I. **Call to Order**

President Wehrli called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. in the Kendall County Board Room.

II. **Roll Call**

Commissioners Cullick, Davidson, Flowers, Gilmour, Gryder, Koukol, Prochaska, Purcell, Shaw, and Wehri all were present.

III. **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Prochaska made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Cullick. All, aye. Opposed, none. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. **Citizens to be Heard**

No public comments were offered.

V. **Director’s Report**

Director Guritz reported that one of the Laws of Nature exhibit rooms has been temporarily closed for use in storing archives and materials relocated from the lower level storage room in the historic courthouse. The exhibit area will be reopened once there is an opportunity to sort through the materials.

Fall Fest planning is underway for the Forest Foundation of Kendall County. A letter will be sent requesting disbursement of contributions received by the Forest Foundation for support of Ellis House and Equestrian Center.

Interviews for open positions in the environmental education department have been completed, with training of new instructors underway.

Discussions with Taylor Creek Nursery have continued to explore the opportunity for establishing a cropland conversion lease agreement and native plant nursery operation, with a meeting planned to discuss lease provisions.

Development of the FY 15-16 farm license agreement for the Fox River Bluffs property was discussed at the Finance Committee meeting. Currently, the property is being farmed under the lease agreement terms assigned at the property closing. Trenton Toftoy is currently farming the property based on the lease agreement assigned to the District at
closing, and has expressed interest in renewing the agreement. Commission discussed the terms of the agreement for the upcoming year, with the goal of entering into a single agreement between the District, County and Trenton Toftoy for the Fox River Bluffs property and Eldamain and Fox Road rights of way.

The District exhibited at Yorkville’s Hometown Days held 9/4/15 – 9/6/15.

Upland Design is providing a donation of design services for completing a site plan for Stephanie’s Garden and Nature Playscape.

Grounds maintenance staff have been doing a great job keeping up with maintaining preserve areas and trails. The portico at Meadowhawk Lodge was repaired, with the District reimbursed for costs incurred.

Director Guritz stated that Rebecca Antrim will be on vacation for the upcoming two weeks.

VI. **“Great Galena Giveaway” Raffle Drawing**

104 tickets were sold generating $455.00. Raffle drawing winner and ticket numbers were:

- First prize ticket was Molly Enter-Noel (Ticket #073185)
- Second prize ticket was Dolores Curbis (Ticket #073180)
- Third prize ticket was Anna Collazo (Ticket #073153)
- Fourth prize ticket was Larry Rijk (Ticket #073213)
- Fifth prize ticket was Brian Steele (Ticket #073216)
- Sixth prize ticket was Megan Cahill (Ticket #073127)

VII. **KCFPD Director’s Purchase Limits**

Commission discussed establishing a maximum threshold for allowable purchases for the Director. Commission reached consensus that the threshold will be set at $1,000, with a policy drafted to include purchases of supplies and services so long as the purchases are within the budget.

Commissioner Davidson made a motion to forward a proposed policy to the Commission to establish a policy authorizing the District’s Director to approve purchases for goods and services up to $1,000.00 within approved budget appropriation limits. Seconded by Commissioner Cullick. Aye, all. Opposed, none.
VIII. KCFPD Rules of Order Updates

The State’s Attorney’s Office has completed its review of the draft Rules of Order. President Wehli will schedule a meeting with Commissioner Prochaska and Director Guritz to review the comments and suggested revisions.

IX. Millbrook North NRCS Compatible Use Agreement

Director Guritz reported that a compatible use agreement has been received from the USDA-NRCS establishing the provisions for maintaining a floodplain easement area purchased by the NRCS from the District in 2009.

Commissioner Cullick made a motion to approve the proposed NRCS Compatible Use Agreement for signature by President Wehrli. Seconded by Commissioner Prochaska. Aye, all, opposed, none.

X. Resolution #15-007 – Yorkville – Hoover Road Intergovernmental Agreement and ICC Petition

President Wherli provided a summary on the need for the intergovernmental agreement, including the petition to the ICC by the City of Yorkville establishing the entry road leading to the railroad crossing at Hoover Forest Preserve as a public road and crossing in order to be eligible for federal transportation funding to construct the crossing gates.

Commissioner Davidson made a motion to forward Resolution #15-007 establishing an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Yorkville to convey right-of-way and public road dedication for the Hoover FP entrance road, including a petition to the ICC petition to reclassify the Hoover Road railroad crossing as a public crossing for the purposes of establishing an active gate railroad crossing at Hoover Forest Preserve. Seconded by Commissioner Cullick. All, aye. Opposed, none.

XI. Position Description Revisions – Office Assistant, Equestrian Program Manager, and Grounds Supervisor and Resident

Director Guritz reported that the State’s Attorney’s Office has completed review of the three position descriptions.

Commission Cullick made a motion to forward the Office Assistant, Equestrian Program Manager, and Grounds Supervisor and Resident position descriptions for approval. Seconded by Commissioner Gryder.
Commission discussed the Grounds Supervisor and Resident position. Commissioner Gilmour inquired into whether the Grounds Supervisor and Resident would be supervising the Natural Beginnings Program. Director Guritz stated that the Natural Beginnings Manager would report to the Grounds Supervisor and Resident for day-to-day activities. While the Natural Beginnings Manager is largely self-directed in managing the preschool program, this position does rely on support and assistance extended by the grounds maintenance positions supporting Hoover Forest Preserve. Commissioner Gilmour stated that she did not agree that assignment of the Natural Beginnings Manager under the proposed Grounds Supervisor and Resident position was appropriate. Director Guritz stated that the phrasing could be revised to clarify that the proposed position will not be actually overseeing the preschool program. Commission deliberated whether the Grounds Supervisor and Resident would possess the qualifications needed to evaluate the preschool program and staff. Director Guritz stated that he would remain involved in this aspect of program oversight, but expressed concerns over not having daily or weekly contact with the Natural Beginnings program staff. If the assignment of oversight was not approved, the Grounds Supervisor and Resident position would remain a non-exempt. Director Guritz was instructed to retain a supervisory role for the program as part of the Director’s position responsibilities, with day-to-day supervision and support provided by the Grounds Supervisor and Resident position.

Commission discussed the descriptions, instructing Director Guritz to work with the State’s Attorney’s Office to review the lifting requirements for all three positions in order to insure the descriptions provide flexibility for the range of potential lifting activities for each of the positions.

Director Guritz was instructed to list each of the position descriptions separately on the Commission agenda for approval.

President Wherli called the question. Aye, all. Opposed, none.

XII. Grounds Supervisor and Resident Lease Agreement

Director Guritz reported that the comparison of monthly rent for houses in the Yorkville area for homes similar to the Hoover residence was completed in order to provide an estimate for the market value of the residence of $1,750 per month. Utilities average $260 per month, for a total value of just over $2,000 per month.

The State’s Attorney’s Office discussed how to approach the valuation of the benefit with the District’s auditors, determining that the value of the residence and utilities will need to be stated as part of the position’s reported benefits on a pre-tax basis.
Separately, the State’s Attorney’s Office is looking into modifying the provisions that will require rent to be paid if and when the employee resigns, or is terminated from their position. Director Guritz stated that policy questions will need to be discussed, specifically in the situation where an employee is still in good standing, but requires an unpaid medical leave to address a personal or family medical issue.

XIII. Review and Discussion of Operational Costs and Capital Projects of Ellis House and Equestrian Center

Latreese Caldwell distributed year-to-date revenue and expenditure reports for the working budget for the Ellis House and Equestrian Center.

Latreese reported that the working budget includes reduced anticipated revenues for wedding events, down to $43,000 from the $69,500 originally budgeted, bringing total anticipated revenues to $139,000, with total expenditures anticipated of $188,000 with a net anticipated deficit of ($48,934). Year-to-date revenues total $109,000 representing 78% of the total anticipated in the working budget. Year-to-date expenditures total $153,000 representing 81%, with a year to date deficit of ($44,097).

The working budget spreadsheet includes year-to-date revenues and expenditures broken into cost centers.

Costs for operating and maintaining Ellis House is $16,791 and includes Marty Vick’s salary, equipment, supplies, and utilities, $10,000 for the barn and outbuildings maintenance, and $5,000 for grounds.

Camps generated revenues of $11,800, with associated expenses totaling $17,500, leaving a program deficit of $5,700.

Lessons generated revenues of $19,600, with associated expenses totaling $19,100 generating a program surplus of $500.

Parties generated revenues of $8,300, with associated expenses totaling $12,500, leaving a program deficit of $4,140.

Weddings generated revenues of $55,000, with associated expenses totaling $43,000, generating a program surplus of $11,000.

Other Events generated revenues of $1,500, with associated expenses totaling $3,500, leaving a program deficit $2,000.
Public Programs generated revenues of $4,200, with associated expenses totaling $18,000 leaving a program deficit of $13,800.

The 5K run generated revenues of $4,000, with associated expenses totaling $1,700, generating a program surplus of $2,400.

Latreese discussed the salary allocations for Ellis that were provided by the Ellis House and Equestrian Center staff.

Commission discussed the allocations of the assigned building and grounds maintenance costs. Latreese pointed out that regardless of whether the site is operating, the District has a part time salary expense of $12,000, which is significantly less than the prior year when a full time staff member was assigned to Ellis.

Director Guritz stated that grounds maintenance includes work on the trails, and maintenance of the Baker Woods pavilion area off of Route 52.

Commissioner Davidson observed that the Camps budget will need to be carefully examined and evaluated, and that having this information available for the first time allows an opportunity to make adjustments to reduce overall operational costs.

Commissioner Flowers pointed out that costs for maintaining the site year-to-date is around $32,000, with the overall operation running a deficit of $44,097.

Commissioner Gilmour suggested examining fees and charges to reduce overall program deficits.

Commissioner Purcell cautioned that in order to break even with camps, and other programs, costs would need to be raised significantly to reduce the program deficit. The overall deficit for operations year-to-date is $44,000, and suggested that all options for reducing Ellis House and Equestrian Center operational costs should be considered.

Commissioner Purcell inquired into the revenues for wedding events. Latreese pointed out that revenues for weddings includes the security deposits received, with corresponding expenditures for return of the security deposits. Latreese reported that the working budget as presented is on a cash basis.

President Wherli asked the Commission to carefully examine all of the reports presented in order to continue discussions on the overall budget directions for the District.

Commission thanked Latreese Caldwell for all of the efforts required to generate the working budget spreadsheets.
XIV. Executive Session

None.

XV. Other Items of Business

President Wherli requested input from the board on whether or not the preliminary budget that will be presented should include staff salaries coded to capital for capital projects taking place in the upcoming year. President Wherli stated that in FY 14-15, approximately $60,000 in staff salary expense was coded to the capital fund.

General consensus of the Commission is to present a preliminary budget with all costs for operations, including staff salaries, accounted within the operating budget in order to first examine the District’s overall current position before considering alternatives for use of capital fund resources.

XVI. Citizens to be Heard

None.

XVII. Adjournment

Commissioner Davidson made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Koukol. Aye, all. Opposed, none. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Guritz
Director, Kendall County Forest Preserve District