I. Call to Order
Commissioner Wehrli called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. in the Kendall County Board Room.

II. Roll Call
Commissioners Gilmour, Shaw, and Wehrli all were present. Director Guritz and Ellis Barn Manager Clever also were present.

III. Approval of Agenda
Commissioner Gilmour made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Shaw. All, aye. Opposed, none.

IV. Citizens to be Heard
No public comments were offered.

V. American Competitive Trail Horse Challenge Cooperative Event Agreement
Director Guritz reported that ACTHA that the District has reached out to ACTHA to review an agreement to host ACTHA Competitive Trail Horse Challenges and Arena Obstacle Course Challenges. Within the agreement, ACTHA will collect registration fees online based on the schedule for participation by different riding classes, with 80% of the registration fees payable to the District following the event. 20% of the fees collected, up to $250 is retained by ACTHA, with a portion of funds collected beyond the $250 donated to a designated equestrian charity. Director Guritz stated that the goal is to net between $2,000 and $4,000, dependent on the number of registrants.

The challenge is that the District needs to move forward in planning for the event within a limited timeframe. The ACTHA competitive challenge season ends in late May. The draft agreement has been forwarded to the State’s Attorney’s Office and ACTHA for review, with the goal of presenting a final agreement at the following week’s Commission meeting.

Barn Manager Amy Clever reported that Ellis would be hosting two trail challenges and one arena challenge event on May 16 and 17, 2015.

Commissioner Flowers arrived at 6:17 pm.
President Wehrli inquired into how ACTHA supports the event. Amy stated that ACTHA sends one to two representatives to support the event. Additionally, Dolly Pierson is a local ACTHA member, and is donating prizes for winners. Beyond local participation, Amy stated that local sponsors are being sought to support the event, and contribute funds for cash prizes for trail challenge and obstacle challenge event winners. The event will be largely staffed by Ellis volunteers. The challenge will be to secure the 10 qualified judges for each of the obstacle areas that are qualified, experienced riders. Judges are qualified using ACTHA’s on-line training program. In addition to registration proceeds, overnight trailer camping will be offered for $15 per night.

Commissioner Gilmour inquired into what the District will do to meet the 10 hour marketing requirement. Director Guritz stated that Constant Contact will be used to assist with marketing efforts and posting to District and equestrian group social media sites. ACTHA provides a listing of members that will receive direct e-mails promoting the event.

Commissioner Gilmour inquired into when the District will be paid. Director Guritz stated payment will be received following the event, and anticipated a short turnaround time for payment because registration is handled electronically with registration payments collected prior to the event.

Commission Flowers made a motion to present the ACTHA agreement to Commission for approval. Seconded by Commissioner Shaw. Aye, all. Opposed, none.

Commissioner Flowers presided over the remainder of the meeting.

VI. General Discussions and Updates
   A. Marketing Updates
      Director Guritz reported that all newsletter contacts had been imported into Constant Contact, bringing total subscribers to over 1,000. A pdf of the newsletter was sent to all subscribers, with some e-mails returned due to inactive e-mail addresses. In a few instances, individuals requested removal from the newsletter listing, and has been completed based upon these requests. The newsletter sign-up form is posted to the District’s website, and all staff member e-mails include a link to the sign-up form within their signature lines.

   B. Wireless Internet Access at Hoover
      Director Guritz stated that Comcast completed a second inspection for high-speed internet connection, and indicated they would complete the connection if the District ran cable from Meadowhawk to their service line connection. Estimates will need to be secured for trenching and installation of conduit based on follow-up
discussions with Comcast. President Wehrli suggested that trenching work could be
donated for the Comcast connection, as well as phone line work needed to fix the
alarm monitoring issue. Beyond Meadowhawk, costs were provided by KC
information technology staff indicating that there may be recurring costs associated
with broadcasting internet connection signal to other Hoover facilities. This would
be explored after the Meadowhawk line is up and running.

Director Guritz stated that efforts are underway to switch over internet connection
from AT&T to Verizon using jetpacks, which provide good speed and internet
connectivity for $37 per month. Prior to cancelling AT&T service, jetpack signal
reception will be tested at Harris, Hoover, and Ellis, and wireless reception hardware
installed on staff workstation computers to provide wireless internet access.

VII. 2016 Program Discussions and Directions

Natural Beginnings

Director Guritz stated he would like to bring a budget proposal for the Natural
Beginnings 2015-2016 school year to the upcoming Commission meeting. Based on
budget review meetings for Natural Beginnings held with Laura McCoy and Megan
Gessler, Natural Beginnings is able to cover and potentially exceed direct costs for
operations if enrollment targets are met, without reliance on outside contributions.
Director Guritz complimented environmental education staff efforts in reviewing
program costs, drawing attention to upcoming national conferences that will feature
the Natural Beginnings program as a model conservation agency program for the
region. Director Guritz stated that once conference costs are known, a proposal
may be presented at a future date to approve travel costs for Megan’s attendance,
as the District has expended its conference budget for the year.

Commissioner Gilmour inquired into whether the program change would require a
full-time coordinator. Director Guritz stated that the expanded program can be
offered, with all teaching staff supporting the program scheduled under 1,500 hours
for the year because the program does not run year-round.

Director Guritz stated the reason for pursuing approval of the proposal is to allow
for sufficient time to market and fill the program. Beyond Natural Beginnings, Laura
McCoy is also reviewing the fee schedule for school programs in order to
recommend market-based fee increases to offset District costs for the
environmental education program.
Commissioner Flowers requested that the report be sent to Commission prior to the meeting for review.

Ellis House and Equestrian Center Updates

Director Guritz stated that Amy Clever will continue to support Ellis programs in a limited fashion, and efforts are underway to examine Ellis program staff costs. This will include examining the Ellis event and rentals program once Tina Villarreal returns from leave.

VIII. Executive Session

None.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Flowers made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Gilmour. All, aye. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Guritz
Director, Kendall County Forest Preserve District