent Exhibits

- *The Grand Prairie Story* (1,907 square feet). This new exhibit was funded by a \$57,571 grant from the Illinois Public Museum Capital Grant as administered by IDNR, although the grant reimbursement has yet to be received pending a state budget. The exhibit interprets the natural and cultural history of the Grand Prairie, from the glaciers through the formation of the prairie, and includes discussion of the Native Americans and first settlers. The exhibit opened in March 2015.
- *Blacksmithing on the Prairie* (1,100 square feet) 1,461 artifacts. Completed in 2001. Slated to be updated in 2017, pending funding, by an exhibit on the area's agricultural history.
- *Champaign County's Lincoln* (1,790 square feet) 324 artifacts. Completed in 2010. Lincoln's time in Champaign County is recounted through a series of vignettes.
- *Discovery Room* (900 square feet). Completed in 2000, with periodic updates. The Discovery Room provides hands-on opportunities for children. It features Zay Wright's bedroom (from 1911), a wigwam (pre 1830s) and an 1840s home environment. This room is slated for renovation in 2018.

Annual Exhibits

- *Ahoy There! (A Brief History of Telephones)* (November to June) Featuring the Capel telephone collection (part of the MGP permanent collection), the story of the development of telephone communication is told.
- *New to the Collection: Chanute Collection*. Featuring highlights from the newly acquired Chanute Collection.
- *Mystery Artifact*. Our exhibit of select artifacts introduced on Facebook and the museum blog for followers to solve.
- *Offsite Exhibit at Parkland: Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories in Champaign County* (from the Doris Hoskins Collection).

Exhibits: Homer Lake Interpretive Center

The HLIC exhibits interpret the story of Homer Lake area's landscape and peoples as they relate to the larger story of the Grand Prairie.

Permanent Exhibits

- *A Land Shaped by Ice & Fire: The Grand Prairie* (53 square feet): This exhibit introduces visitors to the Grand Prairie as they enter the HLIC, and includes the 3-D diorama.
- *Discovery Den* (500 square feet): Life on the Grand Prairie, Forest Wildlife of the Grand Prairie Region, Aquatic Life at Homer Lake, Wildlife viewing window, and interactive activities.

Annual Exhibits

The HLIC features 14 square feet of exhibit space featuring topics unique to Homer Lake, timely natural history topics, or topics that complement the Museum's annual exhibit. The 2016 exhibit, *Fawnsfeet & Fatmuckets: Freshwater Mussels of Illinois*, coincided with the MGP *Worth of Water and Water/Ways* exhibits, and introduced visitors to the fascinating lifecycle and important role of mussels in aquatic ecosystems.

Offsite Exhibits

- Annually, the MGP employs the resources of the Doris K. Wylie Hoskins Archive for Cultural Diversity to create an exhibit for Parkland College on African American History during the month of February. The 2016 exhibit is entitled *Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories in Champaign County*.
- A permanent offsite exhibit, *Abraham Lincoln: Large Presence in a Small Town*, resides at the County Courthouse. This major offsite exhibit is a partnership with the Champaign County Board, Taylor Studios, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Exhibits: Trailside Interpretation

The Department manages more than 30 trailside interpretive signs at District sites throughout the county, in conjunction with the District's sign committee.

In 2016, we developed signs for Collins Pond, the campground, the Lake of the Woods peninsula, and Rayburn-Purnell Woods along the bike trail. A sign about Clark School at Homer Lake is in development in collaboration with Homer Historical Society.

Collections

Collections: Museum of the Grand Prairie

The museum holds more than 29,000 objects, archives, and photographs in public trust. These collections have been donated over the course of the last 48 years. They are guided by the documents mentioned above and the Museum Advisory Committee, who assist the museum in making decisions about the collections process including offers to the collection and the deaccession of items.

Examples of collections include:

- Redhed: 2,573 artifacts from the late 18th and early 19th century
- Chesebro blacksmith shop (last operated in 1920) in its entirety
- Doris K. Wylie Hoskins Archive for Cultural Diversity
- Nine Gal Tavern archaeological collection
- Textile collections with more than 1,600 items of clothing including 600 pieces recovered from the

dispersal of the University of Illinois' Textile Collection in 1998

- Barnhart furniture, and a rustic-design iron gate from the Weinard family
- Plows and tools from the University of Illinois

There were no new collections acquisitions or deaccessions in 2016.

Collections accomplishments in 2016 included:

- Continuation of multi-year Hoskins Archive processing project.
- Drafted updated Collections Policy.
- Hired a new Registrar.
- Obtained a freezer for cold treatment of artifacts with mold and/or pest issues.
- Began revision of Collections Procedures.
- Resolved outstanding accessions and deaccessions.
- Reorganization and survey of collections stored in Sangamon River shed.
- Completed processing of the Nine Gal Tavern archaeological collection.

Collections: Homer Lake Interpretive Center

The HLIC houses over 440 catalogued biofacts, including taxidermy mounts, mussel shells, live animals, pelts, skulls, antlers, turtle shells, fossils, nests, feathers, plant specimens, and more.

Grants and Collaborations

Grants & Monies received in 2016

- Illinois Public Museum Capital Grant for rebuilding LAS (\$238,000). This grant is still frozen.
- *Water/Ways* Illinois Humanities Council programming grant (\$2,300).
- Smithsonian/Dept of Education Youth Access Grant (MGP) (\$9,250).
- News-Gazette Sponsorship of *Water/Ways* (\$2,000).
- Grant for LED costs at the MGP (\$643.50).
- Donated space by Spurlock Museum for the *Water/Ways* film showing (\$600).
- Final receipt of the bequest from Frieda Anderson Mumm (\$130,855)
- Champaign County Audubon Society grant in support of Bird Migration Fest at Homer Lake.
- Donations to the "Animal Advocates" fund at the HLIC.
- 1,370 lbs of birdseed donated to the HLIC.
- Funds for binoculars donated to HLIC.
- Pondless waterfall donated to HLIC.
- Donations at the door: \$4,284 (MGP), \$674 (HLIC).
- Sponsorships through, IGA, Curtis Orchard, Meijer, Casey's and several area businesses.
- Donations to the Education for the Underserved Fund (in memory of Marilyn Sinclair and other long-time volunteers). These funds are used to pay bus and program fees for schools that could not otherwise attend CCFPD field trips due to inadequate resources (\$1,555).
- Ongoing Museum Friends donations. These funds support programs, exhibits and collections (\$2,800).
- Donations to Homer Lake Interpretive Center, which includes donations from Homer Soda Company from the sale of Maple Root Beer (\$525).

Collaborations/Professional Associations or Memberships in 2016

The Department depends heavily on collaborations with and membership in other agencies and organizations for development and implementation of programs, exhibits, and other initiatives.

Partners include, but are not limited to: Champaign County Museums Network, CU Astronomical Society, Regional Office of Education, Illinois Library Association Summer Reading program, Illinois State Geological Survey, Illinois State Archaeological Survey, Upper Sangamon River Conservancy, Natural History Survey, Illinois State Museum, St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce, and many others.

Department Staff

The department staff consists of its management team, and full-time and part-time staff as outlined below.

- Director: Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey (FT) *Oversees ME Department & operation of its facilities, programs, projects & staff*
- Assistant Director: Pam Leiter (FT) *Oversees operation of HLIC, its exhibits & collections, and natural history programs, projects & staff*
- Program Staff (Natural History Emphasis): Stacey Clementz (FT), Chelsey Walsh (PT), David Evans (PT), Christy Wallace (seasonal)
- Program Staff (Cultural History Emphasis): Katie Riopelle (FT), Katie Snyder (FT), Sandy Osborne (PT), Garden Program Specialist (vacant) (PT)
- Curatorial Staff: Mark Hanson (FT), Jennifer Grove (PT)
- Customer Service/Retail Staff: Mel Wiegel, Gretchen Winkler, Shelly Green (PT)
- MGP Custodian: George Groschen (PT)
- Other Seasonal Positions: Seasonal Naturalist, Day Camp Educators, and Interns

Volunteers and Interns

Volunteers assist with a wide variety of tasks in the department and contribute on average about two to three thousand hours annually (2,638 hours in 2016). Some of the roles they fill include: youth, special event, and public program volunteers, school marms/masters, Counselors-in-Training, curatorial & library volunteers, photographers, interpretive guides, and exhibit fabricators. In addition MGP had four interns in 2016 that assisted with collections work or programming for university credit. The Museum and Education staff recognizes its volunteers twice a year, and provides ongoing training.

Facilities

In 2016 the following improvements were made to our facilities:

- All MGP lamps are now energy efficient fluorescents or LEDs.
- New chairs for the MGP Education Room.
- New sign at MGP.
- New sidewalk installed at HLIC, solving water ponding issues.

Gift Shop

The Museum's gift shop offers a wide variety of merchandise. Our gallery specializes in local art consignment, often showcasing representations of the different preserves in the CCFPD. In 2016 the gift shop and gallery brought in a total of \$14,552, down about \$900 from the year before.

Facility and Program Expectations

In 2022, the Museum of the Grand Prairie will undergo another accreditation review by the American Alliance of Museums. At that time, we plan to incorporate the Homer Lake Interpretive Center into the accreditation review.

Capital improvements to the Museum in the next few years will include replacement of the Blacksmithing exhibit and renovation of the Discovery Room, painting of the schoolhouse,

installation of gutters and new energy-efficient windows. Capital improvements at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center may include carpet replacement in the main part of the building. A long-term need is to replace or substantially renovate the HLIC to accommodate visitor, program, exhibit and staff needs.

Many exciting opportunities await us in the next five to ten years. We will continue planning for long-term growth at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center and its programs, see growth in the Museum's school and summer camp programs, develop interpretation along the Kickapoo Rail Trail as construction allows, among other opportunities.

March 6, 2017

MEMORANDUM

From: Michael Daab, Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Department Yearly Overview

Who We Are

The Natural Resources Department is based at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve in Mahomet and operates at all Champaign County Forest Preserve sites. The department is comprised of four full-time staff members: the Director of Natural Resources (Michael Daab), Natural Resources Specialist (Jacob Pruiett) and two Natural Resources Technicians (Bradley Nelson and Austin Haskett). Staff education and experience in fields such as forestry, wildlife biology, plant biology, and human dimensions of natural resources contribute to dynamic decision making regarding best management practices for the conservation, restoration, and recreation of ecologically and culturally important natural areas of Champaign County.

In addition to the full time staff, the Natural Resources Department regularly fills a part time position. This position may be a seasonal worker, intern, or related to a special project. Past special projects have included mapping, assessment of sustainable practices, and tree inventories. More recent seasonal workers have worked with us through multiple seasons, providing much needed help as we aggressively work to restore high quality natural areas at CCFPD.

What We Do

Invasive Plant Management

While each invasive plant requires its own management schedule and technique, there are some general rules that we follow. First, we try to keep our historically intact natural areas as free of non-native, invasive species as possible. This is in accordance with the preferred response to any invasive threat: early detection and rapid response. These areas have been identified in past site plans and by current staff. Next we focus on areas of light infestations in lesser overall quality areas and in areas we have invested time and money in restoring or recreating native ecotypes. The day-to-day work of the Natural Resources Department is dictated in large part by season and weather. While we manage invasive plants in all seasons, during the spring we manage the greatest variety of plants.

We routinely utilize volunteers to aid staff in invasive plant management. Each January, CCFPD teams up with partner organizations through the Headwaters Invasive Plant Partnership (HIPP) to get volunteers certified to manage invasive plants with herbicide under Illinois Pesticide Act rules. Urbana Park District, Champaign Park District, Kickapoo State Park, and the University of Illinois staff helped with the January 2017 training, which had record attendance with 68 volunteers present, and 55 of those seeking certification to work on CCFPD lands. This was a significant increase over the 34 volunteers certified to apply herbicide in the previous year. Much of the difference has been made up through the active recruitment of volunteers affiliated with the Red Bison and Wildlife Society student ecological groups at the University of Illinois. Volunteers from these groups have been active in invasive plant management and trash removal at the KRT in Urbana.

Prairie and Savanna Restoration

Champaign County sits in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Division of Schwegman's Natural Divisions of Illinois. The first Europeans to visit the area would have found a sea of prairie covering about 90 percent of the county. Very little of this landscape still exists, of course, save for some remnant plants along railroads or in cemeteries. Through our prairie restoration efforts, the Natural Resources Department is committed to showcasing the county's ecological heritage by providing spaces where visitors can picture the landscape as it once was. Beyond the historical and aesthetic appeal of the prairie, however, we are also committed to reestablishing much of the biodiversity of these lands that had been reduced to monotypic croplands or pasture. By establishing a base of native flora, we provide habitat for native fauna to thrive.

Prairie restoration efforts are guided by publications such as the Tallgrass Restoration Handbook, Prairie Establishment and Landscaping (a technical publication of the IL Department of Natural Resources (IL DNR)), scientific articles, information garnered from conferences and symposiums, and other peer-to-peer discussions.

<i>Prairie and Savanna Restoration Projects 2006-2016</i>			
Forest Preserve	Acres	2015 Additional Acres	2016 Acres
Lake of the Woods	25.30		18 (Buffalo Trace short stature prairie)
Homer Lake	37.50		
Sangamon River	66.35		7 (Savannas)
Middle Fork River	85.00	11.00 (Pt. Pleasant Expansion)	10 (Prairie – Savanna @ Point Pleasant entry area)
Kickapoo Rail Trail	0	8.00 (US 150 Construction Seeding)	Holding for Spring 2017 planting
Cumulative Total	214.15	233.15	268.15

Forest/Woodland Restoration

The process of restoring a forest is similar to that of restoring a prairie. Historical and current use of the site is considered. For a new reforestation planting, the site is prepared by eliminating weedy competition (competition from grasses is especially detrimental to young seedlings). Reforestation efforts at CCFPD have utilized both planting seedlings and growing directly from seed.

Forest restoration also includes invasive species removal efforts. Our most dramatic invasive plant management activity is our invasive shrub removal, which primarily takes place over the winter months. The skid steer forestry mower is used when the ground is dry or frozen and handheld power tools are used in various conditions. **Over the past year, we have used the forestry mower at the Lake of the Woods Headquarters, Stidham Woods, and Centennial Oak Grove locations, as well at Quillers Woods at MFRFP. We also used the forestry mower to reduce the amount of invasive shrubs and trees impeding progress within the Kickapoo Rail Trail construction zone during the summer of 2016. Where using the**

forestry mower is not feasible, trees and shrubs can be cleared with chainsaws and hand saws, sometimes in conjunction with a skid steer grapple attachment. This technique was used at Buffalo Trace, along the LOW bike path, and by volunteers at SRFP and KRT. Basal bark herbicide treatment to manage autumn olive continued over several acres in open fields at MFRFP.

Following intensive invasive plant management and removal efforts, new planting is necessary to re-establish native flora. The goal is to direct the overstory and understory in a trajectory resembling historical intact ecosystems prior to settlement. In fall 2016, we planted a mix of 75 native trees and shrubs in several locations where invasive plants had been previously removed. We purchased woodland plant seedlings and roots that were planted by staff and volunteers. These areas were also seeded with a mix of woodland herbaceous species in order to diversify the groundcover. Prescribed burns and other routine maintenance of invasive plants will be necessary in these areas.

<i>Winter Invasive Shrub and Tree Clearing 2013-2016</i>				
Forest Preserve	2013-14 Acres	2014-15 Acres	2015-16 Acres	2016-2017 Acres
Lake of the Woods	34.08	17.50	40.90	30.5 (HQ, Stidham Woods, Centennial Oak Grove, Buffalo Trace, North Bike Path)
Homer Lake	1.50	15.20	0.00	
River Bend	6.80	0.00	4.50	
Middle Fork River	6.00	43.30	15.00	20.00 (Quillers Woods and Campground area)
Sangamon River				0.75 (Volunteers – Wetland periphery)
Kickapoo Rail Trail				6
Total	48.38	76.00	60.40	57.25

Wetland, Lake, Pond, and Riparian Restoration

Wetlands are a vital habitat for the many plants and animals that depend on their existence for survival. These areas also help with floodwater control, groundwater recharge, water filtering, and offer recreation opportunities. We have undertaken a number of projects that aim to create or restore these areas in Champaign County. Much recent work has been done at our Homer Lake Forest Preserve, where a wetland complex that includes ephemeral pools and a larger pond was created in 2007. In 2013 and 2014, the shorelines of Homer Lake and Collins Pond were planted with plugs of over thirty different native wetland obligate species, replacing the low-diversity, non-native vegetation present.

Larger wetland creation and restoration projects have occurred at our Middle Fork River Forest Preserve. Two waterfowl areas totaling over 130 acres were created in the 1990s, built with grant funds provided by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources through the Duck Stamp

Program. Point Pleasant Wetland, which includes large and small wetland areas as well as prairie restoration, was purchased in 2001 and continues to be expanded and restored. **In 2016, we contracted Huddleston McBride Land Drainage Company to evaluate the area with the objective of implementing a plan to maintain valuable wetland for migratory and resident wildlife, while still maintaining drainage for the surrounding farm land. The exploratory work resulted in maps of drain tile locations, and a recommendation for projects to reach our restoration goals given the current hydrology. The focus has now been moved toward securing partnerships and funding to reach those goals. Discussions with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ducks Unlimited, the Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife and others are currently underway.**

We have been monitoring water quality conditions in Lake of the Woods, Homer Lake, and Sunset Lake, through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Volunteer Lake Management Program.

Prescribed Fire

When the first European settlers arrived to Illinois they saw a landscape that was highly influenced by fire. Fires were both naturally occurring (e.g. lightning strikes) and intentionally set by Native Americans for many reasons, including clearing area for food plots, hunting, warfare, and pest management. Today we carefully plan and execute prescribed fires in order to help preserve and enhance culturally and ecologically significant landscapes. These prescribed fires help to improve wildlife habitat, stimulate native plant growth, and reduce the costs of vegetation control. Prescribed burning can take place any time from fall through spring when the conditions are proper for safety and management goals, but we typically see the best conditions in November and from March into April. Spring typically offers more opportunities. Burns can be beneficial for, and may be conducted in, prairie, savanna, wetland, and forest settings.

We are required to obtain an annual open burning permit through IL EPA in order to conduct prescribed fires. Preparation for prescribed burning begins months before fire is set. Mapping and planning is done anytime between burn seasons. Burn breaks are mowed throughout the fall. Natural Resources staff attends prescribed fire classes when available, and we have partnered with the Illinois Fire Service Institute and the Illinois Prescribed Fire Council to host conferences and classes. Natural Resources staff members have acted as prescribed burning knowledge resource for volunteers and partners. On the day of a burn, the proper contacts are made to make local fire departments and CCFPD staff aware of burning activities. All prescribed burns at CCFPD follow the rules of the Illinois Prescribed Burning Act.

While burned acres in 2016 decreased by 232 from our record-high acres in 2015, we still met our goals for burning high priority units. Burned woodland/forest increased by 100 acres from 137 acres in 2017. This increase in burned acres is partially due to bringing new woodland acres into a burn regime, including some of the established, high quality woodland along the multi-use path north of the Golf Course at Lake of the Woods, and two sites at River Bend that were planted as woodlands in the years immediately following acquisition of the site.

In spring of 2016 we were able to conduct our first prescribed burn along the Kickapoo Rail Trail. The remnant prairie on site appeared to respond well to the burning, with a very productive growing season. We have applied for EPA and IDOT burn permits to continue burning along the KRT as time and weather allow in 2017.

<i>Prescribed Burns at CCFPD 2016</i>		
Natural Area Type	Spring Acres	Fall Acres
Prairie/grassland	342.5	44
Savanna/shrubland	8.5	
Woodland/forest	237.5	
Wetland	5	
Total	592.5	44

Natural Resources Equipment

The Natural Resources Department utilizes large and small equipment in the management of our natural areas. The current vehicle fleet of the department includes a 2010 Ford F-450 with dump bed, a 2004 Ford Explorer, and a 2014 Ford F-150 Crew Cab. A 2011 Polaris 800 6x6 with a 55 gallon water tank has been a great addition to the fleet and is used for transportation to remote sites, seed collection, herbicide application, and as a water source on prescribed burns. Additional utility vehicles, usually available on site at MFRFP and HLFP, offer convenient modes of transportation along trails and to remote areas.

The 2002 John Deere 5420 utility tractor is primarily used for mowing in preparation for and in maintenance of prairies. This tractor is also used for broadcast spreading and no-till drilling prairie seed, spraying herbicides, loading dirt and mulch, post-hole digging, etc. Homer Lake and Middle Fork utility tractors are still borrowed regularly to aid in maintenance mowing throughout the growing season.

The 2007 Bobcat T300 compact track loader has greatly improved management efficiency. Attachments for the machine include a Fecon forestry mower for on-the-spot shredding of shrubs and small trees, a Brushcat mower for maintenance mowing prairies and other non-manicured areas, a grapple for moving large bundles of cut or fallen tree debris as well as large trunk pieces, forks for pallet moving, and a combination bucket for moving dirt. We also utilize the Homer Lake Bobcat skid steer when available in order to complete projects more quickly, or to keep moving on projects while we experience down time due to repair needs with our older machine.

The department uses several trailers in the course of management. The 2007 Cronkhite 20 foot flatbed trailer is primarily used for transporting the Bobcat T300 and attachments and is pulled by the Ford F-450. It is also used for transporting the John Deere 5420 when necessary, and has been used to pick up loads of balled and burlapped trees. The trailer received new decking in 2015. The white oak boards came from a downed tree at LOW that was milled at Homer Lake, saving us over \$1000 in supply costs. The 2006 American Hauler 7x12' enclosed cargo trailer is used for transporting plants, and as a mobile prescribed fire equipment locker in the fall and spring. A 14' flatbed utility trailer is used for transport of the Polaris Ranger with water tank

attached. This trailer can be pulled with any of the vehicles in the fleet, adding to the versatility of our management tool options. Finally, a 1,000 gallon water tank trailer is available for prescribed fires, watering plants, etc.

A 1999 Smoker Craft 16' boat with an outboard motor is used for lake monitoring, fish habitat structure placement, and other miscellaneous tasks.

Smaller power equipment available for resource management includes a variety of chainsaws, brushcutters, and an auger. Equipment maintenance is ongoing and is performed as needed and as suggested in equipment manuals. As examples, chainsaws can require up to an hour of maintenance a day during the busy season for cleaning and sharpening, and the Bobcat T300 requires several points of greasing after every ten hours of use.

Additional Natural Resources Partnerships and Responsibilities

The Natural Resources Department is responsible for many small projects and tasks throughout the year. Responsibilities of the department include:

- Serving as a resource for staff and the public regarding issues of flora and fauna of Champaign County,
- Geocaches and letterboxes: Keeping updated on where geocaches are places on CCFPD property, making sure they adhere to CCFPD regulations, as well as remaining aware of these locations during management activities,
- Participating in the development of materials for outreach, interpretation, and education including content for posters, signs and newsletters,
- Lake, river and pond management: Participating in the IL EPA Volunteer Lake Management Program at Homer Lake, Lake of the Woods, and Sunset Lake, and working with DNR fisheries managers and site superintendents to sample and stock lakes.
- Participating in the annual tree planting at Unity West elementary school in Tolono, (**due to planting space limitations, this program was discontinued in 2016**)
- Managing research at CCFPD: Serving as contact for researchers and approving permits. As many as ten to fifteen projects may be active at CCFPD at any time, with a range of foci, including ducks, ticks, mosquitoes, minnows, invasive plants, leaf litter, etc.,
- **Participating in efforts to improve ecology with other professionals and volunteers.**
 - o **Michael Daab serves as the chair of the local cooperative weed management area, the Headwaters Invasive Plant Partnership (formerly the Invasive Plant Task Force, a subcommittee of the East Central Master Naturalist Advisory Board). HIPP organizes the Great Garlic Mustard Hunt, hosts classes on landscaping with native plants, hosts stewardship trainings for volunteers, published “Invasive Plants of East Central Illinois, including Recommended Actions and Alternative Plants for Landscape Applications”, and reached out to garden centers regarding the selling of invasive plants, etc. We are currently seeking grants for funding more projects and/or staff.**
 - o **Michael Daab sits on the Midwest Invasive Plant Network (MIPN) Board of Directors. MIPN is active in 8 Midwest states, and is now operated out of the Morton Arboretum. MIPN helps to spread awareness and education**

regarding invasive plants through organizing conferences, distributing informational material, and helping to develop additional cooperative weed management areas.

- **Michael Daab sits on the Upper Sangamon River Conservancy (USRC) Board of Directors. The USRC leads citizen science work on the Sangamon River (e.g. RiverWatch and mussel surveys), helps to keep the river clean through Route 47 highway cleanups and a large annual river cleanup, and promotes recreational use of the Sangamon through paddling events.**
- **Michael Daab is an active participant in the Champaign County Pollinator Coalition. The group was formed to increase monarch butterfly and other pollinator habitat, and is led by Carol Hays of the Prairie Rivers Network.**
- Assisting Operations staffs with tree removals and other arborist work, including hiring professional arborists on contract,
- Managing grant work as related to natural resources projects
- Managing the Honorary and Memorial Tree Program, including serving as a contact for the public, ordering trees, and planting trees,
- Working with volunteers to collect seed, conduct river cleanups, cut invasive shrubs, conduct prescribed burns, etc.
- **Permit Management – Open Burning Permits for Prescribed Fire, IDOT Highway Permits for burning along the KRT, and EPA NPDES Permits for spraying herbicide near or over bodies of water.**

March 2, 2017

MEMORANDUM

From: Jon Hasselbring, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Department 2016 Yearly Overview

Who We Are

The Planning Department operates out of District Headquarters at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve in Mahomet, and coordinates projects with all CCFPD departments and sites. We are comprised of two full-time staff members: the Planning Director and the Special Projects Assistant. Staff background is multifaceted, drawing on experience from the operations and maintenance side of facility management, as well as architectural design and oversight of large scale construction projects for public agencies. This combination provides institutional knowledge of forest preserve developmental history, and positions the department to successfully plan and manage a wide array of projects.

What We Do

The Planning Department prepares estimates, maps, technical drawings, and specifications for internal construction projects, public bids, and grant applications; collaborates with the all departments (most closely with Construction); and acts as District liaison to consultants and contractors for construction projects. We maintain records of projects, facilities, and equipment. We aim to design infrastructure, facilities, and amenities that are safe, unique, cost-effective, low-maintenance, sustainable, energy efficient, consistent with CCFPD's conservation efforts, and reflective of its history.

2016 Reserves Project - Homer Lake Sailboat Launch / Shoreline Improvements



The Sailboat Launch / Shoreline Improvements project at Homer Lake was completed in 2016, with minor work needed in 2017 (parking space paint striping). This was a large scale project that involved demolition, tree removal, earthwork, boulder retaining wall construction, and concrete paved walks and ramps. The majority of work for this project was completed in house, through coordinated efforts by Construction, Homer Lake, and Natural Resources staff. The work was completed for \$41,700, well under the budgeted amount of \$135,000. This is due to the fact that almost half of the project budget was not needed; \$60,000 for potential road repairs from damage by construction traffic.

2016 Year in Review - Capital Projects Status

Site	Project Description	Status
<i>MF</i>	<i>Rehab Shower House Stalls</i>	<i>Completed (2015 Carry Over)</i>
<i>MF</i>	<i>Willow Pond Renovation Drawings</i>	<i>Completed (2015 Carry Over)</i>
<i>MF</i>	<i>Pt. Pleasant Trail Improvements</i>	<i>Underway (2015 Carry Over)</i>
<i>GOLF</i>	<i>Repair Pro Shop Roof</i>	<i>Completed (2015 Carry Over)</i>
NR	Hazard Tree Removal	Completed
PN	Building Code Repairs	Underway
MF	Odle Trail Washout Repairs	Completed
CCFPD	Trail & Sidewalk Repair Projects	Partially Completed / 2017 Carry Over
LOW	Roads Sealcoating	Completed
GOLF	Replace Bridge on Pond	Completed
GOLF	Chemical Storage Repairs	Completed
LOW	Peninsula Utility Upgrades	Completed
SIGN	District Signage Projects	Underway
PN	HVAC Replacements	Completed
LOW	Replace RT 47 Gate Piers	On Hold / Estimates
GOLF	Bunker Repairs	Completed / Ongoing
NR	Integrated Pest Management	Completed / Ongoing
NR	Drain Tile Repair	Completed / Ongoing
NR	Woodland Restoration	Completed / Ongoing
NR	Middle Fork Savanna Restoration	Completed / Ongoing
NR	Buffalo Trace Prairie Restoration	Completed / Ongoing

2016 Grant Projects

Site	Project Description	Status
KRT	PH 1 – Construction	Underway
LOW	PH 2 – ADA Sidewalks in Gardens	Completed
SR	Savanna/Stream Corridor Restoration	Underway



2016 Carry Over / On Hold Projects Update

CCFPD Trail and Sidewalk Repair Projects – There was no shortage of paving projects in 2016. Appropriate weather conditions and annual workload caused the following projects to be carried over to 2017: Headquarters & Hightower Entrance Walk Replacement, Middle Fork Activity Center Entrance Ramp Replacement, and Lake of the Woods Bike Path Repairs. These projects were factored into the 2017 workload and are scheduled to be completed in summer and fall of 2017.

LOW Replace RT 47 Gate Piers – The Planning Department recommended placing this project on hold for 2016 due to contractor workload and/or unresponsiveness to requests for quotations. This project was not carried over to 2017, but we are currently seeking estimates for this scope of work.

Capital Equipment

The Planning Department coordinated several large equipment purchases in 2016, including a replacement mower for Homer Lake operations, a replacement van for Homer Lake Interpretive Center staff, and a new dump truck (with snow plow kit) for Lake of the Woods operations.

In 2016 and early 2017 we acquired traffic and trail counters for use throughout the District. Traffic data is currently being collected at the main entrances of all preserves. Trail usage is also being collected at eight (8) locations throughout the District. Two (2) additional trail counters will be placed at the Kickapoo Rail Trail prior to opening.

Planning also coordinated the purchase of new chairs at the Museum of the Grand Prairie Education Center. The chairs were purchased through a cooperative purchasing program at a discounted price.

Professional Inspections and Surveys

The Lake of the Woods Covered Bridge inspection was completed in August, 2016. This bridge and roadway is inspected every two years by the Champaign County Highway Department. No deficiencies were noted in this inspection.

The Hensley Hall Schoolhouse Building adjacent the Museum of the Grand Prairie was inspected by a Farnsworth Group Structural Engineer at the request of the Planning Department. No major structural deficiencies were found in this inspection. Planning and Construction will continue to monitor this building for lateral deflection.

A 2015 inspection of the Lake of the Woods dam and spillway indicated minor cracking and spalling in the concrete structure, and recommended repair with a latex modified concrete repair product. These minor issues were repaired by the Construction Department in the summer of 2016.

ADA Improvements

Improved access to buildings, shelters, trails, campgrounds, and natural areas throughout the District is a constant goal of the Planning Department. As the Planning Director is the District's Accessibility Coordinator, the Department acts as liaison to patrons for accessibility matters.

Several capital projects in 2016 focused directly on accessibility improvements. Two accessible parking spots and several hundred feet of accessible walks & ramps were installed as part of the Homer Lake Sailboat Launch project. An accessible entrance walk was installed at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center. Phase 2 of accessible sidewalks through the Botanical Gardens was completed. The Middle Fork Activity Center entrance patio was treated to improve slip resistance, and accessibility repairs are forthcoming.

Continuing Education

This year the Planning Director attended the Illinois Bike Summit in Bloomington, IL and the National Recreation and Park Association conference in St. Louis, MO. While in St. Louis for the conference, staff members and CCFPD Board President Andrew Kerins visited the Katy Trail and the Metro East Park District to research upcoming Kickapoo Rail Trail amenities.

The Planning Director is a licensed architect in the state of Illinois. Licensing credentials are maintained through continuing education seminars, meetings, and webinars sponsored by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) throughout the year.

2017 The Year Ahead

The Planning Department will continue its goal of satisfaction in Capital Projects throughout the District. We aim to complete all 2016 carry over projects, as well as all 2017 capital projects. We will continue to work closely with the Construction Department to deliver projects that are completed ahead of schedule, under budget, and in coordination with appropriate department operations and activities. We will continue to research high quality, low maintenance, and environmentally friendly products for facility improvements.

In 2017, the Planning Department will continue renovations to existing District facilities, based on applicable building and life-safety codes. We will maintain focus on exit door and hardware replacements, exit and emergency light installations, and fire exit plans.

Planning will continue to work with engineers and contractors to complete Phase I of Kickapoo Rail Trail construction, reviewing submittals and field work for adherence to the contract documents. We will issue an RFQ for Phase 2 design engineering services, and use knowledge gained from Phase 1 to inform the construction scope of work and specifications.

We will continue to seek opportunities to improve sustainability and building technology throughout the district, such as LED lighting, high efficiency HVAC systems, and alternative power.

March 6, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners
From: Kristin Tetzlaff, Volunteer Coordinator
Re: 2016 Volunteer Summary

Departmental Overview: For a large portion of the 2016 calendar year, the Volunteer Coordinator position sat vacant. The current Volunteer Coordinator started in late August 2016. As a result, much of 2016 was spent meeting with managers around the district to see how volunteers are presently utilized and to determine how volunteer engagement should increase and/or otherwise change in the future. A variety of preparatory tasks were taken in anticipation of revitalizing the program in 2017 and years following. The list below highlights many of the tasks completed as they relate to future improvements.

2016 Accomplishments:

- A master volunteer list was compiled to include volunteer populations that had records housed in multiple areas around the district.
- An online based volunteer tracking system was purchased for annual use. This system will help streamline the volunteer program greatly by providing a cloud based system that has all volunteer applications, hours, and assignments housed in one real-time location.
- With the surplus budget from the Volunteer Coordinator position vacancy, incentives and recognition items were purchased for District Volunteers.
- Stationary was also purchased with the surplus budget so that the District can have volunteer specific thank you notes, birthday cards and sympathy cards on hand.
- Past trail stewards were contacted to gauge continued interest in the program and to get tools back from those no longer interested in the program.
- Work began on overhauling the District-wide Volunteer Manual and the Trail Steward Training manual.
- An internal volunteer request form was developed so that staff can request volunteers in the same manner throughout the district.
- Based off of submitted hours, volunteers throughout the District gave nearly 6645.6 hours of service throughout 2016. Based off of the state minimum wage of \$8.25/hour, this totals approximately \$54,826.20 in “free” labor. In reality, however, this number is higher as many of our volunteers provide a level of experience and expertise far greater than can be estimated with minimum wage numbers. A quick summary of 2016 hours is as follows:

Interpretive Center – 493 hours
Museum/Education – 2200.6 hours
Admin – 320 hours
Trail Stewards – 159 hours
Misc. Grounds Help/Projects - 222 hours
CCFPD Board – 553 hours
FPFF – 346 hours
Misc. Natural Resources – 84.75 hours
Golf Course- 462.5 hours
Middle Fork- 1220 hours
Freedom Fest – 584.75 hours
River to Rail – 28.5 hours
Confirmed Total – 6674.1 HOURS