BYRON FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

MINUTES OF MEETING

MARCH 20, 2023

Commissioners present: Baker, Breen, Patterson, Remhof, and Vincer.

Commissioners absent: none.

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

Guests present: none.

The meeting was called to order at 6pm.

President Vincer removed Agenda Items 14A-14C Executive Session from the agenda.

REMHOF MOVED AND BAKER SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. BREEN – YES, PATTERSON – YES, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

REMHOF MOVED AND BREEN SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 27, 2023. PATTERSON – YES, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

President Vincer opened the floor to Shawn McCammond to discuss the Financial Report. He stated that this February closed out ahead of last February and March is going strong. New employees are being hired for the season. Brief discussion followed.

BREEN MOVED AND PATTERSON SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2023. REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – YES, PATTERSON – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

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On behalf of the City of Byron Public Works Department, President Vincer thanked the District for the generous donation of land to the City to build a new Public Works Department. He also apologized to the PrairieFire staff for the over-chlorinated water situation recently. Brief discussion followed.

There was no Bike Path Report.

President Vincer opened the floor to District Department Heads to present their Staff Reports. Director Tucker was absent so there was no Administrative Services report.

Janet Dahlberg, Education Department-6:07-6:12pm-She reviewed photos with the board of recent programs including Maple Syrup Festival, Homeschool, and Preschool. Commissioner Breen questioned the egg incubation that preschool is doing. He asked where the chicks are taken after they are hatched. Janet responded that they are given back to the Ogle County 4-H representative.

Russell Brunner, Restoration/Maintenance Department-6:12-6:24pm-He reported that his crew has been helping the Byron Park District with removing junk trees at the Johnson Riverfront Park. He noted that there aren’t too many good trees on the property other than a few silver maples. He reported that he and his crew collected 1500 gallons of maple sap, which equals about 32 gallons of syrup. We sold about 50 bottles of syrup at the Maple Syrup Festival. The remaining bottles will be sold at the Jarrett Prairie Center Gift Shop. He informed the board that they are getting ready to start controlled prairie burns. He will email the burn map to the commissioners. He noted that the flier for the Trail Volunteer Work Day is in Dropbox. The dates are May 6th and October 14th. The first project will be at the Jarrett Prairie Preserve near the Wilson Shelter.

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Scott deOliveira and Jason Wombacher, Golf Operations-6:24-6:42pm-The reported that they are getting the clubhouse ready for the course opening. They are reconfiguring the kitchen. They met with Pace representative regarding new functions of the GPS on the golf carts. New functions will increase efficiency and safety on the course. Nic Barnes was hired as the new golf pro. President Vincer asked about the structure of the lesson program. Jason answered that the District will get 10% of the lesson revenue. Other ambiguities including boundaries, etc. are being discussed with Nic. PrairieFire has been extremely busy. Raynor Garage Door had their annual event at PrairieFire, which was an entire facility rental. Pioneer Seed was at PrairieFire 3 times last week and have decided to make PrairieFire and the Pavilion their home base meeting facility. Commissioner Baker noted that he has had many compliments regarding the seasonal decorating at PrairieFire.

Mike Brown, Golf Course Maintenance Department-6:42-6:50pm-He stated that if the weather cooperates, PrairieView will be open very soon. He reviewed photos. The stump grinder projects were discussed. Mike thanked President Vincer and the City of Byron for use of the backhoe. He noted that it worked it out well and sharing equipment is a good way to save taxpayer dollars. His crew is working on the lighting for the PrairieView/PrairieFire sign. Commissioner Patterson asked if it could be run by a solar system. Mike will check into this.

President Vincer opened the floor to Shawn McCammond and Michelle Gerke to discuss the capital budget situation regarding the landscaping project, the new HVAC unit, and the sound system for the Jarrett Prairie Center. Several unexpected issues were discovered regarding costs, timing, and legalities as staff began working on these projects.

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Michelle distributed a handout explaining that as staff began to prepare bids for a new HVAC unit, it was discovered that, by law, an engineer must prepare the bid for the new HVAC unit and sign off on the project completion, which is an additional unexpected cost. As the landscaping project quotes came in, they were much more than expected plus it was decided that a landscape architect would be needed to prepare the bids for this project, which would be an additional cost. Since the lower level of the Jarrett Prairie Center would need to be closed for several weeks, the timing of the landscape project became an issue. The cost of installing the sound system at the Jarrett Prairie Center came in much higher than the original quote. After much discussion, staff decided to propose to delay the completion of the landscaping project until 2024. Staff would hire a landscape architect to prepare bids this year for the work to be completed by June 1, 2024. The lower level will be closed for rentals for approximately two-three months in the spring of 2024. Completing the bid process this summer or fall would allow staff to have better figures to propose for budgeting purposes this fall.

Staff also decided to propose that with the delaying of the landscaping project, the new HVAC system for the Jarrett Prairie Center could be purchased with these funds instead of stretching the budget to cover the emergency expense.

Originally, only the lower level of the Jarrett Prairie Center was going to have a sound system installed due to budget constraints. With delaying the landscaping project, staff recommends installing a sound system on the main floor (museum) of the Jarrett Prairie Center as well.

After brief discussion, the board generally agreed with the staff’s proposal of the capital budget changes for this year with the completion of the landscaping project being delayed until 2024.

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Russell Brunner showed pictures of the three trailers that he wants to surplus to purchase a new trailer. Brief discussion followed.

BREEN MOVED AND PATTERSON SECONDED A MOTION TO DECLARE THE THREE RESTORATION DEPARTMENT TRAILERS AS SURPLUS EQUIPMENT AS PRESENTED. BAKER – YES, BREEN – YES, PATTERSON – YES, REMHOF – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

REMHOF MOVED AND BAKER SECONDED A MOTION AT 7:02PM TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. BREEN – YES, PATTERSON – YES, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Remhof, Secretary

Board of Commissioners

CR/mg