BYRON FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 21, 2025

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

Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: Brown, Brunner, Dahlberg, deOliveira, Hawkins, McCammond, Ross, Tucker, and Wombacher

Guests present: Jeff Ludwig, District Beekeeper

The meeting was called order at 6pm.

Outgoing Executive Director Tucker suggested removing item 14 A Executive Session from the agenda.

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

President Vincer welcomed Jeff Ludwig to his last board meeting he will be attending as a guest until he is sworn is as a returning board member for a new four-year term at the May organizational board meeting.

PATTERSON MOVED AND REMHOF SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 17, 2025. BREEN – YES, PATTERSON – YES, REMHOF – YES, AND VINCER – ABSTAIN.

The correspondence was noted.

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President Vincer opened the floor to Shawn McCammond to discuss the financial reports. Shawn noted an uptick in the revenue for the General Fund for March, and expects revenue to

continue to increase with the upcoming annual Byron Chamber of Commerce Awards dinner and other events scheduled weekly at the facilities. Golf Fund revenue was down in March as expected with the weather, but he expects to see an increase in revenue as weather warms. PrairieFire continues to hold steady regardless of the weather. Expenses are comparable to last year as Audit season approaches.

REMHOF MOVED AND BREEN SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR MARCH 2025. PATTERSON – YES, REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

President Vincer began his President’s Report by stating that the City of Byron and Constellation has rekindled a tabled conversation on a project that includes running a sewer line that would impact the golf course. This was proposed but is subject to change and is still only discussion. President Vincer noted that he will continue to keep the board updated on this. President Vincer also discussed the recent ordinances passed by the City of Byron involving Section 5.08 Alcoholic Dealers of Title 5 Business Licenses. He concluded his President’s Report stating that Commissioner Patterson would like to say a few words at the conclusion of his last board meeting as a commissioner with the district.

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President Vincer opened the floor for district department heads to present their staff reports.

Todd Tucker, Administration Department – 6:10pm- 6:12pm - Outgoing Director Tucker briefly noted he has been attending administrative area meetings with incoming Director Hawkins and introducing him accordingly. Outgoing Director Tucker thanked the board of commissioners and staff for his retirement party at the golf pavilion on April 4th. There was a great turn out for him as he heads into his new life chapter.

Andrew Hawkins, Administration Department – 6:12pm- 6:20 pm – Incoming Director Hawkins began his report by stating he has been busy going around the district properties introducing himself, getting familiar with department operations and doing a lot of research on where the district has been and where it is headed. He noted that the area administrator meetings went well and enjoyed meeting staff and volunteers at the Annual Staff & Volunteer Recognition Banquet held last week. He will continue to make his rounds in the coming weeks. He stated that he also plans to meet with local nonprofits as well. At the conclusion of the Administration Department Staff Report commissioner Remhof asked if there was any update on the purchase agreement for the 3-acre parcel located on route 2 at the south of the Mill Creek Preserve. There is a new lawyer assigned to this and Andy will follow up with the district’s lawyer to determine if they have come up with an agreement on what the price will be to purchase. He will report on this in the coming months.

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Janet Dahlberg, Education Department – 6:20pm- 6:25pm – Janet reported that preschool is winding down for the year and her department has been busy with field trips. She outlined her photos with the board. Janet continues to represent the Byron region in various environmental

education meetings and organizations. Janet also noted that the staff and volunteer recognition banquet went well.

Russell Brunner, Restoration Department-6:25pm- 6:44pm- The last prescribed fire of the spring burn season has been completed. 1,100 acres of the district was burned to continue to preserve the habitat of the preserves. Russ complemented Greg Hunter on the restoration department staff on how well he does with prescribed burns. Russ then outlined his photos of this with the board. He reported that the Maple Syrup Festival went well and there was a big turnout. He thanked Raul Leon for flipping pancakes for roughly 350 people that were in attendance for this event. He noted and thanked the Ogle County 4-H club for coming out to the Jarrett Prairie Center Preserve to plant 25 oak trees. Brush work has been on going. Commissioner Remhof noted that the Nardi Preserve Fence is in rough shape. Russ responded that this is being looked at and is not in the capitol budget for this year but is being considered for next year. Commissioner Remhof also reminded Russ about the upcoming Tiger 10 Miler race coming and that he will let the high school cross country team know how many people Russ will need for some volunteer restoration projects.

Scott deOliveira- 6:44-6:49pm- Scott reported that March’s rounds for golf were very comparable to last year’s with similar weather. Sign ups for PGA are under way. Scott thanked Mike Brown and his crew for getting the course in great shape for the season. Tournaments are coming

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up and many golfers are signed up. The new POS system is up and running throughout the clubhouse and at PrairieFire. While it has been a big learning curve, everyone is getting the hang of it. The pub menu for the clubhouse has been expanded and will be launched next week. Legue nights are starting this week. The pavilion has been very busy with bookings from the high school, company banquets, and general celebrations. PrairieFire continues to be busy. There have been many school fundraisers and Mary Morgan Elementary even had their career fair out at PrairieFire.

Mike Brown- 6:49- 6:56pm- Mike began his report by noting it has been a slow start to the season with unpredictable and very windy weather. He has been working on many chemical operations to keep weeds away on the golf course, but the wind has not been ideal. He is hopeful that when the weather warms that the drying will allow the opportunity to make that more sustainable. Mike noted that there is another hole in the canopy that needs fixed from unexpected high winds, the district will file a claim with PDRMA (district insurance company) for repair.

Agenda item B, Unfinished Business was discussed. Since President Vincer was absent at the March board meeting when this was discussed, Commissioner Remhof filled him in that no resolution had been reached. It was clarified that the discussion entails how to recognize former living directors and how to memorialize past deceased directors in the district. Outgoing Executive Director Todd Tucker believes a Gazebo for Jack Philbrick would be a nice way to honor his memory and his family has been actively donating. Recognizing past living directors was discussed briefly and the idea to have plaques hung at the Jarett Prairie Center was brought up. The conclusion was to further research what other districts are doing to come up with a generalized

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policy. Incoming Executive Director Andy Hawkins shared his thoughts and an administrative procedure he had in place at his former district. President Vincer concluded that this discussion will be continued at the May board meeting.

It was at this time President Vincer opened the floor to Steve Patterson to speak about his experience on the Byron Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners for the last 8 years as he is retiring with his expiring term. Steve highlighted some of his favorite memories with the district and how it came to be that he run for commissioner. Steve then acknowledged the talented and hardworking staff of the Byron Forest Preserve and thanked them for the years he has had the opportunity to work alongside them to satisfy the mission of the district.

VINCER MOVED AND BREEN SECONDED A MOTION AT 7:15 PM TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. REMHOF – YES, BAKER – YES, BREEN – YES, PATTERSON – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Baker, Secretary

Board of Commissioners

KB/kr