

Journal of Proceedings
REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 21, 2026, 6:00 pm,
Golf Course Clubhouse, Lake of the Woods, Mahomet, Illinois

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners met at a Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2026, at the Golf Course Clubhouse, Lake of the Woods, Mahomet, Illinois. Commissioner Knott called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Toalson called the roll. The following Commissioners were present: Knott, Bartlett, Toalson and Goodman. Commissioner Hundley was absent with notice.

REMOTE ATTENDANCE – None

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS - None

PRESENTATIONS - None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes of Regular Meeting on April 16, 2026**
- B. Monthly Staff Reports**
- C. Disbursements for Approval**
- D. April Treasurers Report**

Commissioner Bartlett made a motion to approve consent agenda items A. through D. Commissioner Goodman seconded.

A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Knott, Toalson, Bartlett and Toalson. Motion carried.

FOREST PRESERVE FRIENDS FOUNDATION

Commissioner Bartlett provided an update on the Nature Center building design and fundraising status, as well as the Kickapoo Rail Trail construction and fundraising. The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation Memorandum of Understanding and Bylaws have been approved by the Foundation. The Foundation is funding the purchase of a refrigerator for Lake of the Woods Pavilion for use by Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation, that will then also be available when individuals rent the facility for events. The Fundraising Committee met on May 20 and reviewed current donor lists, including area businesses that could potentially be approached for donations, as well as the status of the Three Rivers Society members.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioners noted positive things about the following items from staff reports and observations:

- Very impressed with the programming at the Museum and all the options available to the public
- Congratulations to Mike Daab on his 20th Anniversary with the Forest Preserves
- Great opportunities for connection with the public with the egg hunt and programs offered

- Volunteer efforts are impressive and great to see people in the community getting involved
- Museum continues to impress with items the public donates and the programs available to the public
- Appreciate the maps and trail signs for the preserves
- Nice to see the Forest Preserves so frequently in the media
- Great to see interest from several area service groups and their desire to volunteer
- Amazing to see the numbers for the Golf Course and the phenomenal first month of opening for golf
- Nice to see that more than half the visitors to the Museum are new visitors
- Kudos to everyone who participated in the cleanup after the tornado

STAFF REPORTS

A. Executive Director Announcements

Executive Director Lorrie Pearson reported improvements in and around the golf course, including new appliances in the clubhouse and landscaping next to the Pro Shop. She also noted that now that the clubhouse is listed as a rental facility alongside other rentals, it is rented several times a month versus several times a year.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval Request to Acquire Collections

Commissioner Toalson moved the Board to approve the acquisition of donations for the permanent collection offered by the Congregation of Shiloh UMC, Shirley Berbaum, John Schmale, and Barber & DeAtley Inc. Commissioner Knott seconded.

A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Knott, Toalson, Bartlett and Goodman. Motion carried.

B. Approval of New Position (FT) in Museum and Education Department

Commissioner Toalson moved the Board to approve a full-time Visitor Services Office Supervisor position to directly supervise Visitor Services Associates. Commissioner Bartlett seconded. Museum and Education Director Kamryn Suttinger explained the job duties of the Visitor Service Associates and the challenges the Museum has experienced when there is a vacation or illness amongst the staff, sometimes resulting in closing a location when it would normally be open because there is no one available to cover that area or shift. A recent resignation allowed for this position to be revised, and the budgeted dollars for the current position will be moved to help pay for the new position.

A roll call vote was taken. The following commissioners voted “yes”: Knott, Toalson, Bartlett and Toalson. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION

A. July 2026 Health Insurance Renewal

Human Resources Director Michael Ambrose provided an update regarding the 2026 health insurance renewal. The current Forest Preserves health plan expires on June 30, 2026, and the current provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield, has quoted a 20% increase in premiums to renew the

plan. An alternative quote was received from United Healthcare, who is offering similar coverage with a slight cost savings. Ambrose requested the Board of Commissioners be prepared to attend a special meeting to vote on the selection of the group health insurance plans and provide direction on the amounts that the Forest Preserves will contribute towards health insurance premiums.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Goodman made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 6:32pm. Commissioner Toalson seconded. A voice vote was taken. Motion carried.



Mark Toalson, Secretary
Board of Commissioners
Champaign County Forest Preserve District