

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County  
BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday, December 18, 2024 – 5:30 PM  
Forest Preserve Headquarters



**AGENDA**

- A. ROLL CALL**
- B. PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE**
- C. ELECTION of PRESIDENT and VICE PRESIDENT**
- D. APPROVAL of MINUTES**  
Minutes for November 20 – Board Meeting
- E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AWARDS, and PRESENTATIONS**
- F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS / DISCUSSION**
- G. NEW BUSINESS**
  - 1. Bond Updates
- H. ACTION ITEMS**
  - 1. Appointment of Officers
  - 2. Bills for November
  - 4. Budget Amendment – Land Acquisition
  - 4. Budget Amendment – Grant Revenue
  - 5. Acceptance of Bid – Nancy Olson Children’s Garden Natural Playground at Klehm Arboretum
- I. UPDATES and REPORTS**
  - 1. Preserve Operations
  - 2. Natural Resource Management
  - 3. Golf
  - 4. Human Resources
  - 5. Law Enforcement
  - 6. Partner Groups
- J. CLOSED SESSION**
  - 1. Land Acquisition
- K. ANNOUNCEMENTS and COMMUNICATIONS**
  - 1. December 19 – Restoration Workday at Macktown Forest Preserve starting at 9:00am.
  - 2. December 26 – Restoration Workday at Roland Olson Forest Preserve starting at 9:00am.
  - 3. January 3 – Bird Hike at Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve from 8:00am – 9:30am.
- L. ADJOURNMENT**

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Next regular Board Meeting– 5:30 PM Wednesday, January 15, Forest Preserve Headquarters

Anyone wishing to address the Board must call 815-877-6100 or email [ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org](mailto:ewendlandt@winnebagoforest.org) in advance of the meeting.

**APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**  
**No. 24-1201**

**Appointing the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Officers for a 2-year term  
beginning on December 18, 2024, and ending on December 2, 2026.**

WHEREAS, the provisions of Section 8 of the Illinois Forest Preserve District Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Chapter 70, Paragraph 805/8) authorize the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County (FPWC) to appoint Officers for the FPWC; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of Article III, Sec. 3-2b of the Code of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County authorize that the President, in addition to performing the duties prescribed by statute, shall appoint the Officers of the FPWC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT CONFIRMED by the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County as follows:

Section 1. – That the President does hereby appoint and the Board of Commissioners does hereby confirm the appointment of the following named persons as Officers of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County. Said Officers shall serve two-year terms of office, which terms shall commence on December 18, 2024, and shall conclude on December 2, 2026:

- Secretary – \_\_\_\_\_
- Treasurer – \_\_\_\_\_
- Assistant Treasurer – \_\_\_\_\_

Section 2. – That this appointment shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its confirmation by the Board of Commissioners.

**Voting YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **Voting NO** \_\_\_\_\_

The above and foregoing Appointment of Officers was adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Board of Commissioners

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County**  
**Authorization to Process Payment of Bills**



December 18, 2024

**TO: THE AUDITOR AND TREASURER OF THE  
FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY.**

Your Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners, to whom were referred the following bills in the amount of **\$ 737,786.91** against the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, have reviewed and approved and therefore respectfully request that orders be drawn on the account of the Forest Preserve District for their payment:

CORPORATE FUND	3001	331,365.13
HEALTH BENEFITS FUND	3185	41,871.67
SOCIAL SECURITY FUND	3192	21,884.15
RETIREMENT FUND	3193	23,934.11
LIABILITY RESERVE FUND	3194	131,493.00
IMPROVEMENT & DEV. FUND	3302	61,648.20
CORPORATE FUND	3402	<u>125,590.65</u>
		<b>\$ 737,786.91</b>

Respectfully submitted,

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Steve Chapman, Finance Director

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Date

**RESOLUTION**

**No. 24-1202**

**PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR NOVEMBER**

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserve incurs annual and monthly operating and capital expenditures during its budget cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Winnebago County Finance Department compiled the attached invoices relating to Forest Preserve expenditures to be paid for the month of November; and

WHEREAS, our Finance Director, Steve Chapman, has reviewed the invoices and avows them to be accurate and appropriate for payment; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board authorizes the payment of the attached compilation of bills totaling \$737,786.91 to be paid by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County for the month of November 2024.

Voting YES \_\_\_\_\_

Voting NO \_\_\_\_\_

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 18th day of December, 2024.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Board of Commissioners

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County**

**ORDINANCE**

**No. 24-1203**

**Amending the Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance  
for the period from November 1, 2024 through October 31, 2025**

WHEREAS, the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act (70 ILCS 805/13.4) states “After the adoption of the Annual Appropriation Ordinance, no further appropriations may be made at any other time during that fiscal year except as provided in this Act, provided that the Board of each district may amend such appropriation ordinance from time to time by the same procedure required by this Act for the original adoption of the appropriation ordinance. By a two-thirds vote of all the members constituting the Board, the Board may make appropriations in excess of those authorized by the appropriations ordinance in order to meet an immediate emergency.”; and,

WHEREAS, the Downstate Forest Preserve District Act (70 ILCS 805/6) grants Forest Preserve Districts the “power to acquire lands and grounds”; and,

WHEREAS, a parcel of land for sale was brought forward to the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and the Board of Commissioners felt it was a viable property to purchase; and,

WHEREAS, in order to purchase the property, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County will need to transfer money from the Corporate Fund Balance to the Land Acquisition Fund,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED as follows:

Section 1. That the Land Acquisition line (91000-46110) of the Corporate Fund (3001) in the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget will be amended in the amount of \$90,000 and will be funded by the Corporate Fund Balance.

Section 2. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect immediately upon this adoption

Section 3. That the Secretary of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is hereby authorized and directed to send two certified copies of this Ordinance to the District Executive Director and one to the Director of Finance.

**Voting Yes**

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Judith Barnard

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Mike Eickman

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Gloria Lind

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Cheryl Maggio

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Jerry Paulson

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Emily Porter

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Jeff Tilly

**Voting No**

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Judith Barnard

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Mike Eickman

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Gloria Lind

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Cheryl Maggio

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Jerry Paulson

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Emily Porter

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Jeff Tilly

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

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President  
Board of Commissioners

**Forest Preserves of Winnebago County**

**ORDINANCE**

**No. 24-1204**

**Amending the Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance  
for the period from November 1, 2024 through October 31, 2025**

WHEREAS, Chapter 70, paragraph 805/13,4 Illinois Compiled Statutes – 1992 states “After the adoption of the Annual Appropriation Ordinance, no further appropriations may be made at any other time during that fiscal year except as provided in this Act, provided that the Board of each district may amend such appropriation ordinance from time to time by the same procedure required by this Act for the original adoption of the appropriation ordinance. By a two-thirds vote of all the members constituting the Board, the Board may make appropriations in excess of those authorized by the appropriations ordinance in order to meet an immediate emergency,”; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserve of Winnebago County received a \$42,000 grant from The Conservation Fund, as mitigation for impacts caused by the construction and maintenance of the Endbridge Pipelines, LLC Flanigan South Pipeline; and,

WHEREAS, the Conservation Fund grant award will be appropriated and budgeted as a revenue from a grant; and,

WHEREAS, the District applied for this grant and will use this award to contract with a firm to enhance and restore 20 acres of habitat for the federally endangered Indiana bat and migratory birds; and,

WHEREAS, the estimated cost of the project will be \$48,000 with the additional \$6,000 due to price increases since the time of the grant application; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the project will be amended as an expenditure in the Capital Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED as follows:

Section 1. That the State Capital Grant line (96500-32160) of the Capital Improvement Fund (3302) for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget shall be amended to include \$42,000 of revenue from The Conservation Fund.

Section 2. That the Land Improvement line (96500-46310) of the Capital Improvement Fund (3302) for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget shall be amended to include \$48,000 in expenditures to complete the Midwest Habitat Fund – Flanigan South Pipeline Phase II project at Funderburg Forest Preserve.

Section 3. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect immediately upon this adoption

Section 4. That the Secretary of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County is hereby authorized and directed to send two certified copies of this Ordinance to the District Executive Director and one to the Director of Finance.

**Voting Yes**

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Judith Barnard

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Mike Eickman

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Gloria Lind

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Cheryl Maggio

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Jerry Paulson

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Emily Porter

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Jeff Tilly

**Voting No**

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Judith Barnard

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Mike Eickman

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Gloria Lind

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Cheryl Maggio

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Jerry Paulson

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Emily Porter

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Jeff Tilly

The above and foregoing Ordinance was adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

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President  
Board of Commissioners



**RESOLUTION**

**No. 24-1205**

**ACCEPTANCE OF BID FOR THE NANCY OLSON CHILDREN'S  
GARDEN NATURAL PLAYGROUND AT KLEHM ARBORETUM &  
BOTANIC GARDEN**

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County was awarded \$389,900 in funding from the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's Open Space Land and Development grant program (OS-24-2570) for the development of a natural playground at Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden; and,

WHEREAS, the natural playground will be constructed in the Nancy Olson Children's Garden; and,

WHEREAS, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Board of Commissioners appropriated \$372,000 to complete this project in the fiscal year 2024-2025 capital budget; and,

WHEREAS, construction services were solicited through sealed bid in accordance with the District's Purchasing Policy; and,

WHEREAS, Stenstrom Excavation and Blacktop Group submitted the lowest qualified bid of \$358,990.00 to construct the natural playground;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County approve awarding the contract to construct the OSLAD funded natural playground at Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden in the amount of \$358,990.00 to Stenstrom Excavation and Blacktop Group of Rockford, IL.

Voting YES \_\_\_\_\_

Voting NO \_\_\_\_\_

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

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President  
Board of Commissioners

BID TABULATION  
 NANCY OLSON CHILDREN'S GARDEN NATURAL PLAYGROUND  
 FOR THE PROJECT LOCATED AT:  
 KLEHM ARBORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN OF THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT  
 BID OPENING – DECEMBER 11, 2024 AT 1:00PM

	VENDOR	Stenstrom Excavation & Blacktop Group	Sjostrom & Sons, Inc.	Rockford Structures Construction Company	DPI Construction, Inc.
A. BASE BID	BASE BID TOTAL COST (LUMP SUM)	\$358,990.00	\$607,442.00	Disqualified	\$520,282.13
B. ALTERNATES	ALTERNATE #1 TOTAL - INSTALL RUBBERIZED PLAY SURFACE (LUMP SUM)	\$26,750.00	\$23,292.00		\$31,183.60
	ALTERNATE #1 TOTAL - REMOVE EXISTING RUBBER SURFACE (LUMP SUM)	\$24,200.00	\$19,567.00		\$15,753.50
C. UNIT PRICING	RUBBERIZED PLAY SURFACE - COMPLETE (PER SQUARE FEET)	\$32.00	\$22.50		\$50.00
	CONCRETE CURBING - COMPLETE (PER LINEAR FOOT)	\$75.00	\$42.00		\$50.00
	DECORATIVE BOULDERS - COMPLETE (PER TON)	\$800.00	\$800.00		\$800.00
ADDENDUM 1	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECIEPT OF ADDENDUM AND FINAL BID FORM	1 of 1	1 of 1		1 of 1

Forest Preserves of Winnebago County  
 5500 Northrock Drive, Rockford, IL 61103  
 Phone: (815) 877-6100 | FPWC@winnebagoforest.org

# Preserve Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations  
Matt Weik & Scott Wallace, Preserve Managers  
Bryan Helmold, Facility & Equipment Manager  
November 2024 Activities Report

- Mulched Leaves at Hononegah Campground.
- Pearson Plumbing winterized Sugar River Showerhouse.
- Blew out hydrants at Sugar River/Hononegah/ Seward Bluffs Campgrounds.
- Delivered firewood to Macktown for Lincoln and Liberty Event.
- Rykowski removed septic pump from Macktown Visitors Center.
- Removed six dead trees at Sugar River.
- Swept/cleaned buildings at Macktown Historic District.
- Closed Sugar River and Hononegah campgrounds.
- Closed Equestrian trails at Roland Olson and Sugar River.
- Removed flags from preserve flag poles.
- Checked every trail system in North Area for down trees before winter.
- Staff completed and turned in 2024 accomplishments and 2025 goals.
- Performed monthly building and equipment safety inspections.
- Prepped Sugar River Maintenance Shop for winter (salt pallets, spreaders and plows).
- Removed damaged swing set from Sugar River playground.
- Purchased new swing set for Sugar River playground.
- 90-day review for Nathan Hallgren was conducted.
- Full-time staff completed annual OSHA safety training at Headquarters.
- Working on annual performance evaluations for full-time staff members.
- Hauled equipment to Central Shop for yearly inspection and maintenance.
- Replaced broken plexiglass panel in the Pecatonica Wetlands kiosk.
- Checked & re-posted boundaries at Indian Hill Forest Preserve.
- Repaired cable gate at back service entrance at Severson Dells.
- Painted interior of block outhouse at Pecatonica Wetlands (Truitt).
- Bucked and split firewood.
- Hazardous tree removal at The Grove Play Area.

## **Preserve Operations**

### November 2024 Activities Report – Cont.

- Equipment was pressure washed and then delivered to central shop for winter maintenance.
- Four preserve staff members qualified through the IDNR to participate in the deer management program.
- Installed new cable gate at southwest trail entrance at Oak Ridge.
- Stump grinding throughout numerous preserves.
- Replaced damaged boundary stakes at preserves adjacent to Perryville Road.
- Cleared out storm gutters at the Deer Lodge at Severson Dells.
- Plow equipment setup for the season.
- Four Lakes water control structure was cleared of debris.

# Land and Development

Mike Brien, Director of Natural Resources  
Mike Groves, Natural Resources Manager  
Keith Krey, Stewardship Coordinator  
Liz Hucker, Wildlife Biologist  
November 2024 Activities Report

## Natural Resource Staff

- Finished preparing burn equipment and installing burn breaks in preserves throughout the county.
- Completed two prescribed burns at Jensen and Macktown Forest Preserves.
- Chemically treated woody invasive species at Kishwaukee Gorge North and Funderburg Forest Preserves.
- Seven staff members qualified with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to participate in the 2025 deer management program.
- Cut and stacked trees around prairie plantings at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Added gravel around the base of Motus tower at Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve.
- Forestry mowed invasive brush around 2025 prairie plantings at Funderburg Forest Preserve.
- Implemented habitat improvement project to promote recruitment of the state endangered plant *Artemisia dracunculus* in a northeastern preserve.
- Maintained native landscaping beds at Headquarters, Atwood, and Macktown Forest Preserves.
- Wrapped up the 2024 seed harvest season by hand collecting aromatic aster at Colored Sands Forest Preserve.
- Finished processing and bagging seed at the Severson Dells nursery.
- Used tree spade truck and tow behind tree spade to transplant sycamore trees from the Severson Dells tree nursery to several preserves. Installed tree guards, mulched, and watered new trees as needed.
- Worked with the Natural Land Institute to nominate and measure the new state and county champion rock elm, *Ulmus thomasi*, an Illinois threatened species.
- Conducted plant survey for coralberry, *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*, at Deer Run Forest Preserve.
- John Peterson instructed south area maintenance staff on how to safely operate the Bobcat forestry mulcher.
- Worked on FY2024-25 capital projects and purchases.
- Completed grant reporting and compliance as required.

## Wildlife

- Assisted with prescribed burns.

## Land and Development

### November 2024 Activities Report – Cont.

- Planned and designed new kestrel nest box monitoring program. Kestrel nest boxes will be installed in 12 preserves throughout the county this winter.
- Monitored the status of radio tagged Blanding's turtles.
- Downloaded data from the new Motus tower at Sugar River Alder to assist the Ward Lab of Ornithology in monitoring northern saw-whet owls.
- Moved abandoned River Cooter to new home at Burpee Museum of Natural History.
- Deployed camera traps to monitor wildlife activity at Clayton Andrews and Deer Run Forest Preserves.
- Conducted necropsy of dead red fox reported at Kishwaukee Gorge Forest Preserve. The animal was found to have been shot and police were notified. Skinned and tanned the animal's hide to use as an educational specimen.
- Qualified with Illinois Department of Natural Resources to participate in 2025 deer management program.

#### Stewardship Coordinator

- Assisted with prescribed burns.
- Held two restoration workdays at Cedar Cliff and Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserves.
- Repaired and replaced bluebird houses as needed.
- Attended webinars hosted by Get Connected "Recruitment: Move from Passive to Active" and "Assess your Processes: How to Make things easier".
- Staffed Forest Preserve booth at the Fours Rivers Sanitation Authority wellness fair.
- Staffed Forest Preserve booth at the Rotary Club's district conference.

#### *2024 Statistics*

A total of 420 volunteers earned 3,619.75 service hours from January 2024 through November 2024.

The monetary value of these service hours equals **\$121,225.54**. As of April 2024, the estimated national value of each volunteer hour is currently \$33.49 (based on the Independent Sector).

# Golf Operations

Vaughn Stamm, Director of Operations  
Rich Rosenstiel, Clubhouse Manager  
Tyler Knapp & Mark Freiman, Golf Maintenance Managers  
November 2024 Activities Report

## Clubhouse Operations:

- Macktown Golf Course closed for the season effective 10/28/24.
- Macktown gaming machines pulled.
- Ledges Golf Course closed for the season effective 11/11/24.
- Ledges gaming machines pulled.
- Atwood Homestead Golf Course closed for season effective 11/21/24.
- Atwood gaming pull request submitted with IBG.
- End of season employee key and badge collections.
- Food & Beverage items transferred to Atwood.
- Golf shop inventory collected and taken to Atwood.
- Macktown & Ledges clubhouses winterized for off-season.
- End of season beverage product returns
  - Pepsi
  - Hayes Distribution
  - LaMonica Beverage
- Ledges & Macktown Pepsi fountain machines flushed & cleaned.

## Golf Maintenance:

### Ledges

- All golf cars parked in storage for winter.
- All golf course accessories removed from course and put into storage for winter.
- Removed volunteer trees and treated stumps in prairie planting between #2 tee and #4 green.
- Removed volunteer trees and treated stumps in prairie planting by #16 green.
- Tree removal and cleanup on hole # 11.
- Tree removal and cleanup on hole # 4.
- Winterized irrigation system and pump station.
- Applied snow mold protection to all greens, tees and select fairways.
- All fulltime staff attended OSHA safety training session at HQ.
- Submitted fulltime staff evaluations to Director of Operations for review.
- Continued trimming low hanging limbs along property line.
- Daily leaf cleanup on all greens, tees and fairways.

# Golf Operations

## November 2024 Activities Report – Cont.

- Finished power washing equipment fleet.
- Continued blowing and mulching leaves.

### Macktown

- Daily leaf cleanup on all greens, tees and fairways.
- All golf course accessories removed from course and put into storage for winter.
- Cleaned gutters at Clubhouse.
- Installed no sledding signs at Clubhouse and hole # 18.
- Winterized irrigation system and pump station.
- Applied snow mold protection to all greens, tees and select fairways.
- Removed volunteer trees and treated stumps in prairie planting by #4 tee.
- Cleaned all hickory nuts from around clubhouse.
- Finished power washing equipment fleet.
- Continued trimming trees along fairways.
- All fulltime staff attended OSHA safety training session at HQ.
- Continued blowing and mulching leaves.
- Repaired parking lot at maintenance building.
- Cut and cleaned-up ornamental grasses.

### Atwood

- Connected air compressor to irrigation system to evacuate water for winter.
- Winterized irrigation pump station.
- Pressure washed and serviced golf car fleet to prepare for winter storage.
- All golf course accessories removed from course and placed in storage.
- Applied winter fungicide application to greens and tees.
- Cut and cleaned-up ornamental grasses at clubhouse and on golf course.
- Golf car fleet parked in dedicated cold storage building.
- Continued to remove invasive and unwanted trees in prairie restoration areas.
- Mulched and swept leaves on golf course.
- Mulched leaves in Atwood Preserve.



## **Human Resources**

Sherry Winebaugh, Human Resources Manager  
November 2024 Activities Report

In November, I worked on several key areas, including assisting employees with benefits, supporting recruitment efforts, conducting interviews, and addressing various personnel matters.

### **Christmas Party Preparation:**

Organized and completed shopping for our upcoming Christmas Party, scheduled for December 6, 2024. Final preparations are underway to ensure a successful event.

### **Unemployment Hearing:**

Attended an unemployment hearing with Carol from Unemployment Consultants Inc. concerning one of our seasonal employees. The hearing focused on eligibility and related matters.

### **Recruitment & Hiring:**

Recruited and interviewed seven candidates for the Communications Coordinator position. I'm pleased to announce we hired Sarah Lorenz from McHenry County Conservation District. Sarah will begin her role with us on December 16, 2024.

### **Exit Interview:**

Conducted an exit interview with Renee Henert, Communications Coordinator. Renee's last day was November 13, 2024.

### **IPBC Board of Directors Meeting:**

Attended the IPBC Board of Directors Zoom meeting on November 21, 2024, which provided valuable updates on benefits and policies.

### **Employee Benefits and Enrollment:**

Held a Teams meeting with Jenny Warp, our IPBC Benefits Consultant, to address ongoing issues with PlanSource and WEX FSA. We discussed the proper procedure for enrolling employees in their WEX FSA, as the process requires using two separate platforms. Additionally, I completed the enrollment of staff in the WEX FSA for the 2025 plan year.

### **Staff Meeting & Safety Training:**

Prepared for our All-Staff Meeting on November 13, 2024. As part of our commitment to employee safety, I also prepared the annual OSHA-required safety videos and coordinated a lunch for the employees.

# Law Enforcement

## November 2024 Activities Report

### Brief Activity Summary

- There were 0 Criminal arrests
- There were 12 Calls for service inside of the Forest Preserves
- There was 1 Report written
- There were 0 Ordinance violations (citations) written
- There were 0 Written warnings
- There were 16 Verbal warnings
- There was 1 Airfield permit
- There were 3 Equestrian bridle tags
- There were 13 Fishing license checks
- There were 0 Occupied shelter house patrols
- There were 21 Campground patrols
- There were 21 Patrols on trail systems
- There were 25.8 Directed patrol hours