I. Call to Order

Acting Finance Committee Chair Prochaska called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm in the Kendall County Board Room, appointing Commissioner Wehrli as a committee representative for the meeting.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Koukol, Davidson, Gryder, and Prochaska all were present.

In the absence of Chairman Cullick, she has requested that President Wehrli be appointed to the Committee in her absence.

The Committee discussed the rules of order for the committee. While County rules restrict assignment of Commissioners to serve on committees in the absence of committee members when a quorum is present, these rules do not apply to the forest preserve district which is in process of establishing rules of order.

III. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Wehrli made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Koukol. Aye, all. Opposed, none.

IV. Citizens to be Heard

No public comments offered.

V. Review of Claims in an Amount Not-to-Exceed $15,852.97.

Commissioner Davidson made a motion to forward claims in the amount of $15,852.97 for Commission approval. Seconded by Commissioner Gryder.

The Finance Committee discussed claim number 261 for canoe rentals and camp supplies. The claim represents payment to Freeman rentals for canoe rentals for the upcoming Paddle and Play summer camp programs.

Commissioner Koukol inquired into claim number 285 for the purchase of horseshoes in the amount of $250.60. Director Guritz stated that the horseshoes are purchased as part of a craft activity for the birthday party programs at Ellis. This cost is factored into the program
budget, and is the only supply expense for these programs. A supply fee could be explored should Commission wish to add a charge for this supply cost.

Commissioner Gryder inquired into the claim number 251 in the amount of $66.03 for conference expenses, noting that the District is over budget in this line item by $189.75. Director Guritz stated that the conference registration cost had been submitted and approved prior to the directive to request preapproval for any additional conference expenditures for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Commissioner Koukol inquired into claim number 258 for Bug Fest programs. Director Guritz stated that the expense is for our honey bee exhibitor as part of this program for 10 separate program dates. Commissioner Koukol stated that this ties into our conversation for when the District will require extension of insurance certificates, which was the purpose for bringing this expense to the committee’s attention.

Acting Committee Chair Prochaska called the question on the motion. Aye, all. Opposed, none. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Review of Millbrook Bridge Engineer’s Estimates and Grant Program Opportunities Discussion

Director Guritz confirmed direction that the Finance Committee will serve as the forum for determining action steps to secure funding needed to address Millbrook Bridge improvements.

Laura Stuart, Grants Consultant with Charles Schrader & Associates, discussed grant funding sources that are available to address needed improvements. Possible funding sources for trail improvement projects include TIGER grants (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) through the US Department of Transportation, ITEP grants (Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program) through the Illinois Department of Transportation, CMAQ grants (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program) and RTP grants (Recreational Trails Program) through the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, and the IDNR Bike Trails Program, although this source would not provide adequate funding for this particular project.

Establishing trail connectivity to Millbrook North Forest Preserve must be secured as a prerequisite to the development of applications under all State and Federal grant programs.

Ms. Stuart stated that these programs were not considered previously because there was no solution presented for establishing trail connectivity. Use of the Dobson Road right-of-way to establish a trail connection creates a viable solution.
Ms. Stuart also suggested that there may be opportunities for presenting the Millbrook Bridge project as part of the State’s capital bill currently under discussion, but the turnaround time to submit this project for consideration is short, and Kendall County may have other competing priorities.

Commissioner Davidson stated that there are no trails currently that could be connected. Director Guritz stated that the best approach the District could present would show eventual trail connection from the canoe launch to Silver Springs State Park through Millbrook North Forest Preserve.

Director Guritz inquired into whether State funds could be used to match Federal grant sources. Ms. Stuart indicated that this was possible, but would add complexity for moving the project forward.

Commissioner Gryder asked whether creating the trail is required, and how this would impact the project costs. Ms. Stuart stated that the trail would need to be built, and that this would be included for completion with the application.

Commissioner Gryder asked what funding is available in the capital project fund. Director Guritz stated that approximately $285,000 remains for the Millbrook Bridge improvement project line item, but expenditure of the entire remaining balance of the capital fund is currently appropriated in anticipation of the acquisition of the entire footprint of the Fox River Bluffs preserve. This provides some flexibility should the need present to expend additional funds towards capital project priorities within the current fiscal year.

The Finance Committee discussed near-term opportunities for approaching local legislators for assistance, as well as other capital priorities for the County. Ms. Stuart advised careful consideration before submitting multiple requests, depending on overall capital project priorities.

Director Guritz stated that he would invite Attorney Kramer to the upcoming meeting to clarify project history, and compare location of the existing road to the right-of-way description.

Commissioner Davidson confirmed the need to examine the actual location of the right-of-way within the legal descriptions for the adjacent property owner(s), and also stated that the District needs to insure that ownership of the bridge was properly conveyed by Fox Township to the District.
Commissioner Gryder agreed that prior to approaching local legislators, these issues need to be properly researched to make sure our ability to complete the project is on solid ground.

Commissioner Davidson stated that the question of the easement location should be on file with the County, and easy enough to confirm.

The Finance Committee discussed whether or not there is a need for completion of a survey, reaching consensus that so long as the right-of-way already located on GIS, there should be no need for completing a survey.

Once right-of-way ownership is determined, and permission given to access the easement for the purposes of constructing a trail, trail construction costs will need to be determined as part of the overall project.

**VII. Environmental Education Program Budget Overview and Presentation**

Director Guritz presented a draft spreadsheet for discussion purposes breaking out revenues and expenditures for school programs and camps as part of the overall Environmental Education budget. For the purposes of discussion, recently completed cost allocations within the current fiscal year’s budget were used as placeholders for program expenses for both school field trip and summer camp programs. The spreadsheet provided estimates for the type and number of programs offered, with participation figures based on the past twelve-month’s history provided by Laura McCoy, and revenue projections based on proposed per participant fee increases for school programs and summer camps.

Director Guritz stated that there are opportunities for closing the deficit gap for sustaining services. In addition to revenues, staff will be working to examine potential cost savings, including utilizing volunteers to teach portions of our field trip programs.

Commissioner Davidson commented that with slight adjustments to the fees, the program would cover all associated costs.

The Finance Committee discussed marketing opportunities for expanding summer program enrollment in order to fill the programs to capacity. Commissioner Koukol suggested stronger marketing efforts in Oswego. Latreese Caldwell recommended that local direct mail marketing services could be sent out to boost participation in the current year.

Commissioner Gryder expressed appreciation for the work put into the breakout of revenues and expenses for these program areas, but cautioned against raising fees that would impact total participation.
Commission discussed the spreadsheet, and requested that further analysis be completed in order to bring back a fee schedule that effectively covers most, if not all of the full operational costs for field trips and summer camps.

Director Guritz stated that weekday vacancies at Meadowhawk and Hoover’s bunkhouses provide other opportunities to attract local park district participation.

VIII. Proposed Differentiated Fee Schedule for Facility Rentals

Director Guritz presented a proposed differentiated price schedule for rental of Meadowhawk Lodge and Ellis House rentals. The purpose of the revised price schedule is to drive demand for use of these facilities by lowering weekday rental cost, and increase fees on those days with highest demand.

Currently, Meadowhawk rentals during the year are few and far between. Essentially, rental of this facility is nearly non-existent.

The proposed fee schedule reduces wedding and large reception rental costs for Meadowhawk from $1,800 down to $1,500 for Saturday, and $1,200 for Friday and Sunday rentals, and lowers weekday rental costs from $75 per hour to $50 per hour for residents in order to boost rental revenues, with discounts for not-for-profit and government sponsored events, and rate increases for corporate events.

The Finance Committee requested that a breakdown of rentals for Meadowhawk be prepared for presentation at a future Finance Committee meeting.

IX. Executive Session

None.

X. Other Items of Business

Director Guritz reported that Busted Knuckles, LLC extended the lowest price for removal of seven trees from Shuh Shuh Gah and Subat Forest Preserves. Their quote was $1,900 which will be presented to Commission for approval.

XI. Adjournment

Commissioner Davidson made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Gryder. All, aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.
Respectfully submitted,

David Guritz
Director, Kendall County Forest Preserve District