BYRON FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

MINUTES OF MEETING

SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

Commissioners present: Baker, Remhof, and Vincer.

Commissioners absent: Breen and Patterson.

Staff present: Brown, Brunner, Dahlberg, deOliveira, Gerke, McCammond, Tucker, and Wombacher.

Guests present: Carol Jackowski, Lucas Group.

The meeting was called to order at 6pm.

Director Tucker recommended removing Agenda Items 14B and 14C, Executive Sessions 2(C)(5) and 2(C)(11). BAKER MOVED AND REMHOF SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. BREEN – ABSENT, PATTERSON – ABSENT, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

President Vincer opened the floor to Carol Jackowski of the Lucas Group to present the 2021 audit for the Byron Forest Preserve District. She noted the internal control statement in the audit letter. Segregation of duties was discussed. She said that about 90% of their government agency clients get this statement in their letter. President Vincer commented that smaller agencies with less staff have to do several different duties vs. larger agencies with more staff have the ability to segregate duties better. Carol noted that PrairieView was negative in 2020 but in the positive for 2021. Brief discussion followed. She departed after her presentation.

There was no City of Byron Representative present at the meeting. Director Tucker noted that he talked to the mayor of Byron re-confirming that the City will be constructing a building on Forest Preserve property. We are waiting for an official proposal from the City. Director Tucker noted that the

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Byron Dragway has sold to a private buyer. He will be approaching the buyer to discuss the prairie restoration efforts that the District has been allowed to do in the past on the property. Hopefully, an agreement can be reached with the current owner so the District can continue to maintain those areas. Director Tucker will also talk to the owner about possibly purchasing a portion of the property where the remnants are located that we maintain.

REMHOF MOVED AND BAKER SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 15, 2022. PATTERSON – ABSENT, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

The correspondence was noted and briefly discussed.

President Vincer opened the floor to Shawn McCammond to discuss the August Financial Report. He stated that everything looks good. Director Tucker stated that PrairieView and PrairieFire are making about $10,000 per day. It was noted that some of the waitresses are getting 20,000-30,000 steps in each shift. That is really busy! President Vincer commended the staff on the operations at PrairieView and PrairieFire. Jason commended Mike and his staff for keeping the course in such great condition. If the course wasn’t great, no money would be made. Brief discussion followed.

REMHOF MOVED AND BAKER SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR AUGUST 2022. REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – ABSENT, PATTERSON – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

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BAKER MOVED AND REMHOF SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2021 AUDIT AS PRESENTED. BAKER – YES, BREEN – ABSENT, PATTERSON – ABSENT, REMHOF – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

President Vincer reminded the board of the upcoming special meetings in October.

Director Tucker updated the board on the Bike Path progress. He talked to Mr. Bushnell who will be talking to Mr. Behmer regarding his property.

President Vincer opened the floor to District Department Heads to present their Staff Reports.

Todd Tucker, Administrative Services Department-6:28-6:36pm-He informed the board that the PrairieFire Invitational is scheduled for Sunday, November 20th. PrairieView’s 30th Anniversary event is scheduled for October 1st. He discussed the farm rental bidding process. President Vincer questioned how farm fields are planted into prairie. Brief discussion followed.

Janet Dahlberg, Education Department-6:36-6:42pm-Field trips and preschool are gearing up for the season. She reported on her barn quilt painting class that went really well. She informed the board that the observatory is getting new flooring. She reviewed her photos that included all of the Education Department staff working in the classroom, with field trips, etc.

Russell Brunner, Restoration/Maintenance Department-6:42-6:57pm-He reviewed his photos of staff clearing trails, grinding stumps, and helping out at Nachusa with their bison tours during Autumn on the Prairie. He showed a photo of a Monarch Butterfly. He stated that they are almost endangered. There used to be billions of them. Now, there are millions of them. The District has lots of milkweed

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and other plants that they like. He discussed the process in which they eat and grow and milkweed. Brief discussion followed.

Scott deOliveira and Jason Wombacher, Golf Operations-6:57-7:12pm-They reported that it’s been a good month. Events are going well. Companies call almost daily requesting to book an event at PrairieFire. They commended their staff for stepping up as the seasonal staff left. Commissioner Remhof visited PrairieFire on a Friday and it was extremely busy. He commended Scott and his staff on handling it well. They reported that the golf carts are working well overall.

Mike Brown, Golf Course Maintenance Department-7:12-7:20pm-He reported that his department is basically just maintaining now until the end of the season. He reviewed his photos with the board. Fallen trees from storms being removed and weak areas of the course were briefly discussed.

Director Tucker reported that the crews are getting the Expo ready for cart storage for the winter season.

Director Tucker informed the board that Ogle County Solid Waste Management would like to back a recycling program to us. They are requesting that we split the costs with them. Discussion followed whether or not the District should be involved or if the City of Byron should be involved. Russell suggested splitting it up further to include Rochelle and Oregon. Location of the receptacles was discussed. Russ suggested that it be placed at the school. When the receptacle was located at the District’s Land Management Center, it was abused and a big mess most of the time. This could be due to the somewhat isolated location. President Vincer asked where the recyclables would be going and is

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concerned that it would still be going to a landfill. Director Tucker suggested that he could research other options including grants and working with other agencies. Commissioner Remhof suggested contacting Constellation Energy for any recycling grants. Brief discussion followed.

Commissioner Remhof reported that the Tiger 10-Miler was recently held on District property. It was the second biggest event his year. There were many compliments on the facilities, trails, and beauty of the preserve. Director Tucker noted that Nick from the Byron Park District called and commended staff as well.

REMHOF MOVED AND BAKER SECONDED A MOTION AT 7:30PM TO CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER section 2(C)(1) OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION OF THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES, SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVE AS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS IN A PARK, RECREATIONAL, OR EDUCATIONAL SETTING, OR SPECIFIC VOLUNTEERS OF THE DISTRICT OR LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE, A SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL WHO SERVES AS AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR IN A PARK, RECREATIONAL OR EDUCATIONAL SETTING, OR A VOLUNTEER OF THE DISTRICT OR AGAINST LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE DISTRICT TO DETERMINE ITS VALIDITY. BREEN – ABSENT, PATTERSON – ABSENT, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

BAKER MOVED AND REMHOF SECONDED A MOTION AT 7:57PM TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION. PATTERSON – ABSENT, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

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REMHOF MOVED AND BAKER SECONDED A MOTION AT 7:58PM TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – ABSENT, PATTERSON – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Remhof, Secretary

Board of Commissioners

CR/mg