To: Kendall County Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners

From: Dave Guritz, Director

RE: February 2015 Director’s Report

Date: March 11, 2015

Good news. We are in receipt of communications from IDOT regarding the availability of a $250,000 Transportation Improvement Grant for completion of the Hoover rail crossing project at no expense to the District. We are preparing for the management of the tree removal project at Hoover and Harris Forest Preserves, and had good turnout from vendors at the mandatory pre-bid meeting.

Primary focus work was completed on the following items in February:

1. Completion of bid specifications and project announcement for removal of trees at Hoover and Harris FP, including completion of a mandatory pre-bid meeting.
2. Priority communications with Speer Financial, Inc. including coordination of competitive bidding for the bond underwriter and preparation of the refund ordinance.
3. Fox River Bluffs property acquisition priority communications and grant agreement compliance work, including completion of the FMV appraisal.
4. KCFPD budget coding project review and overview presentation to staff.
5. Farm license agreements review and initial correspondence.
6. Review of past OSLAD grant projects including completion of an IDNR status update report for Millbrook South and Henneberry Forest Preserves.
7. SAO update of an independent contractor and license agreement for the Ellis Caretaker.
8. Market study and position description update for the approved Administrative Assistant position.
9. Coordination of communications with IDOT (Route 30 / Route 34 multi-use trails).
10. Review of internet options and costs for Hoover and remote facilities.
11. Completion of a ComEd Green Region resolution and grant application.
12. FY 2015 audit review and preparation for presentation to Commission.
13. Preparation for the upcoming S&P’s Bond rating review meeting.
15. Completion of IPRA-Leadership Academy training (graduation on March 10).
16. Preparation for Commission, Special Call, Committee of the Whole, and Finance Committee meetings.
Meetings and Events Attended

2/6 John Church & Aux Sable Creek Watershed Coalition meeting - discussion of LyondellBasell grant project at Ellis
2/9 Big Rock Creek Watershed Planning meeting
2/12 Krueger Appraisals meeting
2/10 IPRA Leadership Academy training
2/12 Kendall County Horse Show Association meeting
2/17 The Conservation Foundation meeting
2/23 Kyle Connell – Ellis hay production and contract review
2/24 Lisa Coffey – FRB Acquisition meeting
2/26 Leslie Johnson – review of in-process legal work and HR audit priorities
2/27 Kim Roman – Illinois Nature Preserves Commission meeting
3/2 Speer Financial – Bond rating review meeting preparation
3/2 The Conservation Foundation - Kendall County Advisory Board meeting
3/4 Kendall County Mayors and Managers meeting
3/5 EAB Removal Project - pre-bid meeting
3/5 Friends of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District board meeting
3/6 Michelle Kelly – Upland Design – OSLAD projects review meeting

Correspondence

1. ComEd Green Region Grants – Letters of Support

March Priorities

- Review and renewal of 2015 KCFPD farm lease agreements.
- Approval of 2015 engagement of Charles H. Schrader and Associates (grants consultant)
- Completion, publication and distribution of the spring eNewsletter.
- Hoover Railroad Crossing – completion of petition and reassignment of the entryway to a public road.
- Finalizing closing documents for the Fox River Bluffs acquisition project, including coordination of grant agreement communications and pre-approvals, and completion of surveys (land and phase 1 environmental).
- Presentation of the Speer Financial bond refunding ordinance and escrow agreement.
- Bond rating review meeting preparation.
- Tree removal contract approval.
- Final review of Hoover FP wireless internet needs and solutions.
- Coordination of IDOT communications – Route 30 board direction for IDOT construction of a multi-purpose trail, and development of the Hoover Rail Crossing petition and ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Dave Guritz
Director, Kendall County Forest Preserve District
KENDALL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE

MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY 2015

RESERVATIONS / Responsibilities

Harris Forest Preserve

0 Internal Event - 0 guests
3 External Events - 125 guests

Guests: KC Emergency Management (Sheriff’s Office)
First Birthday Party
Scout Snow Day

Jay Woods, Richard Young and Subat Forest Preserves

0 External - 0 guests
0 Events - 0 guests

Guests:

Hoover Forest Preserve  (includes Meadowhawk Lodge & KC Outdoor Education Center)

1 Internal event: 50 guests:

5 External events: 132 guests

Guests: Scout Outings: P332, T133, T46, T111
Workshop

Meadowhawk Lodge:
Memorial Service
February Birthday Extravaganza
Baby Shower
Going-Away Party

KC Outdoor Education Center: Plano, Sandwich, Yorkville & outside groups.
Total Guests: 340

Historic Courthouse

Internal: 3 events – 60 guests

Guests: Starved Rock Eagle Tour
Volunteer Program

External: 15 events – 342 guests

Guests: ROE: Bus Driver Training & Truancy Hearing
4H Meeting & Homeschool Group
White Oak Homeowners Meeting
KC Probation Behavior Classes

Forest Foundation Meeting
Weight Control Meetings
KC Animal Volunteer
Responsibilities:

→ **Director Assistance:** I have been assisting David Guritz on the Forest Preserve’s meeting agenda’s, meeting packets and the posting of these items. In addition, I have been assisting him with several other pertinent contracts and agreements to help him get current with these items that needed attention due to the absence of a Director. I met with Latreese Caldwell and David Guritz to review the fiscal year 2015 budget and the proposed new line item coding for the Forest Preserve. David and I spoke with the Forest Preserve supervisory staff on the new line item coding.

Worked with Kim Olson on time sheets and turning in the Payroll vouchers for the two pay periods in February. Worked on the calculation of vacation and sick hours for all employees and advised them of their balance thru 2-20-15. Updated the part time hours monthly report and sent to Glenn Campos.

I telephoned references given to me by the RecPro Software salesperson who are currently using this system for their reservations. One was from the Village of Algonquin and the other was Hollis Park District in Mapleton, IL. Both of them spoke very highly of the software and especially the Customer Service Department for RecPro.

→ **Education Program Registration:** Received phone calls and e-mails regarding education programs. All program registrations received were entered into Access Database and all deposits onto spreadsheet. Printed registration roster pages from Access Database for each program and gave to education department for attendance. Updated report showing attendance and revenue for each area (Public Programs, Field Trips, Summer Camp, Natural Beginnings) for Education Department. Updated Access Database with new programs for the Winter Programs.

→ **Field Trips:** Continue to work on Oswego Field Trips: updated reservation invoice and available dates. Received e-mails regarding dates wanted to reserve.

→ **Accounts Receivable:** Entered all checks and cash received onto individual department spreadsheet. Keeping track of education program deposits for all programs, field trips, and Natural Beginnings and all shelter and bunkhouse rentals. Credit Card transaction were completed and deposited.

→ **Site Trak (shelter & bunkhouse reservations):** Entered new reservations and printed out permits and sent out to registrants. Received phone calls and e-mails regarding reservations and answered any questions in a timely manner. Entered all education department programs into Site Trak and printed out permits. All permits received were entered into Site Trak and on deposit spreadsheet.

→ **Background Reports:** Sent in background reports with assistance from Glenn Campos for volunteers.

→ **Summer Camp 2015:** Summer Camp registrations have been coming in very heavily. I have spoken with several parents regarding which camp would be best for the child and have sent out the registration forms.

*Becky Antrim*
*Reservation Coordinator*
Kendall County Forest Preserve: Education Department
February 2015

Programs and Community Involvement:

- School programs have been presented to a variety of schools and grades:
  - Animals in Winter- Oswego and Yorkville schools
  - Controlled Burns- Yorkville
  - Fossils of Illinois- Oswego
  - Teeth of Herbivores, Omnivores, and Carnivores- Oswego
- The Starved Rock Eagle Tour program ran with great success. The group was treated to over twenty eagle spotted along the Illinois River.
- A graduate student who is studying museum studies has taken on the Laws of Nature Museum for her project. The education staff is working directly with her to renovate one exhibit area of the museum. Work is underway to make the Native American section more hands-on.
- Planning- Summer camp planning and scheduling is underway along with spring public programs created and scheduled.

Staffing:

- Megan Moore has joined the staff as a new Part-Time Environmental Educator. She comes to us with a background in biological research and wonderful experience with teaching students outside. Her previous experiences were with AmeriCorps and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
- Applications are being accepted for three openings for summer camp counselors.

Natural Beginnings:

- All 2015-2016 classes are full and a waitlist has been created. Individuals on the waitlist are interested in opportunities to expand the program, including an afternoon section of the program. Options for staffing and budgets are being explored to expand the program for the following school year.
- A partnership with homeschool students has been very successful and Natural Beginnings will be adding more volunteers to the program next year. These older students (late elementary to middle school) expand their learning by taking on a leadership role in teaching the preschool students. It is a win, win for all involved.
- The Taking Care of Earth unit ends at the end of the month and students will enjoy a celebration that will involve hammers, nails, bottle caps and scrap wood with the finished product being the creation of a homemade racecar.
- The Education Department staff met with an educator from the Kendall County Special Education Cooperative (KCSEC). The meeting focused on instructional modifications that can be done in teaching to address behavioral and development issues with students. Staff is working with the KCSEC to provide the most attentive educational strategies with working with students in all of its educational programs.

Staff Development:

- Laura McCoy attended the winter board meeting as a Northeast Regional Director for the Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI). Work is being done for the spring conference, to be held in Southern Illinois, as well as for the 2017 Midwest Environmental Education Association which will be held in the Chicago Region of that year.
• Laura McCoy is partnering with Will County Forest Preserve to correlate school programs to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Common Core. A presentation will be held in March to cover the implementation of the NGSS in non-formal education settings.
• Megan Gessler will be presenting at several upcoming workshops and conferences. She is currently developing the presentations and trainings.
• Laura attended the Illinois Math and Science School’s teacher training workshop to remain engaged in the implementation of the NGSS into schools.
• The Kendall County Forest Preserve hosted the Project Learning Tree training. This training provides participants with a nature-based curriculum that is aligned with the NGSS. Megan Gessler attended and Laura McCoy already has already been training in this curriculum.
House Bookings:

- July 18, 2015 – Wedding – Oswego - I heard about Ellis House through my cousin who was in a wedding there. She said it was absolutely beautiful and I trusted her taste after being at her wedding which was actually in southern Illinois. Booked: 10/6/14
- August 1, 2015 – Wedding – Plainfield I heard about the Ellis house from Barb and Joanne’s wedding there. Booked: 12/11/14
- August 29, 2015 – Wedding – Morris We knew about Ellis through our fire department but did not know about the weddings till we came to family fun night. Booked: 10/25/14
- September 5, 2015 – Wedding – Naperville – One of world’s best volunteers and supporters of Ellis. Booked: 12/16/14
- September 12, 2015 – Wedding – Shorewood - I heard of the Ellis House through a friend, and also a bride who will be getting married there this year, Kari Kezele. Booked: 9/25/13
- September 18, 2015 – Wedding – Joliet – We actually found it online just searching country wedding venues in Illinois. However, Mitch had talked to an employee from Dollinger farm inquiring weddings and they suggested you. Booked: 10/19/14
- September 19, 2015 – Wedding – Crest Hill – I am pretty sure it has something to do with looking at the big fish grill for catering then rich stumbled upon the Ellis house! Booked 2/15/2015
- September 26, 2015 – Wedding – Morris - Ellis came up on a web search for wedding venues. We are both thrilled to be having our reception there. Booked: 10/4/14
- October 2, 2015 – Wedding – Elwood I heard about it from Amanda millers wedding and also got info from Tarissa Philips, who got married there as well. Booked: 12/14/14
October 10, 2015 – Minooka - I knew I wanted a rustic wedding, outside, with a big white tent...so I googled "rustic wedding venues in Illinois" and a website called popped up. After scrolling through a few places (alphabetical listing) I saw Ellis House...I visited your website and loved it...after that I emailed you to book the first tour and then Mark and Lilly came for the second tour and the rest is history :) Booked: 8/28/14

January 16, 2016 – Birthday Party – Channahon - I did the Reindeer Run at Ellis House. After doing the run, and my daughters brownie troop had an afternoon with the horses I wanted to rent Ellis House for my husband’s party. Booked: 12/2/13

September 17, 2016 – Wedding – Plainfield – We found out about Ellis through a Google search! Booked: 10/27/14

Special Events:

Sunday, February 15th 3rd Annual Bridal Expo – 110 guests (booked 2 weddings)

Meetings/Training/Expos/Annual Events:

Wednesday, February 4th – Planning and Events Meeting
Friday, February 6th – The Conservation Foundation – Lyondell Basel beautification project
Thursday, February 12th – FP Staff Meeting
Saturday, February 21st – Tack Cleaning with volunteers
Tuesday, February 24th – Marketing Meeting
Wednesday, February 25th – Staff Meeting
Thursday, February 26th – FP Staff Meeting
Saturday, February 28th – Family Fest, Minooka

House/Property Tours:

- 10 – EHEC
- 2 - Meadowhawk

Group Tours * Birthday * Girl/Boy Scout Parties * Summer Camps:

- 3 parties/groups with 45 guests

Riding Lessons:

- 18

Community Service hours:
Volunteer Hours:

☐ 75

Total Deposits:

$4523.56

Feedback from Customers:

Saturday, January 17, 2015 – Murder Mystery Dinner

Hi Tina,
Just wanted to let you know, my husband and I had a great time that Saturday.
Everything was VERY nice. Food was delicious!
Marianne
FEB ACTIVITIES—KIM OLSON, PATRICK HIGGINS AND RON SMRZ

- Feb. snow fall totals kept us all very busy...starting with the 19” on Superbowl Sunday! February’s cold temps were conducive to icy conditions requiring salting to be applied/ spread for guests driving/walking safety. A big thank you to all the guys’ hard work!
- We are working on a large project to remove hazardous dead Ash trees from all of the camping areas and also around the bunkhouses at Hoover. Counting, measuring and marking trees for removal, along with actual tree removal itself. Patrick and Ron have removed several Ash at Harris as well. This will be an ongoing battle for years to come. The EAB has taken tremendous toll on the Forests throughout the whole State of Illinois.
- We have retired all Winter equipment for the Spring season. Plows, salt spreaders, etc.
- Cleaning the hill for sledding activities daily, keeping it free of hazardous broken sled and garbage debris.
- Ron and Patrick split wood for Harris and Hoover.
- Ron and Patrick have burned and cleaned up the wood piles from restoration in the various preserves.
- We attended an EAB program for updates, and info for various invasive critters attacking our Forests.
- We are trying to get the seed prepared for disbursement; natural areas management will be deeply affected due to this staff cut.
- As always, our entire field team always does a SUPERB job in the care of the KCFPD.

FEB ACTIVITIES—KIM OLSON

- I am a “hands on” Superintendent...so always...all of the above alongside the guys! Along with...
- I returned from medical leave Feb. 2, and have been getting to know our new Director, Dave Guritz.
- I took class and re-certified my State Herbicide License.
- I have been inspecting and preparing for the clearing of dead ash trees at Hoover, as well as assisting Dave with the bid preparation and pre-bid walk through pertaining to the removal program.
- I do payroll along with Becky Antrim for dual control.
- I have been re-arranging and restructuring the duties/priorities of the staff due to the full time field position elimination.
- I wrote this report.

FEB ACTIVITIES—MIKE PIERSON and crew-HOOVER

- Feb. snow falls kept Mike busy too!
- Mike took class, and re-certified his State Herbicide license.
- Mike has retired all Winter equipment for the Spring season. Plows, Salt spreaders, etc.
- Mike is working with us when possible on the dead Ash removal also, bids and planning.
- And as always, The Hoover staff continues to do a SUPERB job in representing the KCFPD.
ROUTINE DUTIES-FULL AND PART TIME STAFF

• The full time staff is responsible for ALL maintenance required to successfully run the Kendall County Forest Preserve District properties. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  Opening/closing, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, equipment operation, mechanical / equipment repairs, painting, herbicide application, prescribed burns, logging records of all restoration/herbicide efforts, tree removal, demolition/building of structures, snow removal, testing of water supplies, cleaning of all buildings, Forest/Prairie restoration, road, parking lots and trail maintenance, education, various Ranger duties and mowing.

ROUTINE DUTIES-KIM OLSON

• Inspection of all properties on a regular basis for quality and safety.
• Obtaining quotes and meeting with contractors when projects are pending.
• Managing and scheduling staff, including Mike at Hoover.
• Troubleshooting and taking preventative measures for the well being of the properties.
• Educating, informing and communicating with the public.
• Prioritizing and dispatching staff for maximum efficiency and production.
• Opening and closing of preserves as needed to assist on days off and Holidays.
• 24/7/365 on call for staff and Sheriff’s Department for any issues that may arise (and I do get them at all hours!)
• Scheduling/on call for deputy details/patrols.

ROUTINE DUTIES-MIKE PIERSON

• Mike is our on-site certified mechanic for the entire FP fleet.
• Mike is responsible for all the Hoover grounds, buildings, woodlands and trails, maintenance and repairs.
• Mike does care, testing, monitoring and maintenance of lagoon and water treatment systems, testing both daily and monthly.
• Mike supervises part-time staff and also court services individuals.
KENDALL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT COMMISSION

February 2015

Jody Strohm; Natural Areas Volunteer Coordinator, Accounts Payable

Total Volunteer Hours for February: 73.5

Breakdown of Volunteer Hours:
Restoration – 9
Trail Monitor - 7.25
Other - 57.25

Extreme weather put a crimp in most of our outdoor activities. The trails were mostly impassable, and those you could get on were frozen into slippery mounds of footprints. The Saturday Workday was cancelled, and most of the Trail Monitors were unable to get in to report. Fortunately, it was so cold visitors were few and far between.

We took advantage of the opportunity to complete the seed processing and attend classes. The U of I Extension Service held a class on Prairiescapes that many of us attended. Ken Moz- ingo developed a PowerPoint summarizing three classes he had attended last year on climate change and his presentation was aptly titled “Climate Weirdness.” It drew a good crowd and the discussion it generated was fascinating.

I attended the two-day training for my Pesticide relicensing this month.

I am in the process of updating the two part Orientation for NAVs which will be presented in March.

Preparation and notification of Volunteer Awards Ceremony underway.
Accounts Payable

Detail attached.